



the Alumni Newsletter

Post-Convention Issue

Marshfield, Wisconsin

November 2004

Chicago 2004: The Alumni Make a Difference!

To Dean Georgina T. Paredes, Dr. Tito Tanseco, to all the MAAA and Alumni Foundation Officers, to all the Alumni Attendees, families, sponsors, donors and friends:

Thank you for attending and supporting the 16th Annual UERMMMCA-MAAA and Alumni Foundation Convention and Reunion on August 4-7, 2002 at the Chicago Marriott Downtown. Your presence "made a difference" and it certainly translated to the success we all experienced in Chicago this past week. My heartfelt gratitude to all especially to my boss, Dr. Manny Blas, my Co-Chair Dr. Chit Gavino, and to my fully committed and tireless Vice-Chair, Mrs. Odette Blas.

To the majority of the Alumni Attendees, "Chicago made a difference" Nearly the entire Class '64, Class '69, Class '74 and Class '79 (the featured Jubilarian celebrants at the Gala) expressed their joy and satisfaction in attending their Jubilarian Nights. And I can safely claim that almost all Classes in attendance were overjoyed by the kind of camaraderie shared with their classmates. The Midwest Chapter leadership and membership poured their hearts out in making sure that everyone in attendance felt good in coming to this convention and reunion. Our new Dean, Georgina T. Paredes, M.D. expressed her congratulations to every Alumni who led and participated. She also expressed her optimism in the future of both the Association and the Foundation leaderships who were instrumental in making certain that the future of our alma mater is secure.

I am very pleased to report that significant milestones have been achieved in the combined first time meeting of the MAAA, the Foundation, the Alliance and Friends Officers at this convention. I hope that we can make good on our decisions to enhance our fiduciary responsibilities and fully embark on our approved main fundraiser which is the modified Whole Life Insurance with the Farmers Life Insurance Co., and to invest well and diversify our funds with the help of our selected financial management firm, H&R Block. Both the MAAA and the Foundation will also start banking using the Lakeside Bank "lockbox" in order to provide transparency and address permanency with our banking and accounting. Such positive changes to look forward to, and Houston, TX will be the first time we shall see progress reports.

The evening celebrations were warm and festive. The Thursday "Welcome Night" showed us the diverse talents and ingenuities of each Class and their families. The special musical renditions of the Chicago Chorale, the Special Dance Numbers and musical talents shared that evening was wonderful. Rather exceptional for me was the class '67 Transvestites fashion parade. Gee, they could really pass for women! Friday's "Jubilarian Night" hosted by class '79 was equally joyful and diverse. The entire class '79 choir alumni and spouses musical rendition carried the true infective reunion spirit experienced by all. Their children showed lots of talents and exceptional for me was the "Tinikling" Dance number which later called for audience participation from class '77 and '79.

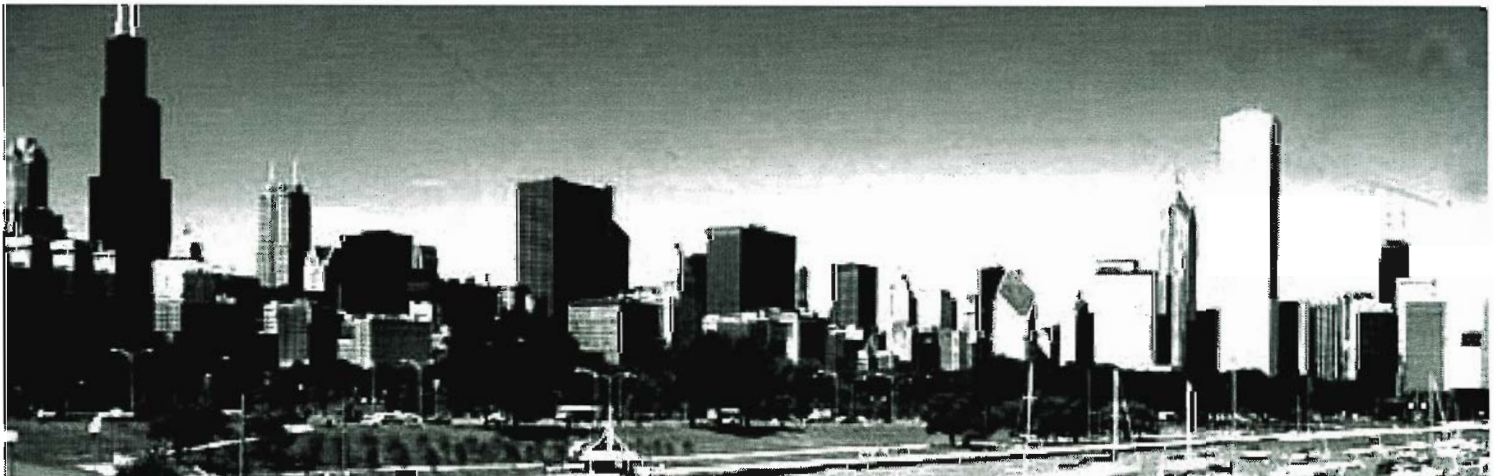
The Saturday "Gala Dinner/Dance" began with the great musical rendition of our Philippine and American anthems by the Chicago Chorale Quartet, followed by the hair raising rendition of our UERMMMCA Hymn led by its composer, Dr. Eleazar Sarmiento '64. We were then awed by the spectacular marching dance entrance of the 48 Silver Jubilarians and their spouses. Medals were given to both class '64 and class '79 by Dean Georgina Paredes and Dr. Manny Blas, President-MAAA, Inc. and the Midwest Chapter. Names were read by Dr. Irene Manalapaz, Executive Director. Other celebrating jubilarians of Class '69 and '74 were called to stand and be recognized by Dr. Conrad Miranda, President of the Alumni Foundation. Dr. Jeff Rastrollo gave a touching valedictory address while Dr. Manny Blas delivered a very inspiring message to all. Dinner was preceded by a moving musical rendition of "Panis Angelicus" by Dr. Rene Querubin. After dinner, dancing was begun by "wowing" kinda-seductive dance number by the Chicago Dance Troupe led by Mayette Cebedo. The entire night was filled with dancing, laughter and a great camaraderie and spirit which was so palpable the entire evening.

I must say that various excitements met us daily from the marathon meetings, CME and even at our last MAAA Election of Officers for 2004-2006. The latest update on the election is that the Executive Council under the leadership of Dr. Manny Blas is looking into the entire matter and will come back to its constituencies with suggestions and decisions as soon as a consensus is reached, in order to effect change which will serve to encourage the loyalty of members in its association. We must remember that "the WHOLE can be greater than the sum of its PARTS" UERMMMCA needs all our loyalty and support and the common fiber which runs in all of us is our connection to our alma mater. On her, be our focus and dedication. Long live and Mabuhay to our dear alma mater and all its alumni! We are all blessed, so now "make a difference" and be a blessing to others. Thank you for sharing the success we all felt at the Chicago Convention and we hope that most of you left your hearts in Chicago!



Susan Perez-Suntay, M.D.

Overall Chicago Convention Chair





Second Opinion

By Senen V. Siasoco, M.D.

Now that the dust has settled from the election fiasco (or so, I hope), it's time to reflect on the lessons we've learned from this incident.

First and foremost, the zeal and ardor of the Concerned Individuals totally daunts me. I cannot see myself getting ultra agitated over this affair- there are patients to heal, diseases to conquer, and newsletters to publish.

There is no doubt these folks are sincere in their desire to help the Ol' Alma Mater and her alumni. I admire my '75 classmate, Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz for the countless hours she has dedicated to the association in her capacity as Executive Director. Her promotion to the Presidency seemed a foregone conclusion, as we gathered at Violy's home Friday night feasting on *dinuguan at puto* and *kare-kare*.

The Good Old Boys had other plans. It seems Irene's managerial style alienated some of the Old Guard of the organization- they feel she has been somewhat bossy, maybe a little arrogant, and dare I say, domineering? My impression is they felt intimidated about having a woman in charge (which never bothered *moi* growing up in the Age of Cory, GMA and Hillary). So the next morning, we find Ed Banez is the President-Elect by a mere three votes, and Irene's vision *le grande alliance* is put on hold.

As Chieftain of the SoCəl Chapter, *Manong* Ed has been a dynamic take-charge kind of guy, and I have no qualms about the direction he will have our group headed to. He may have been thrust into the role unwittingly, but now he has the chance to prove to the skeptics that he has the balls (pardon the expression) to govern wisely. His first task (already began by current head honcho, Manny Blas) ought to be, must be electoral reform.

It is said there are two kinds of Filipino politicians: those who win, and those who were cheated (*yung nanalo at yung nadaya*). Our mission is noble; we ought not to be distracted by this parsimoniousness. Irene should be commended for her magnanimity in this thorny situation.

For more on this debate, please refer to the alumni website, www.uermalumni.org and click on the messageboard- you are guaranteed at least a few hours of lively diversion (some chuckles, maybe teeth gnashing). *Salamat*, Dave R. And for all you webheads out there, check out: www.uerm.edu which is the official school site and will link you to all things of interest to our ilk.

Dean Paredes would like to remind everyone of the **January 15, 2005** deadline for admission applications to the Med School. She is also appealing to the alumni to consider sponsoring some bright (albeit, needy) freshmen, to the tune of some \$2000 annually (the "gold" scholarship) or \$1000 ("silver"). So far, she has 4 slots pledged by Drs Blas & Carpio (Midwest chapter), one from Dr. Alex Bobila (NY/NJ), and another from Dra. Debbie Bobila dedicated to her father. Ex-prexy Jeff Rastrollo has also promised to lend a hand. In addition, The Dean and our Dr. Bayani Elma have developed a "Special Honors Award" as a tribute to students graduating without latin rankings (*summa/magna/cum laude*) but with high NMAT or GWA scores (which, I believe, are the RP equivalent of the MCAT)—so let's all support these generous folks!

A short recap of this issue's contents: you'll read the '04 *Aesculapian* ed's account of happenings Santa Mesa-side; a historical account of the Alliance by Ate Esther Querubin; and committee lists (a veritable who's who of our organization). After reports on the reunion/convention, the centerpiece is a couple of charming articles by Jubilarians Edna Solitario and her cohorts- Enjoy!

On a lighter note, how about a name for this newsletter? It's somewhat unwieldy typing The Alumni Newsletter over and over again, also commonplace- we need a title that is memorable, unique, maybe ethnic (e.g., *Tambuli? Balitaan? Tsismisan?*) *The Pulse* is already taken. How about *Aurora Blvd. Chronicles?* (Too long) *UERM Alum?* (*parang* Tawas!). *Ex-Aesculapian* (excuse me?). All suggestions will be considered, e-mail me at: uermalumnewsletter@yahoo.com and while you're at it, drop me a line about topics you want to read about in future issues.

The two inches of snow on the driveway this morning was a delight to witness (and a mighty burden to shovel). It was also a harbinger of the oncoming holiday season, and my cue to *wish you all the merriest, happiest and holiest of days to come*. My sincerest apologies for the delay in the release of this tabloid. Understand, please, that some of us still have 24/7 careers to fulfill.

Committees

Executive: Chair: President Manny Blas
Executive Director

Irene Manlapaz

President-Elect Ed Banez

Executive Vice-President

Susan Perez Suntay

Secretary DeKiam Ong

Treasurer Sonia Rico Todd

All Past Presidents

Membership: Chair: Agnes Alikpala

Vice: Nanette Pasatiempo

Jackie Gamiao

Mary Rosales

Ruby Cecilio

Ric Flores

Nominating and Elections

Chair: Jeff Rastrollo(EX-Officio)

Vice: Vince Casibang

Alex Bobila

Ida Tiongco

James Tagle

CME and Scientific Programs

Chair: Ben Rigor

Vice: Tom Lumicao

Myra Chiang

Romergruko Geocadin

Constitution and ByLaws

Chair: Debbie Bobila

Vice: Noel Reloj

Rene Querubin

Ruby Cecilio

Newsletter

Chair: Senen Siasoco

Convention Commission

Chair: Susan Suntay

Vice: Manny Blas

Ed Banez

Irene Manlapaz

Tom Lumicao

Roly Mendoza

Greg Carpio

Fund Raising

Chair: Irene Manlapaz

Ways and Means, Audit and Budget
to follow.



Executive Director's Corner

By Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, M.D.

The events in Chicago during the 1968 Democratic National Convention changed the course of history. 36 years later, Chicago was also the site of the turmoil of the 2004 UERMMMCA Alumni Association of America general election. The violent agitation of 1968 caused the sitting President, Lyndon Johnson not to seek a 2nd term re-election and facilitated the end of the Vietnam War. The 2004 Chicago election was flawed and several alumni asked for justice and corrective actions. Just like President Johnson, I did not pursue the protest because of economic reasons. Our Alumni Association is still in its infancy in terms of economic growth and political protests, though honorable would impede its progress.

The 2004 turmoil, however, is a blessing in disguise. It has brought to the attention of our general membership the inadequacy of the election process, the unintentional inaction or improper action of some of our leaders and our lack of political decorum. We are very grateful to many of our alumni who went out of their busy schedules to make sure that we will not have another election fiasco. As we speak, several alumni have volunteered their knowledge on how we can correct our electoral mistakes. The Alumni Association Officers will make sure that there will be a constitutional amendment that will make sure that future elections are handled properly and with integrity. We need you all to attend the 2005 Houston Convention General Meeting to be held on August 6, 2005 to ratify the changes in our election process.

On the brighter note, like the New York Convention and Reunion held in 2003, the Chicago Convention and Reunion was also successful in raising at least \$50,000 towards the Drug Assistance Program (DAP)/Indigent Fund. Because of the teamwork of the Chicago Convention Committee, there is approximately \$40,000 additional income that is the "share" of the Chicago Chapter. According to Dr. Manny Blas, the outgoing President of the Chapter and the current President of the Alumni Association, most of this money will be donated to the Alumni Foundation to be used for its other projects. We would like to also recognize the donation of \$25,000 by the Southern California Chapter and \$5,000 by the MARVa-DC Chapter to the DAP/Indigent Fund. We are hoping that the infrastructure of the transfer of the DAP/Indigent Fund would be established in few months so support of our indigent patients would start as early as next spring.

A History of the Alliance

By Esther N. Querubin, Secretary

Mission, Objectives, Purpose:

- To unite the spouses of the members of the UERMMMCAAAA, Inc. with the awareness that the strength and progress of the Alumni Association will depend upon the ability of the spouses to act together.
- To preserve, support, and contribute, and actively participate in the well-being of the Alumni Association.
- To solicit, collect, and receive funds from fund raising events of the Alliance and Friends with the premise that the funds raised will be donated to the Alumni Association.

History:

The idea or concept of the Alliance and Friends was thought of and conceived during the term of Conrad Miranda as President and Rene Querubin as Executive Director during the Alumni Convention and Reunion in New York City in 1995. With their first hand experience as officers of the Association of Philippine Physicians in America and also the Association of Philippine Physicians of Ohio on Rene's part, they came to realize how the Auxiliary of both Associations are a force to be reckon with in the Association's program activities, and fund raising. However, the APPA and The APPO were just for the ladies, and Conrad and Rene wanted to include the male spouses also, so there will be no discrimination, and they came up with the name of Alliance and Friends. The first few members were not spouses of UERM alumni, and that is where the Friends came in. The first Alliance president was all right but then there was a falling out with some of the Alumni so he just disappeared from the scene completely. Thus the Alliance and Friends also vanished from sight for awhile. Dr. Ben Rigor and his wife Violeta (Lety) tried to resurrect it during the Convention and Reunion in Long Beach, California and introduced the Silent Auction as the first fund raising of the Alliance. During this particular Convention I was not feeling well so I was not active and there was no follow-up in getting new members.

It was in 2001 during the term of Rene as president of the Alumni Association, when the the convention and reunion was held in Cleveland that Rene really pushed me (since I am his wife) to be active and resurrect his dream of having an Alliance and Friends organization. As Cleveland was the host city, we rallied all the spouses of the alumni and went full blast in the election of the officers. Fely Bangayan was our president, a very active past president of the Auxiliary of the Association of Philippine Physicians in Ohio. With her experience in holding Silent Auction, we were able to get donations from many alumni and earned quite a bit of money which we donated to the Alumni Association. During the convention in Hawaii in 2002, Fely introduced the Raffle Ticket fund raising and almost single handedly sold 90 percent of the tickets in Cleveland and donated most of the items in the Silent Auction also. From these fundraising activities, we were able to donate to the Alumni Association the amount of \$2,000.00 and placed in the coffer of the Alliance and Friends some money and at the latest report of our treasurer, Lety Rigor, we have in our bank account the amount of \$3,042.00 as of May 2004. Fely also thought of the Miss UERMMMCAAAA as one of our fundraising but it died a natural death from very little support and no enthusiasm for this kind of endeavor.

The officers and members of the Alliance and Friends have a goal of reaching 100 spouses in the next year or so and become a vital force and visible partner in fundraising events for the Alumni Association. Once again, we will have Raffle Tickets that we will be selling at our table during the registration and during the CME, as well as conducting the Silent Auction. Please help us by buying raffle tickets and purchase Silent Auction items, thus assisting the Alumni Association at the same time. We will be easily noticed this year, since we will have the Alliance and Friends banner on display on our table, so there will be no ignoring or missing us during the convention. With your cooperation, we will expand and increase in number and financial stature. After all as Rene said, fund raising is the main purpose of the Alliance and Friends.

Reported during the Alumni Foundation meeting, August 4, 2004.

Class of '79 ~ 25 Years Journey

By Edna C. Solitario, M.D.

Let me tell you how it all began. In the early 1990's, three classmates saw each other in New York City. We were starting our residency in the same city. Pearl Castillo, Jeannie Pobre-So. and myself shared a dream of reviving our lost "yearbook" At that time, we were struggling residents. We did not have much, but we were stubborn, and willing hard workers. Along the way, Mary Rosales joined our group, communicating by phone with Jeannie and Pearl, and of course there was Andrew So, who supported our idea. Poor Andrew, he had to put up with three alpha females. As we were going through our residency, we continued to communicate with our classmates here and in the Philippines collecting phone numbers, pictures and ideas. Poloy Pua helped Jeannie collect the pictures in the Philippines from our classmates who were just too many to mention. It was not an easy job, Jeannie and I had families to care for and she had to leave her family in Pennsylvania. I knew then that this was tearing her apart. Because of her hard work, we felt that she had the drive and ability to be the editor of the yearbook. After residency and fellowship, I moved to Oklahoma and Jeannie moved back to Pennsylvania. In 1997 Pearl and Conrado Caraos got married. They invited 18 of us classmates on their wedding. On the eve of the wedding, I officiated a meeting and we agreed that we need to contribute seed money for the yearbook. Mary Rosales, Vangie Co, Lydia Jacinto, Amor del Mundo, Pearl, Joey Baltazar, Manny Enriquez, and myself came up with the seed money. Jeannie and Andrew unselfishly worked hard, and in 1999 they came out with our yearbook after waiting for 20 years. It was like giving birth to a macrosomic baby.

Our group became bigger, now including Pearl, Jeannie, Andrew, Mary, Dads and myself. We continued to communicate, and met on several occasions. In June 2003, I went to Philadelphia. Five of us, excluding Mary, had a meeting. We were preparing for our 25th anniversary reunion. We agreed that Lorna Lumicao was the best person to be the Interim chairman because she was already connected with the national organization. Jeannie became the Interim treasurer, Pearl became the Interim secretary I became the Interim auditor and Dads became the communication specialist because of his knowledge of computers. Dads started the class '79 Website in 1998, which facilitated better communication of the class members. Fund-raising was started before the New York City 2003 reunion-conference. Twenty eight of us contributed money for advertisement expenses. Eighteen of our classmates attended that reunion.

After the New York reunion-conference, we started planning for the 2004 Chicago reunion.

Christmas of 2003, I went to New York City and met with Pearl, Jeannie, Andrew and Dads at the Caraos' residence. We discussed plans and were joined by Lorna over the phone. In February 2004 ,at Andrew and Jeannie's residence ,the group met again (included were Pearl, Lorna, Dads, Myrna and Ric Flores). In March 27 we had another meeting at Ric and Myrna's residence in Maryland. This time, we kicked off our Fund-raising for the Chicago reunion. There was a meeting held at Lito Cervantes' place, and again at Andrew and Jeannie's place. Our group had grown. In some of the meetings, Raul Moran, Tito Loya, Beth Coloso, and Peewee Agbayani were in attendance. Pearl, Jeannie, Andrew, Dads, Lorna, Ric, Myrna and myself worked endlessly entreating more classmates to join. Twenty four of our classmates answered our Fund-raising call for the Chicago reunion expenses. Forty five of our classmates joined us in Chicago, forty from the U.S.A. and five from the Philippines. The party and celebration began, four days of euphoria, healing, bonding and sharing. Chicago, August 4-7 2004 will always be remembered by class '79. It brought out the best of every one of us.



The Jubilarians

Day #1. August 3, 2004

Some of our classmates arrived early. Mary Rosales hosted a dinner at a Chinese restaurant. They had so much fun, they partied so hard that Jeannie lost her voice.

Day #2. August 5, 2004 Fellowship Day

In the morning, some of our classmates, Ish Lee Chuy, Noel Reloj, Albert Manalo and Arthur Lim joined the golf tournament. Jeannie, Ric, Myrna and I took Millie Lim, Daphne Domingo, Alfred Tan and wife to the J. Hancock Observatory. I was so thrilled to see Daphne and Alfred after 25 years. In the afternoon, all of us arrived, there was a lot of hugging, kissing, laughing and of course "tsismis" This is our 25 years journey. We were all happy to see each other. We relived our experiences

and adventures during our medical school years. We have changed in our appearance, gained some wisdom but are still crazy after all those years. Five representatives came from the Philippines: Alfred Daphne, May Gose, Ruby Manalastas and of course the overall chairman of 2004 Philippines reunion, Chuchi Pilapil. Four of our Caucasian classmates joined us: Allan Spiegel, Tom Clancy, Henry Balzani, and Mike Manyak. From Canada, the one and only Sonny Talangbayan. The classmates from USA were the following: Alfredo Beltran, Dads Caraos, Pearl Castillo-Caraos, Lito Cervantes, Myra Chiang, Raffy Climaco, Vangie Co, Albert Cruz, Manny Enriquez, Jocelyn Fabila, Ric Flores, Randy Hernando, Al Herrera, Lydia Jacinto, Ish Lee Chuy, Arthur Lim, Albert Lopez, Tito Loya, Lorna Lumicao, Jane de Magno, Albert Manalo, Joey Mendieta, Raul Moran, Amor del Mundo, Myrna Ortega-Flores, Luchi Pernia, Jeannie Pobre-So, Daisy Quiray, Noel Reloj, Mary Rosales, Elvie Sanchez, Andrew So, Edna Solitario, Annette Sulit and Marthie Sulit.

We started practicing our Class night and Gala night presentations. Lucky for us, we have a very talented artist-choreographer classmate who was at one time a professional Filipiniana dancer, Randy Hernando. He had the clear vision of the class presentation for the Gala night. Poor Randy, in spite of dehydration and illness he had to work very hard. Mind you, it was not an easy job. It was like teaching children with "attitude" and on top of that ,had two left feet- how to dance the waltz. We got in trouble several times and Randy had to remind us to listen, behave and watch. We complained, we whined, we disagreed without being disagreeable. Could it be that we have matured?

This is the fellowship night. The alumni were recognized according to the year of graduation. When they introduced the Jubilarian, of course, we clapped and yell as loud as we can. One commented that class '79 had no rules and if there were rules, we made sure that they were broken. Everyone of us enjoyed the camaraderie. We had a great night watching the talents of the alumni and their children. We took a lot of pictures. There was a lot of dancing from the Tango to the modern dance. At midnight, fourteen of us decided to practice our choral presentation until two in the morning. Again, we were lucky to have a classmate with musical talent, the Conductor of the class '79 Choral Group, Ismael Lee Chuy.

Day #3. August 5, 2004 CME Day, Jubilarian Night

Two of our classmates, Myra Chiang and Mike Manyak gave lectures. They were good. We were very proud of them. Myra's topic was "Hyponatremia"

Continued on page 7

Reflections on Class '79

By Josephine Pobre-So, M.D. et al

"It seemed incredible that so many years had passed. We looked the same, no, we looked better. And, with it all, we laughed a lot, without reserve, perhaps in a way we haven't laughed since the last time we met. It comes easily when old friends get together."

Excerpt, Philadelphia Inquirer, August 3, 1999

Forty five members of our class (40 US-based and 5 Philippine-based) arrived in Chicago for our 25th Silver Jubilee celebration in Chicago. Who would have thought that the class without a graduation yearbook; who were "guinea pigs" for the CLS (Correlated Lecture Series, or should we say, Confused Lecture Series?); the first to hold graduation ceremonies at Meralco Theater; frequently labeled as disorganized and uncooperative; who managed, however, to be 100% board passers, would have the largest attendance for a silver jubilee class, to date. Four American classmates came and the ever-elusive Joey Mendieta (Pulmonary Medicine-Kentucky) decided to make an appearance. There were "last minute" attendees – Ongie Nicasio (Child Psychiatry-California), Desi Quiray (Child Psychiatry-Florida), Amor del Mundo (Child Psychiatry-California), Raffy Climaco (Internal Medicine-Florida), and Art Lim (Surgery-W.Virginia). Jun Beltran (Internal Medicine-Minnesota) managed to put in a one day appearance.

It is no coincidence that many attended our 25th reunion. Preparations for our silver jubilee started in 1999. Our class held a 20th year reunion at Westin Philippine Plaza in December 1999, and about 85 classmates attended the two-day affair. It was emotional and touching as we said our goodbyes that we vowed to make our silver anniversary an "affair to remember" A website was created by our computer-savvy classmate, Dads Caraos (Psychiatry-New York) where news and photos would periodically be posted. It became easier to put names and faces together as we had finally published our graduation yearbook. A class directory was available to anyone who requested a copy. Continuous communication proved worthy since twenty four classmates attended the August 2003 alumni homecoming in New York in August 2003. It was a silver jubilee eve celebration for us. Plans were made for our 2004 celebration including the production of a 25th year souvenir program. The "Then and Now" souvenir program theme was the brainchild of Lydia Jacinto Cohan (Child Psychiatry-Arizona). A core group of classmates evolved – Lorna Lumicao (Neonatology-New York), Josephine Pobre-So (Psychiatry-Pennsylvania), Perla Castillo-Caraos (Child Psychiatry-New York), Edna Solitario (Pediatrics-Oklahoma), Myrna Ortega-Flores (OB-Gyn-Maryland), Ric Flores (OB-Gyn-Maryland), Lito Cervantes (Oncology-New York), Andrew So (Pathology-Philadelphia), Raul Moran (Anesthesia-Virginia), Tito Loya (Family Medicine-Maryland), PeeWee Agbayani (Real Estate-New York), Beth Coloso-Javier (Medical Research-New York). Letters, emails, and telephone calls reached out to our classmates, both here and in the Philippines. The group met every two months – wind, rain, snow or sunny weather. Getting one's car stuck in snow or getting lost in an unfamiliar city, did not deter one from making it to the next meeting. The food was too good to miss in these meetings. We ate and we planned and

we ate again and again! John Hatala (Occupational Medicine-Virginia) called in during one of these meetings to voice his suggestions.

The reunion started for a few of us early birds as Mary Rosales invited us to a sumptuous dinner at Hotel Peninsula's Shanghai Terrace restaurant on Wednesday, August 4. We were the most photographed patrons of the restaurant that night.

Thursday, August 5, was the official first day of the convention. It was the first of three very hectic days. There was a lot to do – gather everyone, plan and practice our gala night presentation, distribute the souvenir journals, t-shirts, corsages and boutonnieres, finish the candles, convince the class to make their pledges towards the legacy, do some sightseeing around the windy city, and of course, do some yadayadas and pose for pictures. The first practice session was quite interesting. There were 45 attendees which translated to 45 ideas, all clamoring to be heard and implemented. It was déjà vu back to our college days. The dance presentation was changed multiple times. We went from doing cotillion steps to a cadena-de-amor to a waltz and to a rumba. We could not even get the entrance march right! Every time we met for practice, plans were changed. Headache anyone? A few hours before the gala night affair, we stayed focused and finally, we had a routine. We knew the steps (quick-quick-slow) and each dance pair were in sync with each other. This was probably the reason why everyone was fiercely protective of their practice dance partners. Albert Lopez (California) quietly practiced with his partner. Ditto with Albert Cruz (California), Sonny Talangbayan (Internal Medicine-Toronto) and Al Herrera (Internal Medicine-Tennessee). Nobody was going to give up their partners for Vangie Co (Pulmonary Medicine-Illinois) who had missed the practices.

The jubilarian night on Friday was hosted by our class with a 70's theme. Ish Lee Chuy (Psychiatry-Chicago) was a suave emcee. This night showcased the talents of our children. We also discovered amongst us the "Class 1979 Dance Idols" – Allan Spiegel (Neurology-Florida), Henry Balzani (Ob-Gyn-New Jersey), Tom Clancy (Surgery-North Carolina). Great Tinikling guys! The bamboo poles were controlled by the children of Elvie Sanchez (Family Medicine-Illinois). We do have talented line dancers, too – Chuchi Pilapil (Ob-Gyn-Philippines), Christine Escano (Psychiatry-Missouri), the Sulits – Annette (Texas) and Marthie (California), Jane de Magno (Neonatology-California), Daphne Domingo (Pulmonary-Philippines), Luchi Pernia (Neonatology-California), Ruby Manalastas (Psychiatry-Philippines), May Gose (Neurology-Philippines), Jo Fabila (Psychiatry-New Jersey). Alfred Tan (Neurosurgery-Philippines) was spotted dancing the night away. Was that Manny Enriquez (Pulmonary Medicine-Tennessee) on the dance floor? The surprise of the night was the choir singing. When the song number was called, all 45 silver jubilarians stood up and went up the stage. Everybody thought it was a call for a class picture. Ish seemed unfazed that standing before him were 45 classmates and that only 15 had practiced the night before. Such faith in his classmates! It was a magical night, anyway, as we gave a wonderful rendition of "Let there be Peace on Earth"

The gala night on Saturday, August 7, had the ladies looking gorgeous in their long gowns and matching wrist

Continued on page 7



Seventy-Niners Strutting Our Stuff

Class of '79 ~ 25 Years Journey (continued)

and Mike's was "Advances in the management of prostatic cancer"

After the CME, our class met for a few hours for business matters. It was agreed that class '79 will raise \$50,000.00 for the next five years to be given to the Alumni Foundation in a restricted fund for our class projects. Several were proposed but two projects were given much thought; 1. Professorial chair and 2. The Indigent Fund. No decision was made. The planned election of class officers did not materialized. More dancing practice. To my surprise, some of our classmates decided to change the "Waltz" to "Rumba" Some of us were upset but in the end we decided to follow the wishes of the majority. I threw a tantrum (Hey, I am a Pediatric Endocrinologist so sometimes I act like my patients.- I can't help it, it's the hazard of the job), I whined, I refused to dance but Ate May threatened me that if I didn't dance I would not receive my medallion. Only a tornado can stop me from that!. Thanks to Albert Cruz and Belle Manalo for helping me learn the steps, I was one of those with two left feet. I told my partner, Tito Loya to lead me and I will try my best not to trip or fall. I promised not to embarrass him and the class '79. Albert Manalo, Lorna Lumicao, Tito Loya, Myrna Ortega-Flores took the lead.

This is the class nite. We were the stars and we were treated like stars and acted like it. Cameras were flashing, we were grinning up to our ears. There was joy in each of our faces. Ish Lee Chuy was the emcee with Daphne and Albert Manalo assisting. I was impressed, Ish did a wonderful job. Nobody could have done it better. Several of our classmates have talented children who were gracious enough to perform. Special mention were Elvie Sanchez' children who performed the

"Tinikling" They were joined later by our Caucasian classmates Tom Clancy, Allan Spiegel and Henry Balzani. They did good, no major injury. The highlight of the night was our choral presentation of "Let there be peace on earth" Remember, only fourteen of us practiced, when we were called, somebody mistook it as a class picture taking so he called everyone to join. To Ish surprise, 45 of us went to the stage, too late to back out. To everyone's amazement, we did well. We received a loud applause and we were told it was great singing. Thanks to the back up singers(they were good). Like little kids our faces were beaming with pride and joy.

Day #4. August 7, 2004 Alumni Election, Gala Night

Some of us woke up early to vote for the election thinking that one of our classmate was a candidate. To our disappointment, she was not even nominated. That's another story. We spent the whole afternoon practicing our Gala night presentation.

This is the big night, the Gala night. We were the celebrants. We looked radiant. We looked stunning. The men were in their best suits and the ladies were wearing their best gowns. The ladies looked beautiful and elegant, the men handsome and debonaire. Cameras were flashing again. At last, our presentation started. I was told later that our entrance was dramatic and well conceived. Thanks to Randy Hernando for his vision. Our presentation was well received. Thanks to the gracious audience

Overall, the reunion was a success. I asked several classmates why they came and their answers were similar, "I got a call from you guys and I wanted to see my classmates after 25 years."

Chuchi Pilapil said, "I came all the way from the Philippines to renew old friendship and to represent the Philippines Alumni Association. I am glad I came. This is a "once in a lifetime opportunity." Lydia Jacinto said, "It is worth all the money. I am extremely excited." Sonny Talangbayan said, "I am so happy In fact, I plan to attend the reunion in the Philippines." Mike Manyak said, "I came because I was invited to speak, I am honored to do so. This gave me a chance to see old friends and several classmates that I have not seen for a long time. My experience was very good, I had fun and it was great catching up with so many people."

As for me, it was a very positive experience. To those classmates who were not close to me during the medical school years suddenly, I had the feeling of closeness. There was a renewal of friendship to my old friends and development of friendship to other former classmates. I had the privilege to talk to everyone. Everybody had a wonderful time and they were glad they came. The following day, we said our goodbyes. It was bittersweet.

Epilogue

I was sitting in front of my computer and my daughter was looking at my E-mails. She understood that there was a crisis in class '79 leadership. She said, "Mom what will happen now?" I looked at her and said, "Patience my child. There are good people and smart leaders in class '79. They will not let our Alma Mater down. This is just a bump in the road. We are going to prevail."

Special thanks to my friend and confidant Pearl Castillo-Caraos who helped me with this article.

Reflections on Class '79 (continued)

corsages, and the gentlemen quite dashing in their tuxedos. The dramatic entrance march was orchestrated by our very talented classmate, Randy Hernando (Medical Research-New York), who coordinated our gala night presentation. The rumba presentation, choreographed with the help of Albert Manalo (Internal Medicine-Chicago), was great. The medallions were presented by the Dean of the College of Medicine, Dr. Georgina Paredes, and Dr. Manny Blas, President of the Alumni Association. The solemn candle lighting ceremony culminated with our emotional shout of "Class 1979" The rest of the evening was a lot of dancing again!

As a show of support and pride, a significant number of classmates attended the CME lectures on Friday, August 6. Two classmates gave lectures – Myra Chiang (Chair of Pediatrics-WVUH, W. Virginia) and Mike Manyak (Chair of Urology-GWU, Washington,D.C.). Despite late hours on Friday night, class '79 was up at 8:00 A.M. to experience their first alumni association election. Noel Reloj (Neurology-Kentucky)

emerged as an eloquent voice of our class's afterthoughts on the election. A true leader indeed.

The 3-day homecoming event was an extraordinary display of class unity, camaraderie, generosity, and excellent volunteerism. Class 1979 has shown that differences in opinion and temperament can be useful assets. A significant number of our classmates have become Department chairs, College Professors, successful group and private practitioners in their respective fields. We blended perfectly as we hugged, rekindled old friendships, reacquainted ourselves with classmates we knew but never really knew, and remembered old faces. Plans are ongoing now to meet in Houston in 2005 and Las Vegas in 2006. For now, our focus is joining our Philippine-based classmates at our Alma Mater for our Silver Jubilee celebration this December 2004. We are quite sure it will be as memorable as the one we had in Chicago.

Three months ago, we experienced the Chicago Convention (in what seemed to be a glorious spectacle in the making) fall short because of some unforeseen problems with portions of the totality. Nevertheless, the host chapter feels that we have given the utmost effort to put together one of the most attended conventions- starting with a rowdy and electrifying fellowship night with a display of profusion of talents from the alumni and their offspring. This ended with a gala night with its usual display of beauteous people in their splendid gowns, dancing the night away. This time there were very little speeches to ruin the evening, something that had never been done before.

All these we owe to the untiring effort of the members of the Chicago and Midwest Chapter, and the different committees. Most of all, I would like to mention two people who made the most sacrifices and spent the most sweat, effort and tears to ensure the success of the convention. They are Dr. Susan Perez-Suntay and Mrs. Odette Blas. I believe that both of them are planning to put forth separate reports so I will not dwell on their individual accomplishments (please read their reports in future issues). There are lessons to be learned from each convention and that is the reason we are organizing materials and logistics that we can hand over to the succeeding generations of convention planners. The next convention being planned in Houston Texas is going to be the beneficiary of the newly formed Convention Commission that will coordinate with the Houstonians and orchestrate the use of the materials and logistics. Nothing is changed, however, when it comes to the usual hard work and esprit de corps which are the essentials.

In general all the business matters of the Alumni Association and Foundation were addressed, albeit sometimes too aggressively. It seemed to me that there was an endless array of different meetings just to elucidate these points that could have been discussed over breakfast or cocktails. This is just one of those lessons to be learned. Never schedule too many boring meetings! There is enough information to be absorbed by all those willing to know the ins and outs of the business of the Alumni and Foundation, without having to castigate later their leaders for their lack of knowledge.

The finances of the Chicago Convention had been completely accounted for and will be reported by Dr. Sonia Rico-Todd in her famous Treasury Notes. All distributions to the National Alumni and Foundation will be completed by the time this is published. I must say we exceeded all expectations and to use an old saying "we outdid ourselves" in this department.

Now, for the most awaited part of the report- let me start by a few premises. The election of officers on Saturday morning, August 7, 2004 is just part of the convention. Alumni do not come to attend a convention for the sole intent of voting. In the past, there was no status in being a President, much less a Vice or Treasurer or Secretary. These are all purely unpaid positions. We do it purely for love of the Alma Mater and anyone who would dispute this can call me for a private debate. The main reason I can say this is previous leaderships are charged with selecting future leaders and there are many instances where those approached would decline or refuse citing their own reasons. Murphy's law certainly played a role in the last elections.

I thank all those people who participated in the process of exchange of ideas and ideologies that culminated with the findings that I am about to present. Everyone present during the elections can attest to the fact that we had disorderly proceedings. This was most unexpected, at least to me, because I was not privy to the movements that went on late Friday night and into early Saturday morning. What became apparent at the onset of the elections is that some members did not want to accept the recommended roster of candidates slated by the nominating committee but instead put together a different slate. This is permissible under our Constitution and By-laws (CBL). The result is now well known, between the two candidates for President Dr. Irene Manlapaz and Dr. Edgar Banez, Edgar won the elections with a narrow margin. It seemed that outcry becomes inevitable when unanimity is not attained. Shades of Bush vs. Gore. This is where the process of separating the facts from fiction began for me. Prior to this report a number of our constituents wanted answers from me, something difficult for me to do unless I spend all my hours before a computer. There are answers here that I used in my previous e-mails and which I will use so as not to lose context.

This last election was tainted; in fact all previous elections were tainted because we never kept a list of paid members at the polling place. This may have been perpetuated because elections never posed a challenge and few people were interested in running for office. There was just no status that came with being an officer. We are growing and inevitably elections have become a contest. I take it as a good sign when this happens, and at the same time there are hardships that come with this growth. The

President's Report

By Manuel P. Blas, M.D.



moral responsibility of an orderly election does not stop with the nominating committee. We all must assume the roles of election judge, watchdog, protestor and sometimes castigator. There were many allegations that surfaced during the elections but the most mentioned are the following:

- Some unpaid members voted, which was a violation of the CBL
- Electioneering was committed by some members
- Fraud was committed
- Other forms of violations of the CBL

I asked for and received numerous e-mails and after what I considered sufficient volume that I could work with, I started an exhaustive investigation, including emails and phone interviews with the major players who were named in those allegations. The key is separating facts from opinions. Armed with my study, I appointed an advisory council composed of the elected officers (minus those subject of the controversy) and all past Presidents. I submitted a report on my fact finding and solicited their

advice on whether to accept the result of the elections or call for another election. Imbued with a desire to right what may be wrong, I did not realize that I would have violated the CBL unintentionally. I did receive an answer from the advisory council but the answer became moot when Irene informed us that she decided to accept the mandate of the elections. How and why she did is beyond the scope of this report.

In order to clarify and clean our slate it is necessary to go back to the said allegations. From my investigations, the only valid criticism was that some unpaid members voted. This is the only point we agreed upon with most of those wanting to discard the results. I did not receive specific names of unqualified voters nor the names of those that challenged them. Constitutionality requires that the accuser must provide his/her name and the name of the person being accused. This protects the one being accused of false allegations and innuendos. The accuser must file the complaints to the committee before the election results are tallied, submitted and accepted by the body. Without these requirements, the elections are final. I believe that the CBL were violated unintentionally because it is entirely possible that members not of good standing may have voted. The burden of proof is always on the accuser to prove wrongdoing. It must be cited during the election, and before the final count, and it now becomes the duty of the committee to question the person and bring the matter to the open. This is why challenges to matters with the elections must be timely, while the process is going on, before the final tally or immediately after so that the committee can act and ask the membership gathered for a new vote, and this must be approved by the body before they adjourn. We have no recourse but to go back to parliamentary rules to provide us with guidance. The backbone of our CBL are the parliamentary rules that separates us from a social club. We cannot now violate our CBL intentionally by ignoring the results of the elections because the accusers did not come forward to name the accused perpetrators. I thank Dr. Vickie Casibang for her splendid study and reports that elucidated the issues before us for without which we may just have to consider ourselves a mom and pop club. I hope with this explanation these election matters are laid to perpetual rest. Now let us start the healing process, free ourselves of the mental baggage, start fresh with improvements in our CBL, build in safeguards for future orderly elections, and above all adhere to our commitment to our Alma Mater and restore her place in history. Dr. Debbie Bobila will chair the new By-Laws Committee to be assisted by Vice-Chair Dr. Noel Reloj. The amendment to the CBL will include comprehensive procedures for nominations and elections including methods of identifying paid members. Anyone who has better ideas that can be included in the amendments would please direct them to the New Committee. This is your chance to help and put your talent to work. Hopefully this amendments can be acted on by the Executive Committee before the Houston Convention and be ready for ratification by the membership during the next convention. I would like to express my gratitude to Debbie and Noel for performing these tasks. I would like to extend my congratulations to Irene Manlapaz for her magnanimous acceptance of the position of Executive Director and to Edgar Banez for his election to the post of President Elect.

There are complaints that there are too many members of class 67 in the Board of Trustee of the Foundation. This is because when trustees were being sought to serve, many from class 67 volunteered. Again, there is no status in being a trustee so please if anyone is interested especially amongst the younger alumni; Dr. Roly Mendoza and I agreed to give up our seats for them. Kindly call me or e-mail me with your resume. We need new blood, please consider this appeal. There will be other issues I would like to address but for fear of impending reader boredom, I will end my report here and will continue next issue.

UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST RAMON MAGSAYSAY
MEMORIAL MEDICAL CENTER
MEDICAL ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.
Incorporated on September 03, 1991 with Taxpayer I.D. Number 52-1745846

Minutes of August 7, 2004 meeting held at the Downtown Marriott Hotel, Chicago, Illinois

Members Present:

Manuel Blas, M.D. President, 2004-2006
Irene Ibanez-Manlapaz, M.D. Executive Director, 2002-2005
Edgar Banez, M.D. President -elect, 2006-2008
Susan P. Suntay, M.D. Vice-President, 2004-2006
DeKiam Ong, M.D. Secretary, 2004-2006
Sonia Rico-Todd, M.D. Treasurer, 2004-2006
Joseph Rastrollo, M.D. President, 2002-2004
Andy Ebilane, M.D. President, Southern California Chapter
Benjamin Rigor, M.D. Past President and Advisor
Rogelio Sion, M.D. Past President and Advisor
Samuel Piga, M.D. Editor, Alumni Association newsletter
Georgina Paredes, M.D. Dean, UERMMMC College of Medicine
Mrs. Estelle Querubin, Secretary, UERMMMC MAAA Alliance and Friends
Trustees of the Alumni Foundation Board- Drs. Bayani Elma (Chairman), Renato Querubin (Vice-chairman),
Conrad Miranda, IV (President), Rolando Mendoza (Secretary), Elmer Gilo (Treasurer), and Renato Raymundo

Guests:

Victor O'Yek, M.D.
Susan Raymundo, M.D.
Senen Siasoco, M.D.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Joseph Rastrollo, immediate past president, called the meeting to order at 1:25 P.M. He congratulated the newly elected officers.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on March 20, 2004 at the Bonaventure Hotel, Los Angeles, California was presented by Dr. Ibanez-Manlapaz and were moved by Dr. Blas, seconded by Dr. Miranda and accepted by the assembly.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT

The treasurer's report, due to the unavailability of the complete accounting of the 2003 NYC convention from the Northeast Chapter, was tabled until the NYC accounting was made available to the treasurer who will then include it in her final report. Obtaining an outside auditor for the Association was discussed as the Association had over \$250,000 gross income for 2003. Dr. Blas will pursue the auditor issue.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The report was incorporated in the minutes of the March 20, 2004 meeting in Los Angeles, California.

V. CHAPTER PRESIDENT REPORTS

A. No reports from the following chapters: Northeast, MarVaDC and Northern California.

B. Midwest Chapter

Dr. Blas complemented the success of the Chicago convention/reunion to the hard working members of various committees in charge of all the activities as well as the excellent attendance of the alumni.

C. Florida Chapter

Dr. Mendoza reported that the Florida Chapter will expand to include the States of North and South Carolinas, Alabama, Georgia and Tennessee and to be renamed as Southeast Chapter. The process was already initiated and expect to be completed by the end of 2005.

D. Southern California Chapter

Dr. Ebilane reported that the new officers of the chapter were inducted in April 2004. He also presented a check of \$25,000 from the chapter to the Alumni Foundation.

VI. UERMMMC MAAA ALLIANCE AND FRIENDS

Mrs. Esther Querubin, the secretary, report the activities of the organization including 12 new members and a balance of about \$4,000. (Full report on file)

VII. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Scientific Program and Continuing Education

Dr. Rigor will coordinate with Dr. Tom Lumicao for the CME program of 2005 convention to be held in Houston, Texas.

B. Newsletter

Dr. Piga read his letter (full letter on file) dated August 7, 2004 to the Executive Council and introduced Dr. Siasoco to be the next editor of the Alumni Association newsletter. Dr. Siasoco pledged to follow the tradition of the newsletter with some modification like open to contribution articles from the alumni. The newsletter will be published three times/year.

C. Audit (Ad Hoc) Committee

Starting in 2004, the Audit Committee will be incorporated into the new Audit and Ethics Committee.

D. All the other committees have no reports to present.

VIII. AWARDING OF PLAQUES

Plaques were awarded to various alumni for their valuable services and contributions to the Association.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 P.M.

Reviewed by:

Manuel Blas, M.D.
President, UERMMMC-MAAA, INC. 2004-2006
Date: September 13, 2004

Prepared by:

DeKiam Ong, M.D.
Secretary, UERMMMC-MAAA, INC. 2004-2006
Date: September 13, 2004

Treasury Notes

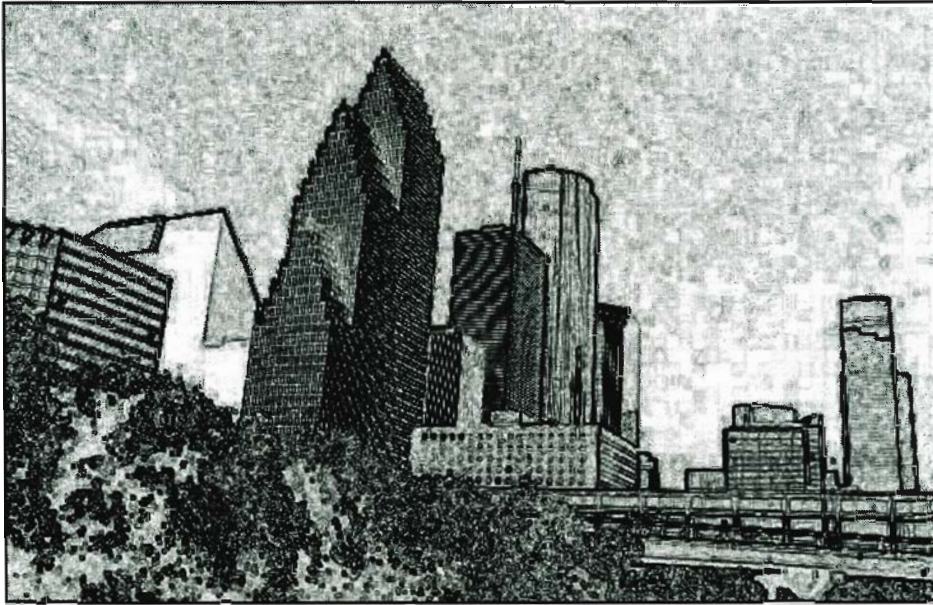
By Sonia Rico-Todd, M.D.



The UERMMMC Medical Alumni Association in America, Inc. started the Fiscal Year 2003 with a bank balance of \$44,831.33, which included checking, CD's, as well as saving account, while the equipments were valued at \$5,069.95 for total assets value of \$ 49,901.28. At this point, let me clarify that the Lifetime membership fees were deposited as CD's, in Suntrust Bank and when the two CD's matured in October 2003, they were transferred to Bank One as a saving account. This is the same bank where we also keep the Association's checking account. Presently, the total of the remaining Suntrust CD and the Bank One saving is \$40,203.08 which, as I mentioned earlier represents the Lifetime membership account. The bank balance meanwhile has a total amount of \$69,858.82 A net income of \$25,027.49 was made after all the Association's obligations were paid off. The main project launched by the present administration is the DAP/Indigent funding, which received \$63,276.00 from NYC Convention income, \$4,000.00 from the Presidential budget, and \$120.00 from the MarVaDC chapter for a total of \$67,396.00. For the UERM Hospital, the Alumni Association donated \$5,000.00 to procure a Defibrillator. As of this report, the Alumni Association has total assets of \$74,928.77

BANK ACCOUNTS (AUGUST 01, 2003 to JULY 31, 2004)

A. CHECKING		
Balance August 01, 2003		\$25,357.89
Credits		109,868.70
Debits		(105,570.85)
Balance Checking		\$29,655.74
B. CD		
1. CD90001535332		
Value August 1, 2003		\$7,145.42
Value October 3, 2003		7,156.29
Value July 31, 2004 (Withdrawn and transferred to Savings)		0
2. CD90001535341		
Value August 1, 2003		\$7,145.42
Value October 3, 2003		7,156.29
Value July 31, 2004 (Withdrawn and transferred to Savings)		0
3. CD000000000001 (Maturity March 20, 2007)		
Value August 1, 2003		\$5,182.60
Value December 31, 2003		5,384.51
Balance CD		\$5,384.51
C. SAVINGS		
Initial Deposit October 10, 2003 (fr. 2 CD withdrawn)		\$14,312.58
Deposits and Fund transfer fr. Checking		20,350.00
Interest Earned		155.99
Balance Savings		\$34,818.57
D. TOTAL BANK BALANCE		\$69,858.82
1. INCOME vs. EXPENSES		
INCOME		
Reimburse NYC seed money		\$14,097.70
Proceeds NYC convention		95,026.00
Membership fees		20,350.00
Interest Earned		357.91
Donations (for LCD & DAP)		620.00
Bank fee reversal		50.00
Newsletter Ads(I. Manlapaz)		75.00
TOTAL INCOME		\$130,576.61
EXPENSES		
Newsletter Printing		\$6,500.00
Medical Mission		1,948.53
Chicago Convention Seed Money		5,000.00
Dean's Airfare (Hawaii & NY)		2,000.00
Jubilarian Medallions		521.70
Strategic Planning Expenses		338.60
Ads		200.00
Income Tax Preparation		175.00
Bank Charges		56.00
Fund transfer to Savings(Membership)		400.00
Returned Check		1,150.00
Donation to UERM Hospital (Defib)		5,000.00
Donation to DAP (fr. Pres. Budget)		4,000.00
Donation to DAP (fr. NYC Conv)		63,276.00
NEC share(fr. NYC Conv)		15,000.00
Copying fee		5.02
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$105,570.85
NET INCOME		\$25,005.76
ASSETS		
Bank Balance		\$69,858.82
Equipments		5,069.95
Total Assets		\$74,928.77
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable		\$0
Equity		74,928.77
Total liabilities + Equity		\$74,928.77



(City Skyline Computer Art by Fred Jinkins at www.angelfire.com/tx4/fredhapyom/page8.html)

Welcome to Houston!

Unbridled energy has always been Houston's trademark. The forceful, wildcatter temperament that transformed what was once a swamp near the junction of the Buffalo and White Oak bayous into the nation's fourth-largest city also made the city a world energy center and pushed exploration into outer space—indeed, the first words spoken from the moon broadcast its name throughout the universe: "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed."

This same wild spirit explains much about the unrestricted growth that resulted in the city's patchwork layout: It's not unusual to find a luxury apartment complex next to a muffler repair shop, or a palm reader's storefront adjacent to a church. Magnificent glass and metal towers dominate the downtown corridor, but for the most part Houston's cityscape is characterized by random upcroppings of impressive architecture interspersed with groomed greenbelts and lively neighborhoods.

Houston is nevertheless an international business hub and the energy capital of the United States, evidenced by the Texas-size conventions that periodically fill its major hotels to bursting points. Medical institutions spawned from the discoveries of the famous heart transplant team of Cooley and DeBakey and research conducted at M.D. Anderson Cancer Center have earned Houston the title of "healing center." Top-notch museums, galleries, and performance halls affirm the city's commitment to creativity and expression, and its many ethnic restaurants add to the cosmopolitan flavor. (Courtesy of: fodors.com destination guides)

The Venue:

Whether you're traveling for business, pleasure, or planning a meeting, Marriott West Loop by the Galleria focuses on what it takes to make your trip successful. Located blocks from the world-famous Galleria, our newly renovated suburban hotel has easy access from all major freeways, the central business district, attractions, restaurants, and recreation. Enjoy the comfort of our 300 guest rooms, each equipped with Marriott's new Luxury Bedding program, high speed internet access, large variety of movies and video games, in-room coffee maker, and phones with voice mail and multiple data ports. Start and end your day with the many tasteful options we offer in our restaurant and lounge. Experience a refreshing change of pace in our indoor pool and expanded fitness center. Your business objectives will stay on course with the convenient workstations in The Room That Works and the services of our Business Center including complimentary faxing, copying, printing and high speed internet access. The convention rate is \$99/night. (Courtesy of the hotel's website)

Mark Your Calendars! It's **August 3 to 6**. Contact **Tomas Lunicao**, '75, convention chairman at: tomasl@bcrr.tmc.edu tel (318) 448-6740 (home) or (318) 561-4154 (office). The home page can be found at: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/houstonreunion2005> or write them at: houstonreunion2005@yahoo.com

CME is Continuing Educational Success

The Clinical Conference scheduled for Friday, August 6, 2004 at the Ballroom of the Chicago Marriott attracted an eager audience of some 300 attendees. Dr. Manny Blas delivered a rousing welcome, then Dr. Ernesto Chua kicked off the lectures with the latest on the management of Dyslipidemias. Ernie, presently a Las Vegas cardiologist, delivered an informative discourse, all the while keeping the conferees alert with his wisecracks (morbid obesity- "spell ATTIC while peering down at your shoes").

The second lecture was from Dr. Rogelio Pine and took a long look at "Acute Coronary Syndromes- a new look at an old problem" After an exhaustive review of the newest technology and pharmacologic agents, he concluded that prevention is still the key to this major problem. He practices cardiology at Princeton, New Jersey.

A brief break and visit to the next door exhibit hall to stock up on ballpoint pens and post-it notes (plus medical literature, *opkors*) led to Dr. Romergryo G. Geocadin's assault on Acute Brain Attack. The baby of the group, nevertheless, Romer delivered numerous pearls on what were formerly termed Strokes. Romer is in-charge of the Neuro-intensive Care Unit at Johns Hopkins in Maryland.

Dr. Myra Chiang, of the Jubilarian class '79, reported on the proper rate of correction of Hyponatremia, emphasizing vigilance and the use of isotonic solutions (since 50% of these cases are iatrogenic). She is the sole pediatric nephrologists in West Virginia, and former chairman of the Pediatrics department at the West Virginia University.

Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome was the topic of Dr. Maribe Bangayan's talk. Using informative slides, she was able to present the most recent advances in the field from her outlook as a pulmonologist and critical care intensivist (and being the offspring

of UERM alumni!). Her practice is based on the north side of Chicago.

A scrumptious luncheon was served while Dr. Benjamin Rigor, chairman of the festivities, introduced the current dean of the Medical School, Dr. Georgina Tungol-Paredes. Dr. Paredes delivered the Dr. Jose Cuyegkeng Memorial Lecture, focusing on the state of the medical center. A review will be published in the next issue of this newsletter.

Colon-rectal surgeon Dr. Constante Aveccilla while admitting that the mortality rate of colorectal carcinomas remains high, heralded the improved quality of life of survivors through efforts to restore bowel continuity, avoiding the dreaded stoma, and the advent of neoadjuvant therapy. He is connected with the Marshfield Clinic in Wisconsin.

Michael Manyak, MD, another Jubilarian, relied on his vast experience as a clinician and academician in the Washington DC area to review the advances in the management of Prostate Cancer. Then Dr. Emmanuel Bravo of the Cleveland Clinic suggested a "Rational Approach to AntiHypertensive Therapy" with some clear illustrations.

Dr Eugene Pantangco also recommended a rational approach to another common condition, Heartburn. He is the scion of a UERM alumni-couple and practices on the West Coast. The final speaker delivered an intriguing uptake on "Hospital Administration- friend or foe?" Renato Suntay is the Chief Financial Officer at Kaleida Health System in the state of New York.



Santa Mesa Chronicles

By Janice M. Abadilla, M.D.



3 Points from PAASCU

It was a good omen for the school year 2004 – 2005. The Philippine Accrediting Agency of Schools, Colleges and Universities (PAASCU) granted accreditation to each of the three colleges of UERMMMCC. The College of Nursing, the first unit in the university to be accredited in 1999, received its Level III accreditation. The College of Medicine, got a Level II accreditation, which made it the first private medical school to be accredited by PAASCU. The College of Physical Therapy had just submitted itself to PAASCU for evaluation, which qualified it to Level I accreditation.

To be recognized by a local and internationally recognized accrediting body was an important moral booster for the university. It was as important as an M.D. at the end of a doctor's name. Well, aside from the prestige, it was nice to see the JMC floors squeaky clean, the buildings repainted, the elevator finally getting fixed, new TV's and VCD players in the Medical Ward PD rooms, computerized card catalogue in the library, etc. How we wish PAASCU could visit us every day!

UERM Med Students: Endangered Species?

The Anatomy Amphitheater seems a bit spacious these days. From 10 members, clustering of tutorial groups had gone down to 7 or 8. Even a whole batch of med students can fit inside the College Auditorium. If my presumption is correct, these are the signs of vanishing population of UERM Medical Students.

According to the June 2004 enrollment statistics from the MISD, the number of students enrolling in UERMMMCC declined by 8.46% over the last five years from AY 2000-01 to 2004-05. First year students from the College of Medicine dwindle at the rate of 11.5% each year. This school year, 191 regular freshmen students are enrolled at the College of Medicine, an outcome 40% lower than the number of enrollees 5 years ago. In the College of Physical Therapy, freshman enrollees has gone down from 121 in year 2002 to 40 this year. On the contrary, 321 first year students are enrolled at the College of Nursing, which is almost four times the number of enrollees in year 2000.

Perhaps the economic crisis has affected all the sectors of the country. Who will think of throwing huge sums of money over a medical degree which demands your entire lifetime to achieve? No way Jose! Why suffer when you can earn twice as much as a nurse in the US! Or maybe by being an entrepreneur can save your ass from paying taxes. Chances are, doctors and medical students left in the Philippines stick to being the real life heroes. They are the kind of people that the country needs in its desperate situation. And they are indeed endangered species.

True-Blooded UERM Students: Students Who Rock!

Who said med students don't have social lives?

Every year, Filae Aesculapii and Ex Orbe Medicus sponsor the Freshmen night, a night-long celebration of singing, dancing, and live bands to welcome the first year medical students. This year, it has not only been a success, but it has pushed to the extreme. Filae Aesculapii, together with the Association of Philippine Medical Colleges – Student Network (APMC-SN) hosted the "Contagious" an inter-med school beauty pageant held in Static Bar, Tomas Morato, QC last September 30, 2004. The event was participated by several medical schools in the NCR, namely, De La Salle, FEU-NRMF, MCU, Jonelta Foundation, San Beda, St. Luke's, UP, UST, and of course, UERMMMCC. It was an evening of beauty, wit, and charm as men and women strutted their way on the ramp, the more adventurous males stripped their shirts and bared their well-sculpted body. It was also a cool way to strengthen the school spirit as everybody cheered for their own male and female delegates. The emergent winners were both from St. Luke's Medical College.

On another hand, the fraternities, sororities, and other organizations from the College of Medicine continues to offer different avenues for the student's social activities. Mu Lambda and APO sponsors the women's volleyball and men's basketball tournament respectively.

Right now, the athletes of UERMMMCC are preparing for the annual Inter-Med School Sports Fest to take place in November. Last year, UERM bagged the 3rd place for the whole event. Let's hope our athletes bring another bacon, or more medals this time.

The Big Irony

The whole community of UERMMMCC rejoiced as its very own Karen L. Nielsen topped the August 2004 Physician Licensure Examination. However, not everyone was happy, for the university got only a 56% passing rate. The national passing rate was 51%.

In the August 2004 PT Board examination, Roma Kristel R. Tingungco and Rhenand A. Mendoza got the 8th and 13th place respectively. The UERM passing percentage was 73%. Despite a fair performance by the school, the national passing rate was barely 29.65%.

Meanwhile, 52 out of 53 graduates from the College of Nursing passed the Nursing Board Examination last June 20, 2004, placing them into the second highest position among the ranking of nursing schools with examinees below 60.

TOSP Awards

On Friday, October 22, 2004, the Ten Outstanding Students of the Philippines (TOSP) for 2004 awarding ceremony was held at the Ceremonial Hall of the Malacanang Palace. One of the thirty finalists who were honored during the ceremony was 2004 UERM graduate, Dr. Vanessa Christine Y. Lacuesta. She graduated Cum laude from the College of Medicine last April. It is the first time that a UERM graduate made it to the top 30 of this competition. Candidates undergo a rigorous national screening process- of 367 nominees from all over the country, 30 were selected and finally, the ten outstanding students of the Philippines were picked. The UERM also received a Certificate of Recognition.

The chairman of the RFM Foundation, Mr. Jose Concepcion, Jr., (principal organizer of the award together with the Commission on Higher Education CHED) considers TOSP as "the laboratory of leaders" From its launching in 1961, it has produced outstanding leaders in government and civil society, in business, academe and even in the religious sector.

Banez Beats Manlapaz for President-Elect in Controversial Election

By Samuel A. Piga, M.D.

Dr. Edgar Banez, '76, a Los Angeles internist and former president of the alumni association's Southern California Chapter, edged out Dr. Irene Ibanez Manlapaz, '75, an Alexandria, Louisiana pathologist and current executive director, for president-elect at the just concluded national alumni convention and reunion in Chicago on August 7th. Elected with him were: Drs. Susan Suntay Perez, '77 as reelected executive vice-president; Dekiam Ong, '67 secretary; and Sonia Rico Todd, '77 as reelected treasurer.

Banez, originally nominated by the nominating committee for vice-president under a slate headed by Manlapaz for president-elect, acceded to a nomination from the floor pitting him instead against the latter for the ballot's top position.

What transpired was a spirited contest egged on by their respective supporters who packed the convention hall to SRO. There were reports of intense political discussions and alignments among different classes the night before that drove nearly everyone to come early for the last convention day's general assembly.

In her executive director's report which some considered as her campaign speech, Manlapaz laid out a vision for the alumni association backed up by facts and figures. Banez for his part promised to continue the onward march of the association toward an inclusive and viable organization.

The tally, done by the convassers headed by Dr. Conrad Miranda, IV, '67, was the closest in association history: Banez by just 3 votes. Shortly after the proclamation of the winners by the Nomination & Election Committee Chairman Dr. Renato Querubin, the oath of office was administered by Dean Georgina T. Paredes as half of the audience had left.

The simple swearing in and the calm that characterized the rest of the day's business deliberations seemed anticlimactic. What was to come was 8 weeks of controversy over the conduct and result of the election. On August 8th, a formal protest was filed by Dr. Debbie Ames Bobila, '73, a supporter of Manlapaz alleging electioneering and voting irregularities and demanding nullification of the results and a repeat election.

For the next 3 weeks, new President Dr. Manny Blas, '67, investigated these allegations and concluded in a report approved by the Executive Council on August 28th that although there might have been electioneering, the alleged irregularities had been "fully explained" and did not constitute a failure of the election process to warrant throwing out the result and calling for a new vote. The Council's decision triggered the resignation of a few lifetime members.

Blas, however, admitted that reforms were needed and vowed to institute them during his term. He then asked the standing Committee on Constitution & By-Laws to draft a proposal for consideration by the Executive Council and ratification by the General Assembly in time for the next national election in 2006. He promptly appointed Drs. Debbie Bobila as chairperson, and Noel Relej, Rene Querubin, and Ruby Cecilio as members of the committee.

In a telephone interview in late September, Dr. Banez accepted the Council's decision and expressed the desire to reach out to all alumni. For her part, Dr. Manlapaz, in an email to all alumni, also accepted the same and looked forward to a successful Houston convention next year and the achievement of the funding goal of her pet project as executive director, the Drug Assistance Program for the UERMMH training hospital.

*****AUTO**MIXED AADC 530
UNUM
SAMUEL A. PIGA MD
3104 TREEHOUSE LN
PLANO TX 75023-7709

Presorted Standard
US Postage
PAID
Permit #1
Marshfield, WI

the Alumni Newsletter
1414 N. Broadway • Marshfield, WI 54449
Email: vermalumnnewsletter@yahoo.com

