



# The Table Top

The Official Publication of the  
Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons on the Philippines  
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*MW Napoleon A. Soriano, Grand Master (5th from right, front row), and RW Eugenio S. Labitoria, DGM (4th from left, front row) with Masonic dignitaries in Guam together with Several Ladies of Masons.*



MW Nap Soriano addresses assembly during the 17th PMAAI Annual Convention.

The GM and his entourage with Fil-AM brethren inside lodge hall.



Our Grand Master is received into lodge hall.

MW Soriano and party with US brethren



Another photo of the GM and his party with US brethren.

MW Soriano and RW Labitoria with Guam dignitaries and several ladies and a cute little girl.



RW Doming Chua (2nd from left) and MW Soriano (1st from right) with some Chinese brethren.



Four Masonic "giants" in Guam visit.



A scene during fraternal luncheon in Taiwan.

*BEHOLD, HOW GOOD AND HOW PLEASANT IT IS FOR BROTHERS OF DIFFERENT JURISDICTIONS TO DWELL TOGETHER IN UNITY!*

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**THE CABLETOW** is a bimonthly publication of the Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines. **Main Office:** Plaridel Masonic Temple, San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila, D2801, Philippines.

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## Our Cover

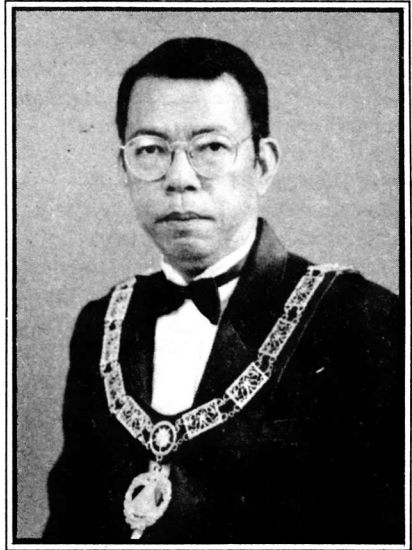
The front, inner front and back covers show our Grand Lodge's thrust to strengthen its ties with its overseas Lodges, with the Grand Lodge of China (with it gave birth to), and with Grand Lodges in the USA as well as with the Philippine Masonic Association of America Inc. (PMAAI). How good and how pleasant it is for brethren from the Philippines to dwell together in unity with brethren overseas and in foreign jurisdictions!

The inner back cover is a paid advertisement. Other interested brethren may also advertise in this publication.

*From the Grand Oriental Chair*

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**MID-YEAR  
REPORT**



**On Information, Education,  
Communication**

**Open-book governance – monthly updates from the Grand Master; suggestion box.** I have, so far, posted on our Website six Monthly Grand Master's Reports. I will also post this report on our Website. These and other communications posted on our Website should keep you posted and guide you for your reactions.

Brethren have coursed their suggestions through the post, through the Internet, or during my official visits of Blue Lodges, Masonic Districts and even Regions. I have invariably recommended to the brethren that they repackage their suggestions into resolutions and course these through our official channels.

**Use of E-mail on news about important Masonic activities.** News tidbits have started to circulate through our Website, and we have coursed our edicts and circulars through E-mail, thereby cutting on expenses for printing and postage. These have been made possible through our Website and through the Yahoo Group System. Our new system enables Masonic Districts, Blue Lodges, Appendant Bodies and Orders, and even individual Brothers to hook in and download news material, edicts and circulars.

**Cabletow section for PGMs.** I must admit that there has been no submission yet. But MW Reynold S. Fajardo, PGM, GMH, our beloved Grand Secretary, has promised our Editor-in-Chief, VW Flor R. Nicolas, several interesting articles for publication in **The Cabletow**. Besides, our PGMs are increasingly sharing their wisdom in district and regional conventions.

**Conferral team.** Many of the brethren composing the conferral team I had wanted to form got caught up with busy schedules, so that I decided not to pursue this project anymore. My decision was also influenced by the observation that there are enough brethren in the various Masonic Districts who can take the lead in the proper execution of our conferrals.

**Seminar/Training for Masonic leaders.** Our Senior Grand Lecturer, VW Ruperto S. Sangalang, and his instructors' team conducted a seminar-training for DDGMs, JGLs, GLIs and GLOs at the Cavite State University in Indang, Cavite last Nov. 4. The seminar-training revolved around the approved IMES curriculum, which had a run-through in an earlier IMES seminar for officers of M.D. Nos. 9 and 11.

I have suggested to officers of Blue Lodges and Masonic Districts that they pay more attention to Lodge Management, especially now that Lodge officers have been elected and the transfer of command will soon take place.

**Short-form closing, multi-Lodge installation.** I have tasked selected brethren to study these matters and to report to me the results of their study in due time.

**Apron for every MM.** Last May 7, I issued Edict No. 204 requiring all Master Masons in our jurisdiction to wear their own aprons during meetings and other Masonic affairs, except on occasions where the white apron is specifically required. This edict took effect last Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. It is posted on our Website, too.

Blue Lodges should provide each new initiate an apron of his own. They may secure standard white aprons at the Grand Lodge for P231 per apron.

**Other actions not covered by my published program.** The Corporate Board, in its June 6, 2001 meeting, created a Special Committee, chaired by MW Raymundo N. Beltran, PGM, the task of which is to look into the so-called "**unauthorized bank account**" at the Traders Royal Bank. This committee will submit a report to me in due time.

I also created a **5-Year Development Program Committee**, chaired by our Deputy Grand Master, RW Eugenio S. Labitoria.

We have, moreover, started to issue out a **new plastic ID-Dues Card**, which will be good for three years. With the magnetic strip at its back, the card can be used to access the computer data bank of the Grand Lodge, and it can be converted to a Privilege Card later on as we negotiate on things of financial value with patron companies.

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## On Organization Management

**Delegation of functions.** Last May 7, I issued Edict No. 203 providing specific functions for the DGM, the SGW and JGW by amending Part I, Article X and Article XI of the Constitution of our Grand Lodge, otherwise known as the Masonic Law Book (Revised 1994). We have also posted this Edict on our Website.

Pursuant to this edict, our Grand Lights have been attending to their areas of responsibility with earnest – the DGM for Luzon, the SGW for the Visayas, and the JGW for Mindanao and Sulu.

Of course, as Grand Master, I look into all these areas, especially when my presence is required, as in District or Multi-District Conventions.

**More active BGP.** Last May 17, I called a joint meeting of the Corporate Board and the Board for General Purposes to thresh out issues attendant to the turn-over of our Masonic leaderships.

I also issued Edict No. 206, which encourages our PGMs to be more actively involved in Grand Lodge affairs. The edict amended Part I, Article XIV of the Constitution of our Grand Lodge.

**Rationalization of GLP Office policies and procedures.** Last May 2, I met with all GLP staff and informed them about the intended rationalization of operations at the GLP.

I also set up the Management Audit Committee and the Committee on Accounts. The latter is on close watch over the GLP's financial transactions. Both committees have helped me in tackling immediate concerns, and they are drawing up sound and appropriate policies for many concerns in GLP procedures and work where no written guidelines are available.

**Computerization.** The Committee on Computerization has effected needed adjustments for more effective and efficient management. We also run to members of this committee whenever we encounter problems with our hardware and software. Besides, this committee has clarified roles, procedures and policies as to the handling of our database to safeguard information and deliver information service when required.

**Reconstruction of burnt PMT.** In its Nov. 23, 2001 meeting, the Building Committee, chaired by MW Enrique Locsin, PGM, decided to move ahead with the rehabilitation of the burnt Plaridel Masonic Temple.

**Other actions outside of my published program.** We informed the brethren and Lodges, through Circular No. 5, that those interested could get back issues of *The Cabletow* at the Grand Lodge free of charge, and brethren and Lodges responded accordingly.

We also disposed of the old, irreparable water tank and replaced it with a new one through the bid-winning contractor company, which is, by the way, not owned by a Brother Mason.

The new dormitory on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the GLP main building has been availed of by transient brethren. It can accommodate up to 20 lodgers at P100 per person per day.

I want to cite, at this juncture, the BJ Relief Committee, chaired by VW Mawi Lazaro, DDGM-9, for donating the beds, cushions, pillows and sheets, as well as Bros. Roy Tan and Sammy Laus of Taga-Ilog Lodge No. 79 for bankrolling the repairs to the dorm and the Grand Master's Room.

I, furthermore, designated RW Eugene Labitoria, DGM, as Acting Grand Master for the duration of my trip to and from the United States. During that time, one of the official acts of our Acting Grand Master was to refer the issue of the position of Administrative Assistant to the Grand Master to our Management Audit Committee, which recommended, in turn, the dissolution of the position. Consonant with the committee's recommendation, I issued out Edict No. 207 to that effect. This Edict is also posted on our Website.

I created three Trial Commissions, all of which acted with effectiveness, efficiency and dispatch.

Be it known unto you, dear brethren, that we have made some physical adjustments within the Grand Lodge Compound, such as the following:

1. Rearrangement of the PGMs' portraits, as suggested by the PGMs themselves;
2. Relocation of the Masonic Supply Center to the space formerly occupied by the DeMolay office;
3. Setting up of an employees' dining room at the back of the new Masonic Supply Center space;
4. Extending of the Canteen for the brethren to accommodate a billiards table and a pool table for recreation;
5. Completion of a bodega right across the canteen to store our reserve and surplus materials; and
6. A modest landscaping to fence off this recreation and bodega area from the parking lot.

## On Advocacy, Networking, Public Service

**Setting up the MSN.** I have set up the Executive Committee of the Masonic Service Network (MSN), which will serve as the service arm of our Grand Lodge starting this year and which is to be continued by my successors. In my visits to various places, I have done advocacy work for the setting up of the MSN.

The Executive Committee has submitted to my office the basic project material of the MSN. This committee, as I have directed, has submitted to my office the basic project material of the MNS. This is published in this issue of *The Cabletow*. I hope, my brethren, that you will send in to us your comments, reactions and suggestions on, and even your commitment to, the MSN.

**Plaridel Assistance Plan.** This has to be set aside in favor of an honest-to-goodness effort to rehabilitate the Acacia Mutual Aid Society Inc. (AMASI).

**Advocacy in public functions.** In many public functions my party and I have graced, I have stressed the need for more Masonry among us, so that we can be of more service to our communities.

**Relief to victims of natural disasters.** The limited funds notwithstanding, our Grand Lodge was able to extend relief as follows: 100 sack of rice to victims of Mt. Mayon's eruption, 50 sacks to typhoon victims in Pangasinan, and 100 sacks to flood victims at Camiguin.

**USA trip.** My messages during my sojourn in the USA revolved around the affinity of Philippine Masonry to American Masonry, the commitment of Philippine Masonry to be of greater service and relevance to the brethren and the nationalities within our jurisdiction, and our Grand Lodge's readiness to foster higher binds of fraternal friendship and cooperation to raise the practice of Masonry to higher ground. I clarified policies governing Life Membership by Purchase and by Longevity as they relate to brethren in the US. Other issues raised were the rationalization of the system for networking between brethren in the U.S. and our GLP, and the option to print *The Cabletow* in the U.S. for better circulation and distribution.

Our Grand Lodge, through this trip, received a total of 5,725 U.S. dollars – 5,225 in cash and 500 in cheques.

We also received a grant of a 4-year college scholarship program. I have submitted this grant to the Corporate Board for policy formulation and management.

The expenses I incurred amounted to 3,761 U.S. dollars – 2,091 for travel fare and 1,670 as incidental expenses resulting from the Twin Towers disaster. These expenses were, however, kept at the minimum due to the generous accommodation by our brethren belonging to PMAAI-USA and by our American brethren-hosts, to whom I have already sent letters of thanks and gratitude.

## On Finance (Budget vs. Actual Revenue and Expenses)

I would like, at this juncture, to call your attention to the attached financial statement from our Accounting Department (please see Attachment 1 on page 10), which reflects our Revenues and Expenses against the Approved Budget for my term.

I am glad to report to you that up to this time, my administration is moving within the budget as appropriated by the last Ancom. Let us sort this out.

1) **Overall**, for the first six months we have an approved budget of P4,898,000.00. Against it, we have incurred expenses amounting to P4,583,808.00 leaving a total mid-term savings of:

P 314,192.00

2) But these **savings** would have been more because my Administration has had to pay the following:

a. Utilities consumed by the tenants	
Electricity	P 36,257.00
Water	7,722.00
Sub-Total	43,979.00

b. Meralco Billing Adjustment for the Old Plaridel Temple which was not paid by the previous administration	127,086.00
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c. (a) plus (b) amount to	171,065.00
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3) Thus total savings is realistically computed As Items 1 plus c, or a total of	<u>485,257.00</u>
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On the **Revenue Side**, there appears to be a supposed variance of (875,984.00) reflecting the shortfall of actual revenues amounting to P2,424,016.00 against programmed revenues estimated at P3,300,000.00. This is because per capita payments of brethren normally come in at the end of the year right up to ANCOM.

In other words, the supposed variance is hypothetical due to the manner we manage our financials. Because the moment that amount comes in, it would easily obliterate the supposed variance by P574,016.00 if we assume that P1,450,000.00 is debited to the account of my term.

4) Notice again brethren that on the Revenue Side, two factors are noteworthy:

a) A significant factor is the increase in revenues which is more than 100 percent shot up of degree against earlier estimated, or in concrete values, P911,211.00 against P450,000.00. I think this is again a sign that there is reinvigoration in the growth of our fraternity.

b) Another substantial amount is that of "Other Income" which is nothing else than donations from brethren from here and abroad.

5) On the Expense Side, significant savings have accrued as a result of our changing of the guards, literally speaking. The previous arrangement with the security guards would have bled us P430,000.00; the new arrangement cost us only P170,552.00, saving us P259,448.00 of precious brethren money.

Also, the Committee on Computerization saved us P250,000.00 whose values have already been delivered through the voluntary efforts of the brethren in rationalizing our systems.

Moreover, let me call your attention on Expenditure Items no. 7 Postage/Telephone and no. 8 Office Supplies, and notice the lower expenditure against budget. Put together, the savings on items 7 and 8 add up to P51,897.00. There are also savings on personnel time, as Brother Ruben Bautista and his support staff have been spared the burden of printing and packaging and posting.

We have also been able to save P238,724.00 from the budgeted amount for salaries and honoraria, which is also a significant amount.

6) But notice as well that we have overshot our budget for repairs and maintenance, which to a great extent went into the construction of the Dormitory for transient brethren from the provinces and a small amount going into the tidiness of our grounds.

7) Looking ahead to the next half of my term, I anticipate the following:

a) Most of the programmed repairs have been done so I do not foresee any major expense in this regard.

b) While my trips for the first half overshot budget by P 47,365.00, the programmed trips on the second half are well within my budget.

8) Finally, my brethren, I appeal for your early remittance of our per capita assessment so as not to jam the administrative and accounting side of the burden of processing our papers and payments.

For all the figures and efforts that contributed to the foregoing, I thank you all for your support and indulgence.

Concluding Statement

It has been a very busy but fulfilling first half. The above undertakings would not have been done without the massive support of our brethren. Hence, I express my deep gratitude to our brethren and appeal for your continued support to our Grand Lodge.

Fraternally yours,



NAPOLEÓN A. SORIANO  
Grand Master



*"See, therefore, that first controlling your own temper, and governing your own passions, you fit yourself to keep peace and harmony among other men, and especially the brethren. Above all, remember that Masonry is the realm of peace, and that 'among Masons there must be no dissension, but only that noble emulation, which can best work and best agree.'" - Albert Pike, Morals and Dogma, p. 124*



# The Cabletow

Attachment 1

## BUDGET VS ACTUAL REVENUES AND EXPENSES

For the Period May 1 – October 31, 2001

	APPROVED ANNUAL BUDGET	BUDGET 6 MONTHS	ACTUAL 6 MONTHS	VARIANCE
<b>REVENUES</b>				
Per Capita	2,990,000.00	1,450,000.00		( 1,450,000.00 )
Degree Fees	900,000.00	450,000.00	911,211.00	461,211.00
Masonic Sup Sales	1,500,000.00	750,000.00	486,439.00	( 263,561.00 )
Comm. on Consigned Mas. Goods.			95,575.00	95,575.00
Rental Income	400,000.00	200,000.00	293,401.00	93,401.00
Interest Income	300,000.00	150,000.00	102,037.00	( 47,963.00 )
Other Income	600,000.00	300,000.00	535,353.00	235,353.00
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>6,600,000.00</b>	<b>3,300,000.00</b>	<b>2,424,016.00</b>	<b>(875,984.00)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Cost of Masonic				
Supplie Sales	1,071,000.00	535,500.00	286,587.00	248,913.00
Sal. & Hon.	2,800,000.00	1,400,000.00	1,161,276.00	238,724.00
SSS/Philhealth/ Pag-ibig	150,000.00	75,000.00	63,965.00	11,035.00
Travel/Transpo.	600,000.00	300,000.00	347,365.00	( 47,365.00 )
Repairs & Maint.	600,000.00	300,000.00	433,986.00	(133,986.00 )
Taxes & Licenses	100,000.00	50,000.00	61,404.00	(11,404.00 )
Postage/Telephone	450,000.00	225,000.00	210,016.00	14,984.00
Office Supplies	350,000.00	175,000.00	138,087.00	36,913.00
Light & Water	880,000.00	440,000.00	465,187.00	( 25,187.00 )
Audit/Legal/ Other Fees	300,000.00	150,000.00	69,590.00	80,410.00
Security Services	860,000.00	430,000.00	170,552.00	259,448.00
Miscellaneous	400,000.00	200,000.00	113,989.00	86,011.00
Awards/Honors	100,000.00	50,000.00	10,591.00	39,409.00
Insurance	80,000.00	40,000.00	31,537.00	8,463.00
Bank Charges	10,000.00	5,000.00	1,644.00	3,356.00
GM Discretionary	120,000.00	60,000.00	77,058.00	( 17,058.00 )
Provision for Rtrmt	100,000.00	50,000.00		50,000.00
Interest	325,000.00	162,500.00	80,421.00	82,079.00
Computerization	500,000.00	250,000.00		250,000.00
Depreciation			860,553.00	( 860,553.00 )
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>9,796,000.00</b>	<b>4,898,000.00</b>	<b>4,583,808.00</b>	<b>314,192.00</b>

## Editorial Comment

by eF.R.eN, PM (#148)

### THE MISSION OF MASONRY IN THE POSTMODERN AGE

**B**efore it is too late, we should exert effort to prevent the loss of the original aims and objectives of our ancient and honorable Fraternity!

That is the strong admonition of the following paragraphs, which were first printed in the February 1929 issue of the *Queensland Freemason*:

“Three elements are contributing to the degeneration of Freemasonry, and unless the Fraternity can be brought to see the danger ahead, it will not be long until the Masonry of the (founding) fathers will be no more. These elements are (1) a crude endeavor to make Masonry conform to every new fashion; (2) the fact that Lodges are making it their chief business to amuse and entertain; and (3) a feeling that Masons are imparting things which they do not believe and practice.

“Analyse the conditions in your own Lodge and see how far the truth has been misstated above. The tendency of the times is to popularise Masonry and to make it so attractive that candidates will come in by the dozen. Freemasonry is no longer an exclusive society such as existed fifty years ago. The measure of Masonic prosperity is numerical. Each

succeeding Master sets a new record, and thus the grind of degrees continues, to the end that the roll of members is expanded and the treasury enhanced. The practical working of the Fraternity is lost sight of, and no wonder that every new fashion beckons conformity, and the wits are called upon for odd and freakish means of entertainment. We need a new Hiram to draw designs of true Masonry.”

To expand the roll of members and therefore enhance the treasury, Lodges in not a few foreign grand jurisdictions have advocated that Masonry be made more visible through such means as reduced proficiencies, shortened closings, friend-to friend programs, raising dues, one-day conferral of Masonic degrees, and more involvement in the community.

There are even Masonic Bodies which insist that because more than one half of the inhabitants of this planet live in extremely low conditions, similar to, if not worse than, the ones people of two centuries ago lived in, the Masonic

Fraternity ought to dedicate itself to finding solutions to problems plaguing the Third World in particular. They stress the urgency of taking assistance to, as well as collaborating with, this suffering Third World, the Philippines included.

Fine! That is, certainly, a worthwhile and noble endeavor. Masonry, after all, as the late Past Grand Master Raymond E.

Wilmarth put it, "provides its members the opportunity to serve mankind and Masonry in whatever way they can best afford."

We want to stress, however, that the most important work of Masonry is to create in the world a band of men to whom others may look for example and inspiration – men who others will say are men of honor, virtue and charitable feelings; men who others will say are personally righteous, personally responsible, and enlightened as to those things which make for human welfare; men who others will say are possessed of faith, courage, poise, self-confidence and devotion to duty.

Our Lodges must focus their attention and effort on the formation of such men of high quality. They must, therefore, give their members a great dosis of the esoteric content of Masonry particularly during stated meetings. Unfortunately, many Lodges fail to do so. Grand Lodge Inspectors, as well as other leaders of

our Masonic Districts, should see to it that Lodges give Masonic education to their members during Masonic functions, especially stated meetings, so that the esoteric content of Masonry will not get lost. This content is, we are afraid, gradually getting lost.

We are gradually losing sight of the fact that, as W.L. Wilmshurst has stated in

***A crude endeavor to make Masonry conform to every new fashion, the fact that Lodges are making it their chief business to amuse and entertain, and a feeling that Masons are imparting things which they do not believe and practice - these three elements are contributing to the degeneration of Freemasonry.***

his book *The Meaning of Masonry* (pp. 12 - 13), "Masonry was designed to teach self-knowledge much deeper, vaster and more difficult than is popularly

conceived. It is not to be acquired by the formal passage through three or four degrees in as many months; it is a knowledge impossible of full achievement until knowledge of every other kind is laid aside and a difficult path of life long and strenuously pursued that alone fits and leads its followers to its attainment..."

Let us listen to Wilmshurst further. He says, "Masonry means this or it means nothing worth the serious pursuit of thoughtful men...It proclaims the fact that there exists a higher and more secret path of life than that which we normally tread, and that when the outer world and its pursuits and rewards lose their attractiveness for us and prove insufficient to our deeper needs, as sooner or later they will, we are compelled

to turn back upon ourselves, to seek and knock at the door of a world within; and it is upon this inner world, and the path to and through it, that Masonry promises light, charts the way, and indicates the qualifications and conditions of progress. This is the sole aim and intention of Masonry." (*Ibid.*).

The achievement of this aim and intention of Masonry should, therefore, be the focus of our attention and effort – not on merely conducting our monthly stated meeting and having a fellowship social afterwards, not even on carrying out public-service programs that help alleviate the sufferings of the greater masses of our countrymen, who live in relatively lower conditions in the face of the global recession that has worsened our country's economic crisis.

Let us, by all means, continue carrying out our community outreach projects and benevolent works for the benefit of the disadvantaged in Philippine society.

*The most important work of Masonry is to form men of quality - men with influence on the society they live in, bringing to the world out there the unequivocal and fundamental message of Masonry.*

But, brethren, there are a lot of welfare organizations that bring beneficial help to others. Many of these organizations were founded and are being supported by Brother Masons. That is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. We have, however, to go further on. We have to provide our respective experiences, first to our venerable Institution, then to our respective families and professional environments, next to our local and national communities, and finally to the world at large.

Accordingly, we must concentrate our effort on the membership of our Lodges. We must form the members of our Lodges very well, so that they will develop themselves into Masons both in name and by nature. This requires infusing our assemblies, especially stated meetings, with the serum of Masonry's esoteric content. We must assist members of our Lodges to gradually achieve "the noblest purpose of life and the highest duty of a man." These are, according to Brother Albert Pike, in *Morals and Dogma* (pp.854-855), "to strive incessantly and vigorously to win mastery of everything, of that which in him is spiritual and divine, over that which is material and sensual; so that in him also, as in the Universe which God governs, Harmony and Beauty may be the result of a just equilibrium."

But, of course, we must lead by example. We must shun imparting things which we do not believe and practice. We must show to our brethren that we ourselves have internalized and have put into daily practice the symbolisms and allegories of our Craft, particularly the symbolism

and teaching of the Compass and the Square.

We know that for the Apprentice, the points of the Compass are beneath the Square; that for the Fellow-Craft, one is above and one beneath; and that for the Master Mason, both are dominant, and have rule, control and empire over the Square, which is the symbol of the earthly and the material.

But we have to apply that knowledge consistently in daily life. This is difficult to do. There can be no doubt about that. But we have to persist; for, after all, as Brother Albert Pike has put it, "Freemasonry is the subjugation of the Human that is in man by the Divine; the conquest of the Appetites and Passions by the Moral Sense and the Reason; a continual effort, struggle, and warfare of the Spiritual against the Material and Sensual." (*Ibid.*)

Yes, we who occupy responsible positions in our Lodges should lead the members thereof by example. We must also inspire them to learn Masonry's simple lessons of practical morality and sublime teachings of religious philosophy and then to live them in order that the light of those lessons and teachings will so shine before non-Masons that they may desire to seek our fellowship and join in our assemblies.

We can use information technology, the Internet and virtual realities for giving Masonic education to the members of our Lodges – and even members of their, as well as our, families. Armed with adequate Masonic education and information, they will, in turn, help us

*Masonry provides its members the opportunity to serve mankind and Masonry in whatever way they can best afford.*

- MW RAYMOND E. WILMARTH, PGM

educate today's materialistic society. Disseminating Masonic teachings and principles – this is Masonry's outer work.

We recall, at this juncture, the following pointed paragraphs of the paper which Ill. C. Fred Kleinknecht, 33rd degree, Sovereign Grand Commander of the Supreme Council of the A.&A.S.R. of Freemasonry, Southern Jurisdiction, USA, presented during the 44<sup>th</sup> Conference of European Sovereign Grand Commanders held in Istanbul, Turkey on May 23-27, 2001:

"There can be no doubt that our center – our ethical values and our morality – has not kept pace with technical knowledge. This, then, is the mission of Frémasonry in general and of the Scottish Rite in particular in the dynamic environment of the future: **we must hold the center.** (Emphasis added).

"We must communicate the great truths which do not change with faster communication and increased technical knowledge. We must remind men that we are not economic units, nor only

*More important than bringing men to  
Masonry is to bring Masonry to men.*

- LORD KYLIAN

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consumers, nor numbers to be crunched, but that we are men, made in the image of the Deity and charged with His work in the world.

"We must assert that human worth is not measured in dollars but in the dignity of the soul.

"We must teach that honor is better than dishonor; that we, not our genes nor our circumstances, are responsible for our actions and attitudes.

"We must teach that hatred is always wrong, that fear is always destructive, and that those who sell hatred and fear are always evil...."

Freemasonry, Ill. Kleinknecht avers, is uniquely positioned to save the center. Hence, we, its votaries, ought to disseminate the ethical values and the morality which Freemasonry teaches as widely as we can. By doing so, we can influence individuals and even nations to make the right decisions.

Our charities are, we reiterate, of great importance and of benefit to many. But all these are secondary to what we teach because, as Ill. Kleinknecht once more has stated, "by these teachings, we strengthen the center, we give men a vision of the possible, we assure them that they are not alone in their struggle to lead a values-based and productive

life."

Let us, then, take the challenge of disseminating Masonry's ethical values and morality as widely as we can among our fellowmen, especially our countrymen, believing as we do that those values will help us survive in the dynamic environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We should take that challenge because, as Lord Kylian, an eminent English Brother of ours, stated during a Past Masters' meeting in England at the start of the last century, "More important than bringing men to Masonry is to bring Masonry to men."

But before bringing Masonry to men, let us exert a little more effort to give the members of our Lodges, young and old alike, more Masonry and inspire them, by word and deed, to live their Masonry every day, everywhere they go. Then we motivate them to help us in the task of more widely disseminating Masonic values and principles, as well as in that of building up our communities into better places to live in as brothers under the Fatherhood of God.

If we really want our beloved Fraternity to be known by all and sundry as an institution of educational advancement, moral leadership and charitable endeavors, **LET US DO ALL THIS!**

# Proposed MSN Strategic Orientation/Program of the M.W. Grand Lodge of F. & A. M. of the Philippines

### **Intervention Programs by Civil Society at Macro Level**

Let us take a look at the intervention programs which civil society has been undertaking, so that we may the better be enabled to situate our own. The overall idea is for the Craft to carry out its own projects and, when necessary, to engage and collaborate with other groups along the following intervention directions:

1. Pursuing military disengagement and positioning the civil society for monitoring and supervising the armed groups' compliance, including that of the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP).
2. Encouraging and providing favorable conditions for the expansion and consolidation of civil society initiatives; promoting the culture of dialogue and providing support for advocacy along multi-media lines; vigorously fostering understanding among Muslims, Christians and Lumads through communicational mechanisms like organized seminars and forums, reading materials, among others.
3. Facilitating the fleshing out of a new history, one written from the people's perspective, through various communicational forums; facilitating literacy/numeracy programs by civil society structures, as these people's organizations (POs) and non-government organizations (NGOs) have a wealth of experience in providing localities with literacy and numeracy programs.
4. Mobilizing civil society structures for the delivery of immediate relief and, later on, for the administration of rehabilitation programs for those displaced by recent fighting. Let us help out in the movement to grant civil society organizations authority to man disaster relief centers, which can simultaneously serve as frontline health care centers. This is important especially since health is among the top concerns in the war-torn depressed areas. The GRP can be made to pay for the necessary medical personnel to man these centers and for the medical equipment and supplies.
5. Generating and channeling support for the socio-economic projects of the civil society in the different localities. The orientation here is for poverty alleviation and job creation. Among the more attractive and compelling lines in the development of cooperatives which can go on supporting entrepreneurial ventures. Support can, for example, be generated for the cooperative initiatives of the vendors of the public markets in small town centers where there is paucity

of government support.

6. Mobilizing and organizing civil society infrastructures, even independent armed groups, for environmental protection and management. Almost all of our hinterlands have been ravaged by big logging firms; consequently, invaluable watersheds have been denuded and repositories of bio-diversity destroyed. The loud call is for their rehabilitation and responsible management, and this can also provide immediate jobs, aside from re-establishing the once rich resource so important for sustainable development.

7. We shall, in all the above-mentioned engagements, organize and prepare our Masonic machinery, including the Appendant Bodies, through value-enrichment, development communications and leadership training seminars. Through these, we shall propagate our cardinal virtues and revered tenets even as we equip our forces with appropriate skills for the anticipated interventions for a new morality.

Striving for unity along standpoint, perspective and strategy is quite a formidable challenge. While our attitudes constitute the frontline manifestations, the core lies in the breadth of shared information or knowledge. The formula, Familiarity plus Comfort Breeds Acceptability, enjoys relevance in this regard. Thus we shall give a high premium to acquiring relevant and significant information about the state of the system and the different groups' worldviews, analyses, scenarios and

commitments concerning short-term and long-term issues. Dialogues and conferences shall be programmed to add up to a process of continuing sharing of information. We shall optimize the use of *The Cabletow* and introduce a Peace and Development Bulletin for this purpose. Likewise, our web site will be turned to better account.

And to mitigate the crisis, we shall enhance our Trust, Resources and Systems that we may be better enabled to conduct Relief and Rehabilitation Work in the affected communities. We shall mobilize brother Masons, their wives, brothers and daughters, whether through the Blue Lodges, the Appendant Bodies or simply by informal liaison and invitations. Conducting thus will enhance our capabilities at Team Learning, not only among us, but also in collaboration with other groups, as we proceed to suspend assumptions and think together to tackle problems and chart out the future. We shall build up an organizational capability that can handle a significant level of relief funds and other resources, for victims of both political strife and natural disasters.

## **The Location and Logic of the MSN**

Given such imperatives, our appreciation of and approaches toward the issues would, however, have to be rationalized. In other words, we, as brethren, should together and in interaction with the rest of society move along a logical level of approach like this continuum: Diagnosis; Scenario-Making and Creativity; Judgment; Planning; and Action. Our individual and group behavior, whether

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in communication within or without, i.e., in interaction with the other sectors of society, will definitely vary by choice.

But whether we act, variably or invariably, as contributors, or collaborators, or communicators, or simply as challengers, we cannot escape the fact that we belong to civil society, whose growing clamor for a radical rethink of society's assumptions and tenets is slowly but surely moving towards our fraternity's time-honored values - equality, liberty, justice, brotherly love, relief, truth and morality.

Mitigating the effects/impact of the crisis seems to be the most urgent call of the day in the face of the continuing war, how to attend to the dead and their kin and to those who barely cheated death and are significantly dislocated. Our fraternity may have to prepare for harder times before we can hope that they get any better. While the refugees are at center stage, those hit by natural disasters are usually not far behind. Diagnosing the crisis should be raised to a higher level.

The Masonic fraternity should dramatically upgrade its technologies to develop our capacity to see and know the big problems. Systems thinking may have to be stressed to enable us to sort out the larger whole. We have to continuously review our vision to ensure that it breeds a culture progressively enhancing our values, goals and missions. Let us take a closer look at which of these our forefather brothers fostered strongly and factor them in into

what we intend to pursue, without losing sight of how much the politico-economic-technological templates had shifted over the last century.

An enlightened and upright citizenry deciding at different crossroads and stations about where to lead this country deserves the respect and support of the Masonic community. But only when we shall have been able to bring back and nurture a culture of learning molded in the Masonic tradition where future reliable leaders are developed as a matter of course can we ever rest content for a job well done.

Once we, as Masons, shall have adequately propagated the virtues and tenets of our Fraternity, society's judgment and decision will significantly reflect our cardinals and by then, generations of brethren past us can probably afford to sit back with folded arms. For the time being, however, we do not have that luxury. Our dream as yet is towards how good it is for the brethren to dwell together in unity as we inescapably address social problems.

The idea then is to provide some organizational form, aside from our fraternal formations, through which our energies as Masons, plus those of our kin and of the Appendant Bodies, can be channeled towards worthy undertakings as we engage with other sectors of society with more intensity, breadth and scope.

Hence, our relief network beginning this

year, the Masonic Service Network (MSN). The Network's Center is to be based right at the Grand Lodge Compound on 1440 San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila.

The VISION of the MSN is a rejuvenated PHILIPPINES with all-round progress, religious tolerance and harmony among its different ethno-linguistic nationalities.

To accomplish such vision, the Network would commit itself to the following MISSION :

1. Harness the Masonic Morality and Legacy and advocate these among society;
2. Impact on society via a broadened range of concerted Masonic involvement with the people's search for a reliable social order, peace, security, and prosperity, and;
3. Influence and nurture a new leadership, starting with ourselves and the Appendant Bodies, and proceeding among those within our reach to the potential leaders of society, molded in the Masonic legacy.

The long view is for the MSN to approximate the famous RESCUE 9-1-1 and extend it for advocacy and action programs for peace and development.

The pragmatic approach would be to address the burning issues of the day by folding up our sleeves and getting

down to work at once. In due time we shall be able to rationalize and improve our interventions.

## Organization of Implementation

At the Grand Lodge premises, we shall establish at San Marcelino the Center of our nation-wide Masonic Service Network and we shall establish affiliated units at these priority areas:

**Luzon:** Laoag; Vigan; San Fernando; Dagupan; Tuguegarao; Santiago; Bayombong; Baguio; Cabanatuan; San Fernando, Pampanga; Malolos; Olongapo; Balanga; Tarlac; Quezon City; Makati City; Lucena City; San Pablo; Batangas City; Calapan; Naga; Legaspi City; Puerto Princesa (23)

**Visayas:** Catarman; Borongan; Catbalogan; Tacloban; Cebu; Tagbilaran; Bacolod~ Dumaguete; Iloilo~ Roxas (10)

**Mindanao-Sulu:** Surigao City; Tandag; San Francisco; Butuan; Cagayan de Oro; Malaybalay; Iligan; Ozamis; Oroqueta; Dipolog~ Pagadian; Zamboanga City; Basilan; Jolo; Tawi-tawi; Tagum; Mati; Davao City; Gensan; Marbel; Tacurong; Cotabato City; Kidapawan (23)

As this infrastructure cannot obviously be fully established within the short term of one Grand Master, we shall ask for the commitment of at least the three incoming Grand Masters. The proposed Organigram or Chain of Command is as follows:

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Annual Communications

|

**Grand Master**

|

Executive Committee for the MSN

|

Secretariat/Coordinator

|

Area Service Centers (56)

## Proposed Program

MW Napoleon A. Soriano, our Grand Master, has taken the lead in some advocacy for the MSN in his provincial sorties. Priority is at uniting the brethren around the proposed MSN and motivating them towards organizing their own counterparts. Priority is also placed at some decisive partnership arrangements and significant resource generation. (The 3-year program will be submitted to the DGM, SGW and JGW for their concurrence and inputs. The draft program as presented hereunder will be given the necessary trimmings and inputs.)

### Institution-building

- Setting up of Policy-Making, Executive Body
- Formulation of Operational Policies/Procedures
- Setting up of Office, Web Site
- Negotiations with Prospective Partners (PLDT/SMART)
- Laying Internal Communicational Infrastructure
- Appointment of Secretariat and Coordinator
- Networking with like-minded organizations

Resource Build Up at National Office (equipment, materials, funds)

Orientation/communicational efforts about the MSN among the brethren and the Appendant Bodies;

Brochure and other materials as needed

Edict on MSN

Orientation Paper

Orientation Seminars/Workshops

DDGMs, Territorial Brother Linkmen Appendant Bodies

Masonic Service Network Communication (Quarterly)

Fine-tuning of *The Cabletow* to accommodate MSN concerns

Advocacy/Networking special projects (Rites of Entry, Katipunan Play at JAS Hall, GLP)

Setting up of Project Committee

Preliminaries Start Up (Script, Director, Production Manager)

Rehearsals and Performances

Manila series, then tour to Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog

Resource Generation, here and abroad

National Level (Govt, Funding Agencies, NCR Lodges, Philanthropists) Provinces

International (USA-Canada, Guam, Okinawa, Japan, Korea, Taipei, etc)

Actual Relief Work

Drawing up of Operational Policy Paper

Linking up (MOAs) with DSWD, DILG and DENR

Allocation of storerooms, bodegas for relief goods

Organization of Relief Task Forces; Test Runs

## **Postscript, Other Possible Implications for the Fraternity**

The last decade or so, the Fraternity has been at a standstill. Regular membership is at sixteen thousand. Roughly 20 per cent of us are already in longevity status. New Master Masons run up to 600 per year the last several years. That is roughly just 2 new members per lodge on the average. Annual Grand Lodge operations have registered budget deficits for more than a decade now. Even the frequency of *The Cabletow* has suffered as a result.

The Legaspi Ancom underscored the very sorry state of the level of trust, resources and systems at the Grand Lodge. It has been the culmination of the gradual erosion of trust brethren hold for the one seated at the Grand Oriental Chair. Part of this must have been the result of rampant electioneering which has marred the Ancoms since the mid-80s.

The gradual erosion of trust, that trust between the top and the rank-and-file, was not helped any by the less and less communication coming from the Grand Master. So was the factor of *The Cabletow* not coming out on time. This makes us realize that it is not that easy indeed to gain back the unity of the brethren under a solid, unified command.

Meanwhile, the continuing absence of a long-term plan and even for now that of a 5-year plan does not augur well for the desired restoration of trust for the Grand Master. Without a programme unifying the brethren and service guideposts to

lead the action of the broad rank-and-file membership, there is that lurking tendency for the brethren to stay aloof from the social realities as they wallow away their time at boisterous and egocentric fellowships, which earn more the ire of waiters and waitresses than their invaluable respect. A package of intervention programs would be necessary and the MSN could be just one of them.

For one Vision-Mission-Goal (VMG) setting would have to be prioritised. Recently, we learned specifically from the TRB account a very important lesson - that information-sharing, the sharing of information and knowledge on issues for decision-making is a hallmark in all democratic societies and organizations, especially in ours. Moreover, when this hallmark is violated, trust is eaten up and results in a turnaround for both systems and resources. Thus the administrative principle of the current Grand Master in so far as management is concerned - open-book governance.

Thus, VMG exercises must encompass the whole organization and there should be transparency in decision-making. And there should be accountability for errors, weaknesses and abuse. However, foremost in these exercises is the manifestation that the VMG process is being generated to address not only the concrete needs of the members, as spelled out in our Masonic Law Book, and that they are being made to participate in the process. But the supreme parameter, the ultimate measure, of our VMG will be whether or

not our Fraternity is attuned to the needs of the social and natural environment. Relevance is the indisputable catchword whether we like it or not. Relevance to country, our neighbours, our kin, ourselves, and to the GAOTU.

1. For our country, the MSN could give us the opportunity to practice those great moral virtues taught to us in blue lodge in accordance with the actualities of our environment. Let us therefore adapt our tenets to the needs of the less fortunate in society, especially at times when they need help most.

By integrating our relief efforts through the MSN we can demonstrate in a nationally- coordinated manner the practice of relief. Thus through this network, Masons can enhance their capacity and powers to extend relief, with breadth, depth, scope and impact.

At this time of imminent disaster, the MSN could generate new ideas among the brethren and can possibly offer society new paradigms which can be decisively helpful to mobilize the nation along new strategies for recovery.

2. For our brethren, ourselves, the MSN provides the mechanism for brotherly love and relief in a more efficient and effective way. There is definitely more depth, breadth and scope in the manner each of us can seek assistance and in assisting brethren in distress.

Through the MSN brethren can be better informed about the country's realities. It then becomes easier for us to recognize

the needs and imperatives of our nation. By these needs, there can be more realization among us about the need to adjust our lifestyles and be more in conformity with the signs of the times. More importantly, through the dynamics generated by the MSN there can be developed the atmosphere in different areas where brethren acquire a strong sense of mission in the service of society. Thus, the enhanced cultivation of moral character among the brethren, leading us all to possibly the kind of happiness that will have more prosperity, wisdom, strength and beauty.

Through the MSN brethren can individually and collectively generate interpersonal, informational, procedural, transactional, financial, aesthetic values which would otherwise be more difficult to obtain. Thus brethren would have more opportunities to improve their intellectual, emotional and social abilities.

Chances are there would be the generation of more morality within the Fraternity as we search for how better still we can be attuned to the environment around us. There should be more pressure among our brethren to develop their morals, lest we all drift into indifference and alienation from the other sectors of society and then from one another.

3. For our kin and neighbours, the MSN can likewise provide them the same interpersonal, informational, procedural, transactional, financial and aesthetic values which otherwise they could not ever imagine. Their increasing knowledge

of the obtaining crisis situations can spur them to help out and sacrifice more for the downtrodden.

Through the MSN there could be some small movement within families and communities to render more relief and service for the sake of others. This commitment for others provides conditions to develop warm and firm human relationships. This could offer a turnaround from what has been accustomed to as a society that has deteriorated from a close one, "I-Thou," to an indifferent one, "I-It." A turnaround from an impersonal society to one where each other values the development of relationships with those in need and with one another.

Especially for our adolescent kids, and the Job's Daughters, the Rainbow Girls and the DeMolays, who by their ages have a very strong need to fulfil themselves, the MSN could be just the vehicle for that. This is the period when they search for their social role and are thus looking for the kind of values and world-views which can be trusted and to which they can commit themselves.

At least with the MSN at hand, we, whom they look up to, can now offer them the option of being affirmative in relation to themselves and others and of being with more empathy with regard to others; joys and sorrows, a good breeding for them to contribute to society. Should they be left to their own resources, the environment would likely push them to become more attached to themselves and their own wilful ways.

4. God surely would be extremely happy should the Masons set up and bring to full fruition the MSN. It could be the local adaptation of the famed RESCUE 911 of the USA. Why?

Our Masonic obligations, tenets and working tools dictate upon us to acquire such qualities as sympathy, kindness, self-restraint, prudence, fortitude, temperance, as well as traits valued high in public morality.

For one, by appreciating the woes of mankind, brethren may be enabled to look at themselves and have more empathy with "the least of our brethren". Thus, more and more exposure to the ills and needs of society can propel brethren to more and more give themselves away for the sake of others. Brethren through empathy and sharing may then have less in life but they may have more in everything else that is moral.

For another, through our progressive development education side by side with relief and rehabilitation work, brethren and even friends and volunteers may have more opportunities to renounce their petty self-interests and be able to master in themselves their potentials for benevolence in life, which promise more peace of mind and happiness.

For a third, such opportunities to help others that would be generated through the MSN can instill among brethren, our kin and friends, the precedence of duty over personal rights, that of putting responsibilities for others before personal

# The Cabletow

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convenience and rights. Such practices could develop our individual character further and can endow us with qualities that breed happiness along what we have been taught as that level of time to some place so esteemed by our rituals.

For a fourth, with our involvement in deeper service, we can virtually pay our moral debts to our heroic brethren forefathers who had so much good and high dreams for all of us. We can be better enabled to unite with their upright spirits worthy of emulation. We are thus helping the GAOTU in creating and nourishing an environment that accommodates the welfare of all and

not just that of a few.

And finally, should many of us through the MSN and its by-products be able to free ourselves from selfishness, chances are it would become contagious, because by tradition, we Masons hold fellowships untiringly; thus, the probability that those who will have advanced along this travel can be models for emulation and can possibly lead the way. And light up the way even more. Then there could be enhanced the already illumined road where all worthy Masons have gone in all ages before us. A flight from darkness to light, indeed!

◆ Masonry is action, and not inertness. It requires its Initiates to *WORK*, actively and earnestly, for the benefit of their brethren, their country and mankind. It is the patron of the oppressed, as it is the comforter and consoler of the unfortunate and wretched. ... It is the advocate of the common people in those things which concern the best interest of mankind. It hates insolent power and impudent usurpation. It pities the poor, the sorrowing, the disconsolate; it endeavors to raise and improve the ignorant, the sunken, and the degraded.

-- Albert Pike, *MORALS AND DOGMA*, p. 152.

◆ Masonry cannot in our age forsake the broad way of life. She must journey on in the open street, appear in the crowded square, and teach men by her deeds, her life more eloquent than any lips. -- *Ibid.*, p. 163.

## Proposed Grand Master's Program for MY 2002-2003

**VISION** : Fraternity relevant to brethren and the community.

### **MISSION**

1. Enhance Masonic Education for Justice and Service.
2. Rationalize structures for service to brethren, their kin and the public.
3. Strengthen Masonic Leadership at the District/Lodge levels.

**THEME** : Harmony through Justice and Service

### **PROGRAM**

#### **In the Field of Information, Education and Communication**

- ◆ Open-book Governance
- ◆ CABLETOW Thrust: Truth, Justice, Relief and Service
- ◆ Seminar for DDGMs/JGLs/DGLs/GLOs on Leadership & Service
- ◆ District Conventions for 5-Year Planning
- ◆ District Bulletins for Generation of Information and Aesthetic Values
- ◆ Forums/Seminars of Lodge Management.

#### **In the Field of Organization Management**

- ◆ Consolidation of Corporate Board
- ◆ Reconstruction of the Old Plaridel Temple Building
- ◆ Generation of Transactional Values through our I.D. System
- ◆ Continuing Rationalization of GLP's Office Policies & Procedures

#### **In the Field of Advocacy, Networking and Public Service**

- ◆ Rehabilitation of ACACIA
- ◆ Publication of Book on Lodges' History
- ◆ Setting up of the Masonic Service Network

# LET'S GIVE MORE ALMS!

by VW Antonio Sarrosa, PDDGM

**O**ur fraternity is always one generation away from extinction!

The brethren who came this way before us avidly studied Masonry and lived its teachings and principles. By so doing, they contributed significantly to transforming this world into a better place to live in. We are the result of their love for and dedication to the Craft.

But, unless we do our share, I am afraid we may be the last generation of Masons. It may sound alarming, but it is plausible. Unless we take the initiative of Masonically educating ourselves, we will not be able to stand up against personalities who malign our organization and answer them with much sense and great depth.

We must know, for instance, how to answer with confidence such questions from our critics or detractors, or even from curious individuals, as the following: (1) Why do you need to belong to a fraternity? (2) Do you have your own bible? (3) Is your fraternity a religion? (4) Does Masonry teach a path of salvation? (5) Why do you advocate and support the separation of church and state? (6) Because you tolerate all religious faiths, are you not promoting the equality of all religions?

To be able to counter the accusations of our critics or detractors, we should, I humbly propose, give **ALMS**, meaning **A Little More System**. Let us give a little more of what we have already been giving to the fraternity. No, we are not asked to spend the money earmarked for our respective families, particularly for the education of our children, but rather, the crumbs on our tables.

If we have already been contributing much time by attending our respective Lodges' stated meetings, it wouldn't hurt us if we give a little more by practicing the proper floor work, by memorizing the ritual until it becomes second nature to us, and by knowing Masonic Protocol, the practice of which is very important in Masonic conventions and assemblies.

If we have already been reading Masonic literature, let us give a little more time to augment our understanding of Masonry, so that we will the better be enabled to disseminate its teachings and principles more widely than before and to defend the Craft from its critics or detractors.

If we have been involved in the affairs of our communities, as well as in the

community outreach projects of our Lodges or Masonic Districts, let us give a little more time - and a little more effort - in promoting the principle of social justice among our countrymen; for, as our late Past Grand Master, MW Conrado F. Benitez, said, the promotion or advocacy of this principle is the Brotherhood of Man in action, and as our Brother Jose Rizal put it, "Masons should not rest so long as the world nurtures a tyrant, so long as there are slaves, so long as there are oppressors. And this work is perhaps the greatest that Masonry has imposed upon herself

and the only one worthy of its universal name."

We have to go beyond how to count what we can get from Masonry. Let us, instead, learn what counts with our membership.

Here is the payoff: If all of us spread the word ALMS around, more and more members will appreciate what our fraternity is all about, and they will mirror this to the people they come in contact with. Then and only then may we rest assured that ours is not the last generation of Masons.

## SHOWING CONCERN FOR THE MENTALLY RETARDED

**O**n January 26, 2002, a week after the installation of the elected and appointed officers of Taga-Ilog Lodge No. 79, 12 brethren led by WM Roy S. Tan and Sis. Susan Tan and Lolit Laus went to Elsie Gaches Village, National Capital Region, located at Alabang, Muntinlupa. There, they fed 73 mentally retarded birthday celebrants for the month of



January and approximately 200 patients inflicted with cerebral palsy were fed with "lugaw". The celebrants welcomed the group with a program consisting of singing and dancing by the patients. Watching those children dance to the tune of "I Had A Dream" really touched our hearts. We felt joy because we were able to make them happy even for a short period of time and we felt sadness because of what they were undergoing. The celebrants also received gift packages from the group consisting of towels, toothbrushes, toothpaste, cologne and powder. We hope that in our little way we were able to share with them God's blessings and make them feel that they are "loved".

# FLAWS IN RITUALISTIC PERFORMANCES

by WB Agustin L. Galang (#2)

**Note:** This "treatise" by WB Galang is reprinted for reactions from our Grand Lecturers or the Committee on Rituals and Works. It was printed in *The Cabletow*, February 1966.

**L**ong before the Ritual was printed en masse and made available to all the initiates, instructions were disseminated only from mouth to ear. In a given Lodge, the Lecturer or Instructor was authorized to coach each initiate after the latter had passed a rigid proficiency test. He was the sole keeper of the Ritual, if there was any; it was scarce then. Nobody, except those who had proven themselves well skilled in the Ancient Craft, was allowed to instruct those seeking advancement. The learning process was not only very slow, but it was tedious as well. Perhaps this system was adopted to insure the solemnity, if not the purity, of our ceremonies.

The printing of the Monitors, which are now readily available, facilitated the admirable advancement in proficiency and performance of the brethren, who now actively participate in our ceremonial and degree works. There is no denying the fact that this is praiseworthy. The conservatives, however, still think that these free

enterprises, shorn of close supervision, have rendered the efficacy of our original terminologies, open to substitution, misinterpretation, if not adulteration. In this premise, it is the purpose of this treatise to be of help in a small way by pinpointing some of our obvious deficiencies which affect adversely the authenticity of our otherwise solemn ceremonies.

## 1. "A-men" in Lieu of "Ah-men"

In some curious way, many of us have formed the habit of saying "ah-men" at the close of the prayer. Short sound was given the first syllable as in "article." If it is thus pronounced, it is wrong. The word is "A-men," with long sound given the first syllable, as in "fate" and "late". The pronunciation "Ah-men," with short "A" as in "ark," is permissible only in singing but not in other circumstances.

## 2. "Hele" in Lieu of "Hail"

Another glaring error committed by careless officers during the obligation is the word "hele," which is, more often than not, substituted with "hail." We should be aware of the fact that the old Anglo-Saxon word "hele," which is still used in

our Ritual or Monitor, should not be pronounced "hail." Hail means summon or greet. "Hele" is pronounced with long "e" as in "heel" and "feel"; it means cover up or hide. We do not summon or greet, but we cover up, hide or conceal the secrets of our Fraternity.

### 3. "Impudent" in Lieu of "Impious"

In the second section of the MM degree, when KS was incensed by what the M of Ts had done to the GMHA, we often here brethren playing the role of KS say "...vile and impious wretches thus..." The word handed down was IMPUDENT, which means insolent, while vile means villainous. "Impious" denotes lack of reverence or impiety. "Impudent" is more compatible to "vile" than "impious," which has a religious tint rather than a criminal one.

### 4. "Flown" in Lieu of "Fallen"

As in the above situation, when KS pronounced his sentence to the men of Tyre, the brethren playing the role of KS – frequently say, "Raise up your heads and receive your sentence in accordance with the implications which have fallen from your own mouths..." "Flown" is the past participle of "flow." Words flow from the mouth in the form of sound waves. As they come outside, they are flashed in all directions so as to be heard all around. "Fallen" is the past participle of "fall," which means drop or sink downward. This trifling difference makes "fallen" inappropriate.

Besides, what word is to be used – "implications" or "imprecations"? I tend to believe that the former is more appropriate. Is it?

***The promotion or advocacy of the principle of social justice among our countrymen is the Brotherhood of Man in action.***

**- MW Conrado Benitez**

***Masons should not rest so long as the word nurtures a tyrant, so long as there are slaves, so long as there are oppressors. And this work is perhaps the greatest that Masonry has imposed upon herself and the only one worthy of its universal name.***

**- Brother Jose Rizal**

## Brethren, You Deserve Your Choice...

by VW Ernie A. Uy

**T**he importance and necessity of electing a brother, worthy and truly qualified, for the position of Junior Grand Warden cannot be overemphasized, for in all probability he will become a Grand Master three years later. A Grand Master, whom we have to address as Most Worshipful, must be truly deserving of such title.

In the present electoral process, the roles of the Past Grand Masters and the ELECOM are very critical and influential; however, the Brethren, particularly the voting delegates, still hold the final verdict.

To start with, the subordinate Lodges, by way of resolutions, recommend certain brethren as potential nominees. In some instances, a brother may be recommended simply because he is popular among the members of his Lodge. But is he truly qualified?

From those recommended by the Lodges, the Past Grand Masters would deliberate and nominate five brethren for the position of Junior Grand Warden. Normally, no one should doubt the decision and choice of the PGMs, for they are supposed to be the pillars, the elders, and the epitome of wisdom in our Fraternity.

However, recent incidents show otherwise. Included in the list of nominees are those who have openly disregarded the provisions of the Masonic Law Book banning electioneering, which is an unmasonic

conduct. Nominees who have openly solicited votes through various means. Sad to say but it is unthinkable to believe that the Past Grand Masters are unaware of the rampant electioneering happening around them. They are not that naïve.

Why do the PGMs have to nominate someone who is openly violating the election code? Is the fraternity wanting in truly qualified candidates? Obviously not. Those who are worthy and truly qualified would rather not seek the position and they shy away from ugly politics.

If they want to cleanse the electoral process, the Past Grand Masters can easily do it by simply rejecting those who are involved in electioneering activities. The PGMs have the silent authority to discipline erring candidates. Certainly, the PGMs will not be proud to have someone who bribed his way through among their ranks. In short, the PGMs can make or brake a candidate if they want to, and nobody would dare question that. That is how powerful the PGMs are in our present electoral process.

The ELECOM is empowered, among

other things, to screen, evaluate, and determine the qualifications of the nominees. Although appointed by the Grand Master, the members of the ELECOM should be apolitical and should exercise its powers for the good of the Craft. The ELECOM is a very powerful body and its decision concerning the exercise of its powers and functions shall be final and immediately executory, and there can be no appeal of its decision to either the Grand Lodge or the Grand Master.

Some nominees have openly defied the ban on electioneering acts but we still have to see the ELECOM investigating and exercising its powers over those perpetrators. They are not that naïve, either.

Then comes the moment of truth when the nominees are presented to the ANCOM delegates. The nominees need not even speak about their qualifications and programs. Most of the delegates have already known them beforehand. Some have been going around the jurisdiction and circulating under various pretexts. They have spent thousands or even millions of pesos for transportation, hotel accommodations, registrations,

donations, sponsorships, fellowships, and other, before and during the ANCOM. The big spenders are easily recognized, for their invitations are open and the alleged king-makers and pawns surround them.

The delegates may have enjoyed or not the disguised generousities of the candidates but when it comes to the casting of their ballots, political considerations and strings attached should be set aside. The interest of the Fraternity should be the primary consideration.

Remember that you are electing a future Grand Master. Someone you will have to address as MOST WORSHIPFUL three years later... Someone who will lead the fraternity with dignity and respect. Someone who will not be a disgrace but one who will bring honor to this venerable and ancient institution.

In the final analysis, the decision is still in the hands of the brethren. It is not the PGMs nor the ELECOM who will decide. Remember, Brethren, that if you allow yourselves to be bribed, then you deserve your choice.

**Remember that you are electing a future Grand Master - someone you will have to address as MOST WORSHIPFUL three years later....**

**- VW Ernie A. Uy**

## UNFOLDING THE BEAUTY OF FREEMASONRY

by WBS Saldy S. Santiago & Rolf S. Salocin

When we go back to initiation night,  
The questions asked return as bright as light.  
The forms and ceremonies we went through  
Up to now we vividly remember too.

That memory impels us to scrutinize  
The rituals we underwent to realize  
The real beauty of Freemasonry  
That seeks to make all men live with dignity.

Realizing thus, we study our Craft patiently  
And strive to live its principles consistently.  
The secrets of Freemasonry are hard to find  
But patience and constancy are marks of the Mason's mind.

Believing that the practice of Masonic philosophy  
Will bring about true peace and universal harmony,  
We Masons strive our neighbors to teach and educate,  
Inspiring them to love and not to hate;

To aid, support, protect, and not to fight;  
To give due respect to, and not to violate, one's right.  
Indeed, Freemasonry provides a key to eternity  
And holds those secrets which will bring us immortality.

# “The Making of a Mason”: Some Observations, Remarks

by VW Florencio Y. Sy, PDGL  
Bagumbayan Lodge No. 4, F.&A.M.

**B**rother Sean O’Neill’s article entitled “The Making of a Mason,” which was originally printed in *The Scottish Rite Journal*, March 2001, and which was reprinted in a previous issue of *The Cabletow*, reflects some of the problems of Masonry in the United States, particularly in Virginia, and some differences between the current and the colonial Masons in that country.

## One-Day Classes

These classes have become an accepted practice in many grand jurisdictions in the USA. But let us consider the following quotation from the *Memphis-Misraim Freemasonry*:

“The object of the initiation is to guide the individual towards this knowledge by an interior illumination, projection and understanding of the human ‘I’ at whose center is the transcendental Light. The initiate method is an essentially intuitive path and that is why Freemasonry uses symbols to provoke this enlightenment as these symbols speak the language of the unconscious.”

If this is so, what would happen to those Masons who did not go through the traditional process of initiation into Masonry? Would the one-day conferral of Masonic degrees attain the original intentions of the initiation rituals? Would the “one-day Masons” discover the hidden spiritual path since the conferral of Masonic degrees on them runs

counter to the usual statement “as those who have gone this way before”?

In any case, it is hoped that the Masons on whom the Masonic degrees are conferred in one day will be as serious and dedicated as those who have undergone the initiations in the traditional way. Otherwise, the **one-day** classes are but a way of correcting an error with another error.

## No More Investigating Committee?

Bro. O’Neill’s statement, “Our aim today seems to be to make anything we can get,” sounds a bit desperate. What has happened to the so-called “investigating committee” intended to check on the background of one who is knocking at our door? What has happened to the candidate’s “free will” aspect included in the rituals of all the three degrees?

No wonder that, as Bro. O’Neill states, “Today, we cannot count on good men having heard of us and wanting to join. We are a nearly obscure organization,

membership in which conveys nothing in particular to the average person. Indeed, there seem to be only two categories of persons in the USA – people who have heard of the Shriners and are surprised to hear that they are all Freemasons, and people who know of us only by virtue of their grandfathers having been, as one woman phrased it, ‘Masonics.’”

Since our Fraternity is based on the promulgation that “we make good men better,” the investigating committee is normally formed by the Worshipful Master “secretly” and the general results of the investigations are only read in the Lodge. But in some esoteric rituals the investigations should focus more on the required mental attitude of the candidate, the investigators making sure that the Lodge’s rituals and business undertakings will be maintained as the new member will be able to conform with the other members in regard to a required degree of thought forms, so that the unity and progress of the Lodge’s works will not be unduly disturbed.

## Unified Version of Our Rituals?

Due to the various changes made in the US rituals, as mentioned by Bro. O’Neill, it has come to the point that each Grand Lodge has made its own changes through the years, so much so that there is now a felt need for a general convention to be participated in by the 50 Grand Lecturers, who should come out with a unified version of our rituals. Bro. O’Neill cites the example set by the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite in the USA, which has started a revised version of Pike’s Scottish Rituals. If,

Bro. O’Neill points out, this version is acceptable, then all Scottish Rite Bodies in the States will adopt it.

Regarding the rituals for the Blue Lodges, let me quote a portion of an article by RW Michael W. Walker, Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge of Ireland, which was reprinted in *The Cabletow*, Vol. 70, No. 5, 2000. States RW Walker: “Freemasonry is fairly a **stable product** in itself – very little can be done to alter the product without changing it entirely in both essence and appearance; its principles and precepts have stood the test of time and are valid today as ever. **We cannot change the product and remain in the same business, and we must be true to ourselves in this**, if we want to get into the same business; it must be accepted and recognized that this is exactly what we are doing. Perhaps it will not be long before somebody decides that the new product is not quite right and needs further adjustments to meet the current demands of society. **This**, I suggest, **is not an option which is open to us**. What we have and what we stand for will always be right, even if its acceptance rises or falls on the scales of time.” (Emphasis added).

There are, therefore, two scenarios relative to our rituals. The first is the move taken by the US Grand Lodges to change the rituals according to their respective tastes. The second is the rigid stance that “such changes are not an option which is open to us,” even if the acceptance of what we have and what we stand for rises or falls on the scales of time. Due to changes made

on the rituals, our American brethren appear to be facing problems that are more compounded than they can understand. The insistence on not changing our rituals is, on the other hand, based, at least in part, on the fact that **our rituals have the same functions as those of the Sacraments and Scriptures of the world's religions.** This point will be explained later.

Even in our jurisdiction, let me add, by a recent stroke of a pen, we attempted to reverse the sequencing of our installation ceremony merely because the reversion has been adopted in the USA and therefore it must be "good." This calls to mind the following remarks made by the Installing Officer when presenting the gavel to the installed Master:

"The gavel, the emblem of power. In the hand of a Master, it may be an instrument of **great good**, or of **greater evil...**" (Emphasis added).

Simple words, aren't they? But they are very prophetic. The gavel, or its equivalent, can wreck havoc if **ignorantly** misused.

### **Insomnia Cure Meeting (ICM)**

I agree with Bro. O'Neill that when a Lodge's business is conducted in a rather monotonous manner, the meeting may turn out to be a cure to the brethren's insomnia problem. That is why I have insisted, at least in my Mother Lodge, that the Worshipful Master, shortly after his installation, must present to the brethren his year-round program of activities. This should include a lecture

series for furthering the brethren's Masonic education.

For the lecture series to be effective, the Worshipful Master must list down knowledgeable brethren together with their respective topics and the appointed dates.

The Worshipful Master must, furthermore, create committees, both standing and special, making sure that members, old and new, actively participate in the works of their respective committees.

Needless to say, he must have carefully chosen the appointive officers, ever bearing in mind that the appointive positions are intended to provide the necessary leadership training for the brethren as they tread round after round of the ladder that leads to fame in our mystic circle. As time passes by, therefore, provided the appointed brethren actively, enthusiastically and even creatively involve themselves in their respective functions and responsibly perform their duties, each of them will be more than half ready when he finally assumes the Oriental Chair.

After his year in the East, a Brother, if he continues to be active in the affairs of the Craft, will further acquire knowledge and experience, thereby exposing himself to more important assignments at the District, if not the Grand Lodge, level.

This should be the path to be followed, so that we will not be engaged in an endless training of leaders and trainors...

If all the officers and members of the Lodge report what they have done during the month, then the ICM syndrome will be minimized, if not entirely eliminated.

The points I raised earlier are bolstered by this statement of the late Past Grand Master Camilo Osias, a fellow Bagumbayanite: "A Mason is a seeker of knowledge. He is never satisfied with the knowledge he possesses. Alone or in the company of brethren, he wants knowledge and more knowledge, knowing that the light of knowledge alone can illumine his path of life."

It is interesting to note that MW Osias uses the word "knowledge" five times and the participle "knowing" once, thereby reflecting his conviction that the light of Masonic knowledge, in contradistinction to physical knowledge, can illumine a Mason's path. Indeed, during his year in the Grand East, MW Osias adopted the theme "More Masonry Among Masons..." Recurrently, he stressed the paramount importance of Masonic education and of constant interaction among Masons in regard to symbolic meanings and interpretations.

## **Masonry: A Sacramental System**

In his book entitled *The Meaning of Masonry*, W.L. Wilmshurst states: "It is well to emphasize then, at the onset, that Masonry is a Sacramental system, possessing, like all Sacraments, an outward and visible side consisting of its ceremonials, its doctrine and its symbols, which we can see and hear, and an inward, intellectual and spiritual side, which is concealed behind the ceremonials, the doctrine and the

symbols, and which is available to the **Mason who has learned to use his spiritual imagination and who can appreciate the reality that lies behind the veil of outward symbol.**" (Emphasis added).

In her *Treatise on White Magic*, Alice Bailey, likewise, states that in Masonry "...form and symbol, tool and furniture, temple and tone, office and externalization were the prominent factors; they **veiled** the truth and we have therefore **preserved** the outer and visible form of an inner and spiritual reality." (Emphasis added, too).

Also points out Bailey in her *Treatise on Cosmic Fire*: "Yet if the hints given above are studied, if the various secrets of the builders are pondered upon, and if the esoteric side of Masonry is carefully and persistently meditated upon, the work of the Great Architect and His many assistants will extend forth in a clearer and fuller light."

## **The Sacrament Rites**

Since, as Wilmshurst has affirmed, "Masonry is a Sacramental system..." let us consider some points on the Sacraments raised by Annie Bessant in *Esoteric Christianity*.

States Bessant at the start of her book: "In all religions there exist certain ceremonies or rites which are regarded by the believers in the religion to be of vital importance and which are held to confer certain benefits on those taking part in them."

Then she points out the main criteria in

the making of a Sacrament. First, there is the exoteric ceremony, which is a pictorial allegory or representation of something by actions and materials – not a verbal allegory or teaching given in words, conveying a truth. Secondly, a Sacrament belongs to the facts of invisible world, which are studied by occult science. A Sacrament links the material world with the subtle and invisible regions to which that world is related. It is not, however, a mere linking of the two worlds, but rather, a method by which the energies of the invisible world are transmuted into action in the physical one — an actual method of changing energies of one kind into energies of another kind.

There are, according to Bessant, two essential parts of a Sacrament, namely, *words of power* and *signs of power*.

In regard to words of power, Bessant has this to say about the use by the Roman Catholic Church of Latin words in the Sacrament rites:

“The Latin language is used by the Roman Catholic Church as an act of worship. It is not a dead language here, a tongue ‘not’ understood by the people, but (is used) as a living force in the invisible world. It is not used to hide knowledge from the people, but in order that certain **vibrations** may be set up in the invisible world, which cannot be set up in the ordinary languages of Europe, **unless a great occultist should compose in them the necessary successions of sounds**. To translate a mantra is to change it from a word of power into an ordinary sentence; the

sounds being changed, other sound forms are created.” (Emphasis added).

Continues Bessant: “Some of the arrangements of Latin words, with the music wedded to them in Christian worship, caused the most marked effects in the supraphysical world, and anyone who is at all sensitive will be conscious of peculiar effects by chanting some of the most sacred sentences, especially in the Mass.”

She further informs us that the outward and visible form, as well as certain gestures, of a Sacrament consists in signs, seals, or sigils. Each of these has its own particular meaning on the invisible forces with which the celebrant is dealing, whether those forces be his own or poured through him. Such a sign is called **sign of power**, just as a mantra is a **word of power**.

In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, for example, the sign of power is the laying of the hands over the bread and wine, including the sign of the cross, while the words of power are “This is my body” and “This is my blood.”

The words and signs of power summon to the celebration the angels specially concerned with the materials used and the nature of the act performed, and they lend their powerful aid, pouring their magnetic energies into the subtle counterparts, and even into the physical ether, thus reinforcing the energies of the celebrant.

What underlies all Sacramental action? It is, according to Bessant, the belief that

the invisible exercises a **potent influence over the visible**, and that, to understand a Sacrament, we **must understand something of the invisible intelligences who administer nature**.

Because Masonry is a Sacramental system, those Brethren who drafted our rituals included in the various lectures, as well as in the landmarks, of the Craft recurrent reminders that we are not to make any changes or modifications in our rituals. Our rituals are, as RW Walker has stressed, a stable product. Hence, we should not be changing them if we really want to be in business. Expert occultists crafted our rituals. Hence, even a Grand Master, by dint of an Edict, cannot, and should not, change our rituals.

Bessant gives us this additional reminder: "The wheel is ever turned by the divine will and the living intelligences who form it learn to cooperate with that will, and if in the action of those intelligences there is any break or gap due to neglect or opposition, then the wheel drags, turning slowly, and the chariot of the evolution of the world goes, but heavily, upon its way."

## **The Volumes of the Sacred Law of the World's Religions**

Since the Volume of the Sacred Law is one of the great lights of Masonry and since the teachings of Masonry are based on those of the various religions of the world, let us consider what Bessant has to say about the diverse Volumes of the Sacred Law.

Says Bessant: "...All such books contain fragments of the Revelation, selected by

one of the Great Ones who hold it in trust. Such a fragment is embodied in what is down here called a revelation, or a scripture, and some part of the world rejoices in it as in a treasure of vast value. The fragments are chosen according to the **needs of the time, the capacity of the people to whom it is given, and the type of race whom it is intended to instruct**. It is generally given in a peculiar form, in which the outer history, or story, or song, or psalm, or prophecy appears to the superficial or ignorant reader to be the whole book. But in these (fragments), **deeper meanings are concealed**, sometimes in numbers; sometimes in word construction or a hidden plan – a cipher, in fact; sometimes in symbols, recognizable by the instructed; sometimes in allegations written as histories; and in many other ways. These books, indeed, have something of a sacramental character about them, an outer form and an inner life, an outer symbol and an inner truth. Those only can explain the hidden meaning who have been trained by those instructed in it. Hence, the dictum of St. Peter that '**no prophecy of the scripture is of private interpretation**' (II Peter, 1:20)."

Additionally, Bessant quotes Origen, who was well-versed in occult knowledge and who taught that the scriptures consist of body, soul and spirit. The body of the scriptures is, according to Origen, made up of the histories and stories, but these are not literally true; they are only stories for the instruction of the ignorant. The statements in those stories are, in fact, obviously untrue, the glaring contradictions lying on the surface.

Origen explains further that as the intellect develops, these contradictions and impossibilities strike the attention and bewilder the student, who is subsequently stirred up to seek for a deeper meaning and begins to find the **soul of the scriptures**, which is the reward of the intelligent seeker: he escapes from the bonds of the letter that killeth (II Cor. 2:6).

Then Origen explains that the **spirit of the scriptures** may be seen only by the men in whom the spirit has been evolved. As I Cor. 2:11, 13 states, "The things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God..., which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth."

Why, then, are the scriptures so constructed? For what particular purpose are all these scriptures so designed?

Replies Bessant: "Man is progressive. The outer meaning given long ago to unevolved men must needs be very limited, and unless something deeper

and fuller than the outer meaning were hidden within it, the value of the scripture would perish when a few millennia had passed away. Whereas by the method of successive meanings it is given a perennial value, and evolved men may find in it hidden treasures, until the day when, possessing the whole, they no longer need the part."

### A Prayer

May all of us Masons, therefore, really put into consistent practice what we tell the Grand Architect at the end of every stated meeting that we want to do: "study and obey the laws which Thou hast given us in Thy Holy Word."

### A Final Word

I earnestly hope that this little article, which contains my reactions to, as well as remarks on, "The Making of a Mason," by Bro. Sean O' Neill, will induce more of our brethren to be inspired to penetrate more deeply into the real teachings of the outer forms of Masonry.

A Mason is a seeker of knowledge. He is never satisfied with the knowledge he possesses. Alone or in the company of brethren, he wants knowledge and more knowledge, knowing that the light of knowledge alone can illumine his path of life.

- MW Camilo Osias

More Masonry among Masons ....

- MW Camilo Osias

# MW SORIANO GRACES INSTITUTION OF LEEWARD LODGE, U.D.

by WB Teofilo "Phil" de Aquino, PM

*Note: The author of this news item is a Past Master of Cordillera Lodge No. 178 and the Senior Warden of the newly-instituted Lodge.*

**M**ost Worshipful Napoleon A. Soriano became the first Filipino Grand Master to visit the State of Hawaii during the institution of a Lodge. He witnessed Most Worshipful Donald Wilson, Grand Master of Masons in Hawaii, institute Leeward Lodge, U.D., in Walpahu, Hawaii, on September 22, 2001.

The institution of Leeward Lodge, the members of which are mostly Filipino-Americans, signified that for the first time the Leeward Community, composed of Waipahu, Ewa Beach, Kapolei and Makakilo, would feel the active influence of the Square and Compass in the life stream of its populace. It also showed the cohesive strength of the Filipino Masons to the betterment of the community.

The institution ceremony was attended by the Officers of the Grand Lodge of Hawaii and by VW Hermeno Palamine, who was with Grand Master Soriano. Masters, Past Masters and brethren from Lodges in the mainland and in the Philippines were in attendance, too.

Leeward Lodge, U.D. metamorphosed from the Leeward Square and Compass Club, which had more than 50 members and the officers of which were the following: Bro. Willie Calledo, President; Bro. Bernardo Biala, Vice-President; Bro.

Nestor Muyot, Secretary; Bro. Tom Arigo, Treasurer, who was succeeded by Bro. Victorino Reyes.

The Masonic club was established during the term of MW Mason Teter, who read the Letter of Intent to establish a club in the last Grand Annual Communication.

The first three honorary members of the club were Bro. Willie Calledo; VW Raymond Wieckowicz, Jr., Grand Secretary; and MW Randy T.S. Chang, PGM.

WB Robert Schultz, Past Master of Hawaiian Lodge, was assigned the Grand Lodge Inspector for the new Lodge.

Members of the Advisory Committee and the By-Laws Committee included Past Masters Oscar Jayme, Severino Malajito, Antonio Ligaya and this writer, as well as Bros. Ismael Solis, Vernon South, Robert Thomas and Theo Butuyan.

Installed Officers of the newly-instituted Lodge are: WB Severino Malajito, PM, Master; this writer, Senior Warden; WB Antonio Ligaya, PM, Junior Warden; Bro. Victorino Reyes, Treasurer; Bro. Nestor Muyot, Secretary; WB Romulo Paano, PM, Chaplain; Bro. Bernardo Biala, Senior Deacon; Bro. Froilan Domingo, Junior Deacon; Bro. Oscar Romero, Marshal; Bro. Feliciano dela Cruz, Senior Steward; Bro. Michael Ballesteros, Junior Steward; Bro. Manuel Aquino, Organist; and WB Lucito Santos, PM, Tyler.

Said WB Serafin Colmenares, Jr., P.M., who wrote the article "The Making of Leeward Lodge U.D.":

*The road ahead remains rough and rugged to any Masonic Lodge. But with the continued support, generosity and dedication of its officers and members and with the blessings of the Supreme Architect, every Lodge can overcome the challenges.*

"Leeward Lodge U.D. is now a reality – thanks to the hard work, dedication and persistence of brethren who were intent in spreading the principles of Freemasonry in the Leeward area. The road ahead remains rough and rugged, but with the continued support, generosity and dedication of the officers and members of Leeward Lodge, and the blessings of the Supreme Architect, these challenges can be overcome."

The day following the institution of Leeward Lodge U.D., Bro. Willie and Sis. Mila Calledo, owners of the C&S Services, invited the brethren to a boat cruise along the Walanae Coast. About 75 brethren and sisters joined the cruise.

MW Nap Soriano and VW Hermie Palamine also joined the cruise.

Most of the "cruisers" considered

sighting of dolphins very exciting.

During the impromptu program, which was emceed by WB Oscar Jayme, the pronouncements of the brethren who were requested to speak were so emotional that Bro. Willie Calledo and other brethren, as well as their better halves, had misty eyes.

MW Soriano was presented a desk nameplate designed by Bro. Rizalde del Prado. In response, he expressed happiness at having been given the opportunity to witness the institution ceremony of Leeward Lodge U.D. He also reminded them of their Masonic privileges and duties.

In the end, the brethren and sisters wished Grand Master Soriano and his party a safe return to the Philippines.

# A PARTIAL GLIMPSE AT THE VIGOR AND DYNAMISM OF PHILIPPINE MASONRY

by eF.R.eN

**R**eports which Blue Lodges and Masonic Districts send in to the Grand Lodge show the increasing vigor and dynamism of Philippine Masonry. Reports which reach our editorial office are part of the striking evidence that the various Masonic Bodies throughout our jurisdiction are exerting effort to pursue the tenets of our Craft. Given hereunder are some of the reports we have received.

## IN PURSUIT OF TRUTH

The Lodges which our Grand Lodge constituted this year have demonstrated their zeal in doing both the inner and outer work of Masonry.

Let's read a brief account by VW B.J. Torres, PAGS, of the constitution of Casili Creek Lodge No. 340.

### Casili Creek Lodge No. 340 Constituted

Grand Master Napoleon A. Soriano, assisted by some Grand Lodge and District 51 officers, constituted **Casili Creek Lodge No. 340** in Mallig, Isabela, on June 30, 2001.

The Grand Master's party – RW Roberto Q. Pagotan, JGW; VW Rodolfo Cardona, AGS; VW Samuel P. Fernandez, PGH and Cabletow Managing Editor; VW B.J. Torres, PAGS and Cabletow Circulation Manager/Exchange Editor; and Bro. Johnny Mirana of Silanganan Lodge No. 19 – left the Grand Lodge at one o'clock

p.m., June 29. They stopped over in Cabanatuan City for a sumptuous dinner tendered by the officers and members of **Masonic District No. 29**.

After dinner and a brief fellowship social, the party proceeded to Ilagan, where they were to spend the night.

Due to inclement weather, the Grand Master and his party reached Ilagan after midnight. VW J. Alex L. Castillo, Jr., DDGM, and some officers of **Masonic District No. 45** were on hand at the hotel to meet them.

After breakfast hosted by VW Castillo at his residence, the GM and his party were brought to the hospital established by Freemasons in Ilagan and then to the Provincial Capitol, where they witnessed the turn-over of the reins of the province from Bro. Benjamin Dy to his brother, Faustino Dy, Jr. The Dy Brothers tendered a luncheon for the GM and his party.

After lunch, the GM and his party,

together with the District Officers, proceeded to Mallig, Isabela for the Constitution of the new Lodge.

The Grand Master presided over the public ceremony of constitution. He was assisted by Grand Lodge and District Officers.

After the constitution ceremony, the officers of the Lodge were installed. VW Sammy Fernandez was installing officer; VW B.J. Torres, master of ceremonies; and VW Serafin Saquing, PDDGM, asst. master of ceremonies.

After the usual congratulations to the officers and members of the Lodge, MW Nap Soriano made a brief but impressive report on the business going on in the Grand Lodge. He told the brethren that the back part of the Plaridel Masonic Temple was being transformed into a dormitory, which would be ready for occupancy before the end of July. The brethren felt happy because they would have a decent and cheap place to stay in when they sojourn in Manila.

The Grand Master and his party have been very visible attending Multi-District Conventions. Following is VW B.J. Torres' account of ...

## **The Multi-District Convention in Tuguegarao City**

The Masonic Districts in Northeastern Luzon held their joint convention last Oct. 5 and 6 at the Cagayan State University Gym in Tuguegarao City, with **Masonic District No. 49** as host.

At 8 a.m., Oct. 5, the brethren motorcaded around the city. The motorcade ended at the Rizal Park, where the Grand Master, together with officers of the participating districts and of the Grand Lodge, such as VW Jimmy Gonzales, VW Hermogenes Ebdane, Jr., VW B.J. Torres, VW Romeo Yu, VW Mags Nuevo and Bro. Roger Bernales, offered flowers.

After the floral offering, the brethren motored back to the Cagayan State University Gym. The opening ceremonies and reception of guests over, the City Mayor, Hon. Randolph S. Ting, gave the welcome remarks. Hon. Edgar Ramones Lara, Provincial Governor, was the guest of honor and keynote speaker. He touched on the theme for this Masonic year, "Harmony and Progress Through Freemasonry."

"Harmony and progress should not be through Freemasonry alone," he said in part. "They should be carried out through the daily lives of the people, so that our country may attain peace and prosperity as well as cultural progress."

In the afternoon of the same day, a Lodge of Instruction was held. Topics covered included Masonic symbolism, Masonic demeanor, the Hiram Legend, and the Exemplification of the Third Degree. The ensuing open forum was enthusiastically participated in by the brethren.

Among the speakers were VW Lee Jaramillo, JGL for Northeastern Luzon I; VW Floren Ambatali, PDDGM; VW Edmundo R. Udarbe, DGL for District No.

49; VW B.J. Torres, PAGES; and VW Felicisimo Munda, DDGM of District No. 43

Some of the delegates raised interesting questions pertinent to the lectures and the exemplification, and the resource speakers answered all questions, to the satisfaction of the delegates.

The following morning, MW Nap Soriano gave an extemporaneous address. He congratulated the host District and commended the delegates for their enthusiastic response during the convention. He informed the delegates, moreover, about the goings-on in the Grand Lodge in the last five months.

"We have expeditiously acted upon certain problems," he stressed.

The brethren gave the Grand Master an standing ovation.

Following is an account by VW B.J. Torres once more of the Lodges of Instruction held at various times.

## **Lodges of Instruction, District Assembly**

**Batangas Lodge No. 35** hosted a one-day Lodge of Instruction for officers and members of Lodges in **Masonic District No. 10** at its temple in Batangas City last Sept. 1.

Upon request from VW Emmanuel S. Villena, DGL, MW Napoleon A. Soriano sent a resource group consisting of VW B.J. Torres, PAGES; VW Mags Nuevo, PDDGM, M.D. No. 51; and WM Ronald

Cortez of Capitol City Lodge No. 174, who covered such topics as basic movements of the Marshal, Deacons and Stewards; opening and closing of the Lodge; flag ceremony; Grand Honors (reception of dignitaries); conferral of degrees, with emphasis on the proper reception of the candidate and the guiding of the candidate during the perambulation; some aspects of Masonic symbolism; and demeanor and proper decorum in Lodge.

VW Servando Lara, DDGM, stated that the Lodge of Instruction had made the brethren of the District realize that what they had been practicing for years is quite different from what they learned that day. Like WM Cesar Abaya and other leaders of the District, he promised that they would disseminate what they had learned during the Lodge of Instruction, so that, eventually, precision and uniformity would be achieved.

**Laog Lodge No. 71**, likewise, initiated and hosted the first-ever District Assembly for the main purpose of "re-training the officers and members of Lodges in **Masonic District No. 47** on the basics of the floorworks of the first sections of the three degrees and the second section of the third degree."

Topics covered during the Assembly, which was actually a Lodge of Instruction, were practically the same as those taken up in the Batangas assembly.

Our Grand Master, MW Nap Soriano, went down to the floor and assisted the trainors, VW B.J. Torres and VW Mags

Nuevo, in demonstrating certain basic movements in the Ritual.

In his message, VW Joey Soriano, DDGM, said in part, "We must not allow innovations to slowly and treacherously erode the pillars of our institution..."

Noticing the great success of the Assembly, the leadership of Angalo Lodge No. 63 volunteered to nosh the next Lodge of Instruction.

In the end, MW Soriano congratulated Laoag Lodge No. 71 and VW Joey Soriano, DDGM, for successfully hosting the affair, which, hopefully, would lead to uniformity and precision in the execution of the Ritual. Said he: "The complete master of the Ritual, characterized by dramatic force and fluency of delivery, is the first essential requirement for Masters and Wardens..."

The Grand Master and his party had an enjoyable South with the brethren of Northern Luzon after the Assembly.

**Kapatiran Lodge No. 228** also sponsored a Lodge of Instruction for the officers and members of Lodges in **Masonic District No. 29** at its temple in Cabanatuan City.

Upon invitation of VW Napoleon E. Valeriano, DGL, MW Nap Soriano, VW B.J. Torres, VW Rudy Cardona, VW Gilbert Pascoguin, and VW Romeo Yu conducted the Lodge of Instruction.

Again, our Grand Master stressed the importance of learning thoroughly the basics in the proper execution of our Ritual.

Said VW B.J. Torres: "After the Lodge of Instruction, we had a fellowship social in a restaurant somewhere in the city. Fraternalism reigned supreme among the brethren."

Last Nov. 4, **Masonic District No. 2** (Cavite), moreover, hosted a seminar-workshop for Lodge Officers at the Cavite State University in Indang, Cavite. The activity was, actually, under the auspices of the **Grand Lodge of the Philippines** as part of the continuing program of the Institute of Masonic Education and Studies (IMES).

VW Nick Ricafrente, PGO, lectured on the origins of Freemasonry; VW Albert Poblete, DGL for Cavite, on the transition from operative to speculative Masonry; VW Fernando V. Pascua, Jr., PSGL, on the definition(s) of Freemasonry, the Craft's purposes and goals, as well as its doctrine, philosophy and principles; VW B.J. Torres, PAGS, on the lessons, philosophy and symbolism of the three Craft degrees, with particular focus on the Drama of the Tragedy; and VW Jimmy Gonzales, PDDGM, on key issues contained in recent publications like *Holy Blood, Holy Grail*.

An animated open forum ensued after the lectures. The lecturers answered all questions, to the satisfaction of the participants.

## **IN PURSUIT OF RELIEF, BROTHERLY LOVE**

To demonstrate that Masons, who are linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection, consider it their

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particular duty to relieve the distressed, the various Masonic Bodies throughout the jurisdiction continue to carry out community outreach or public service projects. Given below are examples.

## **Bantugan Lodge No. 223 Sponsors Diabetic Screening, Bone Scanning**

**Bantugan Lodge No. 223** in Cotabato City, together with the management of the Cotabato Medical Specialist Hospital and the Service Phils. Inc., conducted a free diabetic screening test, which benefited more than 40 individuals. Then, in cooperation with Merck, Sharp and Dohme, the Lodge sponsored a bone scanning test at the same hospital. The project benefited more than 70.

## **Medical-Dental Mission in Camiling, Tarlac**

**Isagani Lodge No. 96** and **Victory Lodge No. 116**, together with the 703<sup>rd</sup> Infantry "Agila" Brigade 71D, PA, conducted a medical-dental mission at Barangay Sawat in Camiling, Tarlac last July 21.

The brethren of Isagani #96, moreover, condoled with the bereaved family of their late Past Master, WB Bert Acuña. But they were happy to rub elbows with their Grand Master during the Grand Master's Night at **Leonard Wood Lodge No. 105** in Angeles City.

## **Meaningful Ways of Celebrating Lodge Anniversaries**

Led by their Wor. Master, VW Cesar L. Go, the brethren of **Jose Abad Santos**

**Memorial Lodge No. 333** in Mabalacat, Pampanga celebrated the first anniversary of their constitution as a Lodge by presenting foodstuffs, clothes and cash donations to the youngsters in the Children's Home of the Immaculate Heart of Mary at Sta. Maria, Balibago, Angeles City.

VW Vicente Garcia, DDGM, and VW Antonio Guzman, PDGL, were with the "good Samaritans."

In like manner, the brethren of **La Naval Lodge No. 269**, with WB Bobby S. Guinto at the steering wheel, made their 17<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration more meaningful by sponsoring the harelip operation on Jeffrey Adiong and Alvin Paiton, elementary students from destitute barangays, at the Lorenzo Ruiz Hospital in Naic, Cavite.

The owner of the hospital himself, VW Rafael Vasquez, PDGL, performed the operations, while the brethren of the Lodge provided the patients and their families with what they needed during the recuperation period, including transportation and food.

The Brethren of La Naval and their families had an enjoyable time together at the Villa Theresa Resort in Cavite City. After the Thanksgiving Mass, there were lots of parlor games for the kids and a raffle for the young once. Major prizes included refrigerator, cellphone, VCD, other appliances.

The celebration was capped by the conferral of the prestigious Hiram Award on the indefatigable Jun S. Anastacio, PDGL.

## **Making Masonry Real**

Worshipful Master Edgardo A. Montero led the brethren of **Judge Valerio V. Rovira Lodge No. 259** in feeding more than a thousand youngsters in Barangays Santiago, Tambacan and Saray, Iligan. The kids relished the hot servings of arroz con caldo, pan de sal, biscuits and candies.

Said Bro. Feliciano Alagao: "We made Masonry real to the kids, in whose hearts was permanently imprinted the square and compasses."

The brethren of the same Lodge also sponsored a free clinic (sugar and cholesterol determinations plus ECG), which benefited brethren, relatives and friends. Charity indeed, begins at home!

## **The Day Our Grand Master Came to Legazpi City**

by VW Florante F. Equipado, DGL (#14)

When our Grand Master, MW Napoleon A. Soriano, came to Legazpi City to give a little assistance to the victims of Mayon Volcano's wrath, we brethren of **Mayon Lodge No. 61** warmly received him at the city airport. VW Tito Collada, Jr., DGL for **M.D. #12**, who had traveled all the way from Daet, and several brethren of **Bulusan Lodge No. 38** were with us.

The City Mayor, Hon. Noel Rosal, upon being informed of the Grand Master's presence, suspended his ongoing conference with barangay leaders. The mayor informed the Grand Master that he had wanted to knock at Masony's

door, but pressure of work had prevented him from doing so.

From City Hall we proceeded to the Bagumbayan Central School, which housed the evacuees from Barangay Matanag. We distributed rice to each of the 635 families housed therein. MW Soriano participated in the rice distribution, thereby getting the applause and appreciation of the recipients.

Next we proceeded to the Albay Central School, where we also distributed rice to 314 families therein house.

After distributing 100 sacks of rice to the evacuees, we had a simple lunch at Waway's Restaurant, home of native dishes and sea foods.

Lunch over, we brought the Grand Master to Anislag Relocation Site at Daraga, Albay. There we showed him the classroom costing P200,000, a project of our Lodge. The Anislag Relocation Village housed the evacuees from Budiao, Daraga, Albay. The Village is a project of Albay Governor Francis C. Bichara, an avid supporter of Masonry in Bicol.

After a hard day's work, we had an enjoyable South at the Orient Garden restaurant of the Hotel Casablanca.

## **How CAMANAVA Masonic Service Club Carries Out Relief, Pays Tribute to Distinguished Brethren**

by VW Mags Nuevo, PDDGM

Members of the **CAMANAVA Masonic Service Club (CAMANAVA MSC)**, led by Bro. Sonny Lim, performed the funeral

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rites for Bro. Eugenio C. Casalme, a member of **Ari-Tau Lodge No. 279**, Police Superintendent and Deputy Chief of Police, Valenzuela City.

Bro. Casalme met his tragic death at the hands of highway robbers while aboard a passenger bus on his way home. He was at the time wearing his type "B" uniform. The robbers divested him of cash and service firearm; then they shot him at close range. (Sounds like a modern version of the ruffians killing the GMHA).

Upon request of Bro. Casalme's widow, Bro. Sonny Lim assembled a team of brethren from various Lodges, such as Samuel Co Sun, **Manuel Roxas #152**; Manolo Teodoro, **Bagumbayan No. 4**; Nestor de Jesus, **High Twelve No. 82**; Melito Villar, **Dapitan No. 21**; Roberto Gualberto, **Cavite No. 2**; Antonio Manuba, **Ang Tipolo No. 334**; Roberto Dacumos, **Dapitan No. 21**; and this writer, a member of **Cagayan Valley No. 133**, who officiated the funeral rites.

In attendance during the rites were VW Vicente Garcia Jr., DDGM; Bro. Narciso A. Abanador, JW; and other brethren of **Pampanga No. 48**, as well as brothers-in-arms, relatives and friends of Bro. Casalme. Specifically, there were Chief Supt. and Bro. Ike Galang, Region 3 PNP Director; Chief Supt. and Bro. Vidal Querol, NPDC Director; and Supt. Nemesio Neron, Police Chief Valenzuela City.

On Nov. 4, the CAMANAVAMSC joined hands with the **Manila Bodies** of the A.&A.S.R., the **Luzon Chapter** of Philippines Bodies, York Rite, **Dapitan**

**Lodge No. 21**, F.&A.M., and the Caloocan Fil-Chinese Charity Clinic in extending free medical and dental services to hundreds of residents of Bagong Barrio in Caloocan City.

The project was spearheaded by Bros. Emmanuel Bravo and Rey Cortez, chair and co-chair, respectively.

On Nov. 6, the Club, through Bro. Sonny Lim, accompanied by Sis. Sonia, donated a brand-new computer set to the Tinajeros National High School in Malabon, Metro Manila.

**Besides carrying out Relief, the Club has also demonstrated that "with heart and tongue we join in promoting each other's welfare and rejoicing at each other's prosperity."** For example, it tendered a testimonial dinner at a Valenzuela City restaurant in honor of Bro. Vidal H. Querol, PNP NPDC Director. City Mayor Bobbit Carlos and VW and Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane, JR. were present during the occasion.

**Lunch Date with a Brother General** by WB Godofredo E. Peteza, Jr., PM

We, the Masons of Camarines Norte, tendered a sumptuous lunch at the Golden House Restaurant in downtown Daet on September 11, this year, in honor of Bro./Brigadier General Enrique Galang, Jr., who, as Police Director for the Bicol Region, conferred with the police forces of Daet at Bagasbas Beach Resort the day before.

Bro. Galang was with Supt. Jaime Milla and 15 policemen, two of whom are also Widow's Sons.

The hosts included VW Godofredo O. Peteza, Sr., DDGM; VW Jose Dy Ching, PDDGM; VW Benjamin L. Ong, DGL; WB Aurelio R. Aguilar, PM (#247); WB Tomas L. Ong, PM (#247); WB Juan A. Bautista Jr., WM (#107); WB Fernando E. Peteza (#107); and this writer, district correspondent to *The Cabletow*.

Bro. "Jun" Galang appraised us of the overall peace and order situation in the Bicol Region, pointing out that Camarines Norte is relatively peaceful while other provinces experience sporadic skirmishes between government forces and disgruntled elements of society, which in turn adversely effect the country's economy.

In response, VW Peteza expressed appreciation of the Bro. General's desire to meet the Masons of Daet.

### **Batangas #35, Kagitingan #286 Conduct Joint Outreach Project**

Led by WMs Cesar Abaya and Rey Cadiz, respectively, brethren of Lodges **Batangas No. 35** and **Kagitingan No. 286**, assisted by their spouses, extended free medical-dental services to residents of Barangay Malalim, Batangas City last August 25.

More than 200 residents were benefited by the project.

### **A Joint Masonic Charity in Action**

Brethren of **Ang Tipolo Lodge No. 334** and the **Rizal Bodies, A.&A.S.R.**, together with some members of the U.S. Armed Services Retirees Activities

Office-NCR (RAO-NCR), traveled to Albay on Aug. 16, 2001 to distribute relief goods to families housed at various evacuation centers. They were able to extend assistance to approximately 530 families consisting of about 1,225 individuals. (Original report by WB Teodorico G. Castor, PM)

### **Masonic District No. 8: An Update** by VW Joselito P. Tamaray, DDGM

The Lodges in our district – **Balintawak No. 28, Kalilayan No. 37, Tayabas No. 48** and **Plaridel No. 74** – participated in the floral-offering ceremony cum program at the Quezon Monument in the Province of Quezon Capitol site in celebration of the 123<sup>rd</sup> birth anniversary of President and Past Grand Master Manuel Luis Quezon last August 19.

The brethren later on proceeded to Barangay Gulang-Gulang in Lucena City, where the 4<sup>th</sup> Lab. Light Armor Brigade, PA, headed by Bro. Rene Calonzo (#282) and Bro. George B. Lomboy (#31), and Kalilayan Lodge No. 37 held a joint medical-dental mission. VW Bros. Willy Frondoza and Bong Habito, as well as Bros. David Sanchez and Remiel Quila, were kept busy during the civic action, while the brethren, particularly VW Anselmo Regis, Jr., barangay captain, extended their helping hands.

WB Alex Cariaga, who was celebrating his birthday, provided the lunch, and the brethren gave him a birthday celebration he'd never forget.

Earlier, on May 19, the brethren of Kalilayan Lodge No. 37, held a family outing at South Waters, Lucena City,

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the manager of which is Bro. Edgar Halili, who provided us with the best accommodation.

Meanwhile, as DDGM, I tasked the DGLs and GLIs to give lectures during stated meetings as part of our district's massive Masonic education program.

Our District held its convention on Nov. 21, with Kalilayan Lodge No. 37 serving as host.

The convention was highlighted by a proficiency competition among the newly-obligated brethren of the four Lodges in the district.

VW Edilberto De Luna and VW Alfonso Custodio, DGLs, and the Lodge Inspectors, especially WI Evergisto Dael and WI Raul Ibal, as well as WM Alex Cariaga and the other brethren of host Lodge Kalilayan, contributed significantly to the success of our convention.

**Livelihood Courses for Out-of-School Youth, Unemployed Adults**  
by Bong R. Macalindong, PM (#269)

**Lodges La Naval No. 269, Cavite No. 2, and Bagong Buhay No. 17** have joined hands with the DECS-Nonformal Education in the continuing conduct of livelihood courses for out-of-school youths and unemployed adults.

The courses offered to the most recent batch of trainees included food preservation and the making of hats, bags, pillows and handicrafts.

**Mt. Malindang Brethren Conduct**

**Outreach Project, Play Host of GLOs**

**Mt. Malindang Lodge No. 130** conducted a medical-dental outreach project during the summer hiatus.

Shortly afterwards it played host to Grand Lodge Officers, led by Grand Master Nap Soriano, JGW Bert Pagotan and AAGM Fred Bihis.

**Walana #13 Spearheads Community Outreach Project in Ilocos Norte**

Headed by WM Fred Ibay, **Walana Lodge No. 13**, teamed up with **Maginoo Shrine Oasis** and **Lodges Biak-na-Bato No. 7** and **Laoag No. 71** in the conduct of a charity and goodwill mission in Ilocos Norte.

In the evening of October 5, the "missionaries" – VW Elmer Gamiao, DDGM; WM Ibay, Bro. Rommel Roxas, Bros. Tres Bañez, Bro. Winston Gayapa, and Bro. Orly Mangapit (initiator of "Oplan Batac"), all of Walana No. 13; and Bro. Edgar Halili, **Taga-Ilog No. 79**, representing Maginoo -- traveled to Laoag City and reached their destination early the next morning. They took breakfast at Bro. Orly and Sis. Ela's residence and, afterwards, went to their assigned quarters: Starlight Lodging House, owned by WM Saldy Santiago of host Lodge Laoag No. 71.

The sojourning "missionaries" had lunch-fellowship with the brethren of the host Lodge and their families at the beach near the famous Fort Ilocandia.

"We certainly relished the Ilocano dishes

prepared by the Mangapit family," WM Fred Ibay remarked.

In the evening the sojourning brethren attended the meeting of host Lodge Laoag, the members of which unanimously lauded the outstanding delivery of the Salute to the Flag by Bro. Rommel Roxas.

The ensuing dinner-fellowship included, among other things, billiards playing and "videoke" singing.

Early in the morning of Sunday, Oct. 7, which marked the anniversary of Bro. Orly's birthday and that of the death of his and Sis Ela's only son Vincent, the sojourners had breakfast at the Mangapit residence.

Thence they motored, through approximately eight kilometers of "rough and rugged" mountain road, to Barangay Quiom in Batac, where they conducted a medical-dental clinic and distributed free medicines to indigent residents of four depressed barangays.

The brethren attributed the success of the medical-dental mission to many individuals and groups, including the Batac Rural Health Unit I, the barangay health workers, the Sangguniang Bayan of Batac, and many others who expressed desire to remain anonymous.

Again, the Mangapit family treated everybody to a sumptuous lunch.

After a brief respite, the brethren and several members of the PNP in Laoag, headed by Bro. Dexter Corpus, engaged themselves in tree planting.

The tree planting over, the brethren, together with their cooperators, proceeded to the Batac Municipal Hall, where they distributed wheelchairs and cash gifts to the town's handicapped children, who were, in turn, profusely grateful to the Masons.

In the ensuing program, the Sangguniang Bayan of Batac presented to the brethren a resolution thanking them for extending charity and goodwill to the town's disadvantaged.

Finally commented "Oplan Batac" initiator Orly Mangapit: "It was another Masonic mission of relief accomplished!"

## Wages for Travelling Brethren

Linked together by an indissoluble chain of sincere affection, Masons extend the warm handclasp to traveling brethren and give due recognition to brethren residing abroad who come back for a visit.

When, for instance, VW Procopio "Bobbie" Trabajo II went to the United States, Bro. Henry Ortiz, a member of **Lodge Abra** who is now based in Bronx, New York, accompanied him to the State of New York and Rhode Island.

WB Larino "Larry" Soriano, PM, an erstwhile provincial director of the National Food Authority who now resides in New York and the first Filipino Worshipful Master of **Eureka Lodge No. 22** under the jurisdiction of the Grand Lodge of Rhode Island and Providence Plantation, tendered a small party in honor of VW Trabajo at his residence. He played host to VW Trabajo for four

days.

When VW Ramoncito V. Piaña, Past Junior Grand Lecturer for Overseas Lodges, paid his Mother Lodge, **Saranay No. 193**, a visit, the brethren of the Lodge awarded a Plaque of Recognition to him for his continued contributions to their Lodge in particular and to the Craft in general.

## **Bridging the Gap...**

One concern of Masons in this jurisdiction is improving the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the Fraternity.

Hence, as reported by WB Alawi Alhabsi, PM, a group of Masons – composed of VW Peter S. Del Valle (DDGM), VW Edgardo I. Abrasaldo (DGL), VW Froilan “Dadi” Tecson (PRDGM), WM Adolfo “Bebs” Bertulfo, WM Almario “Vic” Salloman, and Bros. Benito Tan, Nicanor Layco, Daniel Peralta, Marlon Laurete – held a brainstorming session with a group of Knights of Columbus.

The brainstorming session was not without happy results. One Knight asked for a petition form for Masonic membership, while several other Knights said they would consult the home front to see if there would be no objection to their joining the Craft.

A significant number of Masons want to inject more meaning into their lives by actively involving themselves in the affairs of their respective parishes.

**Past District Grand Lecturer Ramon T.**

**del Castillo IV** is a case in point.

Let us listen to Bro. Tristram Inocencio's account of how VW del Castillo was inducted as head of the Laykong Ministriya Sa Liturhiya (formerly known as Ka-abag Ministry) of the Nuestra Señora de la Candelaria Parish in the city of Tacurong.

“Before giving the final blessings during Mass on Sunday, July 8, 2001, Rev. Fr. Edwin de Gracia, DCC, inducted the officers of the LMSL into their respective positions.

“The officers and members of this Lay Ministry perform the functions of a priest when no priest is available, especially in the barangays where Mass is officiated by an ordained priest only once a month, at the most. Except for some sacraments and the consecration of bread and wine, when these are transformed into the flesh and blood of our Redeemer, these ministers conduct all the priestly functions delegated unto them by authority of the bishop, the parish priest and the Church. They also assist the priests give communion since thousands of Tacurong residents literally flock before the altar to receive communion at every Mass.

“After giving the final blessings, Rev. Fr. De Gracia and his entourage, together with the newly inducted officers, marched toward the door of the church as the choir belted the recessional hymn.

“Outside the church the newly installed president, VW Bro. Ramon T. del Castillo IV, was met with sincere congratulations and with disbelief at the same time. Eyes

glinting with tears, he humbly acknowledged the adulations and praises for a job well done and for an accomplishment no layman in that city had ever claimed. A public installation of the officers of this particular Ministry took place for the first time in the history of the parish, and for the first time, too, a Freemason was elected to lead this lay Ministry.

“VW Bro. del Castillo is a PDGL of **Masonic District No. 48**, currently the Secretary of Daguma Range Lodge No. 244, a Noble of the Mystic Shrine and 32<sup>nd</sup> Degree Knight Commander of the Court of Honor (KCCH).

“Despite all the fuss, despite all the apprehensions, despite all the hatred, despite everything that has been said and done against Freemasons and Freemasonry by the Church, and vice-versa, one layman – by his lonesome self – gallantly fought the battle against all these discriminations, these hardships, these ostracisms, patiently doing all that is needed to be done to reorient the bigotry and the persecution.

“His was a lonely battle against all odds, against a horde of fanatical knights out to dislodge him from even his then lowly post of just a simple “ka-abag”. But he persevered. His spirit buoyed only by the silent support of some freethinking knights, a succession of liberal parish priests and of a non-conservative bishop, he plodded on with his work to serve God and humankind. Once, he was kicked out of the service but the Grace of God was with him and he was readmitted a year later. Not long after, he was elected and duly installed as Vice President of

the powerful Parish Pastoral Council, protestations notwithstanding. And now, this unprecedented honor bestowed by his fellow ministers.

“His was, in the end, the triumph that no Freemason in this grand jurisdiction has ever achieved. This miniature of a man (physically, his build is that of a 12-year-old boy) is an intelligent but a simple, humble and unassuming Mason.

**“For earning the wages of a Mason with a courageous heart, VW Bro. Ramon T. del Castillo is, indeed, deserving of the warm embrace of each Mason in the Philippine jurisdiction.”**

## **Why We Dedicate a Special Day for the Widows and Orphans of Our Departed Brethren**

Masonic Bodies throughout our jurisdiction, either singly or jointly, conducted Lodges of Sorrow/Remembrance in the later part of October or in early November. **Masonic Districts 9 and 11**, for example, had their joint Lodge of Sorrow, while **Masonic Districts 1, 3, 5, 7 and 13** had their own joint activity, with RW Eugenio S. Labitoria, Deputy Grand Master, as guest of honor and speaker. He explained why we dedicate a special day for the widows and orphans of our deceased brethren.

Following are excerpts from RW Labitoria’s speech:

“Our departed brethren allotted time and opportunity for us, for Masons, for the Fraternity, which they could have, otherwise, made use of for probably a much better account with their families,

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now our widows and orphans.

“Thus, by our tokens, we pay our gratitude to our departed brethren, who could have better spent their time and opportunity with their families.

“In another level, however, we share with the widows and orphans the grief and loss of our brethren who have gone ahead of one and all to the other world. When they were alive, our brethren were generous to their families. They were good guardians and providers. They raised these kids who have now become stable and astute. They are on the way to becoming independent and with good morals. Thus, while we empathize with our widows and orphans with the loss of our brethren, we also stand as proud as they are in saluting our departed brethren for living good lives and for being good family members.

“For Masons, however, there is a higher level of appreciation about the special day set aside for remembering our departed brethren. For having meritoriously built up our Fraternity in general, and our Lodges in particular, steeped as they were in virtues and discipline, we owe our departed brethren a big moral debt. And this debt has to be paid up.

“There is no better way to pay up that great moral indebtedness than to live in accordance with the tenets and virtues our departed brethren nurtured and strengthened. Thus, in that sense, we conduct a Lodge of Remembrance, most importantly, to signify our commitment to follow the path traversed by our departed brethren.

“That path is one of moral rectitude and conduct and guided by a moral philosophy that promotes the general good of society, peace, welfare, development, happiness and security, not only among families, but also for the different peoples and nationalities, regardless of faith and political persuasion.

“I am sure that as I step down from this podium, each one of us will have raised his sense of commitment to emulate the lives of our departed brethren, whose widows and orphans we have the same commitment to look after.

“Though our brethren have gone to the great beyond, their memories shall forever be enshrined in our hearts, till time shall be no more.”

## **Cabletow Masonic Foundation, Inc.**

The Cabletow Masonic Foundation, Inc., the incorporators of which are VW Teodulo O. Yap, VW Victor A. Yu, VW Benvenuto C. Alegre, VW Rene Damian, VW Emil Dalican, WB George So. Bro. Roy Tan, and Bro. Samuel Salvador, was duly approved on August 28, 2001 by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

The aims of the CMFI are to (1) establish friendship and camaraderie among members; (2) promote and uphold the dignity of the Foundation; (3) encourage intellectual growth and maintain high levels of professionalism; (4) support charitable programs and projects not in conflict with the Foundation; (5) provide financial, social, medical

assistance to target beneficiaries, individual or institutions; (6) provide scholarship to less fortunate deserving students; and (7) accept donations, gifts, bequeaths in cash or in kind to sustain the objectives of the Foundation, provided, however, that these shall not accrue to the direct benefit of the members.

One of the first official functions of the CMFI was entering into an agreement with the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) relative to the grant of scholarships to ten qualified grantees. Each scholar shall be provided with, in addition to tuition and miscellaneous fees, a book subsidy of at least P500 per semester and stipend of P2, 500 per semester

## **Walana Visited by WB Villaruel's Descendants**

Alfredo Villaruel and four other descendants of the late WB Faustino Villaruel, one of the 13 martyrs of Bagumbayan (Luneta, now Rizal Park) and the founder of **Walana Lodge No. 13**, paid a visit to Walana on July 28, 2001.

The members of the Lodge warmly received them. VW Victor Yu, Grand Historian, and VW Hermeno Palamine briefed the visitors on the history of their ancestor and that of the Lodge.

The visitors having been introduced to each member of the Lodge, they were treated to a hearty dinner by MW Reynold S. Fajardo, PGM, GMH, Grand Secretary, at the Swiss-In Restaurant,

where they were given more information about the great Faustino Villaruel, their, great great grandfather.

## **Dagohoy #84 Honors Elected Brethren, Sisters**

Dagohoy Lodge No. 84 hosted a family and thanksgiving affair at the Dumaluan Beach Resort in the island of Panglao in honor of the brethren and wives of Masons who had been elected to various government positions.

Bro. Urbano Lagunay was elected city councilor; Sis Nuevas Montes, wife of VW Adriano Montes, PDDGM, likewise.

Sis. Amalia Tirol, Sis. Corazon Galbreath, and Sis. Godofredo Tirol, spouses of Bro. Galbreath and WM David Tirol, were elected provincial board members.

Present during the affair were VW King, VW Burt Fernandez, VW William Chu and other brethren from Cebu Lodges.

## **Kaduh Lodge #278 Celebrates 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

by WB Alawi A. Alhabsi

Kaduh Lodge No. 278 celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary in not-so-showy fashion. The Past Masters of the Lodge conducted the meeting proficiently, to the edification of the younger brethren, a significant number of whom were visitors from as far as Mati, Tagum, Davao City and Digos.

After the meeting, the brethren, together with their guests, retired to the exclusive

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Rosewood Plaza for fellowship cum program.

## Lodge Newsletters

Like many others, **Malinaw Lodge No. 25** has a monthly newsletter, the *Malinaw Freemason*. So does Cabanatuan Lodge No. 53, viz., *Ang Mandil*.

Malinaw Lodge, which meets at the Malinaw Foundation Bldg. in San Pablo City every 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month, was chartered by the Grand Oriente Español on Oct. 23, 1912 and given the number 340. Then it was chartered by the Grand Lodge of the Philippines on Feb. 14, 1917 and given the number 25.

**Cabanatuan Lodge No. 53**, as may be gleaned from the August 2001 issue of *Ang Mandil*, actively participated in the Dist. 29 bowling tournament held on four consecutive weekends at the Strike Master Bowling Lanes of the Manrio Hotel and Restaurant in Cabanatuan City.

On Sept. 1, it celebrated its 82<sup>nd</sup> anniversary at the Cabanatuan East Central School. VW Samuel P. Fernandez talked on the theme of the celebration: **Retracing the Widows and Orphans**.

## A Portrait of a Vigorous, Dynamic Lodge

by Rolf Somar Salocin, PM (#148)

I have not yet seen nor read the reports of WM Beethoven N. Sur for the last embers of year 2001, but on the basis

of the reports for April to August that he sent to our editorial office, I can submit that **Toril Lodge No. 208** is one of the most vigorous and dynamic Lodges in our jurisdiction.

The Lodge participated in the April-long "Save Mother Earth" Environmental Program which the national government sponsored in coordination with non-government organizations. It specifically submitted to the City Government of Davao a master plan for environmental protection. WM Sur represented the Lodge in the seminar-workshop on the preparation of the integrated area/community public safety plan for 2001, which was held at the Apo View Hotel.

The Lodge also participated in the Mangrove Tree Planting Project toward the end of April.

On May 7, the Lodge sponsored a night of classical music featuring **Patricia Lalonde**, an internationally known pianist based in Montreal, Canada. The event took place at the Royal Ballroom of the Royal Mandaya Hotel, which was filled with friends of Masons, each of whom shelled out P500 to help the Lodge push through with its various charity and community projects.

Also in May, with the approval of the Office of the City Mayor and the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), as well as the Davao City Water District, the brethren of the Lodge constructed and provided free drinking fountains to six public schools in the city, thereby preventing school children from buying unsanitized commercial water or juices

around the schools, which might bring about the start of diarrhea.

June was a very busy month for our Toril brethren. Aside from having a caucus and planning session to finalize other projects of their Lodge, they attended the June 9 Davao Masonic Foundation Inc., General Assembly called by VW Reynaldo I. Reyes, DDGM for Masonic District No. 44. They again attended the June 18 District Council Meeting, which was graced by the presence of RW Bert Pagotan, Junior Grand Warden.

On June 12, our Toril Brethren, as well as others in Masonic District No. 44, joined in the commemoration of the 103<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of Philippine Independence at the Rizal Park in Davao City. During the program, WM Beethoven Sur introduced the guest speaker, Atty. Ramon Edison C. Batacan, President, Integrated Bar of the Philippines, Davao City Chapter, and VW Reynaldo I. Reyes, DDGM, gave the closing remarks. The program was emceed by VW Antonio T. Uy, PDDGM.

On June 19, our Toril brethren as well as other Masons of Davao joined the City Government, the Order of the Knights of Rizal, the Davao Historical Society Foundation of the Philippines, the VFP Sons and Daughters Inc., the Philippine Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the Boy Scouts of the Phils. in commemorating the 140<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of our celebrated Brother Jose Rizal at the Rizal Park, Davao City.

On the day following, Toril Lodge No. 208 donated one set of computer to

Barangay 29-C.

On June 22, the Lodge turned over free drinking fountains to Quezon Elementary School and Daniel Aguinaldo National High School.

On June 26, WM Ben Sur and VW Antonio T. Uy represented the City of Davao and Toril Lodge No. 44 in the National Kilos Laya Laban sa Droga (KILL DROGA) organizational meeting at the Manila Hotel, in which President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was guest of honor and speaker. VW Uy was elected national president of KILL DROGA.

Our Toril brethren started July with having fellowship with members of their families at a mountain hot spring resort in Nabunturan, Comval Province, thereby strengthening ties among members of the growing Toril Family.

On the 4<sup>th</sup>, the officers and Past Masters had a caucus and planning session, thereby making the stated meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> worthwhile for the members.

On the 8<sup>th</sup>, the Lodge, in coordination with the Phil. Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Boy Scouts of the Phils., the City Environment and Natural Resources Office, and the Phil. Army, pushed through with its Coastal Clean-up Project.

On the 16<sup>th</sup>, the Lodge was amply represented in the District Council meeting presided over by VW Reynaldo I. Reyes, DDGM.

In the morning of the 21<sup>st</sup>, brethren of

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the Lodge visited Joy Solma, an indigent patient sponsored by them, at the hospital. In the afternoon, they actively participated in the District Friendship Day, in which Podomo Lodge No. 294 served as lead Lodge.

On the 25<sup>th</sup>, the officers gave Masonic education to Manuel Garcia, a petitioner for Masonic membership, who was accompanied by his wife. Garcia was initiated into Masonry on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

The brethren of the Lodge ended the month of July by carrying out a free anti-rabies vaccination project.

At the start of August, the officers had a caucus, once more making the stated meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> worthwhile for every members.

On the 4<sup>th</sup>, the Lodge brethren brought sunshine to Bro. Tito Pastoriza, who was then in the hospital.

On the 16<sup>th</sup>, the Lodge's conferral team held a practice session in preparation for the passing of Bro. Manuel Garcia to

Fellowcraft on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

On the 17<sup>th</sup>, the leaders of the Lodge gave Masonic education to Bro. Garcia, who was again accompanied by his wife.

Toril Lodge No. 208 was actively involved in the Multi-District Convention held at Tagum City on Aug. 24-25. In fact, their 26-member delegation was one of the biggest.

On the 27<sup>th</sup>, our Toril brethren inaugurated a drinking fountain at Magallanes Elementary School and formally turned it over to the school authorities.

On the 30<sup>th</sup> of August, the Lodge co-sponsored a Trainors Training Seminar in pursuit of its Drug Abuse Prevention and Control Program.

I'm not by any means batting for WM Beethoven Sur and Toril Lodge No. 208 to become the Most Outstanding Master and the Most Outstanding Lodge, respectively. But there can be no doubt that they deserve to be featured on the pages of this, the official publication of our Grand Lodge.

*Being a Mason means committing your life to God and showing concern for your fellowman.*

*With our example we can do much to encourage others to become better Masons.*

OUR GRAND TRESURER AND  
PAST GRAND MASTER IS Y'S MEN  
INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT FOR ASIA,  
INTERNATIONAL PRINT AWARDEE

**M**W John L. Choa, PGM and current Grand Treasurer of our Grand Lodge, is a man of many accomplishments, including the following: past president, Manila Downtown Y's Men's Club; past district governor, past regional director and incumbent member of the International Council of Y's Men International with headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland; governor, National Book Development Board (NBDB) under the Office of the President of the Republic of the Philippines; president, Printing Industries Association of the Philippines (PIAP); president, Grand Guild of Past Masters of the Philippines (GGPMP), Grand Lodge of the Philippines; president, Printing Industry Board Foundation, Inc. (PIBFI); chairman of the board of Maligaya Homes and trustee of Children Garden – both are operating as orphanages; vice-chairman of the board of the Deaf Evangelical Alliance Foundation (DEAF); and ambassador-at-large of the territory of Guam. He is also a lawyer; as such, he was once chosen Outstanding Alumnus of the Far Eastern University in the Field of Law.



We Masons in this jurisdiction extend our warmest felicitations to MW Choa for being the first Filipino to be elected to the position of the Y's Men International's President for Asia in 2002-2003. As Asia President, he is to hold office at the headquarters in Seoul, South Korea. Besides Korea, the following countries belong to his jurisdiction: Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Shri-Lanka and, of course, the Philippines.

We also extend our sincerest fraternal congratulations to him for having received from Regis J. Del Montagne, president of the Graphic Show Company and NPES, an International Presidential Print Award at the Print 01 held in Chicago, USA for his outstanding leadership in promoting the printing industry in the Philippines and worldwide. He is the only printer from Southeast Asia, so far, to have received such a prestigious international award. — eF.R.eN.

## Magnanimity Made Christmas Party for the Grand Lodge Staff Very Happy

**I**ndividual brethren, as well as Lodges and Masonic Districts, made the Christmas Party for the Grand Lodge Staff and their families a very happy affair due to their magnanimity. They therefore put into meaningful action the following significant statement of Ill. Bro. Albert Pike:

“Generosity and a liberal spirit make men to be humane and genial, open-hearted, frank, and sincere, earnest to do good, easy and contented, and well-wishers of mankind. ... Nor can any man any more be a Mason than he can be gentleman, unless he is generous, liberal, and disinterested. To be liberal, but only that which is our own; to be generous, but only when we have first been just; to give, when to give deprives us of a luxury or a comfort – this is Masonry indeed. (*Morals and Dogma*, p. 122).

The generous donors of cash or check include the following: B.I.R.T.H (c/o Hermie Palamine), VW Alex Ang; VW Ramoncito B. Piaña; MW Rosendo C. Herrera, PGM; VW Jaime V. Gonzales; RW Ricardo P. Galvez, SGW; Service Lodge No. 95; Araw Lodge No. 18; VW Vicente M. Macabidang; VW Isidro Banaria; VW Robert Palanca; VW Godofredo V. Siñeres, Jr; VW Noe dela Cerna; VW Hermogenes Arrayata; VW Epifanio R. Reyes; Silanganan Lodge No. 19; VW Peter U. Lim Lo Suy; VW Jun Suan; VW George Ang Dy Pay; Bro. Roseller L. Barinaga;

RW Eugenio S. Labitoria; VW Manalo Dybongco; VW Mike Ong; VW Frank Manalo; Bro. Danny L. Chan; WB James P. Best; VW Mar Remonquillo; Cagayan Valley Lodge No. 133; Bro. Toto S. Lubag; Bros. Andy Singson and Delton Sumabat; VW Joey Q. Soriano; VW Ernesto Cua; VW Ed Lupisan; Bro. George B. Fojas; VW Benedicto Madarang; WB George So (Ad Cubes); VW Jose Obillo; VW Rodrigo Y. Arandia; Bro. Vic V. Agustin; Bro. Teonilo A. Bala; Bro. Wilson T. Lim; Dr. Aurelio Mendoza Memorial Lodge No. 283; Bro.

Norberto T. Bana, Jr.; Bernardo A. Neri Memorial Lodge No. 214;

Ganano Lodge No. 313; Sinukuan Lodge No. 16; La Naval Lodge No. 269; VW Rodolfo H. Cardona, AGS; Bros. Josefino Cruz and Johnny Mirani; Bro. Nilo;

Bro. Rolly de Guzman; Bro. Rolando B. Matnog; Bro. Roger Braceros; Bro. Severo C. Domingo; Bro. Orly Mangapit; Bro. Jaime B. Hernandez; WB Saldy S. Santiago; Bro. Alex Ventura; Bro. Joel S. Ferrer; VW Bayani Tierro; Bro. Vic Vizcocho; Bro. Rico M. Riego de Dios; Bros. Jun Quijano and Manny Arce; Bro. E.B. Arquero; Bros. Dexter Corpus and Sito Bernabe.

VW Hermogenes Ebdane, Jr. gave a gift for the grand raffle.

Grand Master Nap Soriano, Past Grand Master Enrique L. Locsin, Bro. Roy Tan, VW Celso Viray, Bro. Sammy Laus, VW Benny Ty, Eastern Gold, Vw Roy B. Tan, WB Johnny Tan, WB Charlie Tang, Dan Daryll, Visual Printing, Rocha's Printing, and VW Gil F. Cruz gave one to four gifts for raffle.

Bro. Sammy Laus provided boxes of soft drinks; VW Marcelino Cruz, boxes of empanada; VW Benny Ty, SM gift cheque; WB Roy Tan; a bottle of wine; Bro. Hubert See, packs of assorted snacks; and Masonic District No. 3, 28 Orocan pales with groceries for the GLP employees.

The Grand Lodge staff are grateful to these brethren, Lodges and Masonic Districts for their generosity and disinterestedness. **Mabuhay silang lahat!**



## UNITED ACTION IS THE BEST WEAPON AGAINST KFR - NAKTAF CHIEF EBDANE

In the last nine months of 2001, a total of 76 kidnap-for ransom (KFR) incidents have been reported to the police. Out of the 76, 40 have already been solved. That's a crime solution efficiency rate of 52.6%.

Is KFR on the way out? At the height of the KFR wave in 1997, the national average was one KFR incident every 2.4 days. That was the time when KFR gangs went about their business with impunity. It seemed that when you opened the papers in the morning, you were sure to see another report on the latest KFR incident.

Three years later, in the year 2000, KFR incidents had gone down to one every 7 days. While the efforts to ferret out KFR gangs has been relentless, those who are at the forefront of the anti-KFR campaign say that prevention is the best cure.

### PREVENTION IS THE CURE

"United action is the best weapon to stop KFR once and for all" says newly designated NACC Anti-KFR Task Force (NAKTAF) Chief, Police Deputy Director General Hermogenes E. Ebdane Jr.

"Our experience shows that when people and police work together, the victim is rescued and suspects are arrested. When the case is reported immediately, we have a 99% solution rate."

But the NAKTAF Chief is more emphatic about the big role that prevention can play in finally getting rid of KFR.

"Time and again, we have told the potential victims, particularly the ones in the Filipino-Chinese community, that they should invest in security personnel and systems. The cost of a few hundred thousands is definitely more affordable than paying millions in ransom money", said Ebdane.

### WHY KFR HAS GROWN

Having studied the crime of KFR and the mindset of the KFR criminal, NAKTAF Chief Ebdane has this to say:

"The growth of KFR in the last seven years can be traced to two things. One, the reluctance of victims' and their families to cooperate with the police that has made it easier for ransom to be demanded and collected.

"Two, the large financial gain is very attractive compared to the risk involved. With just one KFR case, an entire group can take care of their needs for a few months, giving them time to plan out their next operation. With united action, we can make KFR very dangerous for the criminals."

What can the average Filipino earner do to avoid being a KFR victim? The NAKTAF Chief has five must do tips to avoid being a KFR victim.

"Prevention through vigilance and awareness on how KFR gangs work is the best weapon against KFR," said Ebdane.

### FIVE ANTI-KFR TIPS

The tips are practical,

if sometimes bordering on the paranoid, but paranoia is better than paying ransom, don't you think?

Tip #1. Vary your day-to-day routine, especially travel routes and hang-out places. "Once you become predictable, you set yourself up to be a target," explained Ebdane.

Tip #2. Appoint a security officer within the family. "One member must act as the security officer and remind everyone about precautions, as well as make sure that some basic systems are in place and working."

Tip #3. Report any suspicious characters or events to the barangay patrol or police immediately. "Act on your instincts, if things don't look or feel right, call or go to your nearest police or barangay station."

Tip #4. Organize neighborhood vigilance networks. "The more eyes that watch out for each other's safety, the safer everyone will be. When neighbors are alert and able to share the responsibility of keeping your families safe, KFR groups will not be able to operate freely."

Tip #5. Learn to take evasive actions. "Knowing what to do in the face of forcible abduction is a must for everyone. Taking the initiative and being ready for the worst is good preparation for whatever may come," Ebdane said.

### COMMUNITY ACTION IS KEY TO PREVENTION OF KFR

The NAKTAF Chief is quick to emphasize that prevention goes hand-in-hand with strong community action. "The bottomline in our fight against KFR is United Action. By this we mean, people and police working together, working as one."

"If we are vigilant, the snatching of potential victims becomes more difficult. When we share the responsibility of fighting KFR, the criminals will not be able to operate as easily.

"With initiative in building our communities to stop KFR and other crimes, there is every reason to believe that we will succeed," the NAKTAF Chief said with optimism and confidence.

### NAKTAF IN ACTION

NAKTAF operations tap the strengths of the Philippine National Police, the Armed Forces of the Philippines, the National Bureau of Investigation and other government agencies involved in the anti-KFR campaign. With area offices in the three main islands, NAKTAF takes on the role as lead agency against the 78 KFR groups all over the Philippines.

### CITIZEN ACTION NOW

How can you help? "Report incidents of KFR to NAKTAF and other trusted institutions. The sooner you report, the greater our chances to succeed," Ebdane added.

"Be vigilant, get involved, take a stand and work together with us to kick out KFR."



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*MW Napoleon A. Soriano, Grand Master; with MW Pablo Ko, Jr., P.G.M., RW Domingo Chua, and VW Hermeno Palaminic with officers and members of the Grand Lodge of China on the occasion of the 48th Annual Communication of the said Grand Lodge in Taiwan.*

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