

# THE MAGAT LEAF ABROAD



A newsletter publication for the NVHS-NVGCHS Alumni Association

PUBLISHED SEMI-ANNUALLY

Fall 2010 ISSUE

## AMERICAN DREAM ALIVE IN L.A.

### 2011 REUNION COMING UP

*American Dream* is the chosen theme for our 2011 reunion. After the successful NVHS/NVGCHS Alumni Abroad Grand Reunion held in Toronto last July 2009, the North American Batch 1978 accepted the task of organizing the next upcoming reunion for August 2011.

A majority of the alumni voted the “City of Angels” as the venue, so Los Angeles, U.S.A. here we come! Come one, come all! We’ll have great fun!

#### Mark this down on your calendar:

**August 5 – 6, 2011**

**Hilton Hotel Universal City  
555 Universal Hollywood Drive  
Los Angeles, California**

- Arlyne Tiam-Coronel, Class '78

Visit our website [www.nvgchstoronto2009.com](http://www.nvgchstoronto2009.com) for more details, forms and updates:

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#### QUOTE

*“There can be no friendship without confidence, and no confidence without integrity.”*

- Samuel Johnson



### ATTENDEES WORE DOWN DJ

Virulent it was and definitely hot, hot, hot! On Saturday, July 11, 2009, the dance floor at the Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel in Toronto was packed. Hotel staff cranked up the air conditioner as the fever rose and the contagion spread. Even the rhythmically challenged such as I was afflicted with the hippy-hippy shakes.

While there was no competition as to who were the most alive, whether the 60’s, 70’s or 80’s batch, each class was represented on the dance floor from beginning to end. If truth be known, there were some dancing queens from each decade, namely, Jo Jacinto-Elsayed, Class 66, Glenda Herrera-Gow, Class 73, Mary-Ann Dulay, Class 76, Maribel Farrales and Dolly Tom, both Class 82. Dancing kings – would you believe Delfin Perez, Class 71 got the “Most Improved Dancer” award? The Frando brothers, Mamerto, Jr., Class 69 and Enrico, Class 74 were also impressive.

Mind you, we would have loved to see more of the 50’s graduates on the dance floor – we may have to set it up with the next DJ to include mellower dance mixes.

One plaintive comment was “there was no line dancing...” now, I can’t be sure of this, since at the Friday reception, it seemed like every tune played was fit for line dancing as each time I looked at the dance floor, line dancers ruled. But no matter, Saturday night fever was totally infectious. – Rose Hombrebueno-Penhale, Class 69

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# **EDITORIAL**

## ***The Reluctant Donor***

Tsunamis, earthquakes, floods, oil spills, fires, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, ice storms, what else is there? Famine. Wars. Pestilence. End of the world.

Then there's UNICEF, Red Cross, PETA, Wildlife Federation, United Way, SPCA, Cancer Society, Heart and Stroke, the church, the hospital, the little league, even the local grocery store, etc. etc. Every organization is after us and our wallets. To give or not to give, that is the question. So why should we?

People come to our door and we respond with a deadpan face, "I give at the office." Do we really? Do we sit in front of the TV and listen to one organization or another entreating us to donate and speaking in our head or out loud – why should we give when the administration of those donations cost more than what is actually delivered to the needy? Why should we give when the country is so corrupt and there is no accountability?

Holy books of all religions talk about the human need to give and who benefits most from the charitable deed – the giver. "Charity begins at home." When one doesn't have a job and the family needs every coin they have, doesn't this apply? What about when one is almost on the verge of hunger struggling hard to make ends meet and ego-be-damned finding oneself at the door of a food bank? Giving has to be difficult for those who face a need themselves. If the need is greater at home, why do we have to give? "Have to..." is that guilt speaking?

Look around. What can we give? Perhaps, there is not much money to give. One can find things to give or to do if so inclined. The gift need not be BIG, little gifts count, too. Size doesn't matter. It is the Love that accompanies the gift that counts. Take stock. A food bank doesn't dictate how much dry goods one can donate – a homeless shelter would take clean, used clothes. Even old magazines are accepted at a retirement home. Gather those beer and wine bottles to sell – money enough to buy a meal for the hungry. There are those who give – whether it's a cup of coffee and a donut to the panhandler at the street corner forsaking their own thirst or hunger at that moment. Then there are those who literally give the coat off their back to someone who's out in the cold. Let's sit back and ask ourselves if we really need 6 coats, a dozen pairs of shoes, 4 pairs of winter gloves, etc., etc.

Volunteer. The gift of service is welcome, too. Even a simple, random act of kindness lights up the world especially that of the receiver and a smile from whom lights up yours as well. Keep Meals-on-wheels rolling along if you drive. Adopt an elderly person who lives alone and visit them. Teach a child to read. Be a listener, be a friend.

Big organizations send out solicitations or pledge forms asking for a stated amount of donation. It never fails – my mail box yields at least a dozen or more per year. I honestly do not give to everyone that asks. But when I do, I look at how much room is there in my bank account – can it wait? If there is any hesitation and I find myself mulling over pros and cons, I remind myself about true giving. Many times I have asked the same questions. Yes, I am the

reluctant donor. I used to think there should be conditions to giving. But is this truly giving?

A gift should be given whole-heartedly – no strings attached. No questions asked. No expectations of recognition or appreciation. A quiet giver gets a quiet nod from God. The unconditional giver is the one with the fullest heart. If we are impelled to give, not duty bound, let's only wish that it will be for the good of the whole.

*-Rose Hombrebueno-Penhale, Class '69*

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## ***The University of Hard Knocks***

Ever heard of the Hard Knocks University (HKU)? This university predates all other institution of learning. The universal force designed it for us to learn the higher qualities of life. Qualities like kindness, integrity, responsibility, respect of resources, giving freedom to others, acceptance, humility, divine love, etc.

Decades ago and to this day, countless Filipinos left the Philippines for a better life in North America. It was the Land of Promise then for most people from all over the world. Getting a job in the profession that one was trained for was easy. To those willing, work was found. People with creativity and imagination contributed to the growth and progress of the country. While people were "escaping" Hard knocks U from their own countries, they came to North America, only to get enrolled at the same university. This time, at another stage of learning.

Immigrants, Filipinos included acquired properties and material things, trappings of the new life in the new country. We now became Americans or Canadians with endless opportunities that made our dreams come true. Young families flourished and were nurtured in a new world to enjoy freedom. Travelling to the "old country" and other parts of the world became a lifestyle. Looking back now, one may say, "Yes, those were the good old days."

The opportunity for a good life worked closely with HKU. Challenges in terms of difficulties, perhaps in the form of health problems, racial discrimination, family dysfunctions arising from cultural change, etc. are always around for a reason - to face our own unique learning experiences to once more lift us into yet another level of understanding Life. Lessons unlearned from the old country are repeated. Pursuit of happiness, the great American dream is the goal of most people but pain and suffering could be the price. Experiences "good or bad," give us the wisdom to go forward or change direction. Hardship teaches the best. Many of us came from families with meager means. Our parents studied at HKU, and had made them strong, wise, caring, responsible and respectful of people, property and the bounties of nature.

Today, the "Promised Land" that we now live in is no longer as robust as it used to be. The economic situation in North America and the world-at-large is almost at a standstill, and the global political situation is fragile. Many have lost jobs, homes, are in poor health or just living a lonely life. Worry causes stress. Negative attitude brought about by "implants" from the media, causes us to be more depressed. We espouse a victim mentality and engage in the "blaming syndrome" exempting ourselves from responsibility. Are we failing at Hard Knocks U? A few passed and survived. Having been there, they may have acquired a

healthy philosophy and positive attitude because they now have a better grasp of life. We can learn from them.

HKU makes you and me better persons. Despite hardship, we can carry a healthy attitude of acceptance and perseverance to work our way out from any difficulty. Strive to maintain integrity, faith in the universal force that governs our lives and always have a sense of humour. A wise quote I saved some time ago goes like this:

*Don't let the pain of one season destroy the joy of all the rest and don't judge life by one difficult season. Instead, aspire to inspire before you expire!*

Let me quote nuggets of wisdom from the Dalai Lama on how to become a better person. He said:

*"What really is important to me is your behaviour in front of your peers, family, work, community and in front of the world"*

*"Remember, the universe is the echo of our actions and our thoughts".*

*"The law of action and reaction is not exclusively for physics. It is also a human relation. If I act with goodness, I will receive goodness. If I act with evil, I will get evil."*

Regarding our pursuit of happiness, he said:

*Being happy is not a matter of destiny. It is a matter of options."*

Finally he said:

*"Take care of your Thoughts because they become Words.  
Take care of your Words because they will become Actions.  
Take care of your Actions because they will become Habits.  
Take care of your Habits because they will become your Character.  
Take care of your Character because they will form your destiny,  
And your destiny will be your life..."*

Indeed, Hard Knocks University is designed to raise our understanding of the Divine plan - to learn how to love the way God loves us. So, strive to live in the now, loving all life, taking one step at a time. We might just make the grade.

- Azucena Kurz Class '54

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### **QUOTE**

*"Whether you realize it or not, you have the Power to be successful by helping others to succeed"*

-David Cottrell

### **Things to do in L.A. for free**

#### **#1**

Watch a Television Show Taping: If you have an advance reservation and some time, you can be in the studio audience for selected sitcoms and game shows.

#### **#2**

Rodeo Drive: The shops are expensive, but window-shopping is free and so is the parking.

#### **#3**

**Walk on the Beach:** Los Angeles beaches are a great place for walking, people-watching and relaxing.

## **PERSPECTIVE**

### **"All's well that ends well"**

If all of the positive comments were of any indications, the three-day affair of the NVGCHS Grand Reunion held in Toronto from July 10-12, 2009 was a roaring success. The reunion was successful in gathering alumni from all corners of the globe. It was successful in offering activities of fun and good times. As well, it was successful in bringing up matters that are important in the viable existence of the association. The reunion was equally successful in promulgating respect for our elders and leaders and inspiring hope and optimism for our young and dynamic leaders-to-be. For all these, I commend and salute the Toronto organizing committee of the NVGCHS 8<sup>th</sup> Grand Reunion in 2009.

I am now convinced that NVGCHS alums know how to party and have a good time. Definitely, new acquaintances blossomed and friendships renewed if not strengthened. To my amusement and delight, NVGCHS alums can dance! And more! Move they can, and so they did the cha-cha, bachata, jive and waltz. They did the disco, hip-hop and mastered the line dance. They even surprised us with folksy and traditional with their exquisite rendition of the Ifugao dance by Tony Abellera, Class 60 and wife, Mila, as only Vizcayenos can. And as if that were not enough, in keeping with the theme of Hollywood North, we were entertained by Ofelia Borje-Blanco, a stand-up comic, singers – Gian Carla Coronel, daughter of Arlyne, Jess Hombrebueno, Class 67 and Esther Eugenio, Class 57 and a bevy of runway models! Glam was surely the order of the night. Alums and guests were dressed to the nines. I never thought of Vizcayenos as glamorous but they all sparkled at the Gala night.



I had expected short speeches but when it came extemporaneously, candidly and warmly from a pioneer of the association, it was a welcome sight and sound. Points were expressed and well taken, I'll say. For future leaders, take note.

I missed the bus ride to Niagara Falls because I drove my car like some others. I hoped the alums found the Niagara Falls outing/picnic a pleasant adventure. Niagara Falls is after all one of Canada's jewels.

My wish was that the alumni had discovered the city of Toronto on their own leisure time. I have a revelation for all...you can find sweet lanzones in Toronto. If that won't let you come back, I don't know what will!

See you all in L.A.

- Rommy Tumaliuan, Class 66

### **WANTED**

Your opinions, anecdotes, favourite jokes, quotes, recipes, family events, pictures, and anything at all you wish to share with the Alumni abroad. Send to [suzie\\_fred@kurzdesign.com](mailto:suzie_fred@kurzdesign.com) or [rosepen13@gmail.com](mailto:rosepen13@gmail.com) or by mail to Fe Cabanting

# LET'S TALK

Dear Committee:

I cannot stop saying how hard you guys all worked for this successful reunion. I have emailed my batch 79 that this is by far the best reunion I have been compared to the previous two I attended. In fairness, the other 2 were also good.

**One little suggestion:** The alumni picture taking should be done earlier next time as there were a lot of alumni who left early. It was 11:15 pm when this was done.

Thanks for your leadership and kudos to the rest.

-Ofelia Borje Blanco, Class 79

(Good one, Ofelia, passing it along to the next committee. Ed)

I had a great time! Job well done by the reunion committee! Big thanks to all!

-Marilex Guinto-Bucoy, Class 82

Our group had so much fun, despite our number (3), could've been 4. We had another classmate who was there but Teng & I didn't get to meet her at all because she was not seated with us on the assigned table for class 73. Her name is Edna Barbero-Wilson. I've been talking to her on the phone way before the San Diego reunion, trying to convince her to join the reunion but she never came. Now that she finally attended in Toronto, I couldn't believe I missed her!!! Overall, we had soooooo much fun!!! Congratulations to you and your team for a job well done!! Thanks to you, Toronto.

-Glenda Herrera-Gow, Class 73

(A number of issues from Glenda's post are included in the list of recommendations to the next Reunion Committee. Ed)

I had a good time the whole weekend I was there. Good job. See you in LA in 2011.

-Fe Cacal-McGill, Class 82

The Reunion was a blast!!! Job well done. Totally impressed. Soooo glad we came. Will post PICS soon.

-Josie Jacinto-Elsayed, Class 66

Thank you so much for all your hard work. I had a memorable reunion because I got connected with 3 of my barkadas and met other batch mates that I did not personally know. I touched base with old friends and made new friends. This reunion was above my expectations. Thank you for having the souvenir program available as soon as we got there. Also having the gala pictures available already on the NVGCHS website is commendable. Thank you for all the techie persons on deck to do this and those responsible for the souvenir program. Please keep the website open even after this reunion.

**One suggestion:** Please add more "sweet or slow dance" for our senior citizens. I noticed they were sitting majority of the time because of mostly modern and fast dance tunes being played. Thanks again and God Bless to all.

-Gigi (milamin) Gallardo-Campbell. Class 77

(I like this...not quite senior yet but I can't keep up like I used to.-ed)

Thanks to the committee for doing such a good job in organizing the reunion here in Toronto, and also to all the contributors and to all the volunteers. My family enjoyed it very much. Job well done. Mabuhay !!!

-Julieta Bonares - Keyes, Class 71

'Twas my 3rd reunion and was the best ever yet I've attended. Really made my summer perfect, seeing my batch after 2 decades and more. I felt 20 yrs. younger, too, except that some kids are calling me grandma so I was awakened. Matanda na pala ako! Ha!ha!ha! See you all in 2011, that's for sure!

- Monica Dulay, Class 70

We have been to several of our reunions but this is so far the best experience we had. The number of attendees was not so great but there was more intimacy between the old and the young not only because we came from the same school but being Vizcayanos. Though we are only two from class '64 there was so much fun and joy from this reunion as compared from the previous. Salute to you all Torontonians for a job well done. Thank you very much for all the fun.

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-Andres (Andy) Gurat, Jr., Class

Got the Souvenir program the other day. Been going through it thoroughly. Great job! It looked like everyone enjoyed themselves.

- E. C., Class ???

I enjoy reading your articles and I believe that you're doing God's work . - Donald Maddumba

We wanted so much to join the NVHS reunion in Toronto, but it coincided with the Phil. Nurses Association of America National Convention in Baltimore, Maryland.

I concur with your disappointment and disgust to the Town Hall sight of a wet market. It surely defaced the beautiful sight that we were used to. Instead of improving the area, it seemed like the Town went backwards into an uglier sight. If there is a petition on this, count us in.

Keep up the good work you are doing for the Newsletter.

Best regards,

Tita Chit ('54) & Tito Bert ('55)

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## For love of poetry....

### SLEEPING IN THE FOREST

I thought the earth  
remembered me, she  
took me back so tenderly, arranging  
her dark skirts, her pockets  
full of lichens and seeds. I slept  
as never before, a stone  
on the riverbed, nothing  
between me and the white fire of the stars  
but my thoughts, and they floated  
light as moths among the branches  
of the perfect trees. All night  
I heard the small kingdoms breathing  
around me, the insects, and the birds  
who do their work in the darkness. All night  
I rose and fall, as if in water, grappling  
with a luminous doom. By morning  
I had vanished at least a dozen times  
into something better.

(Mary Oliver is a winner of the 1983 Pulitzer Prize for Poetry. She is the Banister Writer-in-Residence at Sweet Briar College in Virginia)



## SPOTLIGHT



### 'X' Marks the spot for Class 82

A high school class reunion provides an excellent venue to catch up with classmates, reminisce the old high school days, share new memories and look forward to what may be in store for us.

Some 6-years ago, in one of our mini-reunions, Class 82 decided to organize into a group with a purpose. For the "cool effect", we called ourselves Batch 82X. The bigger and real reason was to take away the barrier that divided us in high school - the sections we belonged. Now we all belong to SECTION X.

Did you know that we have an organizing committee that meets monthly and does the ground work in the name of batch 82x? The core group has ballooned to about 20 people to date. From the initial funds provided by Maribel Farrales to open a batch bank account in 2004, the pot slowly grew with the generous contributions from local and overseas classmates.

Fund raising activities are conducted to sustain the account in order to help batch mates in cases of emergencies, dire medical needs, educational expenses, and for abuloys. About 100k in cash were raised through raffles and solicitations.

Project 82X was started as an educational support fund that lends money, interest-free to help batch mates cope with educational expenses for their kids and/or for themselves. Our batch also conducts dental outreach programs, providing free clinics to help those less fortunate and unable to afford dental services. Thanks to the dentists in the group, Pinky and Isang, and the solid core group that mobilizes the batch and takes care of logistics. Our current officers include: Doc (President), Doming (Vice-President), Mary Ann (Secretary), Weng,(Treasurer), Isang and Pinky (Auditors), Lani (Asst. Secretary). They are ably supported by Bobby, Lourdes, Malou, Mila, Emily, Remy, Mercy, Joseph, Nestor, Randy, etc.

Last holiday season, the group took to the streets of Nueva Vizcaya to search for batch-mates in need and hand them care-packages containing some used clothes, grocery items, and a few bucks. An act of kindness that put smiles back into our classmates faces. The batch wishes to make this a yearly activity.

Kudos to my batch mates! In analogy to a popular TV commercial in this part of the world, material things carry a monetary value, but the time you devote to our batch projects and your selfless acts of kindness are PRICELESS!  
— Joli Gauuan, Class 82

### ***Tawa naman diyan...***

"Nanay! Nanay! Nakatipid ako ng uno singkwenta."

"Nakatipid? Paano?" tanong ng nanay.

"Aba'y 'di ako sumakay ng dyip.

Sumabay lang ako ng takbo.

Kaya't nakatipid ako ng one-fifty!"

"Bobo ka pala, eh. Kung taxi ang sinabayan mo,

'Di mas malaki ang natipid mo!"

## HEALTH MATTERS



### Going bananas: there are a bunch of reasons bananas are good for your health

Next time you browse through the produce department, grab a bunch of bananas--make that a lot of bananas. The yellow, crescent-shaped fruit offers loads of vitamins and such versatility that it's easy to find delicious ways to indulge.

The average banana contains 451 milligrams of potassium. Potassium is an essential mineral for heart function and normal blood pressure, so eating plenty of this grin-shaped fruit could help prevent heart attack, stroke, and heart arrhythmias, giving you something to really smile about. Plus, potassium helps your body maintain normal fluid and electrolyte balances in the cells. Bananas also contain 25 percent of the recommended daily allowance (RDA) for vitamin B6, necessary for producing antibodies and red blood cells as well as aiding in the metabolism of fat. In addition, vitamin B6 serves as an immunity booster. So, this brightly colored fruit strengthens your armor against infectious diseases.

This mushy food associated with primates also protects against cancer, and that's no monkey business. With each average-sized banana, you ingest about 15 percent of the RDA for vitamin C, one of the strongest defenses against many forms of cancer, such as lung, pancreatic, cervical, breast, bladder, and stomach cancer, just to name a few.

Containing only about a half a gram of fat and 105 calories each, bananas enhance your health, not your waistline. So chowing down on this delectable fruit could actually keep you trim. In addition, they provide about two grams of cholesterol reducing fiber.

Although bananas are just about the perfect food, the best reason to eat them is their scrumptious, sweet taste. With astounding versatility, bananas can be eaten raw, cooked, or frozen. Add mashed bananas to pancakes, muffin mix, quick breads, and cakes for moisture and natural sweetness. Peel bananas, break them in thirds, and freeze them so they are ready to toss in the blender with orange juice and frozen berries for a luscious smoothie. Blend them with water for a yummy milk that children will love, containing all eight essential amino acids. Buy them in bulk, because the riper they are, the tastier they are in cooking and freezing.

Bananas are perfect any time of day. Enjoy banana brunch foods for breakfast, sip a banana smoothie with a peanut butter and banana sandwich lunch, grab a golden bunch of nutrition for a snack, and bring out the banana bread for dessert after dinner. Any wonder people are going bananas?

This yellow wonder fruit is loaded with so much delicious nutrition that it packs a powerful ... bunch. Enjoy them for the taste. Enjoy them for your health. Stock up today and enjoy them anytime.  
(Published in *Vibrant Life*, Jan. 2003 by Denis' Thomas)

## **TRIED, TESTED AND TRUE**

*From Arlyne's Kitchen...*

### **KUTCHINTA**

#### **Ingredients**

1 1/2 Cup water  
1 Cup rice flour  
3/4 cup sugar  
1 tsp lye solution

#### **Directions**

Combine sugar, lye and water. Bring to a boil. Let mixture cool. Add rice flour and stir until smooth. Pour onto kutchinta molds and steam for 15 mins. Serve with grated coconut.

#### **QUOTE**

*"I had the blues because I had no shoes until upon the street, I met a man who had no feet." ~Ancient Persian Saying*

## **DIWANG KAYUMANGGI**

*(A native Pampangueno song)*

Atin ku pung singsing, metung yang timpukan  
Amana ke iti kang Indung Ibatan  
Sangkan keng sininup king metung a kaban  
Mewala ya iti e ku amalayan  
Ing sukal ning lub ku susukdul king banua  
Mikurus kung gamat babo ning lamesa  
Ninu ma'ng menakit king singsing kung mana  
Kalulung pusu ku manginu ya kaya

#### **QUOTE**

*"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."*

*-Oliver Wendell Holmes*

**NEWSLETTER STAFF  
POSITIONS AVAILABLE.**

## **THE MAGAT LEAF ABROAD**

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I am an alumni/friend of NVHS-NVGHS and would like to subscribe to the Magat Leaf Abroad Newsletter. Enclosed is a cheque/money order for \$10 as my donation.

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