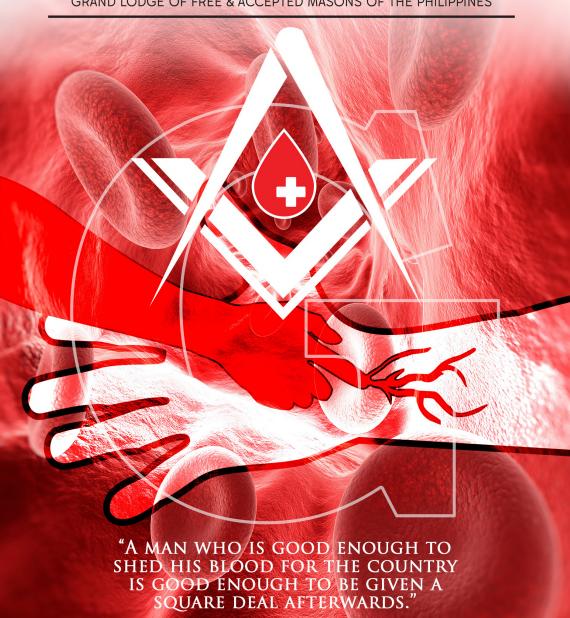


THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MOST WORSHIPFUL
GRAND LODGE OF FREE & ACCEPTED MASONS OF THE PHILIPPINES



THEODORE ROOSEVELT

SURIGAO LA SUERTE CORPORATION

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ENGR. RUEL D. MOMO

President



FROMTHE GRAND ORIENTAL CHAIR

MW Hgapito S. Suan, Jr.

My Dear Brethren:

Like the rest of the country, we have been pre-occupied in coping with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. As we learn to adjust our business to go hand in hand with health and safety standards, we have opened our lodges cautiously and on a voluntary basis. Those lodges with health issues and those located in high-risk quarantine areas remain closed. But those with urgent business needing formal approval in open lodges were allowed to conduct stated meetings. Rather than living in suspended animation, we are trying to live with the COVID virus with all safety consideration in mind. We have to accept that this situation will remain with us for a long time, or until a vaccine against the virus is developed.

Along this line, we have cancelled the annual election of lodge officers this year and extended the term of the incumbent officers until the next term. Mandatory COVID-19 protocols are now being strictly applied in all lodge meetings and activities. Continuing masonic education is being held by the Senior Grand Lecturer on a monthly basis. The IMES has also launched its courses on-line. We have digitized some of our important historical records and made them accessible to the members through the internet. And to lessen dependence on physical attendance in the Grand Lodge, we have assigned official email address for all lodges in the jurisdiction and directing them to officially communicate to and from the Grand Lodge electronically. Pretty soon, we shall launch our e-payment system so that the required annual dues and other payments can likewise be done on-line.

So far, about 20 brethren succumbed to the virus, on top of the many losses we suffered as a result of other illness. Still, the charitable spirit of the brethren is not dampened and we continue to dispense help at a time when it is most needed. Various lodges renewed their various charity programs to their communities. Masons in the frontline services continue to man their posts. They are the doctors and medical professionals, police, military, and civil servants in various fields performing services amidst daily

exposure to the virus. We see our brethren-leaders in government laboring without let-up to ameliorate the conditions of the affected public.



We live in trying times. And the confluence of the pandemic and severe climate disturbances is exhausting needed resources. Foremost of this is blood supply which is getting scarce due to the unusual demand exacerbated by the current health crisis. Early this year, the Grand Lodge partnered with an NGO engaged in blood services - Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc., to organize blood-letting drives sponsored by our various masonic lodges and participated in not only by masons but also by friends and supporters. The Grand Lodge has served as the venue of successful blood collecting activities and we need to sustain this effort through the scheduling of frequent blood drives.

I urge all DDGMs and Worshipful Masters to consider adopting this simple yet very crucial blood-letting drive as part of the regular charitable activities of your lodges and districts. Let us convince friends and supporters to become life donors through the sharing of their life-giving blood. Let us help save lives and receive the only true wages of a master mason – the inner satisfaction and accomplishment of having discharged our duty to promote brotherly love, relief, and truth.

Grand Lodge of the Philippines City of Manila October 30, 2020



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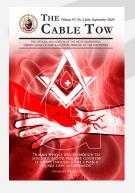
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About the Cover:

The compass and the square are ancient craft symbols associated with Freemasonry. A drop of blood is set inside the two intertwining icons alluding to the central theme of this TCT issue. The letter G with its deep meaning among Masons has been enlarged, denoting its importance beyond the Craft, and the magazine's message: Goodness is for all of Humanity (not just for Masonry). Underneath are two hands of different colors, the manual crimson on the left shares its blood to the white hand on the right. The hands join as finger touches the wrist where the life-saving substance is introduced. It depicts a powerful line from Rafael Zulueta Da Costa's poem Like the Molave, "INFUSE THE VIBRANT RED, INTO OUR THIN ANEMIC VEINS " part of the author's call for a renewed dynamism among Filipinos akin to the actions of the heroes of old.

At the bottom is a blood quote by US President and Mason Theodore Roosevelt. - JHW Santiago / EIC

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Editor's Page











This is the RED Issue. Collated literature from around the jurisdiction, some of them related by blood (pun intended). It features masonic events and activities from the 3rd Quarter together with reports throughout the year, but it is the blood-themed articles that give out the crimson shade.

Relevant articles abound: The JULY that gave birth to Rizal's La Liga Filipina and Bonifacio's Katipunan is Blood Donation Month as well. Fiery AUGUST associ-

ated with Filipino heroism & nationalism also marks the 170th Birth Anniversary of Marcelo H. Del Pilar - Father of Philippine Journalism and Philippine Freemasonry. SEPTEMBER highlights the Opening of the Malolos Congress and fondly remembers the masonic life of our late Worshipful Brother Romeo Gregorio N. Macasaet, MD - this being his birth month.

Joining stories from the Grand Lodge and our Grand Master, are Regular Columns and news-worthy articles. In these pages are found more than 40 lodges and different masonic groups. Blood service institutions are also featured. This collection will help readers keep track of how Masons continue their labors during the Corona Virus Pandemic.

Despite maintaining the Cable Tow folio to 100 pages, not all submitted articles made it to Issue No.2. They are not discarded but deferred for the next Installments where more stories are equally welcome.

The color red gives emphasis on the solemn act of donating blood. As COVID-19 disrupted our way of life, many bloodletting events were cancelled thus reducing further the already low blood reserves in hospitals and blood banks. Now is another opportunity for Charity & Humility. Reading through the next pages can show us how.

As Filipino Heroes of old paid for our country's future with their blood, we encourage both Masons and non-Masons of today to share theirs – 450 cc to be exact, for the future of those who need it. Reflecting on Rafael Zulueta Da Costa's **LIKE THE MOLAVE**:

Not yet, Rizal, not yet. The land has need

Of young blood -- and, what younger than your own,

As Masonry have existed in the past unto the present, so is Heroism ever found upon the Level of Time, and by grace of the GAOTU, our generation is FREE to practice them both TODAY

O souls and spirits of the martyred brave, arise! Arise and scour the land! Shed once again Your willing blood! Infuse the vibrant red Into our thin, anemic veins, until We pick up your Promethean tools and, strong, Out of the depthless matrix of your faith in us,

Read on Brethren. Read on and be inspired. SALUD!!!

Pasig City, November 2, 2020

WB J. Harold W. Santiago, PM Editor-In-Chief



"Of all that is written, I love only what a person has written with his own blood" - Friedrich Nietzsche

Many people are terrified at the sight of blood because it entails injury or even death. Well in fact blood is a symbol of life. As a Physician, I am perpetually fascinated by its structure and function. Blood is the lifeline of a human being as it supports many vital functions. It is no argument that a malady in the blood or any of its components may lead to illness or death. Yet there is a great scarcity of blood in our country. Each of us have blood to share but not all of us are conscious about it, and some do not even care about sharing it. This red-colored body fluid which is taken for granted but so precious to those in need must be emphasized as one of our priorities as Masons. A salute - to the people especially Masons who continuously and selflessly donate their blood for the benefit of others. But for now, let us try to understand it more in order to be able to digest its importance and inculcate the need for blood nowadays.

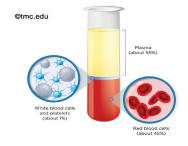
Blood

Blood cells develop from blood stem cells and are formed in the bone marrow. About 7-8% of a person's body weight is blood. An average-sized man and woman have approximately 12 and 9 pints of blood, respectively. Blood has four main components: plasma, red blood cell (RBC) or erythrocytes, white blood cell (WBC) or leukocytes and platelets or thrombocytes.

Four main components of blood:

1) Plasma, it is the liquid component of the blood which is responsible for the trans-

port of nutrients, wastes, antibodies, proteins and hormones. It is the yellowish to brownish liquid that is seen when the blood is left to clot outside of the body.



2) RBCs are the most numerous cells in the blood. Blood is red in color due to the hemoglobin found in RBCs. As we all know, oxygen is very important to humans and the protein hemoglobin carries oxygen from the lungs to the cells of the body and which in turn carries carbon dioxide, the byproduct of the cells, into the lungs for exhalation. They live approximately 120 days and are constantly replenished.



3) WBCs are much fewer than RBCs. Dubbed as 'soldiers of the body'; they are responsible for our body's protection from infection. There are many types of WBCs but the most common types include the neutrophils and the lymphocytes.



4) Platelets are not actually cells but are cell fragments. Platelets are responsible for the blood clotting process. They plug any injury in the blood vessels to control any bleeding and also serve as a framework for coagulation to occur. They also serves as a scaffolding for new tissues to form and so, very vital in the healing process.



Blood problems

Just imagine what trouble it may give a person if any abnormalities arise with any of the blood components. Just to give some very basic examples: A problem in blood protein contained in the plasma may lead to edema, a problem in the RBC may lead to anemia, a problem in the WBC may lead to severe infection while a problem in the platelet may lead to bleeding problems. These are just simple

and basic problems just to name a few that will be encountered if a blood problem develops. Much more of a dilemma if severe pathologies in the blood are acquired such as malignancies and other dyscrasias.

Blood Type Compatibility @stanfordbloodcenter.org A blood type is a classification of blood based on the presence or absence of antigens on the surface of red blood cells. Human blood is divided into one of four main blood types: A, B, AB, and O, and is further divided into fine he or Rh-

		You can receive type							
		0+	0-	A+	A -	B+	В-	AB+	AB
	0+	•							
	0-								
ь	A+								
If you are type	A -		•		•				
on a	B+		•			•	•		
Ę	В-								
	AB+						•		
	AB-								

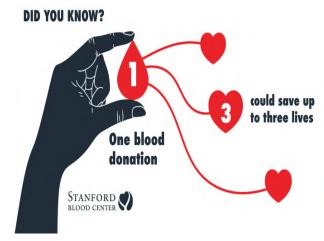


Blood types

Blood types are inherited. They are passed from parents to offspring. There are basically 4 major blood groups (A, B, AB and O). They are determined by the presence or absence of the two antigens, namely the A and B antigens. These antigens are found on the surface of red blood cells. In addition, there is also an inherited protein on the surface of red blood cells called the Rh factor, which can be either present (+) or absent (-). Thus, the most common blood types are A+, A-, B+, B-, O+, O-, AB+, AB-. There are some blood types which are extremely rare. This happens because there are around 600+ antigens which can be present or absent on RBC surface and this constitute rare blood types. The universal donor is O-meaning in emergency cases; it can be given to all blood types. The same goes with the universal recipient AB+, during emergency cases it can accept all blood types.

Blood Transfusion

Blood transfusion is the transfer of blood or blood products from donated blood to a person's body thru a narrow tube connected into a vein. This procedure is widely used worldwide and has saved millions of lives.



Benefits of donating blood

Aside from saving lives and feeling a good sense of well-being, blood donation also offer a vast array of health benefits to the donor such as it can be of great help in promoting cardiovascular health. It can also reduce cancer risk and can control excess iron in the body. Regular blood donation will also

screen you from many diseases. These are just some to name a few of the benefits of donating blood. A healthy person can donate blood every 3 months.

Steps in blood donation

A. Before blood donation

You will be asked to fill up a Donor's Form upon arrival at the blood collection site. Questions regarding your health history will be asked by a trained professional staff. Pre-donation education and

counselling will be given by a trained professional staff. Your weight, blood pressure, pulse rate and temperature will be checked. You will be examined by a physician.

Small sample of blood will be taken to check your blood type and hemoglobin level. Screening and selection procedure will usually take about 10 to 15 minutes. You are en-

cases 312K		253K	5,504	
Location		Cases	Recovered	Deaths
Metro Manila		164K	139K	2,674
Calabarzon		53,476	41,237	580
Central Visayas		22,105	19,332	1,226
Central Luzon		16,346	11,272	203
Western ∨isayas		11,824	8,235	231
Eastern Visayas		4,780	3,953	40
Davao Region		3,135	2,546	75
Northern Mindanao		3,086	2,123	58
Bicol		2,523	2,011	63
Zamboanga Peninsula		2,252	1,744	88
llocos Region		1,959	1,320	42
Cagayan Valley		1,867	1,192	22
SOCCSKSARGEN		1,631	1,069	30
Cordillera Administrative Re	gion	1,501	987	16
MIMAROPA		1,438	1,013	23
Caraga		1,334	771	21

couraged to give accurate data for your own safety and that of the recipient. All information gathered will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

B. During Blood Donation

You will be asked to lie down on the blood donor's couch for blood collection which will be done by a skilled phlebotomist. The amount of blood which will be taken will be determined by a physician. It will depend mainly on your body weight and does not exceed 450 ml. This will take another 10 to 15 minutes.

C. After Blood Donation

You will be advised to rest for 10 more minutes. Beverage and simple snacks will be served. Post-donation education and counselling will be given by a trained professional staff. You will be advised to drink more fluids. The volume of fluids taken is completely replaced by the body within 3 to 5 hours.

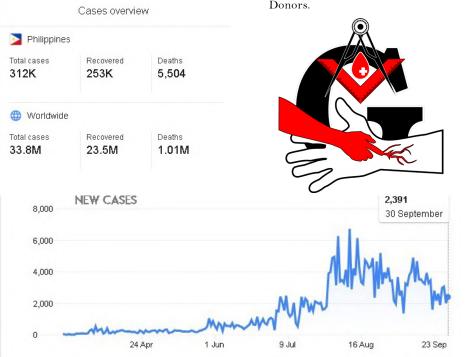
Who cannot donate blood?

There are certain conditions that prevent a person from donating blood temporarily or permanently. Among the temporary conditions are:

- Pregnancy
- Acute fever
- Recent alcoholic intake
- Ear or body piercing and tattooing
 - Surgery

Persons with the following conditions are not allowed to donate blood anytime:

- Cancer
- Cardiac disease
- Sever lung disease
- Hepatitis B and C
- HIV infection, AIDS or Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD)
- High risk occupation (e.g. prostitution)
- Unexplained weight loss of more than 5 kg over 6 months
- Chronic alcoholism
- Other conditions or disease stated in the Guide to Medical Assessment of Blood Donors.





Extending Lives, One Bag of Blood at a Time

By WB J. Harold W. Santiago, PM

"For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." – Leviticus 17:11 (KJV)

There is a non-profit organization, advocating the unconditional donation of blood by organizing Blood-Letting Drives throughout the country to provide immediate, safe, and free blood to those in need, and Masons in the jurisdiction are slowly becoming aware of it. Founded by Medical Technologist Napoleon "NAP" Marilag at Pasig City back in 1994, the organization has since then stayed true to its advocacy.

VW Akok Tan and WB James S. Ngan of Biak-na-Bato No.7 both witnessed the group at work in 2016 and in the next four years have continuously supported DADBI by coordinating through their Mother Lodge and with different Masonic Organizations in the conduct of community-based mobile blood donations. These simple acts of charity by Masons

have helped the group augment the supply of Life-saving Blood.

In 2020 Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. has been tapped by the Grand Lodge of the Philippines when at the start of the year, MW Agapito S. Suan, Jr. issued Circular No.24 launching a GLP-led Blood Letting Drive at the Aguinaldo Hall of the Plaridel Masonic Temple on January 12 (Sunday) from 7AM to 2PM encouraging all able-bodied brethren to donate blood and bring healthy blood donors.

The noticeable scarcity of donors and with the supply of blood in the country's main hospitals becoming critically low has prompted the Most Worshipful masonic institution in the Philippines into the sublime collaboration, enjoining Worshipful Masters of Lodges as well as DDGM's to organize the same for the rest of the year.

The month of January is particularly a lean month for blood stocks due to the surge in demand on account of the proliferation of accidents, not to mention the continuing demand due to recurring needs such as kidney diseases, surgical operations, dengue cases, etc.

VW Tan and WB Ngan coordinated the event with two (2) of DADBI's Hospital Partners. More than 253 individuals donated their blood, of which 85 bags were extracted by the Philippine Orthopedic Center and 168 by Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital.

Thru the event, a sizeable amount of blood was secured and such success further inspired the Grand Master to schedule a 2nd round for March 29 (Circular 29). The event unfortunately did not push through as Metro Manila was placed on Lockdown by March 16 and the entire Luzon in Extended Community Quarantine until May 30.

As the Covid-19 Pandemic discouraged the mass gathering of people, the daily grind of living almost halted to a standstill (Blood-donations included) making the Blood Supply situation worse than ever. The Cable Tow Team curiously peered through the looking glass to investigate.



Transcript of the Cable Tow Interview with Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. founder and president last October 7 at Mary Grace Café - Estancia at Capitol Commons in Pasig City:

TCT-EIC: Sir Nap can you describe the status on the supply of Blood in the Philippines in general and the National Capital Region in particular?

N. Marilag: Before the COVID-19 Pandemic, there already was a shortage of Blood, the situation worsened during the ECQ as all our Scheduled Blood-letting Drives were cancelled. The postponement of the 2nd GLP Blood Donation Activity is just one of many. I can still recall during the Lockdown, halos hindi na malaman ng mga taong nangangailangan kung saan sila kukuha ng dugo. Right now, as we speak, there is no Type A Blood in stock in Blood Banks within Metro Manila.

TCT-EIC: What is the significant difference before and after the ECQ?

N. Marilag: The world was different then, until a few months ago we can organize more than 20 Blood-Letting Drives in a month. Ngayon ma-suerte nang maka-sampu (10) tayo sa isang buwan.

TCT-EIC: What is the Government's take on organizing Mass Blood Letting Events considering that mass social gathering is currently

discouraged?

N. Marilag: They recognize the necessity of continuous Blood Donation among the population. In fact, a few weeks into the Lockdown, the DOH has allowed Blood-letting Events - giving preference to community-based mobile blood-donation over that of donating blood in a health facility which may expose donors to a higher risk of getting an infection. As an essential activity, such events are to be exempted from the mass gathering prohibition, but some precautions have to be followed.

Note: Mr. Marilag is appertaining to DOH Department Memorandum No.2020-0124: Interim Guidelines on Ensuring Blood Safety and Adequacy for COVID-19 Response which DADBI strictly adheres to. Some of its parameters are stated below:

The following shall be done in the conduct of a community – based mobile blood donation:

- 1. The entire activity shall strictly observe social distancing measures and shall be finished within four (4) hours.
- 2. The activity shall be limited to a maximum of 50 donors. In cases where the organizer targeted more than 50 donors, they shall be advised to split and schedule another mobile blood donation.
- Invitation shall be extended only for donors who are healthy and residents of the area
- 4. The following people shall not be allowed

in the venue of the blood donation activity: Elderly, Patients with co-morbidities, Pregnant women, Patients with fever and severe respiratory symptoms

BLOOD-DONOR SCREENING

Per above Guidelines, effective screening strategies will be in place through additional series of interview questions related to COVID – 19 on top of the existing Donor History Questionnaire (DHQ) as stated in Annex A. A stringent deferral criterion will also be used to determine the qualification of the volunteer blood donor in order to ensure the safety of both the donor and the recipient.

- 1. As deferral criteria the following volunteer donors shall not be allowed to donate blood:
- A. Volunteer Blood Donors with history of travel to any countries with COVID 19 local transmission in the last 28 days; Please refer to WHO daily updated list of countries: https://www.wjo.int/emergeniecies/diseases/novelcoronavirus-2019/situation-reports
- B. Those who had close contact with a Person Under Investigation (PUI) / Person Under Monitoring (PUM), or with a Confirmed COVID 19 case in the last 28 days.
- C. Those who had close interaction with patients without severe acute respiratory infection (SARI) and COVID 19 that cannot be ruled out; and,
- D. Those who had respiratory tract infection symptoms (e.g. cough and colds) in the last 14 days.

2. REFERRAL

- A. In case a volunteer blood donor is identified with possible exposure to COVID 19, he/she shall be immediately isolated from the mobile blood donation area. The personnel in charge of blood donor screening shall advise the volunteer blood donor using the current algorithm for triage of patients with possible COVID 19 infection in health care facilities.
- B. The personnel in charge of volunteer blood donor screening, Mobile Blood Dona-

tion Team / Blood Center / Blood Bank Head, shall immediately notify the Regional Blood Program Coordinator (RBPC) for information and proper referral of PUI or PUM.

3. ADVOCACY

- A. Donor Recruitment Officer (DRO) shall conduct health education on COVID 19 during Volunteer Blood Donor Recruitment Campaign or Pep Talk. This shall help the potential volunteer blood donors to assess one's self and practice self-deferral in case with possible infection or exposure to COVID 19.
- B. DRO shall intensify Volunteer Blood Donor Recruitment Campaign and target a



higher population of potential volunteer blood donors from both public and private entities such as but not limited to Universities, Religious Groups, Offices, and Non – Government Organization (NGO's), to compensate for the possible decrease in eligible volunteer blood donors from current partner agencies.

BLOOD COLLECTION

 Blood Collecting procedures shall strictly follow the Protocol on Handling Volunteer Blood Donors during Mobile Blood Donations (MBD) and Facility – based blood Collection to Prevent Spread of COVID – 19 (Annex B) in addition to established standard and safety measured issued by DOH and other recognized institutions;

- 2. In case of transfusion to immunocompromised patients or if in the future, evidence would indicate risk, blood and blood products additional margin of safety may be implemented through pathogen reduction where microorganism in the blood and blood product can be deactivated.
- 3. During sustained local transmission, the National Council for Blood Services (NCBS) Technical Committee shall convene to formulate recommendations and to address the immediate concerns on Blood Service Fa-



cilities related to COVID – 19 following their functions based on Department Personnel Order No. 2005 – 2126 Re: Creation of Committees under the National Council for Blood Services pursuant to A.O 2005 – 002;

Lastly, in Ensuring Safety of Health Personnel during conduct of Mobile Blood Donation Activities:

1. Current Guidelines on preventive measures (e.g. hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette, proper wearing of mask/PPEs, social distancing) shall be strictly observed

2. All Regional Blood Program Coordinators, Head of Blood Services Facilities and Donor Recruitment Officers shall ensure dissemination and strict implementation of these guidelines.

After going through the above technicalities, the interview continued:

TCT-EIC: Can a cancelled blood-letting event be rescheduled?

N. Marilag: It is possible, but it depends on the Organizers — many have changed their priorities. Also, the number of donors has significantly declined. What is needed now is an awareness campaign to remind our countrymen on the importance of Blood Donation and that even during a world-wide Pandemic, we still need blood.

TCT-EIC: This Issue of our publication will give emphasis on the charitable act of Blood Donation. The Cable Tow Team is in one with you on this advocacy Sir. By the way, for interested groups, how is a Blood-Letting Drive organized?

N. Marilag: A Blood Donation Event is composed of 3 groups of people: The Donors, the Collectors, and the Organizers. The Key Role of the Organizer (Masonic Lodges for example) is to bring the other 2 groups together, prepare a suitable venue for the extraction of blood, and host the event.

The real challenge would be gathering all prospective blood donors under one roof. For easier facilitation, organizers can target a certain population. E.g. the PNP, AFP Personnel, a private company, Government Institution, a small community or local Parish.

Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. shall assist the Organizers by coordinating with Blood Collectors through its Medical Partners. In the last 26 years, we have forged partnerships with 39 Medical Institutions with Blood Bank Facilities, 29 of them are in the NCR and 10 outside Metro Manila.

TCT-EIC: Sir, what is done with the blood after extracting them from the donors?



N. Marilag: Collected blood is brought to the blood bank for testing of HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, Malaria, and Syphilis. Afterwards the collection is labelled with the ff. important details:

- Blood Type & RH Type (negative or positive)
- 2. Date of Extraction
- 3. Expiry Date
- 4. Volume & Control No.
- 5. Anticoagulant use
- 6. Name of Hospital

TCT-EIC: What is the percentage of collected blood that can be used?

- N. Marilag: Usually only 50% of Blood Donors are qualified. So, in an event wherein blood was extracted from 50 would be donors, about 25 bags can be collected each bag is equivalent to 450 cc of Blood. Some of the reasons for deferral are:
- 1. Underweight
- Less than 12 hours from last cigarette consumption
- 3. High Blood Pressure
- 4. Less than 90 days from date of last donation
- 5. Less than 1 year from date of ear piercing or tattooing
- 6. Less than 6 months from minor operation
- 7. Low Hemoglobin Level
- **8.** Unsuccessful Phlebotomy (Blood-Extraction)

Persons with This Abilitybefore boarding their modified Tricycles

For Blood Testing, the common deferral factor is a reaction to Hepatitis BsAg.

TCT-EIC: Totoo po ba na Balot at Buko Juice ang maiging ibigay sa mga Blood Donors?

N. Marilag: Sir, they just donated a part of their life. Better if they get a full meal – kanin at ulam po sana. An added drink is also encouraged plus clean drinking water.

There are some organizers, who also give souvenirs like shirts, pins, etc. for the donors. Blood is free but it is sacred as well, NO Monetary Compensation should be made.

TCT-EIC: What is the difference between Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. and the Philippine Red Cross?

N. Marilag: The Philippine Red Cross is the largest NGO in the country that renders Blood Services. Compared to them we have a small operation. They have their own Blood Collecting Facilities whereas tayo naman po ay nakikipag partner with other Medical Institutions. We are not competitors. We work towards the same goal of providing blood to our countrymen.

TCT-EIC: Sir Nap, are there any people within Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. that deserve a "shout-out"?

N. Marilag: People from different walks of life approach us for their Blood Requirements, some can meet us to receive the request. But there are

certain situations when blood must be brought to the patient as they have no capability to travel. I would like to give special mention to our DADBI Heroic Riders. These are our motorcycle and tricycle riders who voluntarily transport blood from our Hospital Blood Bank Partners to a particular patient at any point in the country on any given day at any given time. Napakalaki po ng mga sacrifices ng mga volunteer riders natin.

TCT-EIC: Wow! That is indeed a worthy sacrifice. I just realized there are Masons who are motorcycle enthusiasts, can they volunteer?

N. Marilag: (Smiling) We look for 3 important traits among would be volunteer riders.

Most Important Trait is HUMILITY (Kababaang-loob). Remember a requirement of Blood will most probably involve a life-threatening situation and the rider will be dealing NOT with the patient but with a love one who is highly emotional at that moment the blood donation is received. Now consider this situation, the Rider was summoned in the late hours of the evening to collect the Blood from a Hospital in NCR and is tasked to bring it to a patient, say somewhere in Quezon Province. By the time that he arrives, pagod na sya, gutom at wala pang tulog. During the point of blood exchange, a weary volunteer traveler will be dealing with a worried and anxious relative and anything can happen. Kung ano man ang maging encounter ng dalawang partido, the rider at that point in time must be filled with patience, compassion and understanding otherwise his sacrifices may be in vain. The next value to be considered is that of FREE WILL. We do not collect any financial renumerations. Same with our riders, their actions should be UNCONDITIONAL. The fuel. toll fees, refreshments, sagot ng ating mga riders ang sarili nila. Hindi nila iyun kinukuha sa pamilyang nangailangan ng dugo.

Last but not the least, the 3rd value that must be present is JOY. With the above 2 criteria strictly set in place, the would-be rider volunteer must ask himself, "Magiging masaya ba ko sa gagawin kong pagtulong?".

If you notice, the mode of transport used is the motorcycle. It is because such a vehicle can negotiate through most traffic, detours, and even off-road at the swiftest time possible while carrying a life-saving resource. I can recall an emergency a few years ago involving the delivery of blood coming from Manila to be sent up to Baguio. Nagkataon na may landslide pa and no other vehicle can pass through, except a motorbike. Ang isa pang maipagmamalaki natin sa mga Heroic Riders ng DADBI are the Group's modified tricycles.

TCT-EIC: What modification are those Sir?

N. Marilag: (Sir Nap's eyes are really beaming with pride at this moment). These modified tricycles carry the rider's wheelchair. You see, aside from the usual volunteer riders, we have 6 PWD Volunteers (but they are PWTA in our book), we no longer consider them as Persons With Disability (mga taong may kakulangan) but rather as Persons With This Ability (mga taong may ganitong kakayahan). They are really among the most inspiring volunteers that we have ever met!

TCT-EIC: Sir for the record, what are the names of the PWTAs?

N. Marilag: You mentioned a shout-out kaya babanggitin na po natin: They are Messrs. Danilo Canubas, Judy Alferez, Florentino Saldivar, Domz Literal, and the husband & wife tandem of Michael and Leny Daz.

TCT-EIC: Sir sa dami ng mga tumutulong sa inyong group, paano po ninyo sila napapasalamatan?

N. Marilag: Once a year, DADBI conducts a Gabi ng Pagkilala, Pasasalamat at Parangal. It is our humble way of expressing appreciation to our supporters and volunteers.

Speaking of Gratitude, please allow me po to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the Brethren of Biak-Na-Bato Lodge No.7, especially Kuya Akok Tan and James Ngan for their continuous support to Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. Through them, napakalaki po ng naging kontribusyon ng mga Masons sa advocacy natin na ito.

GRAND LODGE OF THE PHILIPPINES







By donating Blood, You can save lives





January 12, 2020 7:00am to 2:00pm at NEW MASONIC TEMPLE 1440 San Marcelino St., Ermita Manila

Editor's Note:

The interview lasted between 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM. In those 2 hours, six (6) different people approached Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. to receive Blood Request Certificates issued by Mr. Marilag that they each will present to Hospitals that will give them the life-saving requirement for free.

Of these, 4 were received by a relative on behalf of the patient while 2 were transported by Volunteer Riders, one of them was a PWTA.

The DADBI founder then showed us the list of recipients for the day. As it turns out, the 6 people that followed Sir Nap during the interview were the last on a list of 26 requests for October 7. On that day alone, twenty-six random lives where extended with Blood collected through Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. stored in different Hospital Blood Banks. According to Sir Nap, an average of 20 people approach them daily since the lockdown. There were days when the number could reach more than 40. Some of them in search of blood for more than 2 weeks even from other organizations.

The prohibition against Mass-Gathering has discouraged some donors to commit their blood once again. No one can blame them, however the continuous need for blood is a reality that Filipinos as Human Beings will have to face. It may be true that staying at home can help reduce the spread of the disease called COVID-19 but leaving our homes for a few moments just to

donate our blood can be a worthwhile activity during this time of need.

We thank VW Akok Tan for introducing us to the man behind Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. "Bro. Harold, Pasig is the Birthplace of DADBI" Said Kuyang Akok. "Sana our Pasig Brethren can support us more in the future".

TCT-EIC: Being from Pasig City myself, we will personally approach the Brethren in the area for this sacred advocacy.

After the interview, we volunteered to bring Sir Nap to his Pasig City home. As he got off the vehicle, we asked him: Sir any final quote for our article? Mr. Marilag paused for a while and answered: "NO FILIPINO SHOULD EVER BE DEPRIVED OF BLOOD IN HIS OWN COUNTRY".

Masonic Organizations in the jurisdiction interested in organizing a Blood-letting Drive in their respective areas thru the assistance of Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. can coordinate with:

Mr. Napoleon "NAP" Marilag (DADBI) 0917-858-3423

WB James S. Ngan (BNB 7) 0917-8131-314

VW Akok Tan (BNB 7) 0917-831-5988

Mobile LTO Services held at the GLP By Bro. Bryan Ginza C. Kiok (59)

1440 Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila

The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines, in partnership with the Land Transportation Office (LTO) National Capital Region rendered various LTO Services at the GLP Compound last July 25, 27 and 28.

The public service activity was spearheaded by Labong Lodge No. 59 through the leadership of their WM Stevenson Y. Ang in coordination with Regional Director Atty. Clarence V. Guinto - West Department and Ms. Liwayway F. Basinang of LTO Manila South District.

The first day was catered to medical front liners coming from different hospitals within the proximity of the Grand Lodge. "It is one of our simple way as a fraternity and a known institution of the society to give back to these modern-day heroes" Said the Master of the Lodge. "If we can make their lives easier, even for a bit during the pandemic is already a big help. While they take care of us in the frontlines the least that we can do is to take care of some of their worries for them". Added WM Stevenson.

The second and third day were intended primarily for the brethren from the Greater Manila Area. Some occasional walk-ins were also entertained. The popularity and success of the first two days spread like wildfire within the vicinity inviting other people hoping to be served as well

Packed meals and drinks were handed out to attendees and personnel three times a day. The gesture was for the LTO officials to be able to refresh themselves occasionally as they perform their duties to the best of their abilities. VW Dado Melegrito - Executive Assistant to the Grand Master and Bro. Sharkey Rodriguez helped facilitate the activity between the lead lodge and LTO.

A total of 401 transactions were successfully served in the 3-day event, of these 279 were vehicle registration renewals, 86 motorcycle registration renewals, 23 driver's license renewals and resolution of 13 cases / penalties. 68 of the transactions fulfilled were for medical professionals and front liners.

The project was executed by Labong 59 with the intention of bringing a Government Service closer to citizens as the Covid-19 Pandemic may have

disrupted the capability of municipalities and local governments to provide the same. The Worshipful Master expresses much appreciation to the support extended by the Brethren especially Senior & Junior Wardens Bowie C. Kho and Jesus S. Fernando, Jr.

The event also marked the first time since the March 2020 Lockdown that most Masons had the chance to gather in small groups as brothers meet again and catch up on each other's lives while awaiting their turn. Short but sweet, these mini fellowships somehow gave the Brethren a sense of normalcy in not so normal times.



GLP participates in the LTOPF Caravans By VW Rodolfo Magtibay (35)

The COVID 19 Pandemic has made it hard for individuals to secure and renew documents for their Licenses To Own and Possess Firearms (LTOPF). The restriction on movement and transportation are problems one has to overcome to secure the requirements and file the same at Firearms and Explosives Office at Camp Crame, Quezon City.

It is for this reason that Police Major General Roberto B. Fajardo, erstwhile Director of the Philippine National Police Civil Security Group sought the approval of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines to conduct an LTOPF Caravan at the Plaridel Masonic Temple in San Marcelino St., Ermita, Manila. The request was readily granted by the Grand Master.

An estimated 600 transactions were served on August 28 and September 16 to the delight of both Brethren and guests as NBI clearances and other supporting documents were secured on the spot. During the 2-Day Event, the GLP became a "One Stop Shop" for those seeking license the first time and licensees in need to renewals.







The efficient work process was executed with the all-out support of the following groups and their heads:

Alpha Phi Omega- Masons Inc.

Mabuhay Shriners

Cosmos Masonic Lodge No. 8

Laong-Laan Lodge Masonic No. 185

Frank Reed Horton Masonic Lodge No. 379

The Seven Cardinal Virtues Lodge No. 390

Unang Sigaw Masonic Lodge No. 430

Sultan Haroun Al-Rashid Lucman Masonic Lodge No.406 - WM Arturo de Leon

APO Alumni Association- Malate

National Bureau of Investigation

Rotary Club of Sampaguita, District 3800

Brethren of Manila City Hall

- VW PMGen Roberto B. Fajardo
- Ill. Eulalio "Ayong" Lorenzo
- WM Richard Quirido
- WM Ernie Ligon
- WM Nestor B. Bequillo
- VW Justo Yap
- WM Feliciano Narciso
- VW Datu Ameerhassan Lucman
- Atty. Justo Yap
- Ateng Tess Fajardo, President
- Bro. Joem Ian Moralde

"We are very grateful for the participating groups, the presence of their volunteer members as well as our NBI & PNP Personnel made the process smooth and orderly." Said VW Francis Blanco - the Project Chairman. He also mentioned the invaluable assistance extended by VW Jose Roncesvalles, Bro. Marco Gregorio, and Bro. John Mabao for this Special Project for Law Abiding Citizens



NCR NEWS

Nilad Lodge No. 12

ROCK-STEADY IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

By WB Rodolfo T. Azanza, Jr. (12)

No man shall ever outlive Freemasonry. And we have now also proven that no pandemic shall outlast the grinding of the wheels of Freemasonry. Under this inspiration, allow me to share what the Brethren of the Mother Lodge has been doing.

BUILDING THE NILAD EDIFICE

After being installed as Master of the Lodge on February 1, we tried to hit the ground running by immediately pursuing the Seven (7) Pillar Programs under the theme: "GAOTU First".

To build the lodge and make it strong from within, it was part of the plan to work on our Trestle board. Before the lockdown ensued, we managed to raise 2 FCMs to the Sublime Degree, passed 9 EAMS to the FCM Degree and initiated 5 Candidates as Entered Apprentices.

Masonic education forms part of internal strengthening, and as such, Nilad held its first Lodge Mentorship Programme Session as chaired by Lodge Mentor Bro. Bryant Laniog that same month. To keep abreast with IMES programs and schedules, a fellowship dinner was also held with IMES Pres. VW Rudy Ong last February 19, 2020.

PROGRESS ON THE PILLAR PROGRAMS

Also, in February the Nilad Ambassadorship System (PILLAR 2) was launched as Chief Ambassador WB Benson Pimentel swore-in 23 Ambassadors of Goodwill.

The Career Orientation Program (PILLAR 4) chaired by VW Jess Mateo and WB Joselito Dela Cruz was also off to a good start as two seminars were held in Quezon City (New Era High School, ~500 students, and Batasan Hills High School, ~500 students) in cooperation with E-Claro Academy.

The launching of the Nilad Business Club (PILLAR 6) chaired by Bro. Ricky Aranzamendez was held early on March 7. Succeeding meetings were held virtually due to the pandemic. In one such occasion, VW Vic Hao Chin was invited as a resource person to elucidate on how our members can make good use of the Masonic philosophy to guide proper business behavior in these challenging times.



Our Social Responsibility Pillar (PIL-LAR 7) has so far accomplished quite a list of Brigada Eskwela events. The first salvo was focused on the Taal eruption-affected public schools. Nilad Lodge went to Aguedo Asinas Mem. Elem. School and Latag Elem. School to give 200 and 100 school kits/supplies, respectively, to indigent students. A joint CSR MOA was also signed with PCU Pres. Kuyang Dr. Junifen Gauuan, wherein the Lodge donated 500 masonic design notebooks. In July, a Canon printer, thermal scanners, inks, and other supplies were donated to Imus Pilot Elem. School (IPES), and likewise thermal scanners, 100 plastic envelopes and 1,500 pencils to Teodora Alonzo Elem. School in Quezon City. Additional 400 notebooks and 2,000 pencils were sent to Bantayang Bato Masonic Lodge No. 447 for indigent students in Laguna. And in September, 300 masonic design notebooks were given to indigent students in Pampanga through the efforts of Bro. Obil Dahap.

The Project Chairmen of the other Pillar Programs had also been active. The page plan of the Nilad Coffee Table Book (PILLAR 5) has been drafted by Project Chairman Bro.



Ponly Pena. The design for the Nilad Time Capsule (PILLAR 3) is also now on the drawing board.

ROCK-STEADY IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY

When the Luzon-wide COVID-19 lockdown ensued, the first few weeks were quite stressful for everyone. But as Masons, we have a mindset of not cowering in the face of adversity. Knowing that our society needs us to be strong, we labored to rise to the occasion and mobilized people and resources. Amidst the confusion, we kept our wits, as the Lodge decided to be part of the offensive assault against the dreaded virus.

Our initial fund-raising collected a total of Php60,000, which was used to purchase face shields. This was quarterbacked by Bro. Carlo Bala, who directed the actual distribution to various hospitals, including the PNP General Hospital. Part of the fund went to food packages for frontliners in the PNP Highway Patrol Group (HPG). Finally, Nilad-12 also caused the distribution of 400 facemasks to various hospitals to support our health workers in combating the COVID-19 outbreak.

When our Masonic District NCR-B DDGM Crisostomo Beltran initiated with the other NCR DDGMs a unified NCR effort to put together a massive undertaking for health workers (dubbed as "Munting Regalo para sa Pamilya Mo, Sagot ng Kuyang Ko"), Nilad was first to pledge support. The second fund-raising salvo collected some Php200,000, which turned out to be the largest contribution from a single blue lodge in NCR.

There were individual and group efforts that complemented the lodge initiatives. Some members purchased hazmat suits while others provided relief goods/groceries to the marginalized sectors of society. Food packs for

frontline workers became a staple and was done with regularity. The sharing of resources became a true expression of brotherly love. Kuyang Don Bigas had to brave the confusion in the streets and volunteered to be a "transporter" of these staples for the Lung Center of the Philippines. He did such a significant work that he was declared one of the 10 "Outstanding Frontliners" by Resorts World Manila (RWM).

On the matter of keeping up a sense of "fellowship" going, we went fully digital with Zoom meetings that were organized almost every Saturday. Later, the Brethren upped the ante by turning a significant part of these meetings into a time for Masonic education. The first sessions featured VW Rico Puno and VW Darren Eurlings as speakers. Brothers from as far as Australia, Vietnam and Saudi Arabia joined these virtual meetings. We also had regular Zoom meetings with our petitioners, EAMs and FCMs.

Another brother emailed free copies of e-books he wrote to help fellow travelers combat boredom. WB Benson Pimentel sent fresh food items to the abodes of brethren to give variety to their food intake and did his own relief goods distribution in Pangasinan. WB Rod Fernandez celebrated his birthday by feeding 150 indigents in Laguna. WB Lito Dela Cruz led a team in his capacity as head of the homeowners' association to operate a checkpoint in their locality. Kuyang Ronald Buccat played his vinyl records thru FB Live every sunset for good vibes. Kuyang Michael Jaldon spearheaded the project to procure Nilad-designed facemasks. The publications team headed by Bro. Patrick Azanza, Bro. Ojie Santillan, and Bro. Ponly Pena came up with three (3) electronic issues of our official newsletter, The Mystic Tie. More recently, VW Joseph Pablo and JW Anton Cruz combined their talents to usher in the formation of a NX100 radio group called the Dose Radio Group of Nilad (DRAG-ON), which now serves as the Lodge's linchpin in terms of quick information dissemination.

In a more official capacity, Nilad Past Master VW Jess L.R. Mateo was, for a time, part of the government's Technical Working Group working on post-COVID-19 economic recovery, while another Past Master, VW Joel Mangahas became peer reviewer for the massive ADB loan extended by the multilateral institution to the

Philippines.

Truly it was beautiful to behold, the order amidst the chaos that our Nilad brethren managed to bring forth.

THE HOON AWARDS

With no plans of slowing down, the lodge continued to stick with its approved plan for 2020. On August 24, the Highest Order of Nilad (HOON) Award (PILLAR 1) was launched to coincide with our virtual Past Masters Night celebration.



Albeit virtual, it did not diminish the excitement of those who participated, especially since the date was chosen for its historical significance. It was on August 24, 1906 that Nilad was re-established with the help of Sinukuan Lodge's Bro. Ramon Diokno who then became the 2nd Worshipful Master of Nilad Lodge. This happened after 13 years of being in the dark from 1893 to 1906. The HOON Awards shall henceforth mark this Resurrection Day, or the day we rose again from the ashes of near obscurity.

The HOON Awards is a way to give recognition to a Nilad Past Master. There are those who continued to make Nilad Lodge proud through their exemplary achievements both in the Masonic arena and in their own professional careers even after sitting in the Oriental Chair, and they deserve to be honored and recognized. This year's members of the search committee are: Bro. Amador Pena (COS), Bro. Mendelssohn Manalaysay (Charity Director), Bro. Obil Dahap (Marshall), Bro. Vincent Dacallos (Adjutant Secretary), Bro. Adonis Bigas (Sunshine Committee Member). Together they hammered out a water-tight selection criterion

for the honorees.

The HOON Award token is quite special. Each medallion takes the shape of a shield, akin to the one adopted as part of the emblem that goes with our current theme this year, GAOTU FIRST. Each one is crafted and hammered to perfection in the forge of WB Harold Santiago of Pampanga Masonic Lodge No. 48. And the colorful baldric is made out of a fabric that was hand-woven by the Indigenous Peoples of Maguindanao and selected with the assistance of no less than NCCA Director Fatima Kanakan. This fabric, called Inaul, was sewn into baldrics by one of lodge's Entered Apprentice, Johann Ebarle

This year's HOON Awards were given to: MW Teodoro M. Kalaw Sr., PGM (post-humously); VW Rico Puno, PGA; VW Gregorio Vicente Jr., PDDGM; VW Jesus L.R. Mateo, PGH; VW Crisostomo Beltran, DDGM; and, WB Benson Pimentel, PM. The posthumous award for MW Teodoro M. Kalaw was received by his great grandson, VW Teddy Kalaw IV, SGL, who gave a heart-warming response in behalf of the Kalaw clan.

GAOTU FIRST

It still lingers as a challenge to the global community as the race to develop an effective vaccine for the COVID-19 virus continues, and the risk of a second and third wave of the outbreak could still rear its ugly head. But that notwithstanding, Nilad as a lodge will continue to serve as a bridge of hope and resilience for the brethren and for the citizenry. After all, we are a brotherhood of men under the fatherhood of the GAOTU





N.S. Amoranto "Amboys" in Action By BJW Noel A. Bulaong (358)

In 2020 to exemplify the Masonic Theme "Charity and Humility: Foundation of a True Mason" brethren of Norberto S. Amoranto Lodge No.358 conducted various activities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Led by their Worshipful Master Ivan Usman, the following projects were implemented:

Medical & Legal Mission



March 8, days before the Enhanced Community Quarantine was implemented across the nation, the lodge together with equally civic minded volunteers, conducted a Medical and Legal Mission at Barangay Krus na Ligas, Diliman, Ouezon City.

The event was participated by volunteer doctors and nurses including Worshipful Inspector Salvador "Buddy" Enerio a Doctor of Medicine and Ateng Dra. Angeles, wife of Past Master Atty. Galileo Angeles. More than 300 individuals of the said barangay received muchneeded medical attention and medicines.

For the Legal Mission, volunteers from the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) – Quezon City Chapter, headed by their President Atty. Dominic Solis provided valuable answers to legal inquiries of barangay residents. Documentation and notarization services

were also done free of charge.

The time spent and talent shared by both Medical and Legal volunteers contributed to the event's success.

"The lodge was supposed to conduct more medical and legal missions not just in Metro Manila but in far flung areas of the Philippines as well" said WM Usman, who like most Masters of Lodges had their initial plans and programs realigned due to the pandemic.



Support to Medical Front Liners

Starting in April, a week-long distribution of food and supplies were conducted at Grace General Hospital of Quezon City and the Medical City Hospital in Ortigas. The undertaking made possible through the efforts of Bro. Cris Nitafan, MD and Bro. Froilan Fortesa was done by the Lodge in gratitude to the sacrifices of the medical front liners. The practice was repeated in May and June in both hospitals.

Likewise, Medical face masks were given to the Tricycle Operator and Drivers Association (TODA) of Barangay Krus na Ligas as well as to Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDL) presently held at the Quezon City Police Department – Police Station No. 9. NSA-358 Brethren also received their own handcrafted face mask complements of the WM.

LTOPF Caravan

To support the Philippine National Police's "Oplan Katok" - a campaign against loose firearms, and to remind licensed gun owners to renew their firearms on time, NSA Lodge No.358 in cooperation with the PNP conducted an LTOPF CARAVAN: ONE-STOP SHOP at



the Capitol Masonic Temple grounds in Matalino St., Diliman Quezon City in August 20.

The public service was made possible under its Project Chairman, Bro. PLTCOL Renante M. Galang - Chief of PNP Firearms and Licensing Division and the support of Bro. PMGEN Roberto B. Fajardo - Director of PNP Civil Security Group.

According to WM Usman, the one-day event also aims to help the brethren, their families and friends, who despite their eagerness to comply with the required licensing and renewal of firearms, are constraint from doing so due to limited movement and strict health protocol brought about by the Covid-19 Pandemic. The services include, Neuro Psychiatric Testing, Drug Testing, PNP Clearance etc. Some 320 transactions were served. Inquiries were also entertained and answered

To ensure compliance with the IATF rules, strict health protocols and physical distancing were implemented. Packed lunch and refreshment were readily provided with safety measures and to limit movements of attendees and personnel providing LTOPF services.

The successful event was concluded by a brief but stress-relieving dinner and fellowship.

Lingap Kabataan

By September 18 with VW Noel Ferrer as Project Chairman, another community outreached program was conducted, this time in Sta. Cruz, Zambales where various Pandemic Supplies were handover to Don Marcelo C. Marty Elementary School. Dubbed as "Lingap Kabataan" 500pcs of Medical grade facemasks, 1,200 pcs of face shields, 10 gallons of Alcohol,



10 gallons of Hand Sanitizers, 3 units of wheel chair and 5 units of thermal scanner were donated by NSA-358 for the teachers and administrative personnel of the said school.

Worshipful Master Cup: "Fun, Fun, Fun Shoot"

To relieve stress and promote camaraderie, a Fun, Fun, Fun Shoot will be held in October 24 at Scooby Firing Range in Barangay Paltok, Quezon City were participants will contend for the Championship Title in various categories. The event will be followed by a sumptuous lunch and fellowship at Peak Flight Grill to be sponsored by the Octoboyz (Brethren celebrating their natal day on the month of October).

Through the above activities, Norberto S. Amoranto Lodge No. 358 Brethren hope to prove that in a Mason's journey in search for truth and quest for wisdom, he must be a man of action to practice Charity, and by the virtue of humility, learn that the more he has, the more he owes to those in need.





NCR NEWS

Biak-na-Bato 007 - Agent Blood Donors By WB J. Harold W. Santiago, PM

The Cable Tow Interview with VW Akok Tan representing Biak-Na-Bato Lodge No. 7

TCT-EIC: In our masonic jurisdiction, you have become the poster boy for Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. What is your DADBI story Kuya Akok?

VW Akok Tan: Ang totoo nyan, it was Kuya Jimmy Ngan who first encountered Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. back in 2016. He was looking for Blood Donors for his sister who is fighting the big C. Several referrals within our mystic circle led our distressed brother to Sir Nap Marilag who assisted him UNCO-DITIONALLY not once or twice but several times.

Later, he attended a DADBI Blood-donation event as he witnessed several PWD's donating blood – our brother had an Epiphany: Blood is a life-saving commodity and yet it is something that can be acquired only by sharing one's own. Connecting it to our Craft teachings, Blood keeps everyone on the level – the high and the low, the rich and the poor – everyone depends on it. At the same time, even Persons with Disability can donate. Of all Charity Projects, Blood Donation is unique because it can extend lives. He became an advocate of Blood Donation.

When Kuya Jimmy became our Junior Warden in 2017, he enjoined our Mother Lodge to be involved. Since then the lodge have embarked on continuous Blood-Letting Drives through Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc., the following Worshipful Masters refocused our lodge charity projects into that of saving lives through blood donation:

 2017
 =
 WB Akok Tan

 2018
 =
 WB Davidson L. Ngo

 2019
 =
 WB James S. Ngan

 2020
 =
 WB Armando V. Siongco

TCT-EIC: Wow that is indeed a remarkable account for BNB-7. Would you recall how many Blood Donation Events (MBD's) have your Mother Lodge supported since?

VW Akok Tan: Medyo madami yun Kuya. I cannot recall the figures anymore, but in those 3 years (2017 to 2019) the numbers will not go down to 50 Mobile Blood Donations (MBD) annually.

Pagpasok ng 2020, we had a promising schedule. Among the last to be organized by WB Jimmy before stepping down as Master of the Lodge were simultaneous Bloodletting in fourteen (14) Puregold Branches in January 22.

By February, as Lodge Leadership transition between WB Jimmy & WM Arman, we had another series of MBDs scheduled in several companies and different colleges. Then the events got cancelled one after the other...

TCT-EIC: When did the scheduled MBD events started cancelling?

VW Akok Tan: As early as February. When the World Health Organization announced the corona virus as a public health emergency, we have no choice but to stop.

TCT-EIC: Gaano kayo katagal natigil? When did BNB-7 resumed the activities?

VW Akok Tan: From February to April, we had to lay low. Staying at home as adviced by the Government. However, the demand for blood is still there and worse halos wala na makuha ang mga tao. In May, WM Arman Siongco decided to act. We started bringing donors sa mga Blood Banks and did the Blood Donation there.

BNB 7 was able to execute 2 Blood Donation Sessions: May 24 at Rizal Medical Center (Pasig) and June 14 at the National Kidney Transfer Institute (Quezon City). Medyo pahirapan pa sa paghanap ng mga Blood Donors at this time.

Finally, the lodge was able to coordinate new MBD schedules for the 3rd and 4th Quarter of the year, this time in collaboration with 2 other Lodges: Grand Sec Fajardo Lodge 383, and Saigon 188.

TCT-EIC: From what we've seen and heard, BNB-7 has become an expert in Blood Donations. Any advice on how Masons, Lodges, Districts and Clubs participate?

VW Akok Tan: There are at least 5 Ways for everyone to become a part of the solution. Ang pinakasimple is to Donate Blood. 1 bag of blood (450 cc) can benefit at least 3 people. The 2nd best thing is to bring someone who can donate blood, dyan pumapasok ang KKK.

Editor's Note: KKK refers to a vocabulary of Filipino Words that define camaraderie among people who have shared the same condition, status, or event (mga may pinagsamahan). Each word starts with the syllable "Ka" and is associated with the heroic brotherhood that sparked the Philippine Revolution. The vocabulary can be found at the back cover of this issue.

Next is Financial Support, whatever amount that people can spare, we will add them to



DADBI's meal budget for Blood Donors when organizing Blood-Letting Drives. It can also be in kind like actual meals and snacks, drinks (Juice or Bottled Water), loot bags, souvenir items or anything that can benefit the Event.

The fourth is to organize a Blood-letting Project – I believe Sir Nap already explained how it works (See DADBI Article on page 11).

The Fifth Way (since uso ang Zoom ngayon) is by holding a Blood Donation Awareness Webinar , this may not generate blood instantly pero puedeng mamulat ang Brethren to the reality and seriousness of the situation and how Masons can help. The strategy is to hold the BDA Webinar a few weeks before a Blood-Letting Activity so it can attract more Blood Donors and Supporters.

TCT-EIC: Speaking of Blood Donors, sinu-sino sa mga Kuyang natin ang nasasaksihan ninyong palaging nagbibigay ng dugo?

VW Akok Tan: Sa Biak-na-Bato 007, ang mga Kuyang na masipag magbigay ng dugo ay sina:

Joseph Alday Randy Espinosa
Jerick Balat Davidson Ngo
Almon Bernabe Adrian Tecson
Adrian Cuevas Kenneth Trobaugh
Alex Daniel

In other Lodges, ang nakikita nating nakaupo sa Donor's Bed palagi ay sina:

Cesar Co (59) Johnson Chan (430) Stephen Ian Kung (59) Vincent Sanchez (430) Sharkey Rodríguez (59)

Ang paglalabas ng dugo sa katawan ay nakakabata. Itong mga Kuyang na binanggit natin sa listahan, Kuya Harold – puro baby face ang lahat ng mga yan...

TCT-EIC: Seriously Kuya? Ma-try nga... Well going back. On behalf of the entire Cable Tow Team we salute the Brethren of Biak-Na-Bato Lodge No. 7 on their continuous commitment to extend lives through Blood Donation. Kuya Akok, if this article feature is your Lodge Trophy at ikaw ang tumatanggap on behalf of the Worshipful Master, ano po ang message ninyo?

VW Akok Tan: (Laughs) Parang FAMAS tayo Kuya Harold. First & foremost, we thank the Great Architect of the Universe for using Biak-Na-Bato Lodge No. 7 as a vessel for collecting Blood from donors and sending other Brethren to support us. On behalf of WM Siongco and the Brethren of BNB No.7, we extend our sincere appreciation to all brothers who supported our advocacy from Day One. Special mention to VW Jaime Ching Palmares (Labong 59) na masipag magpa-Lugaw w/ Egg, si VW Ronnie Del Birut (Taguig 431) palaging nakapresenta ang "Old Style" Sausages, WM Stephen Sia (Jose Rizal 22) na maagap magpapadala ng Fresh Eggs, and WB Jimmy Ang (LPdO 1034) na nakaabang palagi ang Hot Pandesal.

TCT-EIC: Any added tips or suggestions for the Brethren Kuya Akok?

VW Akok Tan:

Based on what we've witnessed at DADBI in the last 4 years, the most practical advice is for Lodges and Districts (or even our Grand Lodge) to start the process of blood-typing our Members and Candidates.

This can be a life-saving Activity, in a Medical Emergency at walang makuhang dugo sa mga Blood Banks, Lodges can assist their members in need by simply checking who among the Brethren have similar Blood Types. Especially during this COVID-19 Pandemic na kulang pa din ang dugo — when a Mason or his Family is in need of Blood, the Master or DDGM can send Brethren with similar blood type directly to the person in need and the requirement can be satisfied more efficiently.

We hope that someday soon, GLP would start a buildup of a Blood-Typing Data Base among its 24,000 membership. It will surely be worth it.

TCT-EIC: Thank you VW Sir for granting us this interview. Before wrapping up, hindi pa po nasasagot ng buo ang first question: Where do you enter into the Blood Donation story Kuyang Akok?

VW Akok Tan: (Smiles) Akala ko lusot na ko... Kami ni Kuya Jimmy, we are like Batman & Robin – siya talaga ang bida habang tayo ang dakilang sidekick. Kaso masmahiyain sya, kaya tayo ang napupunta sa frontlines, kagaya ng interview na ito (laughs).

End of Interview



DONATED BLOOD FLOWS THROUGH THE **VEINS OF THE NATIONAL** CAPITAL REGION

10 Lodges involved. 1,379 + bags of blood collected. Potential lives saved =4,000

SIMULTANEOUS BLOOD DONATION AT 14 PUREGOLD BRANCHES

By VW Akok Tan (007)

On its fourth year of their Blood Donation Advocacy, Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7, made a unique record with a simultaneous Mass Blood Donation (MBD) in 14 Puregold Branches in a single day as well-meaning employees of the supermarket chain gave blood last January 22, in the ff. Branches:

- Puregold Araneta Cubao, Q.C (22 bags)
- Puregold Balintawak, QC (50 bags)
- Puregold Brgy. Singkamas, Makati (41 bags)
- Puregold Calasiao, Pangasinan (52 bags)
- Puregold Dalandanan, Valenzuela (40 bags) Puregold - Guiguinto, Bulacan (51 bags)
- Puregold Libertad Branch (57 bags)
- Puregold Main Office (Paco, Manila) (45 bags)
- Puregold Marilao Plaza Cecilia, Bulacan (56 bags)
- Puregold Monumento, Caloocan City (20 bags)
- Puregold Pasig City (31 bags)
- Puregold San Pablo, Laguna (56 bags)
- Puregold Tayuman, Tondo, Manila (42 bags)
- Puregold Tuktukan, Taguig (28 bags)

Then WM Jimmy Ngan was extremely grateful to Bro. Lorenzo Co (GS Fajardo No.383) for making the event possible. Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. was able to achieve such fete through its multiple hospital partners. A total of 591 bags of blood were collected.

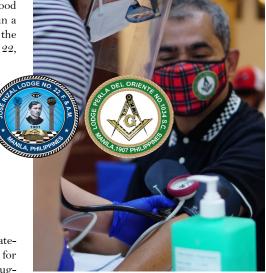
World Blood Donor Day

Lodge 007 Blood Agents jumpstart its Bloodletting Program in June 14 at the National Kidney and Transplant Institute (NKTI) in Quezon City. WM Armando Siongco gather new blood donors enlisting the help of Bro. Deo Macalma at DZRH to appeal On Air appeal. Their efforts bore 57 bags of Blood.

World Blood Donor Day was initiated on June 14, 2004 by the World Health Organization, the Inter-

national Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to raise public awareness about the need for safe blood donation. 2020 Theme is "Safe blood saves lives" with the slogan "Give blood and make the world a healthier place".





DUGO MO BUHAY KO BLOOD DRIVE By VW Kenneth Go Tieng, PDGL (22)

GLP Compound, Ermita, Manila

Inter-jurisdictional collaboration between Jose Rizal Lodge No.22 (GLP) and Lodge Perla Del Oriente No.1034 (GLoS) led to a blood-donation drive in partnership with Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. (DADBI) in July 11 at the Plaridel Masonic Temple.

Coordinating with DADBI were the Worshipful Masters of both lodges. "This is the first activity of its kind between the 2 jurisdictions"



Claimed RW Pravin Thakur Sharma, Master of the Lodge under Scottish Constitution (SC). "And we pray that it will not be the last." Add WB Stephen T. Sia – his counterpart for the GLP Lodge.

Of the 350 who registered as Blood Donors, 174 were able to qualify. Blood Collection was done by and for the benefit of Tondo Medical Center.

GIVING LIFE IN THE MIDST OF THE PANDEMIC

By Bro. Noel Patelo (273)

Fort Magsaysay, Palayan City, Nueva Ecija
To assist those in need of blood and in support of various COVID-19 related undertakings NCR Lodges, Teodoro M. Kalaw No. 136 and Gen. Artemio Ricarte No. 322 traveled to the country's largest military reservation for a Blood-Letting Program in August 28 (8:00 AM - Friday).

Done in collaboration with the Army Artillery Regiment (AAR), Philippine Army and Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc., the multigroup activity was joined by the Rotary Club of New Manila Heights 3780 and the Fort Magsaysay Sojourners Club.

To set an example for their men, the top 3 Officers of the Command namely, Col. Romulo Manuel, Jr., Col. Ray Claudio Abaya, and Col.

Hubert Acierto each donated 450 cc of blood. Incidentally, Brother Colonel Manuel is from Timberland Lodge No. 219 while Brother Colonel Acierto is the Master-elect of Gen. Artemio Ricarte Lodge No. 322 and President of Fort Magsaysay Sojourner's Club Inc.

"Ang dami ng hemoglobin mo ah!" quipped Dra. Corazon Alcantara -Team Leader from Tondo Medical Center after Nurse Aiza Gatan took a prick on one of the donor's finger tips.

The event held at the AAR covered gymnasium generated 132 bags of blood (59,400 cc) collected from Command Personnel and other donors from units inside post.

"This undertaking aims to promote awareness on the importance of blood donation and encourage potential donors to share their blood to the needy and help maintain adequate supply of blood to save lives," said WB Herculano P. Mago, Jr., Master of TM Kalaw Lodge No. 136.

Both Donors, Collectors and Organizers were treated to a lunch-fellowship with the event concluded by the presentation of Certificates of Appreciation to individuals and service groups in recognition of their unwavering support for the noble cause of GIVING LIFE IN THE MIDST OF THE PANDEMIC.



BLOOD FOR LIFE – An Anniversary Gift By Bro. David Magbanua (1)

GLP Compound, Ermita, Manila

In celebration of their 119th Charter Anniversary – the first of 3 Lodges registered under the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines conducted a blood-letting drive in support of the Grand Master's call for Charity in September 27 at the Aguinaldo Hall of the Plaridel Masonic Temple.

The life-saving project was a done in partnership between Manila-Mt. Lebanon Lodge No. 1 and the Tiu-Gan Family Association and in cooperation with the GLP, Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. (DADBI), the Chinese General Hospital and Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital (Mandaluyong).

The 2 Hospital beneficiaries collected blood between 7:00 AM to 12:00 noon. 250 potential donors registered, of these 176 were successfully qualified.

"This Masonic Activity is being done to encourage as many people as possible to be a blood donor during this time of pandemic," said WM Raul R. Reyes – Master of the 119-year-old Lodge. In celebration of Charity and Humility, the Lodge's share of Blood collected will be given for free to any person in need.

Bagumbayan Blood is Thicker than Water By VW Akok Tan (007)

Cainta, Rizal

In a Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. (DADBI) event conducted at Brgy. San Roque Covered Court last October 18, WB Rempert C. Quijano of Bagumbayan No.4 donated his blood for their Worshipful Master Jeor O. Mamaril.

Answering to our emergency call, the Brother drove from his Parañaque residence all the way to Cainta to line-up among the donors registered and was collected 450 cc of the life-saving substance by nurses of Tondo Medical Center (TMC).

"We are always willing to share what we have for others, especially our Brethren," said the Immediate Past Master of the jurisdiction's 4th Lodge. WB Quijano has Type O blood, making him a universal donor. His donation was earmarked as replacement for the blood needed by WM Mamaril for his emergency surgery scheduled at the Philippine Heart Center (PHC). Both TMC and PHC are hospital partners with DADBI.





collaborated with warehouse membership shopping club - S&R for a series of 6 Blood Donation Activities (BDA) among its several branches.

Dubbing themselves as the 3 Pandemic Masters, WM Arman Siongco (Biak-na-Bato No. 7), WM Eric Gallardo (Saigon Lodge No. 188) and WB Joseph T. Ford (Grand Sec Fajardo Lodge No. 383) banded together in the continuance of friendship and brotherly Love with the noble contention collecting blood for those in need. Named Dugong Alay ng S&R para sa Dugtong Buhay ng Filipino the BDA Series were successfully conducted among S&R employees at:

- S&R Shaw, Mandaluyong July 29, 2020 (20 bags)
- S&R Congressional, QC Oct. 21, 2020 (41 bags)



• S&R – Aseana, Pasay- Oct. 27, 2020 (53 bags)

Sub-Total = 104 bags

3 more are scheduled making the Blood Donation Activity series a Hexad:

- S&R Sucat, Parañaque Nov. 10, 2020
- S&R Nuvali, Sta. Rosa, Laguna Nov. 17, 2020
- S&R Dau, Pampanga Nov. 24, 2020

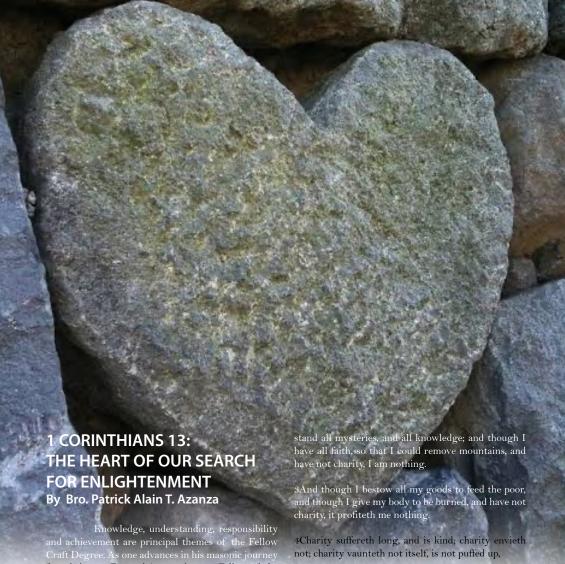
"We adopted this project to help augment our blood reserves which are extremely low during this time of the pandemic". Said WM Eric Gallardo of Saigon 188.

"A lot of people are hesitant to donate their blood at this time." GS Fajardo 383 Master Joseph T. Ford observed. "Many feared that donating their blood would make them vulnerable to COVID-19. Everyone is vulnerable to it, however donating one's blood has its own health benefits." He added.

When asked about the trio's collaboration, the 3 Pandemic Masters were one in saying that the collaboration relieves all 3 lodges and its members of the financial burden that charity projects may entail when done by a single lodge. During times of crisis like what the world is facing in 2020, Lodge leaders have to be sensitive to their members' and lodge's financial situation, they added.

Explained WB Arman Siongco of Biak-na-Bato 7, "As the GAOTU would have it, we are one with brethren who can help us set these Blood Donation Series: VW Akok Tan, one of our Past Masters coordinated with Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. (DADBI) on our behalf, while Bro. Lorenzo Co of GS Fajardo 383 is the Director of Luis Co Chi Kiat Foundation, Inc. – the Foundation for the Corporate Social Responsibilities of S&R, Puregold and the Co Family. At the same time, both of them are advocates of Blood Donation. Meanwhile, WM Eric Gallardo – an S&R Supplier assumed most of the logistics."

Together the two other Worshipful Masters and Lodge members, they arranged the necessary organizational meetings and, the rest as they say is history.



Knowledge, understanding, responsibility and achievement are principal themes of the Fellow Craft Degree. As one advances in his masonic journey from being an Entered Apprentice to a Fellow of the Craft, the obligation given to him is made more specific than the earlier degree. Not only that the duty to the Craft as a whole is emphasized when he stands in the Middle of the Chamber, but also his responsibility to involve one's self in establishing the well-being of each individual member, as well as his fellow human beings.

During our "journey", we would vividly recall as would-be Fellow Craftsmen, that a very important part of the scripture written by St. Paul in 1st Corinthians 13 was recited, to wit:

1Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

2And though I have the gift of prophecy, and under-

5Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 6Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;

7Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

13And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.

In the masonic journey, while the Entered Apprentice represents youth, the Fellow Craft represents manhood where one's life stands in the balance, being put to test whether to be proven adequate. Education allows us to gain knowledge and competencies. Experience gives us valuable lessons. But to make our lives meaningful, we need to be able to make good use of our education, talents, skills and experiences

in order to enable us to transform ourselves as men dedicated to something far greater than us, something worth aspiring; and something worth offering our lives.

As Fellow Crafts, we stood before brazen pillars symbolizing our passage vis-à-vis the growth of civilization from its primitive origins, as well as our individual quest for adulthood towards the attainment of genuine illumination. In our ardent pursuit of a more mature masonic life, we sooner realize that knowledge without wisdom is nothing. In our search for meaning, we contemplate and refer back to the message of 1st Corinthians 13, and then we come to the awesome realization that there is actually an immensely profound reason why such lines of the scripture were made part of the sacred second degree ceremony.

As Fellow Crafts, we were not left without tools and work implements as we labored daily in our adult masonic lives. One of the tools symbolizes morality and virtue, that we may always square our actions. Another serves as the standard for equality, human dignity and individual worth which we need to consider as we deal with other human beings. And yet another one reminds us to be just and upright in our conduct. We are supposed to make use of these tools as we endeavor to climb, step by step, the winding upward staircase which leads us to a place of Wisdom, "where the imperfect understanding of man touches the perfect understanding and will of the Supreme Being." Hopefully, as we made proper use of the tools, we Fellow Crafts shall all be led to the symbolic Letter "G" in our quest to understand and live in accordance with the divine plan of our Great Architect of the Universe.

In the first three lines of St. Paul's message to the Corinthians, he emphasized the following:

- An eloquent person who has gift for languages and public speaking is just like a loud noise if he does not know charity;
- The gift of prophecy that allows man to fathom all mysteries and knowledge, even the strongest faith that can move mountains, shall be nothing if one does not practice charity; and
- Even a person who is extra-ordinarily generous and self-sacrificing, if he does not do acts of charity, will gain nothing.
- 4. In the subsequent four verses, St. Paul wanted every man to understand that:
- Charity waits patiently, meaning it is long-tempered. It shows kindness and does not burn with envy. Nor does it brag;
- Charity is not imbued with impropriety and illmanners. Nor is it selfish. It is not quick to anger. It does not think of evil things.
- It does not find happiness in wrong-doings. Because charity celebrates the truth.
- 8. Charity seeks to always protect and trust. It

never loses hope and never gives up.

Consistent with St. Paul's admonition in these Biblical verses, the true mason will practice kindness in his actions. He will be willing to suffer long and will be slow to anger. He will be easy to forgive. He will send gentle reminders to keep a brother who is going astray. He shall warn him about a potential or forthcoming danger. He will not lend an ear to those who whisper ill words and shall not speak badly of a fellow mason. His brother's faults will be locked in his breast. Instead, he shall pray for divine mercy for his inequities. And in the spirit of genuine charity, a worthy brother mason shall do the same to everyone, whether or not related to him by consanguinity or affinity.

We then remember that as Fellow Crafts, we were told that "operative masons received certain wages in payment for their labors." Now we come to an understanding that as speculative masons we are also rewarded, although not in terms of material wealth. Our rewards come in the form of nourishment to our spiritual lives and the opportunity to truly serve our fellowmen, enabling us to enjoy the priceless experience of having a healthy spirit and a joyful soul.

As we look around, we then slowly understand why philanthropy seems to be an inseparable part of the masonic life of many of our elders and enlightened brothers. The act of giving selflessly has become synonymous to the reputation of Freemasonry all over the world, fulfilling the message of St. Paul in 1st Corinthians 13:13 that of the three virtues that remain: Faith, Hope and Charity; the greatest is Charity. Thus, making it pre-eminent in masonry's mystic ladder.

As Freemasons, we must not fall into the folly of erroneously believing that charity is a mere sentiment of commiseration. This will simply drive us to develop unattached behavior of mechanically giving aid or donation to the poor and the needy. In this particular sense, charity will lose its real meaning because while it uplifts the condition of the receiver, it is supposed to give as much joy and happiness to the giver. In its original context, charity as referred to by St. Paul in this part of the scripture, means "Agape", the highest form of love and support we can give to a fellow human being closely akin to "Divine Love".

When we reach this point in our masonic journey, where we have combined knowledge with understanding, then we know that we have gained wisdom. This is enlightenment; a grand discovery and illumination of our sense of purpose as human beings. 1st Corinthians 13 seeks to remind all of us of about the wisdom of finding the greater meanings of our lives. Ultimately, upon deep contemplation, we as masons must realize that important elements of our character need to be united with our inner sense of morality and purpose as we seek to fulfill the will of the Great Architect of the Universe through the greatest virtue that is no other than Charity.

DUGONG ALAY NG PUSONG MASON

By VW Vic V. Vizcocho, Jr., PJGL



DEPUTY GRAND-MASTER RW Bro. Rolen C. Paulino has called on all brethren, especially in Masonic District R3 Zambales, to rise up to the challenge of the in-

creased demand for blood to save lives during these times of the Covid-19 pandemic, setting a blood-letting activity on the last week of November 2020

"Under our Pusong Mason initiatives, we address the need of blood, not only of our brethren and Masonic family but for others in our respective communities as well," RW Paulino said, "this is in line with the expressed direction of Grandmaster MW Bro. Agapito S. Suan, Jr. who had issued two circulars early this year for blood-letting activities throughout the jurisdiction of The Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of the Philippines (GLP)."

It can be recalled that MW Bro. Suan issued Circular no. 24 in January, encouraging "all able-bodied brethren to donate blood" for the January 12 bloodletting. Pleased with the success of the January 12 activity, he issued Circular no. 29 setting a similar activity on March 29, which, unfortunately, was overtaken by events due to the Pandemic.

According to RW Bro. Paulino, with the "new normal" in our daily routines requiring conscious and strict hygienic and safety measures that include "social distancing, wearing of face masks and face shields, frequent use of alcohol and sanitizers, and regular disinfection of home, work and public premises, among others, brethren in the jurisdiction conducted individual and separate efforts to donate blood.

"As we have done in the past, especially in collaboration with the Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc., a non-profit organization that organizes blood donations to make available immediate. safe and free blood to the needy, we make it a point to always have blood-letting activities in our calendar

"When we donate blood, we give someone another chance in life," the Deputy Grand Master said from a quote, "that someone may be a close relative, a friend, a loved one – or even you,"

Meanwhile, he welcomed the appointment of VW Bro. Col. Randy Y. Arceo, as the new head of the Olongapo City Police Office (OCPO). "With a brother Mason heading the local police force, we can expect full participation of our policemen in our blood donation activities," RW Bro. Paulino said.

A Master Mason since 2008, VW Bro. Arceo is an active member of Pura Masonic Lodge 312 in Tarlac and is an incoming District Grand Lecturer (DGL) for the ensuing Masonic year. (VVV)



"PUSONG MASON DUGONG MASON". Brethren of Masonic District R3 Zambales with the volunteers in a previous blood-letting activity initiated by RW Bro. Rolen C. Paulino - Deputy Grandmaster together with VW Ly Aquino (4th from R, front) DDGM, in line with the call of MW Bro. Agapito S. Suan "to ensure adequate help for our brethren and other patients in need of blood transfusion."



RW Rolen C. Paulino, deputy grandmaster of Masons in the Philippines, in a recent "Dugong Mason Pusong Mason" blood donation project of Masonic District R3-Zambales at Unity Masonic Temple, Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Mindful of the importance of blood transfusion in various medical situations, RW Paulino and the brethren of the District regularly conduct blood-letting activities to help fill the need and save lives.

Masons of Panay Island Sow Seeds of Love during the Pandemic By VW Jose Leo Contreras, PDGL (229)

Masonic District - 6 Panay Island

March 14

MW Ricardo P. Galvez Masonic Lodge No. 229 answered the call of Iloilo City Mayor, Bro. Jerry Trenas (Iloilo Acacia 11) in extending assistance to The Alliance of Drivers Association (ICA-DA). An assortment of relief goods for the daily needs of out-of-job jeepney drivers of the City were distributed by the Brethren.

PPEs and Testing Kits were also turned over to the Provincial Government of Iloilo, while school supplies and hygiene kits were donated to Sto. Domingo Elementary School as part of their Annual Support to the Public Program.



March 21 - April 4

For 2 weeks, Aklan Masonic Lodge No. 205 Brethren donated relief goods and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE's) to frontliners and affected communities in the Province of Aklan. Among the recipients were the Provincial and District Hospitals, Clinics, Stimulation Therapeutic Activity Centers (STAC), various municipal police stations, the Aeta community, and the Missionaries of Charity.





June 13

Masons of Graciano Lopez Jaena Lodge
No. 194, ably assisted by the Circulo de 340
Damas de Graciano (Mason Wives), donated
PPEs, Testing Kits, and other equipment to
the frontliners of Sara District Hospital in the
Municipality of Sara, Province of Iloilo. Sacks
of rice were given to affected Barangays in the
said Municipality. These were implemented
with the support of the Office of Civil Defense
Region VI Regional Director Jose Roberto R.
Nunez, an affiliate member of the Lodge.



Datu Lapu Lapu Masonic Lodge No. 347 Partners with PAF Reservists' Heed for a Community Outreach

By Bro. Eugene Paul P. Espinosa

The brethren of Datu Lapu Masonic Lodge No. 347 coalesced with the Basic Citizen Military Training (BCMT) "DIMAGA-PI" Class 2020 under the auspices of the 5th Air Reserve Center of the Philippine Air Force. As part of the class' Civic Military Operations (CMO), the outreach activity distributed food packs and hygiene sanitation kits to sixty (60) indigent families of Purok Pool II, Barangay Bankal, Lapu Lapu City, Cebu on 26 September 2020.

In the advent of COVID-19, people's lives were affected unprecedentedly as if it brought the world to a standstill. Our minds were plagued with all trivialities, lamenting on the vacillation of government restrictions. At some point, we were locked in solitary confinement albeit the vicissitudes of life subsequently started to unravel.

As the brethren's response to the ongoing call of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines to alleviate the plight of indigent families during this pandemic, BCMT Class President, Bro. Eugene Paul Espinosa heeded to collaborate with his mother lodge. Worries about the future became major players in the theatres of the human mind as the myriad of adversities continued to flail our overall psyche. However, the innate resilience of our culture, bound with the altruistic labor of the lodge, relentlessly brought positivity despite these dark hours.

In retrospect, the congruity between DLL ML347 and the PAF reservists incessantly heralded a glimmer of hope. Even with the faintest inkling, one cannot doubt the reality that the lodge will always head towards the same compass point regardless of the deviations made.

To uplift class morale, LTC Joshua R.



Leones, PAF (GSC), Commanding Officer, 5th Air Reserve Center, expressed his gratitude and appreciation for the compelling efforts of BCMT and DLL ML347. WBro. Allan Abella, Worshipful Master of the lodge, likewise commiserated on the setbacks of affected households.

As the harrowing effects of the pandemic continued to ramify, the world did not stop. The normalcy of the day evoked that this collaborative effort had brought insatiable hope to the lives of many people. To express DLL ML347's support, the members of BCMT wore lodge-sponsored shirts gratifying the desire that ALL are IN THIS TOGETHER.



WB ROMEO GREGORIO N. MACASAET, PM FIRST MASON TO SACRIFICE HIS LIFE DURING THE PANDEMIC

By WB Jomel Dennis L. Maranan, PM (100)



The entire Masonic community now knows of Bro. Greg Macasaet - the first doctor among us to suffer and perish from the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that is still plaguing the world to this day. But it wasn't his death that made him stand out worthy of immortalizing. It was the way he died and, more importantly, the way he lived. He died in the frontlines as one of the first doctors to ever combat the deadly disease, refusing to abandon his medical post in the service of patients, thus unknowingly contracting the virus himself. His life, like Freemasonry itself, is now a legacy that lives in the hearts and minds of Masons across the country - a life he led with compassion and selflessness. No other legacy could excellently espouse the true meaning of Freemasonry than that of Kuya Greg Macasaet - Exemplar of Masonry; Champion of the Sick; and Hero of Humanity.

He was once fondly called Doc Greg. He began his Masonic journey on September 2009, when he went to the Grand Lodge of the Philippines in a pedicab, still wearing his scrubs. There he marveled at the portraits of the Past Grand Masters adorning the Aguinaldo Hall, some of whom he recognized, thus sparking his interest further. He then asked the guards on duty how to become a Mason himself, and the rest is history. He became a member of Keystone Lodge No. 100 where he eventually trusted to become its Worshipful Master, then its Treasurer, and then its Auditor.

Every member of Keystone Lodge, myself included, had fond memories of Doc Greg. I remember first meeting him ten years ago when he was still a petitioner. It was hours before we departed to go to Corregidor Island to conduct our Return-to-Roots project. He was showing me pictures of his wife, Dr. Evalyn Macasaet, and his only son, Raymond Macasaet, telling me stories of their travels across the world. He confided in me that he had wanted to join Freemasonry even as early as the 1980s, but decided to have a family first. When he and his wife finally had a son, they found out that the child had autism, which is why he always made sure that his family should be taken-cared-of first and foremost. Weeks after our trip in Corregidor, Doc Greg confessed to me that, ever since, he didn't like riding a boat in the open sea. As it turned out, he couldn't swim. But he also said that, in his entire life, he made sure that everything had a backup plan. So, unbeknown to all the brethren who were with us at the time, he revealed to me that he had already hired men on a separate boat to follow us from a distance, and instructed them, if ever the boat capsized, to save us all, him first of course since he couldn't swim - a funny yet clever and ingenious move. Because he was both funny and sociable, with very good conversation skills, he made sure that there were no dull moments whenever we were all together. Because of this, he easily gained the trust and confidence of all the brethren, including mine.

Kuya Greg, as a Mason, stayed active in every event the lodge conducted, even those of other lodges. He became well-known among his brethren as a generous brother, whether inside or outside the fraternity. In profession, he stayed faithful, sometimes asking permission from the brethren to leave early during Masonic gatherings in order to attend to his duties as a doctor. In the hospital where he worked, he had helped and assisted Masons' relatives on many occasions.

Even more active did Kuya Greg become in Masonry. By 2011, he joined Plaridel York Rite, and eventually becoming its High Priest in 2015 and its Illustrious Master and Eminent Commander in 2016. He also joined the Manila bodies of the Scottish Rite with me in 2011, to which he became our class president. He would eventually become a Scottish Rite Knight Commander of the Court of Honor (KCCH) in 2017. Kuya Greg also became a member of other honorary and invitational bodies of Freemasonry. Among them were the Knights of the York Cross of Honour (Filipinas Priory No. 61); the Red Cross of Constantine (Asoka Conclave); the Allied Masonic Degrees (Manila Council No. 535, where he served as Sovereign Master in 2015, and Filipinas Council No. 490); the York Rite Sovereign College of North America (Manila York Rite College No. 170); the Holy Royal Arch Knight Templar Priests (Sea of Tiberias Tabernacle No. LXX); the Grand College of Rites; and the Societas Rosicruciana in Civitatibus Foederatis (Pearl of the Orient College). He also joined Maginoo Mabuhay Shriners (Imperial Camel Class), where he became its Medical Director; the Holy Order of High Priesthood; the Order of the Silver Trowel of Thrice Illustrious Masters; and the Knight Crusaders of the Cross. He applied for membership in Tranquility Lodge No. 2000, under the Grand Lodge of Texas, and was approved as Life Member. He joined the Supreme Council of the Order of Demolay (SCOD) and was awarded as Honorary Legion of Honor, the highest award that can be given to a Master Mason. He is also a graduate from the Institute of Masonic Education and Studies (IMES Class of 2014 - 47 Dimasalang).

Years passed and Kuya Greg hosted many annual lodge Family Days for Keystone Lodge. He also donated many things to it, including his very own Eddie Bauer Ford Expedition to be used as an emergency vehicle for the lodge's members and their families. In 2017, he successfully erected the Keystone Lodge Masonic Landmark in the Island of Corregidor. It was perhaps his greatest Masonic achievement during the time of his incumbency as Worshipful Master.

If you ask around, there are many more stories and fond memories of Kuya Greg

from other Masons whose hearts he touched throughout his entire Masonic travel - amazing stories that will put a smile in your face. However, that smile on my face disappeared when he called me last March 16, 2020 to say that he was in an isolation room at the Manila Doctors Hospital, while Sis. Evalyn was in another room because they both tested positive of COVID-19. They were among the first doctors in the country who chose to stay at their posts, as the first patients with signs of infections from the new outbreak began to roll into their hospital, the Manila Doctors Hospital, one of the biggest in Manila.[1] Prayers for their speedy recovery flooded the Internet and cellular networks, but Kuya Greg grew weaker each day and his condition deteriorated. And it wasn't until he sent me the pictures of his last Masonic wish that he wanted to receive Masonic Funeral services, along with the other Last Rites from his other Masonic affiliations, that I realized the severity of his condition.

Sensing the inevitable, Kuya Greg wrote and signed his last wish on March 16, 2020 in the event of his death. On March 21, 2020, Sis. Evalyn updated me that their current condition was bad, and that Kuya Greg was already tired and wanted to give up. She couldn't even go to him because it wasn't allowed. She texted me: "If, in some unfortunate turn of events, he goes first, I won't be allowed to even go to him. Never. He will be alone without loved-ones. Please see that everything will be proper as you see fit. Ikaw ang pinakamamahal nyang kuyang (You are his most loved brother Mason). I'll give you the list of people (to call) when the time comes. You will know what to do. He trusts and loves you fully."

Meanwhile, Kuya Greg sent the following message to the Keystone Lodge Past Masters' Viber group: "Good evening, my beloved brethren. The turn of events is just no longer going in my favor. The feeling you get: aside from extreme pains all over, difficulty of breathing, and as if all life is being sucked from your body. They will be putting cut-down lines and central tubes on me anytime soon. If they intubate me and place me on ventilator, then the game is almost over. If Ateng (referring to his wife) survives, then my wish for her and Raymond for a long and happy life will bear fruition. Raymond, however, needs financial and emotional care for the rest of his life – something I

may no longer be able to fulfill. It is my fervent hope that all of you may assist the rest of my family in our most difficult times."

On that night, Kuya Greg called me personally to confirm that he was about to be intubated, and that it was already, in fact, the end stage. Before hanging up the phone, in what would be our final conversation, Kuya Greg's last words to me were "Paalam, Kuyang Jomel (Farewell, Bro. Jomel)." And that really broke my heart, for I didn't want to lose such a good friend and worthy brother. If only I could have just donated blood for him, just as I had when he went in sextuple heart bypass way back 2013, I would have simply done so again. But such was not the case for this terrible disease he contracted.

Regrettably, on March 22, 2020, past 2:00 a.m., the Masonic world lost a great Mason. Many mourned. Many more remembered

and celebrated the life Kuya Greg just led. The heroic and honorable manner by which he died is a mere cherry on top of an already fulfilled and accomplished life – one centered on kindness, generosity, service, and dedication to one's calling.

Alas, due to the lock-downs and community quarantines still in effect, Kuya Greg did not yet at that time receive any of the Last Rites he requested, whether Masonic and religious. Yet already, prayers

and pledges had been coming forth to the aid of his widow and orphan, as he had requested when he was still alive. Bishop Pablo Virgilio David, Vice President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), said that, upon learning of Kuya Greg's request for Last Rites, he immediately tried calling him on the phone, but Kuya Greg was already intubated at the time. Bishop David recounted: "What gave me greater pain as a Bishop was that part in the message of the family's friend that said Dr. Macasaet wanted to receive the Last Rites but doctors won't allow anyone go near him." [2]

Looking back, however, Kuya Greg's blood brother, Toti Macasaet, said "Greg's death is painful, but I am glad that he stood by his oath and profession until the end. He left no patients behind."

Some of Kuya Greg's colleagues in the medical profession, who mourned the loss of one of their most brilliant and dedicated physicians, and many media networks and news publications nationwide, paid tribute to his memory by letting the world know of his selfless and heroic act. A statement released by Manila Doctors Hospital, as it appeared in GMA,[3] the Manila Bulletin,[4] Manila Today, \[5 \] and the Manila Times, \[6 \] said: "We honor a brave man. He was one of the best anaesthesiologists in our country, and he was one of the first responders to a patient who eventually died from COVID-19. He has lost his life in the service for the Filipino people and our country. No words can convey the depth of our sadness as we lost not just a doctor, but a friend, colleague, co-worker, father, and husband. He had impacted the lives of his patients at Manila Doctors and his fellow doctors and nurses who

worked beside him."

Also, his Alma Mater, the University of the Philippines (UP) College of Medicine dedicated a tribute page in his honor, where it mentioned: "His caring attitude reflects on all that he does. He hardly ever complains, and he makes sure he is there to help. We feel we not only lost a close friend, but a part of us as well. But we know he is in a better place, and he will always remain in our hearts and minds."

Not long after, the UP main

website also gave its own tribute to Kuya Greg, where it mentioned: "Of the UP COVID-19 warriors, Dr. Greg Macasaet was the first to fall. He worked tirelessly to treat COVID-19 patients until he himself became ill. Soon after, his wife Dr. Evalyn, also tested positive. The two had been attending to COVID-19 patients in the emergency room, which was akin to soldiers engaging the enemy in a hand-to-hand combat. Macasaet, according to his godson Renato Paraiso, made the ultimate sacrifice. He said Greg and Evalyn chose to stay in the frontlines and made a bold sacrifice while their only child Raymond had special needs. 'Our country has lost a genuine hero, and the world has lost one of the [kindest and most] selfless human beings that would ever walk its surface,' Paraiso said."



During an interview, Bro. Renato "Aboy" Paraiso, Kuya Greg's godson, shared his viral post on how Kuya Greg remained selfless in the face of impending death: "If you know Ninong (Godfather) Greg, then, like me, you wouldn't be surprised at how everything unfolded; and even his death speaks of the character of the man and his family. As he recounted to me, he and Ateng chose to stay when most of their colleagues chose to keep themselves safe and did not report for work. Never niyang pinabayaan ang mga pasyente niya (He never left his patients behind). And now, Kuya Greg has made the ultimate sacrifice of life, not because he was forced or obliged to do so, but because of his dedication to his craft and his constant devotion to be of service to others."[7]

Days before he died, Kuya Greg seemed to already be warning us all of the threat of this new COVID-19 outbreak. He regularly updated me and Bro. Renato on his developing condition, beginning with details of his early symptoms. Kuya Greg said he started with "very high-grade fever followed by a really bad cough," then some time after, he "already has pneumonia and gastrointestinal symptoms." Bro. Renato later recalled, "Sinasabi niya talaga na 'hindi tayo handa'; Sinabi niya na there was really a lack in personnel and supplies. (He told me that 'we're not prepared for this'; He told me that there was really a lack in personnel and supplies.)"[8]

On that note, Bro. Renato encouraged everyone to share Kuya Greg's story, "that others may learn from it, and that, in his sacrifice, we may pay tribute and honor to all the men and women in the frontlines who, like him, are risking self and family to serve us, and keep us and our loved-ones safe." [9] It is a very timely advice and probably the best tribute we can pay to Kuya Greg – by not letting his death be in vain.

Gleaning therefore from the above, we can definitely say that Kuya Greg's death is a testament of his Masonic life. He died heroically and with honor because he lived a life learning and practicing the virtues of Freemasonry. Indeed, Kuya Greg Macasaet was the epitome of a true Mason, and many Masons who were fortunate enough to have known him would agree. He was kind, selfless, and generous. He was supportive and accommodating of his fellow Masons, both as a brother and as a leader.

He was an outstanding Masonic leader and example, as he gave from himself in the service of others

Masons should take a cue from Kuya Greg, reflecting on the most honorable manner by which we now know him today – an exemplary Mason who gave his own life averting the onslaught of an epidemic, doing so not just for the sake of someone else, but for the sake and welfare of our country and of all mankind. To us Masons therefore, he is considered a Masonic martyr; to the rest of the world, a hero of humanity.

And so shall this be known of the great and valiant Bro. Dr. Greg Macasaet, in the words of his fellow Scottish Rite and York Rite companion, Bro. Joey Villegas, in immortalizing his Masonic memory: "No greater Brotherly Love has one man shown than he who risked his safety in the service of fellowman. No greater Relief from pain and suffering has one doctor given than he who likewise gave his life instead of abandoning his patients. No greater Truth has one Mason revealed his brethren than the exemplary life he led and, ultimately, his own death which brought honor unto it."

Notes:

¹Raul Dancel, "I wasn't ready to die; there's still a war I had to be in: Philippine health workers under siege in coronavirus battle," The Traits Times Asia (SPH Digital News, Singapore Press Holdings Ltd. Co., March 25, 2020), www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/manilashealthcare-workers-facing-increasing-odds.

² "Bishop wants 'prayer warriors' for COVID-19 frontliners as doctor who asked for blessing dies," ABS-CBN News (ABS-CBN Corporation, March 22, 2020), https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/03/22/20/bishopwants-prayer-warriors-for-covid-19-frontliners-as-doctor-whoasked-for-blessing-dies.

³ Bianca Geli, "Doctor dies from COVID-19; colleague shares doctor's dying wish for his son," GMA News and Entertainment (GMA Network, March 23-24, 2020), www.gmanetwork.com/entertainment/celebritylife/news/60869/doctor-diesfromcovid-19-colleague-shares-doctors-dying-wish-for-his-son/story.

⁴ Minka Klaudia Tiangco, "Anesthesiologist dies due to COVID-19," Manila Bulletin (Manila Bulletin, March 23, 2020), https://news. mb.com.ph/2020/03/22/anesthesiologist-dies-due-to-covid-19.

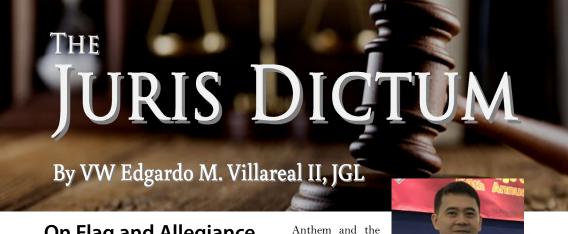
5 Alyssa Recuenco, "Dr. Greg Macasaet," Manila Today (Manila Today, March 25, 2020), www.manilatoday.net/dr-greg-macasaet.

⁶ Raul Jara, "Doctors at the frontline, never to be forgotten," The Manila Times (The Manila Times, April 5, 2020), www.manilatimes. net/2020/04/05/weekly/the-sunday-times/filipino-champions/doctors-at-the-frontline-never-to-be-forgotten/709658

7"Greg Macasaet, College of Medicine, University of the Philippines, Manila (UPCM, 2020), www.upcm.ph/greg-macasaet.

8 "Beyond ultimate sacrifice: Dr Greg Macasaet remembered for his selflessness," Rappler (Rappler.com, March 26,30, 2020), www. rappler.com/move-ph/255871-greg-macasaet-remembered-forselflessness-beyond-ultimate-sacrifice.

⁹ Lade Jean Kabagani, "How a brave Covid-19 frontliner left a legacy of selfless service," PNA (Philippine News Agency, March 24, 2020), www.pna.gov.ph/articles/1097566.



On Flag and Allegiance

To blend with the Nationalist theme of this issue of The Cable Tow, the writer shall discuss some matters about our Philippine Flag and the Oath of Allegiance. Both bear significance in Philippine Masonry considering that we present our Flag, sing the National Anthem and take the Oath of Allegiance to our country in lodge meetings and other masonic events.

Edict No. 44 (MW Quasha) provided for the manner of presenting the Flag, the singing of the Philippine National Anthem and the recital of "Panunumpa Sa Watawat". Previously, we recite the Panunumpa sa Watawat (oath of allegiance) towards the end of lodge meetings. In 1998 however, Republic Act No. 8491, otherwise known as the "Flag and Heraldic Code of the Philippines" was enacted. Its implementing rules provide that such pledge shall be recited right after the singing of the National Anthem. Thus, Edict No. 44 may be said to have been effectively amended by R.A. No. 8491. This position could be inferred from the opinion of the Committee on Jurisprudence for Masonic Year 2009-2010, when it included in its report that "the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines, of which the authority of all Lodges in this (Philippines) jurisdiction is held, is a corporation duly organized and existing by virtue and under the laws of the Republic of the Philippines. Hence, it shall abide by all the laws enacted in this legal jurisdiction which includes Republic Act No. 8491." The said Committee Report has likewise clarified that brethren of foreign nationalities attending our lodge meetings are not required to recite the pledge but should stand at attention (during the singing of the National

recital ofthe Pledge). Verily, such opinion of the Jurisprudence Committee

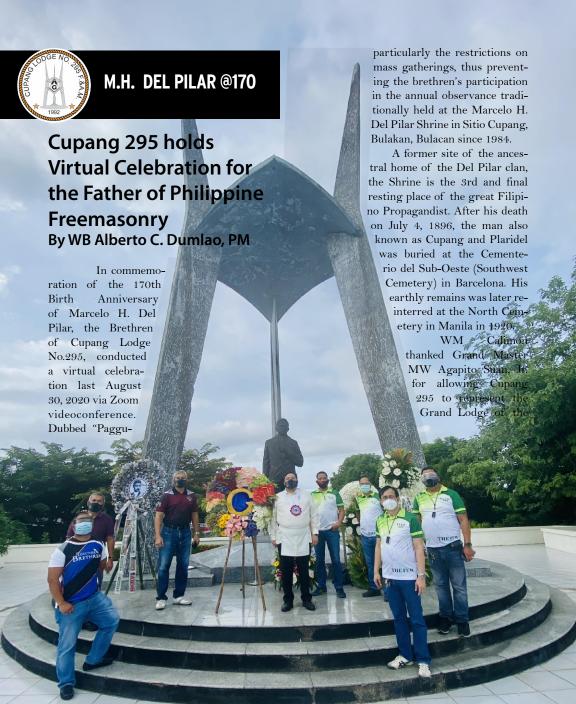
consistent with the objective of the law to observe respect and affection for the national flag and anthem, as well as the sovereignty of our nation.

But can a Filipino Mason refuse to salute the flag or recite the pledge of allegiance by reason of his sincere belief that performing such acts are tantamount to worshiping the flag?

While no such issue has ever been brought to the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, it is better that the brethren be properly informed of a related case for their appreciation and guidance.

In a case decided by our Philippine Supreme Court, petitioners, who at that time were elementary and High School students, were expelled from their classes by the public school authorities for refusing to salute the flag, sing the national anthem and recite the patriotic pledge, which the Department of Education made compulsory in all educational institutions. As members of Jehovah's Witnesses, they were taught not to salute the flag, sing the national anthem, and recite the patriotic pledge for they believe that those are "acts of worship" or "religious devotion" which they cannot conscientiously give to anyone or anything, except God. They consider the flag as an image or idol

> Cont p.71 CONTINUED ON PAGE 71



nita at Pagdiriwang ng Buhay ni Plaridel", the program was streamed live via The Cable Tow Facebook page at 10:00 AM.

WM Donemark Calimon, Master of the Lodge, opened the program by acknowledging the challenges that the pandemic has posed, Philippines during the Flag Raising and Wreath Laying Ceremonies at the Shrine and later host the virtual celebration for the benefit not just of Bulacan Masons but for the whole jurisdiction.

The Grand Master then addressed the brethren, highlighting the degree of reverence and admiration bestowed upon Del Pilar



by Filipino Masons not just in the Philippines but in other jurisdictions as well. A transcript of MW Suan's Message can be read in the succeeding article.

Also, in attendance were VW Elmer Vitug, the Grand Master's Deputy for Masonic District R3 (Bulacan West) and Cupang 295 Charter Master, VW Faustino Garcia, PD-DGM.

VW Vitug pointed out that the celebration of Del Pilar's birth anniversary is the biggest event in the province of Bulacan dedicated to a single person - a testament to his heroism that has been one of the foundations of our nation. On a personal note, VW Garcia mentioned that for the past three decades, this was the first time that he has missed the celebration of Marcelo Day at the Del Pilar Shrine. He then talked about the history of the Shrine, and the involvement of Masons in previous M. H. Del Pilar Celebrations.

In his Keynote Address, MW Pacifico Aniag, Past Grand Master recounted that during his term as Master of Malolos Lodge No.46 (1984–1985), he was able to honor the memory of Del Pilar with the establishment of Marcelo H. Del Pilar Chapter Order of DeMolay and the chartering of Marcelo H. Del Pilar Lodge No. 272.

Recalling an important role played in the final interment of Del Pilar at the Sitio Cupang Shrine in 1984, MW Aniag narrated overseeing the retrieval of the lambskin apron and dried up acacia leaves found on and about Del Pilar's remains when it was exhumed from Manila North Cemetery – a special task delegated by then Grand Master Reynato Puno to the

lodge. With the artifacts thought secured for the Grand Lodge, an impressive program was held at Templo Plaridel of Malolos 46 with MW Puno giving tribute to the Father of Philippine Freemasonry. The artifacts were then displayed in the old GLP Museum. Unfortunately, the Del Pilar Apron was one of the many casualties in the conflagration that consumed the masonic edifice in the year 2000.

The Past Grand Master proceeded with the biography of M.H. Del Pilar ultimately focusing on his alleged role as the true mastermind of the Katipunan. He offered archival evidence – letters, documents, primary source declarations - unearthed by some scholars and researchers, that may lead to the conclusion that the great man indeed played a more active role in the events leading to the Revolution against Spain.

He then posed a challenge to Cupang Masonic Lodge No. 295, Bulacan Masons and the whole fraternity to do further research on this still controversial topic, to shed further light on the true role of Del Pilar on the history



of the Katipunan and the Revolution of 1896.

In closing, MW Aniag stated, "Ako'y naniniwala na napakalaki ang nagging bahagi ni Marcelo H. Del Pilar sa naganap na himagsikan kahit na siya ay nasa Espanya. Kung papaanong ang kapatiran ay kumilala sa kanya bilang Ama ng Masonerya dahil sa kanyang pamamagitan at pakikipag-ugnayan sa may kapangyarihan sa Masonerya, marahil ay ganun ding pagkilala ang dapat igawad ng buong sambayanang Pilipino dahil sa papel na kanyang ginampanan, di umano, kung totoo ang lahat ng isinasaad sa mga naturang salaysay, sa buhay ng Katipunan at sa paglaban para sa kasarinlan."

The Event can be re-watched at The Cable Tow Facebook Page.



GRAND MASTER'S MESSAGE 170th Birth Anniversary of Bro. M. H. del Pilar

August 30, 2020

With much pride and honor, I join the brethren of Cupang Masonic Lodge No. 295 as they lead the celebration of the 170th Birth Anniversary of one of our greatest Mason heroes, Bro. Marcelo H. del Pilar.

I cannot over-emphasize the degree of reverence and admiration Philippine Freemasonry places on this illustrious Mason. Look around you - his name, del Pilar or Plaridel, is carried by many schools, university halls, town plazas and other public places. Masonic lodges carry his name not only in the Philippines but in other countries as well. I need not name the local lodges for there are many. But for foreign lodges, there is Plaridel Lodge No.302 in the Grand Lodge of New Jersey, USA. And just last year, I have attended the consecration and chartering of a lodge under the Grand Lodge of Victoria, Australia that is named Plaridel Lodge No.1893. That number was particularly chosen by our Filipino-Australian brethren to commemorate the establishment of the first national organization of Filipino Masons in 1893, for which del Pilar earned the recognition as the Father of Philippine Freemasonry. And as you know, we rightfully named our Grand Lodge Temple after him.

Marcelo del Pilar lived at a time when individual rights, liberties, and way of life of Filipinos were so vastly different from what we take for granted today – no freedom of religion, no freedom of expression and assembly, and individual rights were practically curtailed by the state. Bro. del Pilar was among the brave and the few who dared question the abuses of the friars, the lopsided status quo in society which favored only the rich and powerful, and the injustices tolerated by the colonial government.

Plaridel was already a great nationalist before he joined Freemasonry. But when he joined the Fraternity, he observed how Freemasonry's peculiar system of morality, where equality among men and being treated 'on the level' regardless of skin color, race or belief was not only possible, it was commonplace! This strengthened his resolve in seeing Filipinos treated as equals in their very own country. Del Pilar saw Freemasonry not as a way of life for pleasure, but as a life of sacrifice and purpose. According to him, and I quote:

"Masonry is not a society of mutual aid. Mutual protection is a part of its rule and every Mason has a duty of assisting his brethren, but this is not its sole and final objective.

"It's ideal is very much higher, much more sacred, much more thorny; it is to uphold the principle of universal brotherhood and consequently... to uphold the principle of democracy, the real and effective autonomy of human individuality, as opposed to the enslaving ambitions of those persons who nurture their greed by trampling upon the rights of others and who build their happiness at the expense of the tears of the needy."

He employed his foremost weapon – the pen – to spark the fire of nationalism in his countrymen until it became a conflagration eventually leading to our rebirth as a great Filipino nation.

His greatest legacy is the many writings on nationalism which he authored, not in Spanish, but in Tagalog which is the common language of the masses then and now. I hasten to add that because of his forceful writings in Tagalog, he reached multitudes of Filipinos, perhaps more than any of his other compatriots. For sure, the masses understood the cause and ideas that he was fighting for and this paved the way to a great awakening for the ideals of democracy and nationalism among Filipinos.

I commend the officers and members of Cupang Lodge No. 295, led by its Worshipful Master – Bro. Donemark Calimon – for organizing this commemorative event about Bro. Marcelo del Pilar, despite the hardships of the Coronavirus pandemic. But as I say time and again, Freemasonry has survived devastations and other calamities during its many centuries of continued existence. United in our craft and with prudence and perseverance, we shall prevail, we shall overcome this pandemic and we shall soon meet again in the great halls of Freemasonry.

AGAPITO S. SUAN, JR. Crand Master



The Ties that Bind

MARCELO H. DEL PILAR

@ 170

- Bro. MH Del Pilar

Beyond Fraternalism and Journalism By Bro. Lloyd C. Llaga

"Let us strive therefore, to extend to the remotest corners of the Philippines the principles of our august order, teaching the people by precept and example, if not by legislation, the love of liberty, equality and fraternity."

After weeks of preparations, the staff of both The Cable Tow and the Far Eastern Freemason finally converged one Sunday afternoon to celebrate the life and heroism of Bro. Marcelo H. Del Pilar. He was considered the father of Philippine Masonry and had played a vital role in the fledgling history of the country's journalistic landscape. But like most gatherings during this pandemic, this unique confluence of the two official publications of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines and the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Philippines took place in cyberspace. As the new medium of exchange of ideas, video conferencing about the colorful parts of Plaridel in our history proved to be both challenging in the beginning yet truly rewarding for those who participated.

The program began at around 4:00 in the afternoon of 30 August 2020, with the reception of guests and participants to the lecture. Two distinguished gentlemen provided the main materials for discussion through the distinct lenses of viewing Del Pilar as "Cupang," the father of Philippine Freemasonry and as "Plaridel" or the father of Philippine journalism. In presenting Bro. Del Pilar as the former, VR Samuel T. Fernandez, PGC, HA, displayed proficiency with his rich collection of documentary evidence and his erudite explora-

tion of their significance in the development of the Craft within the archipelago. Complementing his lecture was the equally outstanding discourse facilitated by Prof. Arvin D. Eballo, PhD, about Plaridel as a linchpin in the development of journalism in the country.

A few minutes into the opening of the online session, the editor-in-chief of The Far Eastern Freemason Bro. Lloyd C. Llaga, 32° MRS, explained the short orientation for the conduct of the lectures. Common courtesy was highlighted as the rule of thumb while participating with Brethren and members of the general public. It was followed by the introduction of the editor-in-chief of the Cable Tow WB Harold W. Santiago, PM and the invocation of Illus. Roel S. Palaca, 33°. WB Santiago discussed the reason for the commemoration of the 170th birthdate of Bro. Del Pilar and explained that it was one of the identified joint activities between the two publications. The preliminaries were followed by wise words from the MW Grand Master Agapito S. Suan, Jr. in his welcome remarks. MW Suan formally opened the event and gave a brief lecture on the value of Bro. Del Pilar as a Mason and journalist. The Grand Master then commended both speakers and the staff of The Cable Tow and the Far Eastern Freemason for their initiative in conducting this momentous event despite the challenges of the pandemic. He then concluded with encouragements for all Brethren to weather the current crisis and to never stop learning even when physical gatherings are not yet possible.

Bro. Llaga then introduced VR Fernandez to begin the first lecture on Bro. Cupang. He first presented biographical information on Del Pilar before proceeding to his association with other Brother Masons during the Spanish era in the Philippines. His anti-friar sentiments were also elaborated by aid of examples from his Dasalan at Tocsohan where he demonstrated his eloquence in the use of the local Tagalog language. As the father of Philippine Masonry, Bro. Cupang was instrumental in the establishment of Logia Revolucion in 1889 under the Gran Oriente Espanol.

The next lecturer was welcomed by Bro. Santiago and was introduced accordingly. Prof. Arvin D. Eballo, PhD presented the topic on Plaridel and his role as the father of Philippine journalism. The professor is a faculty member of the University of Santo Tomas Institute



of Religion. Coincidentally, he shares the same birthday as Bro. Del Pilar. He began his lecture with some levity to illustrate the unique culture of the Filipinos to combine spirituality and humor, as demonstrated in Del Pilar's Dasalan at Tocsohan. It was followed by his comprehensive discussion of the academic and professional accomplishments of our Brother as a full-fledged lawyer and journalist. Aside from the Dasalan, Plaridel also wrote other hard-hitting pieces in Caiigat Cayo and La Soberania Monacal en Filipinas among others. In conclusion, Prof. Eballo quoted Governor General Ramon Blanco who described our noble Brother thus, "si Plaridel ay lubhang matapang at nakakagimbal na pulitiko, ang tunay na boses ng mga separatista at kaluluwa ng himagsikan, mas mahusay kay Rizal."

As entertaining and educational breaks from the lectures, the organizers played a mock version of "Jeopardy" where the participants were quizzed on the important lessons presented. Winners were awarded products and vouchers from Masonic suppliers Fine Craftsmen, Mason Wear, and Frat Shirt. Fifteen lucky guests won the contest and prizes were accordingly given as reward for their active participation.

The formal question and answer portion began after the final round of the games where a healthy exchange of ideas took place among those present. Both speakers displayed proficiency in their topics in responding to various related queries while the participants sustained their interest in learning more. Tokens were then presented to the lecturers in appreciation of their efforts and dedication in sharing

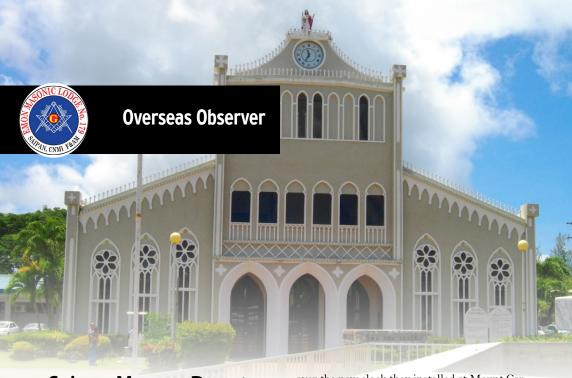
their wisdom and knowledge on the life of our dear Brother Marcelo H. Del Pilar.

To conclude the program, Bro. Llaga introduced Illus. Faustino C. Garcia, 33° who represented the Supreme Council of the Thirty-Third and Last Degree, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Republic of the Philippines. Illus. Garcia is the Grand Almoner of the Supreme Council and the Sovereign Grand Inspector General of the Orients of Bulacan and Pampanga who was designated by the Most Puissant Sovereign Grand Commander Illus. Edilberto P. Carabbacan, 33° to deliver the closing remarks on his behalf. He began by congratulating the organizers of the novel event for its successful delivery. He followed it by shifting to the local Tagalog in thanking the speakers and expressing his appreciation for the whole day commemoration of the life of Bro. Del Pilar. He hoped that this would not be the last time that the life of Plaridel is studied by the public, especially by his Brothers in Masonry.

The special joint event was attended by more than a hundred guests and watched live on the Facebook page of The Cable Tow. A copy of the webinar may still be viewed at the same social media account.

About the Author:

Bro. Llaga is the editor-in-chief of the Far Eastern Freemason, the official publication of the Supreme Council of the Thirty-Third and Last Degree, Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry of the Republic of the Philippines. He is the incumbent District Secretary of Masonic District R4 (Quezon and Marinduque). He was raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason at Kalilayan Masonic Lodge No. 37 and has served it in various capacities. He is a writer, landscape architect, real estate consultant, appraiser, and broker. Bro. Llaga is also the general manager of Titullo Real Estate Services.



Saipan Masons Donate Tower Clock to Catholic Cathedral By Bro. Christopher Hodapp

Friday, July 14, 2020

Freemasons help their communities all over the world, and in countless ways. In the village of Chalan Kanoa on the Pacific Island of Saipan, local Masons have just completed the installation of a new tower clock at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Cathedral. The Cathedral is the mother church and seat of the bishop of the Diocese of Chalan Kanao.

According to the Marinas Variety newspaper website today, the Brethren from Emon Lodge No.179 donated the clock and their labor to install it at the Catholic Cathedral. The tower's original clock was destroyed by Super Typhoon Yutu in October 2018:

From the Article:

The member of the Emon Masonic Lodge No.179 under the leadership of Worshipful Master Joel I. Subang on Wednesday turned over the new clock they installed at Mount Carmel Cathedral

"I feel much pleased to thank the brethren who worked together to make this project a reality" Subang said, adding that the project was initiated by Very Worshipful Bong Malasarte. Through brotherly love, charity and faith in God, everything becomes possible," Subang said, as he urged the Freemasons on Saipan to continue working together in serving the community."

Bishop Ryan Jimenez of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa expressed his appreciation to the Emon Masonic Lodge No. 179 for its contribution to the church.

"I am truly and sincerely grateful to all of you for your kindness and generosity. You've been very helpful to the community," Bishop Jimenez said as he acknowledged Saipan Mayor David M. Atapang and Honorary Philippine Consul to the CNMI Glicerio "Eli" Arago for their assistance and support.

"The church is just a structure; it's just a building, but more than that building is really our faith that can withstand any storm," Bishop Jimenez said.



Tree Planting News Story from the Marianas Islands

By VW Romeo D. Malasarte, PDDGM (179)

SAIPAN, Northern Mariana Islands

In their desire to help keep Saipan green and more attractive, members of Emon Masonic Lodge No.179 led by Worshipful Master Joel Subang conducted a tree-planting activity on Airport Road on August 22 (Saturday). Family members, friends and other volunteers also participated in the event.

"We just want to give back to Mother Earth to help maintain the island's beautiful and clean environment," WM Subang said.

About 40 flame trees and other flowering varieties where planted in the area. The CNMI Division of Forestry provided the seedlings and the same agency will help maintain the area, including the watering of the plants.

In keeping steadfast to their Environmental Advocacy, the lodge on September 19 also participated in the International Coastal Cleanup Day – an Awareness Campaign encouraging citizens from all around the globe to rid local beaches of garbage to keep their coastlines clean. The event is observed around the world every 3rd Saturday of September.

The freemasons have also partnered with the Saipan Rotary Club in "adopting" and maintaining Suicide Cliff.



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	3	22	Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7	Puregold - Balintawak, Quezon City	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	50.00	NCR
	4	22	Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7	Puregold - Brgy Singkamas, Makati	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	41.00	NCR
	5	22	Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7	Puregold - Calasiao, Pangasinan	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	52.00	Pangasinan
	6	22	Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7	Puregold- Dalandanan, Valenzuela	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	40.00	NCR
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	9	22	Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7	Puregold - MAIN OFFICE	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	45.00	NCR
	10	22	Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7	Puregold - Marilao	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	56.00	Bulacan
	11	22	Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7	Plaza, Bulacan Puregold -	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	20.00	NCR
	12	22	Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7	MONUMENTO Puregold - Pasig City	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	31.00	NCR
	13	22		Puregold – San Pablo,	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	56.00	3007
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	14	22	Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7	Tondo, Manila Puregold - Tuktukan,	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	42.00	NCR
	15	22	Biak-na-Bato Lodge No.7	Taguig	Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc.	28.00	NCR
	16	30	Magtagumpay Lodge No. 410		Dugong Mason	46.00	Cavite
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	24	11	Perla del Oriente No. 1034		Dugong Alay, Dugtong Buhay, Inc. Philippine College of Surgeons -	174.00	NCR
	25	11	Malinaw Lodge No. 25		STC	35.00	Laguna
	26	19	Magtagumpay Lodge No. 410	4	Dugong Mason	86.00	Cavite
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Fractals and the God Code

In our maiden issue, we introduced the idea of the fractal Geometry of nature as tangible and observable phenomena that may lead us to think that the use of this "noblest of sciences" in our ritual, is more than an allegory to complement the use of King Solomon's Temple as a teaching tool for the progressive moral science that is Freemasonry.

For this second installment, we will further investigate the original reasoning behind the use of Geometry in our teachings, and how the relatively recent branch of mathematics of fractals may be the missing connection between the two "Letter G Lectures" of the Fellowcraft degree.



GEOMETRY - THE FIRST AND NOBLEST OF SCIENCES

Our Fellowcraft ritual, largely based on the work of William Preston and Thomas Smith Webb, introduces Geometry as the first and noblest of sciences. The earliest civilizations in Egpyt, Babylon and India developed empirically discovered principles concerning lengths, angles, areas and volumes, which they found useful in the surveying of land

for agriculture and consequently, in construction.

The Greeks further developed Geometry, changing its methodol-

ogy from trial-and-error to logical deduction (the axiom method), which became the foundation of critical thinking and rational thought. By these, we can see how Geometry would fit perfectly in the allegorical teaching model of King Solomon's temple and how using this discipline assumes beautifully the role of foundational basis on which the progressive moral science of Freemasonry may be built upon



Towards the end of the Fellowcraft ritual, the Worshipful Master delivers the Letter "G" lecture to the candidate in two parts: first by giving a comprehensive discussion of the practical benefits of Geometry to man and second, by calling out the significance of the letter G as the initial of the name of the Supreme Being.

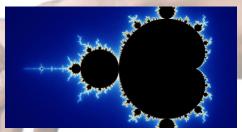
While the first part of the Letter G lecture has frequent allusions to Geometry as a means to admire the works of the GAOTU, it has been always impressed upon me that these two lectures were two distinct lectures based on two distinct precepts - Science and Faith. For centuries, from the time of Galileo Galilei up until Charles Darwin, these were and to certain extent still are regarded as two worlds that are at best incompatible, and at worst completely hostile.

But should we forever accept the vast disparity of the concepts of science and faith, and quoting Bro. Rudyard Kipling, "never the twain shall meet?"

FRACTALS AND THE 'GOD CODE'

The term 'fractal' was first used by the mathematician Benoit Mandelbrot in 1975 to describe self-similar patterns that show up everywhere and repeat themselves all around us in nature, from leaves and trees to shells and waves to rock outcrops and entire mountain ranges.

We can also see fractal patterns in the human body, from our organs, our lungs, our heart, our nervous and arterial system, and our brain. We can also see it at the microscopic level of our DNA, our cells and our tissues.



In the Letter G lecture, we were encouraged to use Geometry "to discover the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of the Grand Artificer of the Universe." Written centuries ago, the discovery alluded to in the ritual may only be possible in small part by the scientific instruments available during that time, but in a larger part on an assumption that can neither be proved nor disproved – the existence of Deity – something all aspirants, as a requirement of admission to the Fraternity, must profess a belief on

Mandelbrot, benefitting from advanced observational and computing instruments, explained that what we need to consider is not the large shapes we see in nature but rather what it took to create those shapes and patterns. It takes infinitely endless repetition of the same patterns, over and over again known as "self-similarity."

Is this phenomenon of self-similarity, layered inside every living organism and every natural occurrence, the signature of God? Is the fractal Geometry of nature what our ritual refers to as bearing "the nearest resemblance or affinity of that Supreme Intelligence which pervades all nature?"

Is this, finally, scientific proof that God exists?

BRIDGING THE GAP

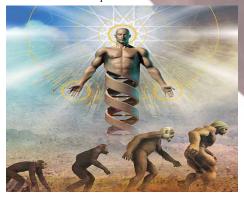
As a candidate hearing the Letter G lectures for the first time, I initially thought that it was an attempt, albeit a weak one, to marry the two disparate ideas of science and religion. Masons, after all, were expected to be rationale thinking men, but at the same time express a belief in the existence of a Supreme Being and the immortality of the soul – two things that are difficult and perhaps impossible and arguably futile to prove or disprove.

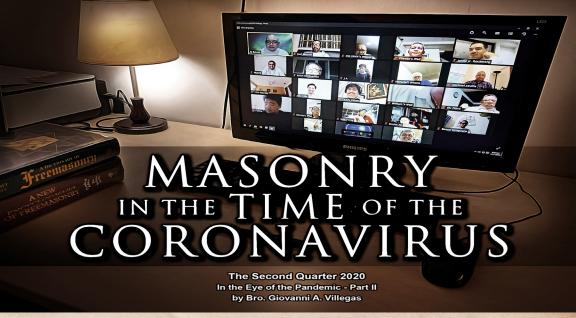
In a Short Talk Bulletin written in 1934, it was argued that Geometry, like all other sciences, is not "exact." That ultimately, the whole progressive moral science of Freemasonry - with all its allusions to the liberal arts and the rational thinking mind as fundamental to a person's improvement – is still dependent on a person's belief in a Supreme Being.

However, Masonic teachings are inherently based on the intersection of science and faith. When science was still lacking, we took a leap of faith. Now, we see the science slowly catching up with our belief. And we see the science reinforcing our belief, instead of weakening it.

Modern dialogues between science and religion are building bridges between these two worlds. The "Creationism versus Darwinism" debate is now being seen in fresh perspective known as the "Intelligent Design Movement." With fractal Geometry, we see the "hard" science of mathematics being offered as proof of a Divine blueprint of life – a Grand Design, if you will.

In our next installment we will feature how architecture and geometry is manifested in the design of our halls and temples.





Masons of the different Craft Lodges in the Philippines have been meeting online amongst themselves, and for various reasons – some in order to check up on each other's health and living conditions; others to see if anyone needed assistance, medical or otherwise. Some conduct their virtual meetings regularly to discuss lodge-related matters; while others do so only as a sort of lodge social or fellowship – to propose toasts, offer prayers, or just simply to console each other during these difficult times. Some even talk about ways on how they could

assist their communities during quarantine. These local lodges meeting online include: Cavite Lodge No. 2; Nilad Lodge No. 12; Jose Rizal Lodge No. 22; Mt. Mainam Masonic Lodge No. 49; Union Lodge No. 70; Muog Lodge No. 89; Isa-

gani Lodge No. 96; Quezon City Masonic Lodge No. 122, Emon Lodge No. 179 (Mariana Islands); Saigon Lodge No. 188; Jacobo Zobel Memorial Lodge No. 202; Ricardo Galvez Lodge No. 229; La Naval Lodge No. 269; Urdaneta Masonic Lodge No. 302; Mendez-Nunez Masonic Lodge No. 316; Datu Lapu-Lapu Masonic Lodge No. 347; Macario Ramos Memorial Lodge No. 355 who did so on their 16th charter anniversary; Escudo Lodge No. 371, Cabuyao City Masonic Lodge No. 442; Leon Kilat Masonic Lodge No. 437, and Primera Republica Masonic Lodge No. 444. In other Masonic bodies, Orients and Valleys such as Manila Bodies, Philippine Bodies,

and Bulacan Bodies of the Scottish Rite, as well as the Luzon, Plaridel, Cavite, and Bulacan York Rite bodies, have likewise been conducting their own respective caucus meetings online. Note that such meetings were in no way considered official stated meetings, and that no Masonic degree rituals were ever performed therein.

Elsewhere around the world, many lodges, groups, and individual Masons have been conducting their own virtual meetings, lectures, and webinars. For instance, the Grand

Master of the UGLE, the Duke of Kent, delivered an online speech and Toast on April 12, 2020. Members of the Allied Masonic Degrees (AMD) of the USA have been conducting and sponsoring informal Masonic forums and virtual lec-

tures since April 13, 2020, and even conducted their Grand Officers' meeting online. A group of individual Masons hosted a virtual reality meet-up or hangout via AltspaceVR on April 14, 2020. Masons of California[9] and Bro. David Chichinadze hosted different series of digital lectures featuring renowned Masonic authors and researchers like Bros. Oscar Alleyne, Josef Wages, David Harrison, Robert LD Cooper and Prof. Andreas Onnerfors, the current Worshipful Master of the premier lodge of research, Quatuor Coronati Lodge No. 2076. Some of their lectures are posted in the YouTube channel of the Grand Lodge of

Georgia (the country).[10] An online ritualmemorization workshop was also hosted on April 30, 2020 for those who wanted to brush up on their ritual parts. Masonic author, Bro. Michael Poll, shared his views on "Freemasonry during COVID-19" in the New Orleans Scottish Rite College YouTube channel, [11] while the Freemasonry Report[12] and the Prince Hall Think Tank[13] did their own respective COVID reports and commentaries. The Maryland Masonic Research Society began hosting Masonic presentations on May 2, 2020. The UK progressive orders, also called the orders beyond the Craft, conducted their own meetings, with the Societas Rosicruciana In Anglia (SRIA) on May 2, 2020, and the Red Cross of Constantine, observing their Feast of the Cross service,[14] on May 3, 2020. Lexington Lodge No. 1 of Kentucky and their Rubicon Masonic Society have organized virtual gatherings every Monday starting May 4, 2020, featuring highcaliber Masonic authors and speakers like Bros. Christopher Hodapp, and S. Brent Morris, who likewise appeared in one of the weekly virtual meetings of Speedway Masonic Lodge No. 500 in Indiana. Bro. Mark William Stockdale has been regularly reminding UK brethren of their daily Zoom meetings and Nine O'clock Toast to Absent Brethren, while Bros. Alex Powers and Robert Marshal of Historical Light Masonic podcast have been doing the same daily Toasts in the US and with featured Masonic speakers. On Facebook Live, Past Grand Master and Past Potentate of the Al Malaikah Shriners, MW Stuart Wright, toasted to the Shriner Hospitals and to those who have contributed to the Distressed Worthy Brother relief fund. MW Andrey Bogdanov, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Russia posted a video showing Masons linking their hands electronically and carrying on the tradition of the Chain of Union from their homes. [15] The Order of the Eastern Star of New Jersey featured Bro. Moises Gomez on May 13, 2020, who delivered a Masonic lecture on the origins of that order. The Brother Masonic Podcast YouTube channel started a few virtual meetings and presentations discussing about such progressive orders as the Red Cross of Constantine, Order of the Secret Monitor, Royal and Select Masters, and the Allied Masonic Degrees. The Freemasons Without Borders group did the same, discussing about the Royal Ark Mariner, the Allied

Masonic Degrees, the Order of the Scarlet Cord, etc.[16]

Guidelines to Virtual Masonic Meetings and Webinars

The growing popularity of virtual Masonic gatherings raised concern among certain jurisprudence-minded Masons who believe that such meetings may potentially be contrary to or in violation of certain Masonic rules and protocols. Even though such virtual meetings were already officially endorsed by their respective Grand Lodges, it remained vague for a time what exactly Masons can or cannot do during such meetings.

On April 5, 2020, the Grand Lodge of Ohio issued a dispensation to its subordinate lodges to hold "virtual stated meetings," using available methods on the Internet. Such meetings were not required to have individual dispensations anymore for each Worshipful Masters was automatically granted permission to hold them. Though such would function as stated meetings, as proclaimed by the Master to be "symbolically open in the Entered Apprentice Degree," and permitted to conduct official businesses, the Grand Lodge dispensation gave specific instructions that "ritual work of any type or nature, candidate examinations, and candidate balloting are not permitted." [17]

On April 13, 2020, the Grand Lodge of Scotland issued its own guidelines for conducting digital meetings during the time of the pandemic, allowing its subordinate lodges to choose their own secure platforms and conduct them as often as required. Attendees to such meetings should adhere to the same decorum and standards of regular meetings, and should not record videos of proceedings. Since digital meetings are not tyled nor should they appear to be so, signs and tokens should not be shown, exchanged, or performed. The guidelines also clarified that decisions made within such meetings are not considered binding. Such digital meetings still do not replace a regular stated meeting, as they do not, no matter how much they seem to appear, meet the requirements of the Ancient Landmarks, Ancient Charges and Regulations, and Constitution in order to be considered tyled in any or remote form. [18] A

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later update from the Grand Lodge also clarified that there should be no nomination or election of office-bearers, or interviews of candidates during such digital meetings.

Similarly, the Grand Lodge of Oklahoma clarified what was considered legal and not when conducting virtual meetings of lodges under its jurisdiction. Since it was already unlawful to record or place on any public record any part of the Masonic esoteric work, they were not allowed to hold official stated meetings online nor perform degree works and other ritual practices. When conducting virtual meetings, they should not be tyled and should be treated merely as informal meetings where members conduct fellowship or listen to Masonic presentations only.

Even appendant bodies and orders beyond the Craft have likewise issues the same directives of permitting virtual meetings but without performing any rituals or conferring any degrees. The Grand Encampment of Knights Templar USA, for instance, when it cancelled all scheduled conclaves on May 4, 2020, officially authorized the Grand Commanders of subordinate Commanderies to conduct meetings online whenever possible, sans the performance of rituals and conferment of orders.

Here in the Philippines, it was on May 27, 2020 when the Grand Lodge issued the circular defining the local protocols and delimitations on how subordinate lodges and appendant bodies should conduct Masonic online meetings. It stated that such meetings should be conducted informally and should never be recognized as a substitute for regular tyled meetings. It also specified that no Masonic regalia should be worn, no Masonic-related articles should be displayed, and no discussion of the esoteric work or ritual should be allowed. [19] Later, VW Teodoro Kalaw IV, Senior Grand Lecturer of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines, gave sample scenarios pertaining to the said circular. For instance, if a Mason belonging to a Philippine lodge or other local Masonic body is currently situated outside the Philippines, he still cannot host a tyled virtual meeting from outside the country and have brethren attend in Masonic regalia, even if such is allowed in the Masonic jurisdiction he is situated. Regardless of where he may be in the world, once he hosts a meeting of a lodge or Masonic body under the jurisdiction of a Grand body in the Philippines, that online meeting is effectively deemed to be in the Philippines. Another clarification is whether a Philippine Mason situated in the Philippines can join and participate, in his own Masonic regalia, a virtual meeting situated abroad where such are considered official or regular meetings. VW Kalaw said yes. Such was the case when the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia issued last May 8, 2020 that its subordinate lodges could meet virtually "in provisional form" for the duration of the pandemic. Since such an online meeting was deemed to be held in Washington DC and not in the Philippines, and that a Philippine Mason wanting to attend it would mean that he would virtually be in Washington DC where Masonic activities have resumed, then it follows that he could wear his Masonic regalia during said virtual meeting.[20] Note however that only a small minority of regular Masonic jurisdictions have followed the path taken by the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia in allowing such tyled-like meetings. The UGLE, for one, had already taken a stand against such a path.

On the Re-Opening of Lodges

Having experienced months of isolation, it soon dawned on everyone that the need for governments to ease their lockdowns and re-open their economies, coupled with everyone's need to make a living and return to any semblance of normalcy, far outweighed the general fear of contracting COVID-19, thus ushering the inevitable second wave.

While there are countries that are slowly flattening the curve of their local Coronavirus infections, the numbers of cases are still rising in most other countries, including the Philippines. By the end of May 2020, cases continued to rise, prompting the Grand Lodge of the Philippines – which was supposed to hold its overdue Annual Communication in order to transition to a new set of Grand officers – to reset the date to April the following year, [21] thus retaining the current Grand line on holdover for another year's term.

Transitioning to a new lodge and Grand Lodge leadership in unprecedented times can be difficult, and different Masonic jurisdictions deal with the problem differently from each other. For instance, some Scottish lodges like Lodge Buchan St. John No. 636 have informed their members that, in view of everyone's safety, office bearers would remain in their current offices until next year. The Grand Lodge of Texas, whose state already planned to re-open, proclaimed that their lodges may start holding stated meetings on May 25, 2020, for the primary purpose of electing their officers for the ensuing year; and that they may also conduct their businesses on said meetings. Still, no other meetings with other purposes, such as degree works, were allowed. Lodges were reminded to practice social distancing or to avoid attending altogether should there be signs of illnesses.

As other countries eased their respective lockdowns, possibly in view of a perceived decline of new cases per day, they likewise consequently experienced a sudden surge of new infections thereafter. On April 29, 2020, Japan reported to have experienced its second wave of COVID-19 infections after ending a three-week lockdown. By May 2, 2020, other countries like South Korea, France, and parts of Europe started to slowly ease their respective restrictions, paving the way for a possible second wave. On May 11, 2020, Spain and Germany likewise started easing their strict lockdowns. Germany warned, however, after a consequent rise in infection rate, that a second wave and second lockdown is inevitable if people would treat the easing of lockdowns lightly or loosely. Meanwhile, Syria began re-opening its mosques to the public

It was about this time when the WHO said that the world must prepare for the second and third wave. A study from the University of Minnesota warned that if the Coronavirus follows the same pattern as the 1918 Spanish Flu, then the current pandemic could last up to 2 years; and that its second wave could be far worse than the first. On May 23, 2020, Saudi Arabia announced a total lockdown following the end of their Ramadan after new-cases soared. Other countries that have recently reopened have likewise closed down again after experiencing sudden spikes of new cases.

Despite this consistent trend of reinfections occurring precisely because of the easing of prior lockdowns, it was reported that 12 Grand Lodged in the US still resumed Masonic activities by mid-May 2020, while 39 remained suspended. The Grand Lodge of Alabama already authorized its subordinate lodges to resume normal operations, except degree works, effective June 1, 2020, still subject to their Worshipful Masters' discretions. By May 28, 2020, 16 Grand Lodges were already meeting, in person and virtually, while 5 have been suspended through June 30, 2020, and 13 with no specified return dates. The Grand Lodge of Florida, on May 29, 2020, installed its new set of Grand officers, pending an electronic election and installation of their Junior Grand Warden. More updated news on the gradual re-opening of US Grand Lodges can be found in the Northeast Corner blog. [22]

Let us pause for a moment to contemplate on the above trend. We can understand why governments need to ease their quarantines and lockdowns. It is not because it is already safe to go outside. It is because they need to restart their economies and prevent them from total collapse. So why are some Masonic jurisdictions in a hurry to resume their physical gatherings without any similar urgency? What possible reason or motivation could compel some Masonic leaders to risk the health and safety of their members and those of their families and loved-ones, in order to prematurely go back to lodge and just sit there to listen to min-

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utes and reports, which incidentally can now be done virtually anyway? These concerns were raised and addressed in one of the episodes of the Masonic Roundtable - a panel discussion consisting of US-based Bros. Jon Ruark, Juan Sepulveda, Robert Johnson, Jason Richards, and Mike Hambrecht. They mentioned how many Masons on social media were already excited and couldn't wait to go back to lodge. To this, Bro. Sepulveda posed the challenge question, "What for? If all we are doing is discussing bills, minutes, probably a small portion of Masonic education (which can be done online), is that worth risking our health going to lodge?" Bro. Johnson, in sharing a mutual sentiment with a friend, added, "I'm okay with never having to go back... ever...because if it's going to be the way it was before... why?"[23] Although the panel unanimously agreed that "virtual Masonry will never replace brick-and-mortar Masonry" (alluding that online methods of meeting, learning, and practicing Masonry will never replace actual lodge meetings where rituals and degrees are performed in person), the real question is actually: why are there Masons in a hurry to go back so soon when it is clearly not yet safe to do so? We may never know the answers, as situations vary from one place to another. We can merely guess based on each of our own jurisdiction's perspectives. It may be that those who are clamoring to go back to lodge so soon are those "fellowship guys" - those who miss the meals, the socials, the banters, and the drinking sessions; or perhaps those who can't wait to ascend to their next higher position in office; or maybe those in a hurry to collect money and dues. Of course, these are mere conjectures.

Whatever the case may be, when finally deciding to lift the general suspension of Masonic activities, there should be a strategy in place to ensure safety and smooth transition back to normal, whatever that "normal" already happens to be. The UGLE has already outlined a provisional blueprint for an exit strategy from its suspension of Masonic activities, learning from the experiences of its Districts overseas like Hong Kong where meetings are already allowed. [24]

At the end of the day, we must look carefully at the real-life situation in each of our own countries and jurisdictions in order to correctly assess and weigh the pros and cons of going back to lodge this early. Many would agree that the danger is still out there and, as such, Masonic activities should remain suspended indefinitely until such time when it is already absolutely safe to meet and gather again in real life. We cannot risk the health and safety of our families for something we have only little to gain for now. After all, much of what we had been doing at lodge can now be done remotely anyway; and those that can only be done physically at lodge, believe it or not, can actually wait. In the meantime, we could still learn, practice, apply, and appreciate Masonry without yet having to leave our homes. When the time finally does arrive, when the danger shall have passed, without a shred of a doubt, then what a joyous and momentous occasion it would be for us to be able to return to lodge and embrace each other in celebration - without fear, without apprehension, and without reservation. Only then can we start rebuilding what we have lost - together - as how true Masons should. And we shall do so gladly, for sure, for we shall be amongst our brethren whom we have missed being with for a long time.

Masonry and the Post Pandemic World

Millennial video blogger Nuseir Yassin gave a positive and inspirational perspective on the future of the world, taking into account what we have learned and realized so far during the pandemic. He said that the office will be dead; people will work from home; large cities will be abandoned as companies can hire people of talent from around the world who no longer need to travel. Yassin concluded, "once we realize that our jobs can be done remotely, we will not want to be stuck in traffic, paying huge sums for small apartments, just to be near our offices. Coronavirus is a global tragedy, but it is a historic one, and it will change our lives, our jobs, our offices, and our countries forever." [25]

On June 4, 2020, an online panel discussion called "Freemasonry Post COVID-19" was hosted by Bro. Wendell Hayward, conjecturing what a post-pandemic world would look like. It featured Masons from different jurisdictions, including Bros. Wayne Lindop representing the English Constitution, Lewellyn Trott representing the Irish Constitution, Bill Car-

penter representing Massachusetts, and Robert Young representing Prince Hall. Bro. Darin Lahners, in his article in the Midnight Freemasons called "It's the End of the World as We Know It," revealed some of the things learned from the current pandemic and the things to reconsider for the future of Masonry. [26] In his other article called "What Now," he provided excellent insights on what would be left when the lockdowns end; how much would we have lost; and what things could be done in order to rebuild. [27]

Whatever happens next will indeed change everything. The Coronavirus pandemic has and will continue to change our lives long after it has gone, if indeed it shall. But this is actually a good thing and should not be a cause of worry. Contrary to what some Masons believe, Masonry, like society itself, has always been in a constant state of flux - adapting itself to the changing times. This time, the Coronavirus made us realize the things in Masonry we need to retain and the superfluous things we can dispense with or deprioritize. It made us aware of what else Masonry can potentially do, given the modern technological working tools of this generation - such as the Internet - without having to abandon our old traditions - such as the Nine O'clock Toast, for instance. We have now learned and experienced the importance of Masonic education first hand, having watched and listened to virtual lectures and presentations instead of the reading of minutes and bills for payment. More importantly, we have now learned and started to appreciate and pay more attention to the true value of the solemnity of our rituals and degrees, for we have realized that we cannot confer them upon another except personally and amongst other brethren. This is how COVID-19 is rewriting the future of Masonry and our very way of life as Masons. Some changes will be born out of necessity, others of convenience, but one thing is for sure - they will all definitely be for the better.

Bro. Jason Richards, in an interview by Bro. Jeremy Chevrier, remarked, "Overall, the way the Fraternity is reacting to the pandemic, on the aggregate, is overwhelmingly inspiring. The lasting repercussions are going to benefit the Fraternity in the long run because we are forcing ourselves to adapt – forcing ourselves to change the way we do business – embracing technology, adding emphasis on taking care of our widows and orphans, and so on, thus eventually increasing our ability to attract the younger generation of good men." (paraphrased)[28]

What Else Masons Are Up To

We are nearing the end of the second quarter of 2020, and we are still in the middle of the pandemic. Though official Masonic activities remain suspended in most jurisdictions, Masons have found different ways to avoid getting "lodgesick" (used similar to homesick). The UGLE's Provincial Grand Lodge of Middlesex posted an article called "10 Things To Do During Lockdown," which listed recommendations such as brushing up on rituals, rehearsing lines, helping in charities, organizing one's Masonic belongings, and so on.[29] So far, the most common means by which Masons have tried avoiding "lodgesickness" is by staying in touch with each other online, asking each other how they are holding up amidst the health crisis, the isolations, and the lockdowns. They offer each other much needed help, reassurances, and comfort that they are not alone.

Some Masons have tried to stay busy in other ways. Just to give an idea of what else individual Masons around the world have been up to, here are some examples: Bro. Robert William Marshall shared that in the last 40 days, he has read 6 books about or related to Masonic history; researched and written 9 articles for the Grand Lodge of Texas History Committee; and watched or provided countless virtual presentations through various platforms. Bro. DH Mattox shared that he has been searching eBay for obscure and hard-to-find Masonic items, and likewise taking time for self-reflection. Bro. John Hess said that he has started collecting books relating to the history of Missouri, in order to form the basis of the "Bicentennial History Collection" of the Missouri Masonic Research Library, as both the State and the Grand Lodge of Missouri would be turning 200 years in 2021. Bro. TJ Whitaker said he has been memorizing and studying ritual and listening to some good Masonic podcasts to avoid wasting time. Bros. Richard Criddle, Steve Roberts, and Scott Cargill produced an unofficial newsletter series

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called "The COVID Times," for the members of the Allied Masonic Degrees in London. On a much lighter side, the Masonic Lite podcast presented an online non-degree called the "Digital Order of the Knights Quarantine," just in the spirit of fun.

Make no mistake, however, that life under the pandemic is now the greatest challenge of this generation. Not only has the entire world suffered a deadly contagion, but it has also succumbed to global economic collapse, political hostility, and public unrest. COVID-19 is now the leading cause of death in the US, killing more people per day than the previous top contenders like cancer and heart-attack. Drugs with promising results are being discouraged, even for patients with no options left, simply because of the lack of sufficient tests by official and established pharmaceutical companies. Oil refineries and other businesses, big and small, have already shut down. The Chinese government remains uncooperative of international efforts to investigate the origins of the Coronavirus, seemingly suppressing vital information to the rest of the world. ABS-CBN, one of the Philippines' largest news networks, was ill-timely shutdown when the government refused renewal of its license, allegedly due to pressures from President Duterte to whom the network was said to be critical. US President

Trump had pulled out its financial support for the WHO; while the entire nation was later gripped with chaos over racial protests, causing vandalism, arsons, and destruction to Masonic properties, including those on the House of the Temple building of the Scottish Rite in Washington, DC; the Denver's downtown Masonic Center; the downtown Tucson, Arizona Masonic Hall; the downtown Masonic Temple in Fort Wayne, Indiana; the Temple of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts in downtown Boston; the Prince Hall Masonic Temple in Raleigh, North Carolina; the Prince Hall Masonic hall and headquarters building in Pennsylvania; the Masonic Temple in Wright City, Oklahoma; the Masonic Hall in the Shiloh community of Asheville, North Carolina; the bronze sculptures of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington outside of Philadelphia's Masonic Temple; and the Albert Pike statue in Washington DC. All these protests and riots are still happening even amidst the certain consequence of further spreading COVID-19. Sure enough, the last few days of June saw a record surge of new cases in the US.

Glimmer of Hope

By June 30, 2020, there are already 10.4+ million cases worldwide, with 508+ thousand deaths and 5.6+ million recoveries. In the



Philippines, the number of cases rose to 37,514, with 1,266 deaths and 10,233 recoveries. The country currently has the second highest death rate in Southeast Asia, despite having, as some say, the longest running lockdown or community quarantine in the world. It also now has the fastest rising number of cases in West Pacific Asia.

Despite the losses in lives, property, jobs, money, and civil order, hope itself was never lost. Recent news reveals that an old, cheap and widely available drug (dexamethasone) has been proven effective in saving the lives of seriously-ill COVID-19 patients. [30] Added to the fact the test runs are already under way for possible vaccines, scientists have also recently discovered 5 antibodies that can combat COVID-19, and that human trials are expected to commence in the coming months. There are even reports that the Coronavirus is already weakening and could disappear on its own.

Masons themselves remain idealistic and anticipative of a bright future ahead for

Masonry. It may not be a future that will resemble what the past once deemed as normal, but it will definitely be a future improved by the tribulations of the past. Masons likewise remain positive and optimistic that each of their labors to help society during these troubled times will not be in vain and will definitely make a difference, while at the same time remaining equally realistic and accepting of whatever uncertainty the future may hold.

On June 12, 2020, on the occasion of the country's Independence Day, the Grand Lodge of the Philippines held a small and private flag-raising ceremony in front of its Plaridel Temple in Manila, while strictly obeying the protocols of social distancing. It was the first sanctioned physical gathering among local Masons since the general suspension of Masonic activities last March. It was webcast over at Facebook Live, followed by a Zoom webinar that included a message from the Grand Master and a short Masonic presentation by the Senior Grand Lecturer. It may only had been a small gathering, yet it was witnessed online by hundreds more, sparking hope that perhaps it may be possible, after all, for some semblance of normalcy to soon return to local Masonry, with precautions in place and slight changes in how things are normally done. For now, Masonic activities still remain suspended in the Philippines, but we have been given a glimpse and hope of what the future would be like. A few days later, on June 19, 2020, the Grand Lodge



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again held a small gathering – a wreath-laying ceremony to commemorate the birthday of National Hero, Jose Rizal.

Elsewhere, the United Grand Lodge of Victoria held its Quarterly Communication and Grand Installation on June 27, 2020, participated in person by the necessary officers while practicing social distancing, and streamed online to the rest of their brethren at home. There are also reports coming in that other Masonic jurisdictions – like those in Denmark, New Zealand, Switzerland, Italy, Canada, the Netherlands, and a few states in the US – are beginning to open their lodges, but with firm restrictions, limitations, and precautions in place.

To sum up this Chapter of my chronicle on life under the pandemic, we can say that some lodges may slowly be overcoming their tribulations and have started going back to normal, while others have already accepted their new normal in the brave new world of social distancing and virtual meetings. We can also say that Masonry in the time of the Coronavirus has allowed Masons to let their best shine during the worst of times. It has been an opportunity to not just re-learn Masonry, but to actually apply Masonry even amidst isolation. We learned more Masonry through further reading, through personal researches, and through watching and listening to online Masonic presentations, webinars, and podcasts. We applied the tenets of Masonry when we, from the comfort of our homes, untiringly checked up on our brethren's safety and welfare through social media and online meetings. We extended our relief and aid whenever needed, not just to the communities, but more importantly to our brethren, first and foremost. The phrase, "charity begins at home," indeed took on a new meaning and realization.

It has been a very enlightening experience. I therefore would like to propose a virtual Toast:

Here's to the days when we were carefree – when we welcomed each other, held each other, and whispered intimate words to each other from mouth to ear. We might never see that kind of life again – not for a very long time. May we therefore look forward to that future with the lessons from the past and the hope

from the present. Happy to meet! Sorry to part! Hoping to meet again!

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MASONS' INVOLVEMENT IN LA LIGA FILIPINAS By VR Samuel P. Fernandez PM, PGLI, PGSB, PGP, PGS, PGH, PGC

Before Bro./Dr. Rizal's bold resolve second coming to the Philippines, he told his countrymen in Europe: "The battlefield is in the Philippines. There is where we should meet xxx."

Two months later, on December 31, 1891, Bro. Rizal wrote his friend Blumentritt: "I believe that La Solidaridad is no longer our battlefield; now is the struggle xxx the fight is no longer in Madrid."

On June 26, 1892, Bro. Rizal returned to Manila to lead the fight for reform at home.

On July 3, 1892, La Liga Filipina was founded at Ilaya Street, Tondo, Manila at the house of Bro. Doroteo Ongjungko of Lusong Lodge. The aims of La Liga were not radical. Embodied in the constitution were the following:

- To unite the whole archipelago into one compact and homogenous body.
- Mutual protection in every want and necessity.
- 3. Defense against all violence and injustice.
- 4. Encouragement of education agriculture, and commerce.
- 5. Study and application of reforms.

The motto of the La Liga Filipina

was: Unus Instar Omniun (One Like All)

The La Liga Constitution provided for the creation of a Supreme Council for the whole country, a Provincial Council for every province, and a Popular Council for every town.

The La Liga did not last long.

On July 5, 1892, houses of Masons in Bulacan, Tarlac, Pampanga and Manila that Bro. Rizal visited were raided.

On July 7, 1892, four days after the founding of La Liga, Gaceta de Manila published Bro. Rizal's arrest by order of Gov. Gen. Eulogio Despujol. Bro. Rizal was then exiled to lonely Dapitan.

Without Bro. Rizal's leadership and due to the Spanish' relentless crack down on Masonry, La Liga withered away.

On Nov. 14, 1892, Bro. Moises Salvador wrote Bro. Marcelo H. del Pilar thus: "xxx As regards Masonry, no lodge is working at present, because we are closely watched xxx."

MASONIC LABORS RESUMED

The surveillance of Masons continued up to the end of 1892. Numerous Brethren were either deported or fired from office. In 1893, the Spanish authorities relaxed their watch.

Around the middle of 1893, Ramon Blanco took over as Governor General. He was a 32nd degree Mason and was not inclined and disposed to make life difficult for his Mason brethren.

By April 1893, the Masons organized

the Gran Consejo Regional which assumed supervision over lodges.

LA LIGA REVIVED

The Supreme Council and all the subordinate Popular Councils were headed by Masons

Great Masonic historian, Past Grand Master Reynold S. Fajardo wrote:

"In April 1893, Andres Bonifacio, Apolinario Mabini, Domingo Franco and others reactivated the La Liga Filipina, which had withered away after Rizal's exile to Dapitan. As reorganized, the La Liga was governed by a Supreme Council and had under it Popular Councils which were established in each of the different districts of Manila. The Supreme Council and all its subordinate Popular Councils were headed by Masons.

Franco of Balagtas Lodge was elected President of the Supreme Council; and Mabini, also of Balagtas Lodge, the Secretary. The elected heads of the various Popular Councils were:

- Binondo Council President, Estanislao Legaspi (Azul) of Lusong and Integridad Espanola Lodges.
- Quiapo Council President, Francisco Nakpil; Treasurer, Bonifacio Arevalo (Harem) of Balagtas Lodge.
- Tondo Council President, Timoteo Paez (Raxa Matanda) of Lusong Lodge in Tondo.
- 4. Ermita and Malate President, Grand Master of the Regional Grand Council, Ambrocio Flores (Musa).
- Sampaloc Council President, Numeriano Adriano (Ipil); Members: Moises Salvador (Araw), Apolinaro Mabini (Katabay), Andres Bunda (Ampon), Domingo Franco (Felipe Leal), all of Balagtas Lodge in Sampaloc.
- Sta. Cruz Council President, Isaias Toribio (Salakot) of Nilad Lodge.
- 7. Trozo Council President, Andres Bonifacio (Sinukuan); Secretary, Teodoro Plata; Treasurer, Epifanio Saguil (Tibu). Members: Alvaro Nepomuceno (Juarez), Jose Reyes Tolentino (Prim), Jose Trinidad, Luis Villareal (Balisa) and Jose Dizon (Montgomery) all of Taliba Lodge.

The most active of the popular councils of the Liga was the one in Trozo headed by and composed of members of Taliba Lodge."

A number of historians are of the opinion that Bro. Andres Bonifaco founded the Katipunan. Members of the Taliba Lodge founded the KKK.

TWO FACTIONS

The reorganized La Liga lasted for only six months.

Two factions emerged, one which sustained and nourished the conviction that political reforms would be wrestled from Spain through peaceful means. The radical group called for revolution.

In October, 1893, the moderates organized Cuerpo de Compromisarios and pledged support to raise funds for the support of the propaganda organ.

The radical group was convinced that the solution to the political ills of the country was through revolution. They organized the Kataastaasan, Kagalanggalangan Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan (Supreme and Venerable Association of the Children of the Nation), also known as Katipunan or KKK. The aims of the KKK were to:

- 1. Unite all Filipinos
- 2. Fight for Philippine independence.

KATIPUNAN GOVERNMENT

- The Supreme Council (Kataastaaasan Sanggunian) consisted of a president, a fiscal, a secretary and a comptroller.
- The Provincial Council (Sangguniang Bayan) was organized for every province.
- 3. The Municipal Council (Sangguniang Balangay) was formed for every town.
- The Judicial power of the KKK was exercised by Sanggunian Hukuman.

MASON KATIPUNAN PRESIDENTS

Three Mason Presidents (Supremos) were elected to lead KKK:

- ${
 m l.}$ Deodato Arellano (1892-1893),
- 2. Roman Basa (1893-1895), and

3. Andres Bonifacio (1895-1897).

Deodato Arellano - (July 26, 1844 - October 7, 1899), the first KKK Supremo.

Bro. Deodato Arellano was born on July 26, 1844 in Bulacan.

Bro. Arellano studied Bookkeeping at the Ateneo Municipal de Manila (now Ateneo de Manila University) and later worked as assistant clerk at the arsenal of the military's artillery corp.

Bro. Arellano married Bro. Marcelo H. del Pilar's sister, Hilaria del Pilar on April 22, 1877 after his first wife, Paula Rivera died.

Bro. Arellano was an active Freemason of Lusong Lodge and was one of the first to respond to Bro. Rizal's invitation to La Liga. He was La Liga's elected secretary. Bro. Arellano was very careful about recruiting new members for there were too many spies.

Author Teodoro A. Agoncillo in his work Revolt of the Masses: The Story of Bonifacio, writes: "In a meeting in Feb. 1893, Bonifacio, disgusted over Arellano's inaction, deposed him and put Roman Basa in his place as Supremo xxx."

Bro. Bonifacio's replacing Bro. Arellano was an impetuous decision. Being cautious in picking members to join the Katipinan was the call of the hour.

Despite Bro. Arellano's set back, he carried on his work in the movement organizing provincial councils in Bulacan. He repaired to Bulacan and joined Gregorio del Pilar.

During the Philippine American War, Bro. Arellano contracted tuberculosis in the course of the war. He passed away while fighting with his fellow revolutionaries in the Cordillera mountains. His comrades buried Bro. Arellano in La Trinidad, Benguet.

Roman Basa - (February 29, 1848 – February 6, 1897), Second Supremo of the Katipunan.

It is not known where Bro. Roman Basa completed his studies, but he was employed in the Comandancia de Marina in Manila. He lived in a boarding house where he met Bro. Ladislao Diwa who was then a student at the University of Santo Tomas.

On November 9, 1892, Bro. Basa was initiated into Masonry under the name Liwanag (bright).

Conniving with Eulogio Santiago, a machinist on the boat Don Juan which made regular weekly trips between Hong Kong and Manila, Bro. Basa smuggled copies of the La Solidaridad and novels of Bro. Rizal in a large glass container called dama juanas (demijohns).

In 1893, Bros, Basa and Diwa were assigned to organize a Katipunan Chapter.

Bro. Basa published a paper called Kalayaan commemorating the rights of man expounded by the French revolution.

Bro. Basa refused reelection as president of the Katipunan in 1894 because he did not want to induct his son into the Katipunan and objected to the overspending of the Katipunan funds by Bro. Andres Bonifacio.

Bro. Basa was one of those suspected of being a member of Masonry at the outbreak of the revolution in 1896 and was jailed for sedition and treason. He was convicted by Spanish military court and was executed by musketry on Feb. 6, 1897 along with Doroteo Dominguez, Gervacio Samson, Feliciano del Rosario, Pedro Nicodemus, Jesus Trinidad, Hermenigildo delos Reyes, Vicente Molina, Teodoro Plata and Apolonio de la Cruz.

Andres Bonifacio - (November 30, 1863 – May 10, 1897) was elected as the Third Supremo by the KKK.

Bro. Andres Bonifacio was the first among six siblings of parents Catalina de Castro, Spanish mestiza, and Santiago Bonifacio, a tailor.

Orphaned at an early age of 14, Bro. Bonifacio and his brothers and sisters made canes and paper fans which they sold. Gifted with fine penmanship and a keen interest in calligraphic arts, Bro. Bonifacio made posters for commercial purposes.

Bro. Bonifacio got employed as clerkmessenger at the British commercial firm of Fleming and Company, and later was promoted as agent (mandatario) of the firm to sell rattan and other articles of trade. During his brief stint in the company, Bro. Bonifacio learned the rudiments of the English language. He later transferred as an agent at Fresell and Company, a German commercial firm as bodegero (store house keeper).

A voracious reader, Bro. Bonifacio bought books and read them avidly deep into the night under the flicker of the lamps. He bought Noli Me Tangere, El Filibusterismo, History of the French Revolution, Ruins of Palmyra, Lives of the Presidents of the United Stated, Les Miserables, Holy Bible, International Law, Penal and Civil Code, novels of Alexandre Dumas, Wandering Jews and some copies of La Solidaridad.

When La Liga was organized, Bro. Bonifacio was a member of Triangulo Taliba. He chose Sinukuan as his Masonic pen name.

On learning of the arrest of Bro. Rizal, Bro. Bonifacio, along with Bro. Ladislao Diwa and Bro. Teodoro Plata, cousin of his first wife, decided on July 7, 1892 to organize the Katipunan. The three made up the first triumvirate of the Katipunan. Other members were Bros. Jose Dizon, Alvaro Nepumuceno, Jose Turiano Santiago, Jose Reyes Tolentino, Eustaquio Javier and Valentin Diaz Taliba Lodge.

The discovery of the Katipunan on August 19, 1896 forced Bro. Bonifacio and members to take to the field and start an armed uprising. On Sunday, August 23, 1896 the uprising began. Bro. Bonifacio and his men attacked the Spanish polvorin-powder magazine in San Juan del Monte, now Pinaglabanan. The Katipunan fighters were repulsed with heavy losses. The one-week fighting killed 80 Katipuneros, 200 prisoners were taken. The encounter marked the end of the Katipunan revolt under Bro. Bonifacio.

EPILOGUE

Historian Isabelo de los Reyes described the Katipunan brotherhood as una asociacion plebeya.

No such societal classification exists in the Philippines at that time.

If some historians call Bro. Bonifacio the greatest plebian, who then were the patricians?

The World Book Dictionary defines patrician as "a) a person of noble birth; aristocrat; 2) member of the nobility of ancient Roman or later Roman Empire and the Byzantine Empire and plebian as 1. belonging to or having to do with common people; 2. belonging to or having to do with the lower class citizens in ancient Rome; 3. Figurative - common, vulgar.

American historian and Katipunan expert, Jim Richardson, wondered why majority of the members of the Katipunan were proletarians. To Richardson, "most commonly and typically, xxx, the Katipunan activists were clerks, employees, agents, tobacco workers, printers and service personnel."

The Katipunan leaders were better educated, relatively paid better and can comprehend the concepts of Freemasonry.

All Katipunan Supremos were Freemasons. They understood the risk they were taking for love of country and people. They were not dirt poor. To be a Mason one has to have the necessary resources.

Bro./Dr. Jose Rizal wrote:

"I assure you that I have no desire to take part in conspiracies which seem to me too premature and risky. But if the government drives us to them, that is to say, when no other hope remains to us but seek our destruction in war, when the Filipinos would prefer to die rather than endure longer their misery, then I will also become a partisan of violent means. xxx." (Letter to Blumentritt, Geneva, 19 June 1887, Epistolario Rizalino, V. Part I, No. 30, pp. 170-171).

"We die only once and if we do not die well we lose a good opportunity which will never come up again xxx If one has to die, at least one must die in his own country by his country, and for his country." (Letter to Mariano Ponce, Brussels, 9 July 1890. Epistolario Rizalino, III, No. 396)

Bro. Rizal's deportation did not end La Liga. La Liga Filipinas gave birth to two groups: Cuerpo de Compomisarios and the Katipunan, both led by Masons.

/eaf 7.5.20

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RXI DAVAO DRAWS 350 BAGS BLOOD IN 'DU-GONG BAYANI' By VW Edgar S. Bentulan, DGL

With blood banks in the Davao region frequently running short on blood, this one was a timely relief. Masonic District of RXI - Davao del Norte, Davao Oriental and Davao de Oro spearheaded a 'Dugong Bayani, Dugo Alay Para Sa Bayan' blood-letting activity at the Tagum City Hall Atrium, Tagum City last February 14, this year. This was conducted with Shangri-La Lodge No. 196 as lead lodge under WB Mark John B. Prudencio, Worshipful Master, on joint efforts with Tagum Masonic Lodge No. 204, the Davao del Norte Province Blood Bank and Davao Regional Medical Center, 10th

ID, Philippine Army, DeMolay of Tagum Dalisay Chapter, Order of the Amaranth of Tagum, Don Salvador, Mati Aurora, and Panabo-Dalisay.

VW Joel A. Capalit, DDGM, reported that 350 bags of blood were collected from donors of personnel volunteers from the PNP Davao del Norte and Philippine Army, Eastern Mindanao Command (East Min Com) and 10th Infantry Division. These blood donations were directly turned over to the Davao Regional Medical Center, Apokon, Tagum City, Davao del Norte.

MD RXI and Shangri-La No. 196 with the assistance of Tagum No. 204 brethren, sisters from the Order of the Amaranth and DeMolay members in Tagum, served arroz caldo and Cavendish bananas to the blood donors.



MINDANAO MEET

Butuan Masonic Lodge No. 299 reaches out to the Community as it turn 27 By Bro. lan Dale L. Tan Lodge Secretary

Butuan City, Agusan Del Norte

BML No.299 headed by its Worshipful Master and Wardens celebrated its Charter Day with note-worthy events benefiting the local community:

PHILIPPINE RED CROSS

As blood donations are needed daily even with the COVID-19 situation, Philippine Red Cross - BXU Chapter is truly thankful for the lodge in organizing an in-house Blood Donation Activity within PRC City premises on May 22. The initiative yielded 36 units of life saving blood. "A single pint can save three lives; a single gesture can create a million smiles." Said WM Lloyd M. Cedro as they silently accomplish the activity aligned with Circular 24 – Suan.

POVERTY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

"In a pandemic, helping those in need is not just a kind gesture, but an obligation." With these inspiring words from Lodge Senior





Warden Paris Raymond S. Gaballo, the Brethren continued with their Anniversary Observance the next day (May 23), by providing relief assistance to vulnerable sectors in the city. Relief Packs consisting of rice, canned goods & other essentials to support the basic needs of the target recipients were distributed to the homeless. 27 Families received 2,500 php worth of Relief Package.

ADOPT A SCHOOL PROGRAM for MY2020

Fast forward to October 15, the 27-year old Lodge turned over 2 printers, 1 Laminating Machine, 50 reams of A4 bond paper, 5 units Globe Home WIFI & various school supplies to its adopted school, SAN VICENTE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL at Brgy. San Vicente, Butuan City. "The lodge prefers to work in silence" said Bro. Brando E. Faelnar when asked about the activity. "We just want to help out, not desiring applause or recognition", he added.

FIRST STATED MEETING DURING THE PANDEMIC

The lodge is currently weathering the Coronavirus Pandemic under the steadfast leadership of its Worshipful Master, assisted by the Lodge Officers who were installed last February 29. The lodge since then has not been able to open in due and ancient form and is looking forward to its first Stated Meeting on October 24, 2020 following the issuance of Edict No.333.

Working under dispensation issued by MW Agustin V. Mateo and Instituted by



Senior Grand Warden Pablo C. Ko on 12 September 1992, Butuan Lodge was constituted by MW Rizal Aportadera as the 299th Lodge under GLP jurisdiction on 22 May 1993, after its charter was granted during the 77th Annual Communications.

It meets Regularly every 2nd Saturday (3:00PM) at 4th Street, Pareja Subd., Libertad, Butuan City.

Cont from p.44

ONTINUED FROM PAGE 44 - JURIS DICTUM

representing the State. They consider the action of the school authorities a transgression of their constitutionally protected religious In ruling for the petitioners, the freedom. Court held that the sole justification for a prior restraint or limitation on the exercise of religious freedom is the existence of a grave and present danger of a character both grave and imminent, of a serious evil to public safety, public morals, public health or any other legitimate public interest, that the State has a right (and duty) to prevent. Absent such a threat to public safety, the exercise of religious freedom must be respected. If these students quietly stand at attention during the flag ceremony while their classmates and teachers salute the flag, sing the national anthem and recite the patriotic pledge, the Court could not see how such conduct may possibly disturb the peace, or pose "a grave and present danger of a serious evil to public safety, public morals, public health or any other legitimate public interest that the State has a right (and duty) to prevent.

In the same case, although petitioners' right under our Constitution to refuse to salute the Philippine flag on account of their religious beliefs was upheld, the Court hope nevertheless, that another foreign invasion of our country will not be necessary in order for our countrymen to appreciate and cherish the Philippine flag.

Trivia: Can we sing the National Anthem in a different music and tempo?

Ans: No. R.A. 8491 provides that "Lupang Hinirang" when performed "shall be in accordance with the musical arrangement and composition of Julian Felipe." However, many musicians argue that it cannot be sung according to the original score, because the music would be so fast that singers would be unable to keep pace.

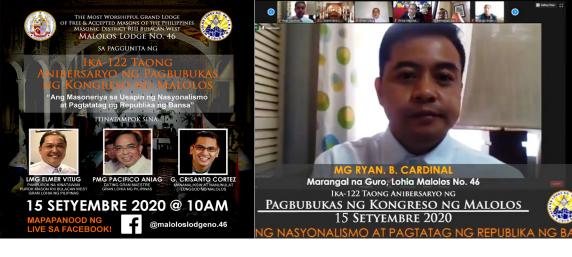
¹ Sec. 29, Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 8491

² See Opinion No. 007-2009/10, Committee on Jurisprudence for M.Y. 2009-2010

³ Sec. 2, R.A. 8491

⁴ Ebralinag vs. Div. Superintendent of Schools of Cebu, G.R. No. 95770 March 1, 1993, En banc, J. Griño-Aquino.

⁵ Sec. 37, R.A. 8491



Opening of the Malolos Congress Remembered By WB Alberto C. Dumlao, PM (46)

September 15, 2020 - Malolos City, Bulacan

122 Years ago, the Malolos Congress was opened with the primary task of drafting a constitution for the first Philippine Republic. This annual celebration is one of three national commemorative events held each year at the Barasoain Church National Landmark that Logia Malolos No. 46, together with other Masonic Organizations and Lodges in Bulacan participate in - the other two being the June 12 Declaration of Independence and the Inauguration of the First Philippine Republic on January 23.

Like all events in the Masonic calendar affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, this year's program had to be conducted virtually and online. WM Ryan Cardinal — Master of Lodge 46 led the Brethren in the virtual commemoration of the 1898 Event. The Videoconference started 10AM via Zoom flatform with the theme "Ang Masonerya sa Usapin ng Nasyonalismo at Pagtatag ng Republika ng Bansa" and streamed live on Facebook.

SW Benjamin Cajucom welcomed the attendees and viewers with a historical account of the proceedings of the Malolos Congress.

A video recorded message of MW Pacifico Aniag, Past Grand Master and a Past Master of Malolos 46 was played conveying his wish that September 15 - a regular holiday in the province of Bulacan, be declared a regular Philippine National Holiday thereby giving the Opening of the Malolos Congress its rightful place in the nation's history as it paved the way for the inauguration of the first democratic government in Asia.

MW Aniag expressed his delight that despite the pandemic, the lodge leadership still found it worthwhile to celebrate the historic event, not just for the sake of participating, but more importantly, for the realization that it should have a special place in the hearts of Masons. It can be recalled that Masons played significant roles in the Malolos Congress, especially in terms of upholding such issues as equality, human rights and the separation of church and state.

"Kung mayroon tayong dapat na maipagmalaki na minana sa mga naunang mga bayani ng ating bansa, iyun ay ang mga katuruan sa Masonerya na siyang humubog sa pasimula ng kasarinlan ng ating bansa." The Past Grand Master said.

Invited as a resource speaker is Mr. Crisanto "King" Cortez, a local historical researcher and author, who proceeded with his lecture, starting with a caveat that the topic is vast and wide-ranging. He expressed amazement at the role of Masons and the town of Malolos, in paving the national road to sovereignty and self-governance and how the two entities came together during the short period between September 1898 to February 1899. Mr. Cortez also advised his audience to study history not only for its beauty and triumphs, but also for its harsh truths and failures in order to learn much from it.

In his message, VW Elmer Vitug, District Deputy Grand Master of Masonic District R3 Bulacan (West) reminded the brethren that the Malolos Congress, of which Masons played a vital role, is one of the reasons why Bro. Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, declared that "The successful Revolution of 1896 was masonically inspired, led and executed."

"This online conference proves that we still have much to learn from our history, not only as Masons but also as Filipinos." Said WM Ryan Cardinal in his closing remarks, adding that everyone is encouraged to do their part in their personal capacities to study the country's past. Malolos "Lodge No. 46 express much appreciation to all brethren in attendance." Concluded the Lodge Master. The Event can be re-watched at the Facebook Pages of Malolos Lodge No. 46 as well as in The Cable Tow.



SCWC @ TCT

Dugong Mason - Blood Donation Advocacy among Men & Masons By VW Roy E. Castronuevo (410)

Men of Science will define "blood" as that body fluid in humans and animals necessary in the transport of oxygen, nutrients, and other substances to the cells. To men of letters like the poet, "blood" is also a symbol - associated with Courage, Sacrifice, even Nationalism, and more so to Life itself. We have the phrases, "related by blood", "blood is thicker than water", "blood brother", and many more. The significance of blood is sacrosanct to religion. In 1 John 5:8 in the New Testament we read: "The Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree". In the Holy Quran, in Surah 22:37, it is written: "Neither their flesh reaches Allah nor their blood; it is your piety that reaches Him." Blood's life-giving nature is vital to our body, our God-given earthly vehicle, as we embark on this journey towards that sublime destiny.

DISCOVERING THE IMPORTANCE OF BLOOD DONATION

Blood is the most precious gift that anyone can give to another person, it is a gift of life. A decision to donate your blood can save 3 lives, as the donation upon processing is separated into its components – red blood cells, platelets, and plasma. Each of these components can be used individually by 3 patients with specific illness and serious conditions.

Donating one's blood is one of the most noble ways to give back to society. The demand for blood request or transfusion in hospitals is always high. Unfortunately, despite the high demand and the general recognition of its importance - only a few will share it.

As mentioned in the previous issue of the Cable Tow (Vol.97-No.1, page 66), our Masonic Group Square & Compass We-Connect – has its own Blood Donation Advocacy Committee called DUGONG MASON. The call for blood was observed to be one of the most common distress calls among the Brethren and their families, thus the advocacy to ensure its availability whenever and wherever needed, by holding Blood Donation Drives as often as possible.

Dugong Mason embraces, R.A 7719 also known as the National Blood Service Act of 1994 that promotes voluntary blood donation program and further inspired by the world Blood Donor day held every 14th day of June.

As the task of recruiting voluntary donors remains one of the major challenges, Pres. Fidel V. Ramos in 1997 signed Proclamation No.1021 declaring July as Blood Donor's Month. For one whole month each year, men and women are encouraged to support and participate either through organized blood-letting events or simply proceed directly to hospitals to donate blood. It was also a time to acknowledge such acts of generosity.

Likewise, R.A 10121 (2010) or the Philippine National Disaster Risk Reduction & Management Council declares the month of July as National Disaster Awareness Month, encouraging health and safety consciousness among the population through knowledge dissemination on Disaster preparedness, Disaster response, Disaster Prevention Mitigation and Disaster Recovery & Rehabilitation – which are considered as the four thematic approach against disaster.

BRIEF HISTORY OF DUGONG MASON

SCWC's bloodletting and blood-banking project is the brainchild of WB Feliciano Narciso, Jr. (Unang Sigaw 430) who spearheaded the project back in 2012. Their first bloodletting activity way back June 2013 was conducted at the Philippine National Police Academy (PNPA) in Silang, Cavite through the support of WB Robert Joseph S. Moran (Pilar 15) in coordination with Bro. John Car Dela Cruz with Philippine Red Cross – Cavite Chapter.

Its first memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was with the Philippine Heart Center (Quezon, City), wherein 30% of qualified blood units collected during Dugong Mason Bloodletting Activities would be reserved for SCWC – Dugong Mason Blood recipients, while 70%

would be for the Hospital's use. Since then, their partnerships have grown to 13 hospitals.

For the next 8 Years, various joint bloodletting activities with different Masonic Organizations throughout the jurisdiction have been held to the benefit of both Masons and Non-Masons alike.

Upon our appointment as National Chairman in May 2019, with Bro. Ricky Tan Ichoo (Montalban 376) as Vice-Chair, we aimed to increase Blood-Donation Awareness by coordinating between Masonic Organizations and qualified Hospital Partners in their localities. We assist lodges, districts, sojourner clubs and appendant bodies within the Jurisdiction in organizing blood-letting activities in partnership with their local Hospitals or Medical Centers with Blood Banks to build-up blood reserves for future use.

EXTENDING LIFE IN CELEBRATION OF LIFE

I was introduced to Blood Donation Advocacy during my presidency in the Junior Chamber International (JCI) in 2005. Back then bloodletting is among our regular activities which we hold quarterly. At this period, we learned not just the importance of donating blood but its health benefits to blood donors as well.

As we witnessed too many times in the past, people crying out in frustration and hopelessness due to the unavailability of Blood or the inability to pay for it, we made a personal vow in 2010 to organize a Blood-letting Drive in celebration of my birthday in July each, which incidentally is also Blood Donation Month. In the last 10 years, we were able to collect more blood in reserve for calamities and emergency as friends, walk-in individuals, Government



Personnel, NGO's and CSO in different facilities have supported this personal Birthday Advocacy Project to help people and save lives.

REQUIREMENT FOR BLOOD DONORS

- At least 18 years old. Parental consent required for potential donors who are 16 - 17-year-old.
- Must weight above 120 pounds
- Valid I. D card
- Must be free of any major organ disease (including heart and lungs as well as bleeding tendencies)
- No antibiotics or other medication intakes that could affect the procedure
- Must wait 12 months or 1 year for people with tattoos and body piercings
- Recent surgery or medical operation may mean deferral
- Must not have menstrual period (female) during collection
- No alcohol intake within 24 hours prior to donation
- No smoking within 12 hours prior donation
- Eat light meals or snacks, avoid fatty foods

15 REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD GIVE YOUR BLOOD

- Human Blood cannot be manufactured, its only source is another Human Being.
- 2. It is your civil and moral duty.
- 3. Should you need blood one day, you will not hesitate to take it, so why would you hesitate to give it?
- Because there are too many people who can't give blood.
- Because "I can".
- Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you.
- 7. It is not painful. Pain is losing a loved one that you may have saved by donating your blood.
- Because maintaining adequate blood supply in your community serves blood transfusion for patients.
- 9. One (1) bag of blood can save 3 lives.
- 10. It gives donors a medical check-up.
- Donating blood improves the donor's health condition.
- It lowers the viscosity of one's blood which reduces the friction on your arteries and blood vessels
- 13. It can help you lose up to 650 calories.
- 14. It can improve your Blood Pressure (BP).
- It can lower your chance of developing cancer by 30%.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF DONATING BLOOD

Aside from reducing the risk of cancer and hemochromatosis, it decreases damage to the liver and pancreas. It also improves cardiovascular health by reducing obesity and weight loss as well as help maintain a healthy heart and stimulate blood all production. Donating blood can also help in treating bleeding disorders such as chronic anemia associated with sickle cell anemia, and other hereditary blood abnormalities. Giving away 450cc of one's blood not only makes the receivers life good, but it also helps the donor maintain his health, too.

BLOOD IS BEYOND BROTHERHOOD

Let us all support Blood Donation Activities to help achieve a substantial supply of blood across all Masonic regions and jurisdictions increasing blood adequacy and availability. Cooperation from all sectors is imperative in establishing a steady supply in order to respond promptly to blood requirements during medical emergencies.

The concept of blood as an essential aspect of medicine is embedded in antiquity, same as the allegories and teachings of Freemasonry. The very lifeblood of the Craft is in charity and in the loving service not only for our worthy brethren but also for the rest of mankind. With every blood donation, a Mason goes out of his way to help others, in fulfillment of his many duties to the Celestial Lodge Above.

For more information and inquiries about Bloodletting and Blood Donation, the Brethren may contact the following:

• VW Roy E. Castronuevo
Dugong Mason - Chairman
CP no. 0998-849-9634/0927-481-0704







- Email acct: roycastronuevo@yahoo.com
- Bro. Ricky Tan Khoo

 Dugong Mason Vice Chairman
 CP no. 0917-880-7702
- WB Feliciano "Jojo" Narciso SCWC Dugong Mason – Founder CP no. 0922-804-2623/0927-830-1925
- WB Cary Duval Uy
 Square & Compass We Connect (SCWC)
 CP no. 0917-373-3038/0933-820-2632

We are living in a critical time when blood supplies are low while blood requirements remain high. The COVID-19 Pandemic is not the only health threat in our midst, the shortage of blood equally pose a lethal threat to Filipinos – be they Masons or not. SCWC – Dugong Mason is a good flatform for the Brethren to meet on the level and make a difference through Blood Donations.



LOOKING AT LUZON

PAMPANGA 48 Masons at Work for the last 102 Years By BSW Jose Cerrudo, Jr. (48)

In the later part of March 2020, shortly after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Pampanga Masonic Lodge No. 48, spearheaded by Worshipful Master (VW Nelson E. Nucup, PDGL) and its principal officers, initiated the provisions of support and assistance to the Brethren and the local communities.

Initial recipients of food and medical supplies were the composite team of all major checkpoints in the City of San Fernando. Support was also extended to medical front liners in selected hospitals and doctors in the City of San Fernando and Angeles City, which has the greatest number of COVID-19 cases in the province of Pampanga. The third charitable act by the Brethren was executed in cooperation with their better halves - the ladies of PML48 with the distribution of relief goods to underprivileged families in the Municipality of Porac. Neighboring Households living near the Lodge Premises in Brgy. Sto. Nino including the Lodge Caretaker also received assistance.

Pampanga 48 took care of its members by providing Anti-flu and Anti-Pneumonia vaccinations which was subsidized for Senior Citizen members and offered at a discounted rate to other members.

All these noble actions were made possible with the cooperation of lodge members who contributed in various ways for the financial and physical provisions.

How did the brethren develop this motivation? Looking back to its Lodge History, PML 48 was founded on July 16, 1918 which incidentally was the time of a global pandemic. The same month



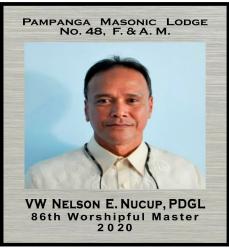


PHOTO CAPTION: 100 Years apart, top portrait is that of WB Isabelo de Silva, Past Master of Maguindanao Lodge No. 40 and Master of Pampanga Lodge No. 48 in 1920. Bottom picture is VW Nelson E. Nucup, a Past Master of Jose Abad Santos Masonic Lodge No.333 and incumbent Master of Pampanga Masonic Lodge No. 48. The Lodge completed its centenary in 2018.

marked the first wave of the Spanish Flu in the Philippines. Despite these, the 15 Charter Members led by WB Pedro Abad Santos - the First Master steadfastly pursued the burning desire to re-establish a lodge in Pampanga as the last Masonic Lodge was closed by local Spanish Authorities in the 1890's.

The 2nd Wave of the Pandemic was said to have occurred in October of the same year. Amidst the onslaught Pampanga Lodge, UD successfully raised its first 5 sons in December 28 followed by 3 more on the 30th. After working



under dispensation for 6 months, the lodge was granted its charter during the 7th Annual Communications on January 28, 2019 and in March 29 was constituted as the 48th Lodge under the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands.

In those times, the pandemic pale rider claimed the lives of 50 Million people worldwide including some 80,000 Filipinos, ranking the Philippines 6th among the countries affected. Pampanga was the seventh among the country's provinces struck badly by the deadly disease. Despite being born in an unhealthy condition of darkness, Pampanga Lodge No. 48 endured and now - 102 years later, the current generation of members bravely face another pandemic in their midst.

Meeting on the Level via Google Meet

To maintain the fervency and zeal among its ranks while Regular Stated Meetings and other Lodge Activities are suspended indefinitely, the lodge hold Online Masonic Conferences every 3rd Saturday of the Month, taking heed of the regulations stipulated in Circular 41 – Suan. Using the Google Meet flatform, the primary

Lodge Officers together with online members organize and manage lodge matters, activities, and projects.

In riding out the Pandemic, Worshipful Master Nelson Nucup, approved the creation of special lodge committees that will ease the implementation of its COVID-19 operations:

Health & Safety Committee - Bro. Louie Castro, MD Info. & Comm. Technology Committee - Bro. Emerson Mercado Committee on Sunshine Visitations - BJW Neil Nicasio Ragasa Covid-19 Charity Committee - BSW Jose D. Cerrudo, Jr.

These committees facilitate assistance to masons, their families, widows and orphans affected by the pandemic, including nearby Brethren belonging to other lodges - among them are VW Ely Solano (Island-Luz-Minerva No.5) and Bro. Enrico Pineda (Alfonso Lee Sin No.159).

Other activities coordinated through the committees were blood donations for sick family members; the solemn commemoration of the 102nd Lodge Founding Anniversary; Orientation of PML No.48 petitioners; and the online cascading of the Grand Lodge Webinars executed by the Senior Grand Lec-



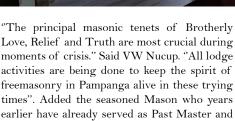
turer VW Teodoro Kalaw IV.

Upcoming Lodge Activities

In symmetry with the programs of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines while doing service to the Brethren, the community and government, PML No.48 will sponsor the processing of application for License To Own And Posses Firearms (LTOAPF) on October 17.

This will be followed by the lodge sponsored Webinar on Blood Donation - to raise awareness on the significance of bloodletting especially during this pandemic, as the country is now experiencing shortage of blood stocks due to the increase in demand and decrease in the number of donors. This will be held in November 27 with resource persons from The Philippine Red Cross - Pampanga & Angeles City Chapter and open to Masons and Non-Masons alike.

Lastly in December, the Brethren will once open again its generous hearts to the widows and orphans of Lodge members in celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.



Truly in the time of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Masons should remain steadfast in acting out the duties they owe to God, their country, family, neighbors, and themselves. The Brethren of Pampanga Masonic Lodge No. 48 will always be MASONS AT WORK, ready to extend their cable-tow in the service to God and their fellowmen.

References:

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GENERAL MANUEL TINIO 167 SUPPORTS FRONTLINERS

By Bro. Noel Patelo (273)

Saranay District, Guimba, Nueva Ecija
March 17 as the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) in Luzon begins, Lodge No. 167
express support to local officials by providing breakfast for the Frontliners at Brgy. Sta. Veronica, Brgy. Sto. Cristo, Brgy. St. John, Brgy. Saranay and to the Guimba Police Station.

The second charity project was the distribution of Personnel Protective Equipment (PPEs) composed of Face Shield, Surgical Rubber Gloves, Alcohol, bottled water, and Vitamin C with Zinc to the Police Station in Guimba, following the request of the Police Personnel on duty.

The next act of Charity is to the community by giving financial assistance to selected daily wage earners most affected by the Enhance Community Quarantine within the local community.



MASONIC FAMILY OF GUIMBA, NUEVA ECIJA

With the continued implementation of ECO in LUZON, families suffered as bread winners lose their jobs and other sources of income. The sad plight of the growing number of people suffering prompted VW Harold Howell D. Banalagay, District Deputy Grand Master for Masonic District R3-Nueva Ecija WEST to organize the MASONIC FAMILY OF GUIMBA to give assistance to the local community. Its supporters consist of Master Masons from Eulogio R. Dizon Masonic Lodge No. 264, Gen. Manuel Tinio Masonic Lodge No. 167, Eulogio R. Dizon Masonic Lodge No. 321, Guimba residents who are members of International Order of the Rainbow for Girls, DeMolays and the Order of the Eastern Star. With the money collected, Milk & Diapers were distributed to Mothers with babies and toddlers.



AR Lamson 290 helps fight Covid-19 By Bro. Noel Patelo (273)

San Antonio, Nueva Ecija

Antonio R. Lamson Masonic Lodge No.290 in support of the fight against COVID-19, proceeded to Cabanatuan City on June 20 (Saturday) to distribute food packs, face masks, assorted medical supplies and accessories to the Medical Frontliners of Paulino J. Garcia Memorial Research and Medical Center and the Immaculate Conception Medical Center (ICMC).

Together with WM Arthur Allen D. Pineda were BSW Enrico Villafuerte and BJW Robert Fajardo. They were ably assisted by: Bros. Arthur Pineda, Francis Luis Mercado, Roderick Dimapilis, Julius Caesar Bundoc, Adrian Santiago and Lodge Secretary VW Paul Y. Guevarra.



Eulogio R. Dizon Lodges assist local communities in Nueva Ecija during ECQ

By VW Harold Howell D. Banalagay, DDGM





Two Masonic Lodges in R3 Nueva Ecija - West, both named after a prominent son of Nueva Ecija, exhibit philanthropy in their respective communities during the height of the Extended Community Quarantine in Luzon last April 2020.

Eulogio R. Dizon Masonic Lodge No.264 (GUIMBA), response to the call of the Grand Master to aid and assist our front liners by distributing food supplies to government personnel on duty in far flung Barangays of their municipality namely, Brgy. San Miguel (AFP personnel), Brgy. Casongsong (PNP Personnel), Brgy. Cavite, and Brgy. Sto. Cristo. Other beneficiaries include Traffic Management at Guimba Municipal Plaza, BJMP Guards and medical personnel at Pacac District Hospital.

Likewise, Eulogio R. Dizon Masonic Lodge No.321 (TALUGTOG), gave a rice assistance to the front liners in the Rural Health Unit, Talugtog Fire Station, and Talugtog Police Station. As support to the community, Bro. Patrick C. Pinili distributed 1,200 chickens courtesy of PCPINILI FARM to 600 households in Science City of Muñoz. Rice Assistance were also given by the lodge. Lastly, front liners at Dr. Paulino J. Garcia Memorial Research and Medical Center, Cabanatuan City received sets of personnel protective suites (PPEs) and surgical gloves compliments of the Brethren.

College President and Philanthropist Eulogio R. Dizon is a well-loved member of Nueva Ecija Lodge No.73. Initiated, Passed and Raised in 1951, he remained active in the fraternity until his death in 1983.

Brigada Eskwela 2020 by Union 70 By VW Antonio C. Feraren, Jr., PDDGM (70)

San Fernando City, La Union

Brethren of Union Lodge No.70 demonstrated their support to the Public School System through their Brigada Eskwela Program 2020. Various Materials such as plywood, paints, and other painting materials as well as tarpaulin health protocols were turned-over to Ms. Evelyn Pacleb – Head Teacher VI of La Union National Highschool (LUNHS) last July 13.

"Madam Pacleb was my teacher in La Union Cultural Institute." said WM Alladin Macam. "She also taught our Immediate Past Master WB Clyde Philip Sia". Added the Master of the Lodge.

Accompanying the Worshipful Master are Bro. Robert Pua Phee and Bro. Hector Halabaso, Senior and Junior Wardens respectively. They handed tarpaulin health protocols to other representatives namely Ms. Ruth P. Paragas, Principal II of Ilocanos elementary School and Ms. Jennete A. Caluza, Principal III of Catbangen Central School.



Alaminos 428 Honors Filipino Heroes By Bro. Alimario M. Flores (428)

Alaminos, Laguna 4001

In a solemn ceremony in gratitude for the sacrifices of the many Filipino Heroes both past and present, the Brethren of Alaminos Masonic Lodge No. 428, offered a floral wreath at the Rizal Monument in Alaminos Plaza on August 31.

"This simple gesture done on the occasion of National Heroes Day, is dedicated not just for the heroes of old who sacrificed their lives to achieve our country's sovereignty, but to the heroes of today – those who are in the forefront of battle against Covid 19". WM Ramil Q. Awayan said. He reiterated the sacrifices of Medical and Police Personnel, members of the Armed Forces and others who played vital roles in preventing the spread of the disease.

Accompanying the Master of the Lodge were Senior Warden Rodel Martires, Junior Warden Mark Julius Macaraig, WB Orlando Cobarrubia, IPM (Lodge Treasurer) and yours truly — the lodge secretary. Joining us were VW Leonel F. Barte, PDGL, and Bros. Jessie Lorilla, Friedrich Domingo, Raul Ciabal, and Bro. Capt. Jollymar Seloterio (Dr. J.P. Rizal – Calamba 270). Everyone present were inspired to protect our inherited freedom and swore to continue to strive for a morally upright society.





SING FOR HUMANITY, SONGS FROM THE HEART

Helping our Frontliners and Children in need through the magic of singing. By WBro. Jodeal Cadacio

The unprecedented health and economic challenges created by the global coronavirus pandemic have once again brought into fore the Filipino's bayanihan spirit and generosity. With our Brethren leading the way, our kababayans from across the four corners of the globe have banded together to raise funds for our embattled frontline healthcare workers in the Philippines.

The "Sing for Humanity, Songs from the Heart" initiative, a brainchild of United Kingdombased Bro. Raul Polinag, a member of Malinaw Lodge No. 25 under the Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines, has raised more than P300,000, the bulk of which was spent for the purchase of personal protective equipment (PPE). These PPEs have been distributed among various public hospitals spanning the country's vast archi-

pelago. The money raised was also earmarked for various feeding programs that benefited thousands of children in a number of impoverished communities in Mindanao and the Southern Tagalog region.

"Year 2020 has indeed ushered in unprecedented challenges for all of us. The Covid-19 pandemic, for one, created uncertainties and helplessness, more so to our kababayans in the Philippines who can barely survive from the harsh economic realities gripping the country," Bro. Polinag said, "but this unfortunate event, in a way, has given us more time for self-reflections and to see the silver linings that surround us all. As Freemasons we were once asked: 'What came you here to do?' And we answered: 'To improve ourselves in Freemasonry." "Improvement in ourselves is best challenged in times like this when most people chose to give up instead of embracing the hard reality of the new normal. As Freemasons we become the bearers of hope and an inspiration of resilience."

Bro. Polinag solicited the support of Freemasons from across the continents to launch the fundraising project that would harness the power of social media. Participants were invited to sing a song or perform online to encourage people from all walks of life to contribute to the fund. The initiative ran for two months – from May to June – and involved a big number of participants that included individuals from different nationalities.







"It was humbling and heart-warming to see people from various countries doing their bit either by singing a song, dancing to a beat or simply by chipping in for this worthy cause. It certainly has brought into light the best in us under the toughest of circumstances," Bro. Polinag said.

To date the beneficiaries include:

- 1. Pasig City General Hospital, Pasig, Rizal
- 2. San Lazaro Hospital, Manila
- 3. Jose Reyes Medical Hospital, Manila
- 4. City of San Pablo Disaster Risk Reduction Management Office
- 5. Laguna Provincial Hospital
- 6. San Pablo City General Hospital
- 7. Local Government Unit of Nagcarlan, Laguna
- 8. Rizal Medical Center, Pasig, Rizal
- Rizal Children Medical Center, Pasia Rizal
- 10. Rural Health Unit, Mlang, Cotabato
- 11. Rural Health Unit, Midsayap, Cotabato
- 12. Rural Health Unit, Pikit, Cotabato
- 13. Cotabato Regional and Medical Center (CRMC) 14. Southern Philippines Medical Center
- 15. Notre Dame Hospital, Cotabato City
- 16. Cotabato Hospitals
- 17. San Isidro Hospital, Angono, Rizal
- 18. Taguig-Pateros District Hospital
- 19. Ospital ng Makati
- 20. Ospital ng Maynila
- 21. Pasig City Children Hospital
- 22. Eastern Samar





The Feeding Program beneficiaries include:

- 1. Feeding Program for kids ages 5-8 in zones of Our Lady of Rosary Parish, Cotabato City
- 2. Feeding Program for children in Zone 30, Cotabato City
- 3. Feeding Program for Children in Zone 29, Cotabato City
- 4. Feeding Program for children in Zone 3, RH-4, Cotabato City
- 5. Feeding Program for children in Zone 15, Cotabato City 6. Saint Martin de Porres Children's Home- San Pablo City
- 7. Barangay Palakpakin, San Pablo City

It is expected that 15 more barangays in San Pablo City, Laguna will benefit from our feeding programs. Bro. Polinag said that everything the project has achieved was made possible through the help of the brethren from other jurisdictions. He said, "A special thanks to my close friends WBro. Ronald Gutierrez of the Grand Lodge of California, WBro. Jodeal Cadacio of New Zealand, Bro. Marvin Alcos of Virginia, and to my mother lodge Malinaw Lodge No. 25 FAM. They were in close contact with me since day one and made me feel that I wouldn't be alone in this noble endeavour. It was a Masonically inspired, Masonically led and Masonically executed project that went from strength to strength.

"As the great Albert Pike said: 'What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us: what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal."

Masonic Blood Donation Activities monitored by The Cable Tow Team in Luzon: 726 Bags collected. Potential Lives Saved = 2,178



Winning Blood for Magtagumpay 410 By VW Roy E. Castronuevo (49)

Imus, Cavite

The Lodge under WM Heroico S. Olivar was victorious in conducting over three Blood Letting Events this 2020:

The first was done last January 30 yielded 46 bags for Las Pinas General Hospital & Satellite Trauma Center (LPGHSTC) and the Ospital ng Imus (ONI).

The next extraction held on May 30 with the same medical partners, LPGHSTC and ONI was able to collect 23 bags. The event was most crucial as it was done at the height of the Luzon ECQ when the world almost came to a standstill.

86 bags were collected in July 19. The third Blood Letting Activity, done in partnership with the City Disaster Risk Reduction and Mgt Office of the City Govt. of Imus was held at their SP Multipurpose Hall.

SCWC Dugong Mason assisted Magtagumapay Masonic Lodge No. 410 in all these blood donation initiatives which collected a total of 155 bags of blood.

Rizal Masonic Temple draws First Blood

By Bro Ronaldo A. Garcia (334)

February 15 – Taytay, Rizal

Resident Organizations at the Temple conducted their first Blood Donation Initiative in support of the GLP call for the same.

At the forefront of the activity is Rizal Bodies A. & A. S. R. in association with: Ang Tipolo Masonic Lodge No. 334; Rizal York Rite; Lope K. Santos Chapter Order of DeMolay; Bethel No.35 Taytay, Rizal; Trinidad Rizal Chapter UD of Job's Daughter International, and the Order of the Eastern Star.

Together, they converted the masonic edifice at Temple Drive, Club Manila East into a blood collecting station for the Philippine Blood Center, implementing body for the National Voluntary Blood Services Program of the Department of Health. The maiden activity produced 10 bags of blood.

"This collective labour of the Temple Residents is just the beginning of this kind of Lifesaving Charity." Said VW Nicolas B. Manipon, District Deputy Grand Master for RIV-Rizal. "We look forward to an annual blood-donation drive in the years to come." The DDGM added.



G.E. Bongolan 330 donates blood up North By Bro Noel Patelo (273)

May 24 - Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya

On its 21st Anniversary, the Guillermo E. Bongolan Masonic Lodge No. 330 (R2-NV South), entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) Nueva Vizcaya Chapter thru the initiative of Lodge elders led by VW Alfredo Dela Cruz and VW Angelito C. 6Baclig, both PDDGMs.

On the same day, a bloodletting activity was held at the PRC Office, Capitol Compound, where qualified Brethren and family members donate precious blood for the benefit of who may need it. A total of sixteen (16) bags of different blood types were collected.

A brother availed of the blood donation for his ailing wife a few days later. Realizing that the activity is both good and timely as it was at the height of the Extended Community Quarantine (ECQ), the Lodge unanimously agreed to hold the activity on a regular basis.

"As Blood is both a precious substance and unavailable commercially, the Brethren of G.E. Bongolan 330 will maintain a ready reserve by donating blood every 3 months or as the situation allows." Worshipful Master Juan R. Urani, Jr. pledged.





Dugong Bayani Alay ni Isagani By VW Anthony E. Tan, PDGL (96)

August 19 - San Miguel, Tarlac

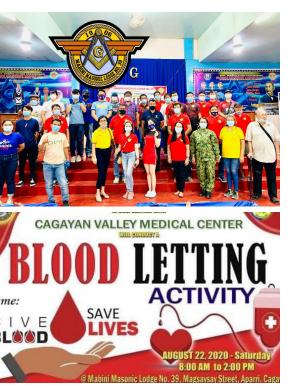
A Joint Blood Letting Project was organized by Isagani Masonic Lodge No. 96 in collaboration with the 3rd Mechanized Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army, Tarlac Filipino-Chinese Volunteers Fire Brigade (TF-CVFB), and the Philippine Red Cross (PRC) – Tarlac Chapter. The project was proposed by VW James Richard Co, DGL due to the alarmingly low levels of blood reserve at the PRC local chapter where he is serving as a director. Worshipful Master Janus Rommel Lim responded with a well-coordinated activity.

Isagani 96 sought partnership through Brother LTC Norberto Aromin of the 3rd Mech In Bn, while the Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM) allowed the use of the Camp Aquino Covered Court. The Tarlac Filipino-Chinese Volunteer Fire Brigade conducted disinfecting operation on the venue a day before the event. TFCVFB President Elle Lee also provided bread, pastries, and bottled water for the project. Lodge members handled the necessary preparations and WB Benigno Chua and VW Ting Pian Co donated food.

On D-Day, around 80 participants registered. PRC personnel were able to make 46 extractions, with the Philippine Army soldiers providing the bulk of the blood donation. Complimentary Red Shirts were given as token of gratitude, the value of which are in no way comparable to the bravery and self-lessness of both donors and participants. As the venue was spacious and well-ventilated, health standards like social distancing and safety measures were easily observed.

"It is very inspiring to see soldiers, fire volunteers, brethren, and civilians alike participate as one." WM Lim exclaimed. "What a great way to celebrate the country's National Heroes' Day and carry on the works as laid down by great Filipino patriots."

Mr. Luciano Paras, administrator of the Philippine Red Cross – Tarlac Chapter acknowledged the success of the activity with a Certificate of Appreciation for the Lodge. Isagani Masonic Lodge No. 96 is a Hall of Fame Awardee of the PRC Tarlac Provincial Board Council and has been a partner of the Tarlac Red Cross in its humanitarian endeavor since 2012.







Mabini 39 Blood Letting at Cagayan Valley By VW Anthony E. Tan, PDGL (96)

August 22 – Aparri, Cagayan

A Blood Letting Activity was hosted by the Mabini Masonic Lodge No. 39 in cooperation with Cagayan Valley Medical Center (CVMC). People from all walks of life registered at the Lodge Temple and 40 Bags were collected. Adapting the theme "Give Blood, Save Lives", Worshipful Master Elmer A. Clemente said that the lodge project was done in response to the urgent need of blood by hospitals and their patients. He assured everyone that the activity was executed with due observance to proper health and safety protocols. Witnessing the event was Regional Director, PRO2 Police Brigadier General Crizaldo O. Nieves, who is also an advocate of bloodletting activities around Region 02.





Proud Blood Donors
By Bro. Sesinando Ariarte, Jr. (25)

September - Laguna & Batangas

Malinaw Lodge No. 25 having inked an alliance with the Southern Tagalog Chapter of the Philippine College of Surgeons and Philippine Red Cross – San Pablo Chapter have successfully collected blood in 6 different occasions this year:

Sept. 12 / Perpetual Help Medical Center / Biñan City = 15 bags Sept. 12 / Phil. Red Cross – San Pablo City Chapter Bldg. = 39 bags Sept. 23 / St. Frances Cabrini Medical, Sto. Tomas, Batangas = 25 bags Sept. 26 / Camp General Malvar / PPO - Batangas = 159 bags

Sub-Total = 239 bags

In an earlier Blood-letting event on February 4, the Lodge was able to secure 31 units at the San Pablo District Hospital, San Pablo City, Laguna. It was ear-marked for Batangas Hospitals affected by the Taal Volcano Eruption. Another 35 bags were collected c/o Philippine Red Cross Laguna Chapter Building, Sta. Cruz, Laguna in July 11.





Mt. Mainam 49 draws blood for better reserves
By VW Roy E. Castronuevo (49)

September 27 - Naic, Cavite

Mt. Mainam Lodge No. 49 in collaboration with Masonic District R4 – Cavite West and the Mangahis DeMolay hold a Blood Donation Project at the Masonic Temple to improve the blood reserves of the National Kidney Transplant Institute (NKTI).

Of the 57 potential donors who registered, 27 were qualified thus generating an equal amount of blood bags measuring 450 cc each.

Aware of the current deficiency in Blood Reserves, Worshipful Master Edgardo Armendi was more than eager to collaborate with SCWC-Dugong Mason for the benefit of those who may need it.





Alay ng Pagong

para sa Dugong Mason

By Bro. Rex Karl S. Teoxon, MD (400)

October 25 - Sta. Maria, Bulacan

The Bulacan Pond of Pagong Ako Kuyang Pilipinas, Inc. in collaboration of Square & Compass – We Connect (SCWC), and Dugong Mason – the latter's Blood Service Group solidified their advocacy to extract blood from qualified volunteers in a Blood Letting Activity at REYMALYN Compound in Brgy. Manggahan last Sunday.

VW Jay F. Gumasing, WB Cary Duval Uy, and VW Roy Castronuevo – the respective leaders of the above Masonic Group, sought permission to the District Deputies of Bulacan namely VW Isagani Navalta (Bulacan East) and VW Elmer Vitug (Bulacan West) who gave their support to the life-saving project as well.

More than 300 participants volunteered to give blood with 128 being qualified. An equal number of blood units (450 cc) were collected the groups Hospital & Blood Bank Partner, National Kidney Transplant Institute (NKTI).

The amount of blood donations collected in a single day is a clear indication of the event's success which was made possible through the support of the following group participants:

- Barasoain Rotary Club of Bulacan
- Travellers Tambayan Bulacan Chapter
- RAMGI
- H.E.R.O. Volunteer
- Tambayan Riders Group and other motorcycle riders group
- Angat Travellers
- REYMALYN Foundation headed by Barangay Captain Rey Castro
- Sta. Maria Batute Lions Club
- Tau Gamma Phi
- IBP Marcelo H. Del Pilar Chapter
- The Fraternal Order of Eagles
- Lady Eagles Club
- Sacred Heart Academy Batch 88 Medical Mission Group
- 48 Infantry Batallion Armed Forces of the Philippines
- PNP and SOCO

Head Organizers - Gumasing, Uy, and Castronuevo are fraternally grateful to all who participated.



RED CROSS ORIGINS By VR Samuel P. Fernandez, PGC

GENESIS: Jean Henri Dunant (du nahng), 1828-1910, a Swiss philanthropist is regarded as the founder of the International Red Cross. At age twenty-nine, he toured Italy during the Austrian-Sardinian War and witnessed the battle at Solferino. About 40,000 persons had been wounded in that battle. Horrified and appalled at the suffering of the wounded, Dunant organized volunteers to help the fallen. In 1862, Dunant published a pamphlet entitled Un Souvenir de Solferino (Recollections of Solferino). The pamphlet ended with a supplication and a plea: "Would it not be possible to found and organize in all civilized countries permanent societies of volunteers who in time of war would give help to the wounded without regard for their nationality?" The appeal of Dunant won sympathetic and timely support. On October 26, 1863, delegates from 16 nations met in Geneva to discuss Dunant's idea. In August of the next year, delegates from 12 European countries met in Geneva at the invitation from the Swiss Federal Council. Out of this meeting was born the First Geneva or (Red Cross) Convention.

Born on May 8, 1828 as the first son of businessman Jean-Jacques Dunant and Antionete Colladon-Dunant. Being devout Calvinists, his father was active helping orphans and parolees while his mother worked with the sick and disadvantaged. At the age



of 18, the young Henry joined the Geneva Society for Alms giving. He founded the so-called "Thursday Association," a band of young men that met to study the Bible and help the poor. He later founded the Geneva Chapter of the YMCA on November 30, 1852.

Nobel Peace Prize: In September 1895, Georg Baumberger, the chief editor of the St. Gall newspaper Die Ostschweiz, wrote an article entitled "Henri Dunant, founder of the Red Cross". It appeared in the German illustrated magazine Uber Land un Meer. The article was reprinted in other publications throughout Europe and Dunant received renewed attention.

He received the Swiss Binet-Fendt, a note from Pope Leo XIII, support from Russian Tsar's widow, Maria Feodorovna and other donations. In 1897, Rudolf Miller, wrote a book about the origin of the Red Cross stressing Dunant's role. Dunant was awarded the first-ever Nobel Peace Prize in 1902, for his role in founding the International Red Cross Movement and initiating the Geneva Convention. The award was jointly given to French pacifist Frederic Passy, founder of the Peace League.

The official congratulations which Dunant received from the International Committee reads: "There is no man who more deserves this honour, for it was you, forty years ago, who set on foot the international organization for the relief of the wounded on the battlefield. Without you, the Red Cross, the supreme humanitarian achievement of the nineteenth century would probably have never been undertaken."

The Red Cross in the Philippines

The Philippine Red Cross (PRC) is a member of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Its motto "Always First, Always Ready, Always There." It provides six major services:

- 1. National Blood Service
- 2. Disaster Management Services
- 3. Safety Services
- 4. Health Services
- 5. Welfare Services, and
- 6. Red Cross Youth.

All major services embody the fundamental principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: humility, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary services, unity, and universality.

HISTORY: Bro. Apolinario Mabini, (Logia Batangas No. 149, Gran Oriente Espanol) first Prime Minister, encouraged the Malolos Republic to form a national Red Cross organization. On February 17, 1899, the Malolos Republic approved the Constitution of the National Red Cross, appointing Hilaria del Rosario de Aguinaldo, consort of the President, as the first head of the association.

Felipe Agoncillo met with Gustave Moynier, an original member of the Committee of Five and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on August 29, 1900 seeking recognition of the Filipino Red Cross Society as well as the application of the First Geneva Convention during the Philippine-American War.

In 1934, President Manuel L. Quezon, (Sinukuan Lodge No. 16) and First Filipino Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Philippine Islands, established an independent Philippine Red Cross. Because the Philippines was then a territory and later a Commonwealth under the United States, it could not be recognized by the ICRC.

Dr. Horacio Yanzon was appointed the first Filipino Red Cross manager in December 1946. On March 22 the next year, Bro. President Manuel A. Roxas (Makawiwili Lodge No. 55), signed Republic Act 95 giving the Philippine Red Cross its charter. ICRC approved the recognition of the PRC, appointing via telegraphed, former First Lady Aurora Aragon Quezon as the Chairman on March 29. An inaugural ceremony was held on April 15. The PRC was admitted as bonafide member of the League of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies by September 17, 1947.

Actress Rosa Rosal received the 1999 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service for her contribution as member of the PRC Board of Governors since 1965. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo signed the consolidation of Senate Bill 3285 and House Bill 6509 in what is now known as Republic Act No. 10072 or the Philippine Red Cross Act of 2009. The Chair of the Philippine Red Cross is Senator Richard J. Gordon from 2004 to present.

EPILOGUE: In the book 10,000 Famous Freemasons A to J, authored by Brothers William R. Denslow and Harry Truman, PGM, it is claimed that Jean Henri Dunant was a brother mason.

It took three Mason Presidents: Illustrious Emilio Aguinaldo, 33°; Past Grand Master Manuel L. Quezon, 33°; and Past Master Manuel A. Roxas, before the Philippine Red Cross was admitted into the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The first appointed head of the Red Cross was a consort of Emilio F Aguinaldo, President of the Malolos Republic, Hilaria del Rosario de Aguinaldo. While First Lady Aurora Aragon Quezon was the First Chairman when PRC was recognized by the ICRC.

The first to encourage the formation of a national Red Cross organization was Bro. Apolinario Mabini - the "Brain of the Revolution".

Former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo once addressed the Mason Brethren at the Tagaytay Convention Center on April 30, 2005, thus: "I once asked my mother, 'Mom, Lolo was a Freemason? And she answered, 'Yes.' And she revealed that when she was in primary school, Lolo went to his meetings very regularly in Zamboanga City. "Later on, I learned much more about Freemasonry and the Freemasons. Especially when I became a Senator, I had great chance to interact with many Freemasons. Eventually I learned that far from being sinister, far from being atheists, the Freemasons are pro-God, pro-country, and pro-goodness."

Goodness transcends beyond the walls of animosity, bitterness, and hatred. Goodness knows no bounds.



Beyond Blood Services By WB J. Harold W. Santiago, PM

As mentioned in the preceding article, the Philippine Red Cross provides six major services, with National Blood Service being on top of the list. Their Motto: Always First. Always Ready. Always There.

In line with the Red Issue, TCT Team look into the profile of the Humanitarian Organization and were surprised to see the involvement of members of the craft from its origins up to the present. As TCT Adviser VR Samuel Fernandez plumbed its past, Circulation Manager Anthony Tan and yours truly interviewed some of our brethren serving under different PRC Chapters. VW James Richard Chua Co (96)

one of the Director of PRC Tarlac, and VW Alfrito D. Mah Chairman of the Board for Pampanga-Angeles Chapter readily indulged our query.

For Non-government Organization, Philippine Red Cross is efficiently established with its Blood Service Di-

towards geographical-balance.



rectory developed During the COVID-19 Pandemic, PRC Pampanga - Angeles City Chapter renders Health Services during the ECQ in Luzon.

68 Blood Banks are evenly distributed into 7 in the National Capital Region, 25 around Luzon, 13 in the Visayas, and 23 over Mindanao. "Our blood banks are strategically located in war torn or high conflict areas." explained VW James when we asked him about the locations. "Maintaining Blood Banks entails cost, part of the Blood Handling Fees that we collect from those who need blood goes to its maintenance and upkeep of our facility.'

"There is more to Red Cross than just the Blood." Ads VW Bong Mah. Recounting, the vital role played by the Pampanga-Angeles City Chapter in the rescue efforts at Porac during the 6.1 magnitude Earthquake back in April last year. "Disaster Management is our second activity, followed by Safety

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A Potential Treatment By Bro. Louie A. Castro, MD

It is a no-brainer that COVID-19 will continue knocking on our doors until a good vaccine has emerged. Doctors are exhausting all available resources to combat the disease and one of the promising weapons in their arsenal is Convalescent Plasma Therapy or CPT. This kind of therapy is no longer new as it has proven its worth for centuries. Although this treatment modality is still considered 'experimental' for Covid-19 per se, doctors are seeing it as a promising potential treatment

How does it work?

The human body produces antibodies in reaction to infections. Antibodies are like 'soldiers' of the body that ward off infections. These antibodies are contained in the plasma of a 'convalesced' or 'recovered' individual. In CPT, a pre-made antibody from a recovered person is given to a sick individual boosting the chances of recovery until such time that their immune system can produce its own antibodies. In a simple context, the human body creates antibodies (soldiers) in response to an infection (war). When there is a 'war' in our body, it will take a while before our body can make its own 'soldiers'. Instead, in CPT, antibodies or 'soldiers' from a person who had already won the 'war' (Covid-19 infection) will be transferred to another patient who is currently battling the infection. All of these antibodies are contained in the plasma of the blood. Thus, plasma is the one harvested and infused into the body.

Is it effective?

Convalescent plasma has proven its worth against many viral diseases including the 1918 Flu Pandemic. Although results are variable, it has shown promise in the management of severe Covid-19. CPT has not yet been fully approved in the management of the disease, but it has shown promise in the improvement of patients with severe Covid-19 infection. Doctors at the Philippine General Hospital (PGH) claim that 9 out of 10 patients who received CPT improved and recovered from the disease. Doctors are looking forward to the possibility of using CPT as an effective means to treat Covid-19 patients.

Who can donate?

Currently, there is a strong urge for qualified recovered patients to donate their plasma to help those afflicted with severe Covid-19. Those qualified to donate are recovered patients between the ages 18 to 65 and donors need to undergo meticulous physical and medical examinations. Donors should also meet the criteria in order to qualify to donate their plasma, which include but not limited to (1st preference):

- Previous diagnosis of COVID-19 by SARS CoV-2 RT-PCR
- Absence of any clinical evidence of COV-ID-19 for at least 14 days
- At least 1 negative SARS-CoV-2 RT-PCR result done on recovery

When to donate?

As antibodies wane over time, there is a certain time window when plasma from Covid-19 survivors can be harvested.

For survivors of an older disease like MERS-CoV, it has been established that the antibodies can last in their system for up to 3 years. The Corona Virus on the other hand has only been present for months, it may take years before researchers can accurately delineate how long plasma antibodies for Covid-19 Patients stay in the body. To err on the safe side, plasma donation should only be done once a patient has fully recovered from the infection and titers of antibodies in the plasma are still high.

Are there any side effects?

Donors of convalescent plasma rarely experience any side effects. Among the rare side



effects observed include lightheadedness, shakiness or possible fainting.

For patients receiving convalescent plasma, among the risks are: Allergic reactions, hemolysis, lung damage and difficulty of breathing. The chances of risk are very nil proportions as blood and its products are meticulously tested for safety. Complications may vary from very mild to none at all.

How to prepare for CP donation?

Donors need to drink plenty of fluids for proper hydration as fluids will be taken out of their body but dehydrating drinks that contain caffeine such as coffee and tea should be avoided. Alcohol must also be avoided. Foods that can alter the consistency of plasma such as fatty and oily foods should not be taken. Remember to always wear proper PPEs for safety.

Where to donate?

Interested donors may visit www. PlasmaNgPagasa.com. It is a secure, one-stop COVID-19 survivor registration system. Entries here are automatically submitted to plasma collecting hospitals and institutions such as the Philippine General Hospital, Lung Center of the Philippines, St. Luke's Medical Center and the Philippine Association of Medical Technologists (PAMET) Cebu.

They can also contact the Philippine Red Cross hotline at 09175820499 or simply dial 143. For other facilities, donors may contact their doctors for verification.

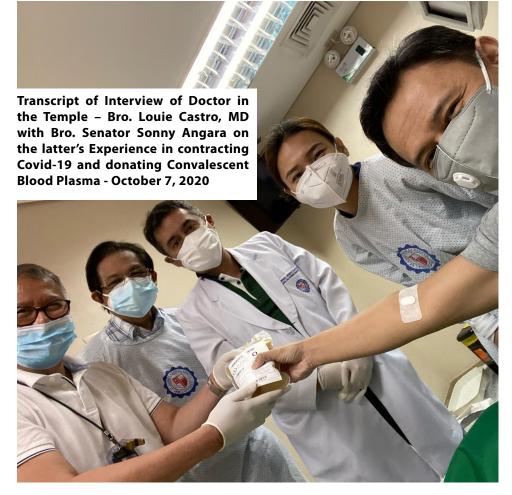
KEYPOINTS

- Donors should have been previously infected with SARS-CoV-2 validated by a diagnostic test at the time of illness.
- Blood from Donors should be harvested at an interval of at least 14 days after full recovery.
- Donors should be assessed as fully recovered from Covid-19 prior to blood donation.
- Volume of plasma collected may range from 200 to 600ml.
- Treatment effectiveness is expected to be better when immune plasma is collected from patients of the same city, or surrounding area, since it is assumed that these donors have defeated the same virus (virus genome can mutate).
- Convalescent plasma should be hyperimmune and contain high antibody titers against SARS-CoV-2.
- It is still unknown how long patients have good antibody levels in their blood; hypothetically, the time window for convalescent plasma donation is limited to the first period after a patient's full recovery.
- Effective titres of antiviral neutralizing antibodies, optimal timing of convalescent plasma treatment, optimal timing for plasma donation, and the severity class of patients who are

likely to benefit from convalescent plasma remains unclear.

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1. When and how did you know you have Covid-19?

On March 15, I started experiencing body pain, sore throat, cough, diarrhea and even shortness of breath. These are almost all of the known symptoms of the virus so at that time I assumed I already contracted it. A day after, news came that my colleague Senate Majority Leader Miguel Zubiri had tested positive for the virus. This further convinced me of the big chance I was also infected because Senator Zubiri and I had been together in the senate the week before. I underwent the COVID-19 test on March 16. It took 10 days before I received the result - positive.

2. Did you ever think that you will get infected by the virus?

I think everyone should assume that they

could be infected by the virus. COVID-19 is a treacherous, it is just lurking around, waiting for another victim regardless of age.

3. What were the things that came into your mind when you were diagnosed as positive for the disease?

After receiving the result, I definitely thought of my mortality—also of my children and wishing to see them pass through life's milestones down the road. Certainly, there was an activation of one's fight-or-flight response.

4. Did you manifest any symptoms of the disease or any symptom that you find related to the disease?

Yes. As I mentioned, I think I experienced almost all of the symptoms of the virus. And because of that, I immediately quarantined

myself for the safety of my family and house workers.

5. If that is the case, what where the next steps that you took?

After some 36 hours of pleas from and arguments with my family and the doctors, I was finally convinced to check myself in at St. Luke's Medical Center in BGC. There, X-ray results showed that I already had pneumonia, and that the manifestation of white spots in my lungs was evidence of the virus.

6. During your quarantine and isolation, did you take any form of treatment or medications both in the hospital and at home?

In the hospital, I was given hydroxychloroquine, a known treatment for malaria and lupus; and lopinavir and ritonavir, a medicine given to HIV patients. The medication, along with healthy diet helped me fight off COV-ID-19.

7. Can you tell us your experience and the impact Covid-19 gave you?

It was lonely and depressing being alone in the hospital, and away from my family. Because there were no regular rooms readily available, I was placed in a makeshift corner of the ER where I stayed for four days.





There was hardly any natural light, and I was surrounded by grey concrete walls-not the cheeriest of experiences. Eventually, I was moved to a regular room, where I was more comfortable. But what really helped me through were a lot of messages from my supportive and loving wife and kids who would write me funny letters and send pictures to me every day, as well as from friends. There were also many well-wishers who sent their messages of support via social media. When you are down there is nothing better like tens and hundreds of your friends and school coparents praying for your recovery. I thank the Lord for I felt his intervention through friends' and strangers' acts of kindness.

8. What were your thoughts then when you finally tested negative of the disease?

Recovering from COVID-19 made me appreciate my life and family more. The experience has brought me closer to God, my wife and kids, and friends, and helped me make new memories. On the other hand, staying at the hospital became an eye opener to the hardships our nurses and doctors face every day. This is the time now to invest even more in our health system—even more so in the courageous men and women in the frontlines.

9. We heard that you tested twice for Covid-19. How was this possible as explained to you by your doctors?

It was close to one month since I recovered from COVID-19. While preparing to donate my blood plasma for a second time, my doctors, after the results of the initial antibody test taken before donating, had me take another swab test, which registered positive. My

wife Tootsy has tested negative, which could be proof of what my doctors are positing that I am probably no longer infectious and that this latest positive result was probably picking up remnants of the virus.

10. Several reports broadcasted that you donated your plasma to help Covid-19 patients. How and when did you know of the so-called convalescent plasma therapy?

My doctors told me that a certain man who is currently on a ventilator needs my plasma. According to them, this practice could save lives as the antibodies of survivors in the past viruses have done.



11. Is it of your own volition or did anyone convince you to donate your plasma for convalescent plasma therapy?

Having to experience COVID-19 and its adverse effects to one's health, I thought that donating my plasma is the least that I could do to hopefully save someone.

12. Why did you decide to donate your convalescent plasma?

I saw it as a way to give back to the medical community who helped me recover from COVID-19. I first learned about the therapy when one of the doctors who treated me asked if I was interested in donating plasma for another critically ill patient. I did not hesitate to agree—perhaps out of a sense of gratitude for the utmost care I received while in confinement from our able doctors and nurses.

13. So basically, what is convalescent plasma therapy?

Convalescent plasma therapy is the infusion of blood plasma from an individual who recovered from COVID-19 with the objective of boosting the receiving patient's defensive response to the virus. COVID-19 survivors are

known to have plasma that carries the antibodies that can fight and protect the body from the virus. While this therapy is still considered as an "investigational treatment", this has been considered by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a valid and safe approach in treating infectious diseases such as H1N1, SARS, MERS-CoV and Ebola.

14. Can you elaborate to us the procedures done prior, during and after the extraction?

For one to qualify as a donor, an individual must have fully recovered from COVID-19 for at least two (2)

weeks. They must be eligible to donate, have prior diagnosis of COVID-19 documented by a laboratory test. Please note that survivors can only donate plasma to one patient every (fourteen) 14 days.

15. Did you know who received your donated convalescent plasma?

My first plasma donation went straight to a hospital in Quezon City to a man on a ventilator.

16. How many times did you donate your convalescent plasma?

I donated my plasma twice. First was in April, the second one was last July.

17. Convalescent plasma therapy is still under investigation as it is not yet proven to cure Covid-19 but it really shows promise. Would you still donate your convalescent plasma in case somebody needs it?

According to current observations, plasma from a covid-19 survivor stays in one's body for about three (3) to five (5) months only. I tested positive on March so I am guessing I no longer have the plasma with me that can help patients recover.

18. We all know the problem and the need for blood in the Philippines then and now. For the countless Filipinos who need blood and blood products, would you have something to say to our fellow brother master masons or even to the general public about blood donation?

I encourage Covid-19 Survivors to donate their plasma to help save the lives of our fellow Filipinos who are struggling with the disease. For all the survivors, you can visit www.plasmangpagasa.com —a website that we have put up in order to facilitate the process of connecting blood plasma donors with the receiving hospitals and the patients in need.

19. Being a Covid-19 survivor yourself, do you have any message to all the Filipinos who are currently suffering from Covid-19 and to the general population as well?

To all covid-19 patients, just stay strong and have faith in God. I urge families of those who are suffering from the disease to support and show your care to your loved one as this can really help them recover. One of the things that this pandemic made me realize is to be 'in the moment' and to enjoy simple moments in life. Maybe this virus could make us think about our lives and reflect and try to be better going forward.



Notes on the Interview:

Bro. Juan Edgardo "Sonny" M. Angara is a Master Mason from Pangarap Masonic Lodge No. 448. He was Initiated and Passed in 2018 and was Raised on the Sublime Degree on February 11, 2019. He is currently serving as Senior Warden for Masonic Year 2020 – 2021. For 3 consecutive terms (2004 – 2013) he served as the Representative of Aurora's Lone District. He was elected to a 2nd Term as Senator in 2019.

To know more about Kuyang Sonny Angara's initiative, the Brethren can visit www. plasmangpagasa.com and share its link in Social Media to help spread awareness on a potential treatment for Covid-19 and encourage recovering patients to donate their blood plasma.

Bro. Louie A. Castro, MD is a Master Mason from Pampanga Masonic Lodge No. 48. He is currently on residency training at Jose B. Lingad Memorial Regional Hospital in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga. He is the Medical Adviser for The Cable Tow and writes medical related articles in his column – Doctor in the Temple.

In arranging the interview, Bro. Doc Louie prepared the questions which was submitted to BSW Sonny Angara through the coordination of TCT Circulation Manager VW Anthony Tan. The Cable Tow Editorial Team is grateful for Bro Senator for taking time-off his busy schedule in order to accommodate our request as well as provide personal photos and share some of his Masonic Information for our Readers.

- WB J. Harold W. Santiago, Editor-In-Chief



Series 02 of 05 A Guide to Lodge Secretaries

TO THE LODGE SECRETARY:

Your station in the Lodge is one of great responsibility. Your continuous contact with the officers and members of your Lodge makes you more vital to the success of your lodge than any other officer. This calls for your utmost efforts to uphold the traditions of your lodge and indeed the entire masonic fraternity.

Your duties are continuous, day-in, and day-out. However, if you tackle them as they arise, your task will prove lighter and less complicated.

CRITICISM there will be, but do not let it worry you. If the criticism is JUST, let it guide you to proper action; if it is UNJUST, do not dwell on it, YOUR DUTY IS TO YOUR LODGE, not to the FAULT-FINDER if his criticism is unjust.

As your years of service to your Brethren lengthen, you will become like one of those hollow pillars of old — a receptacle or safe repository of many Brotherly confidences and secrets, which the ear may have heard or the eyes have seen, but which the tongue withholds.

(Source: MW Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, A.F. & A.M.)

The Caucus

Lodges are encouraged to hold

Monthly Officers' Caucus meetings to draft the agenda of the next stated meeting. It allows an ad-



vanced settlement of the delicate matters which may tend to create disharmony inside the lodge. Moreover, it will shorten the actual lodge meetings and will avoid missing any important matter for discussion. It will also be the best time to prepare in advance any bank transaction form for approval and signing.

A Caucus also permits the Chairmen of the various Lodge Committees to brief everybody on their reports that would be submitted in written form during the Committee Hour at the next stated meeting.

If your lodge is not doing Caucus meetings in the past, try to start one during your term of office. You will find that it will make your work more efficient and orderly. Some of the important things you need to prepare for this purpose are the following:

- Notice of Caucus (indicating time, date, and venue)
- Disbursement vouchers (for payment of expenditures)
- Withdrawal slip (for signature by key signatories)
- Whiteboard marker and marker pen
- Pen and paper
- Refreshment fund
- Venue of Caucus
- List of pending matters
- Copies of New Edicts and GM Circulars within the period

- · Copies of petitions received if any
- Draft of committee reports
- Others

Your First Agenda

The first order of business of your office is to produce a Lodge Annual Plan & Budget (done by the Worshipful Master) together with the list of appointed Chairmen of the various Lodge Committees. These will form an attachment to the Notice of Stated Meeting, which shall indicate the time, date, and venue of convention, especially when under Dispensation. Prepare all of these in soft copy for quicker dissemination to your lodge members via email, Messenger, or Viber group, at least 7 days before the stated meeting. Make sure to provide printed copies as well, for distribution during the Stated Meeting.

Be mindful to include your funding requirements in the Annual Budget. These include, but not limited to, the following:

- Office supplies (for papers, pens, markers, ink, and photocopies)
- Communication (for postage, courier, and cell cards)
- Transportation (for fares, and fuel)
- Allowance (for other unforeseen office expenditures)

In addition, you should prepare a Lodge Resolution to enable you to change the signatories of your Lodge's Bank Accounts, conforming to the new set of Officers having recently elected to the position. Gather all the forms required for this transaction from the bank and have them signed by the duly authorized officers during the meeting.

Another important document for attachment in this transaction is the Secretary's Certificate, which you can update from the copy of the previous year's transaction.

You will be hands-on with the following:

- Notice of the Stated Meeting
- Minutes of the last Stated Meeting, Secretary's Report, and Treasurer's Report
- Annual Lodge Plan & Budget

- Secretary's Certificate
- GLP Circulars and Edicts
- Citizen's tax Certificate of bank signatories
- Identification photos of bank signatories
- Signature of bank signatories
- Notarization of documents

Your First Official Meeting

Make it a habit to wear proper attire and arrive at the Stated Meeting venue earlier than the other members of the Lodge.

Set your table by orderly arranging the volume of documents you have with you for reading. Be sure to bring the Official Lodge Receipt Pad for acknowledging payments made by the members. It is also a must for you to bring a copy of the Masonic Law Book and the By-Laws of the lodge. It is advisable to have spare copies of the meeting's agenda, which should be provided in the lobby for the members. Take note of the opening time and list down the names of those who are present, including the visitors and dignitaries of the Grand Lodge. Prepare a matrix of members and months for the attendance sheet. Jot down all the salient points of other reporters, especially the ones that were not mentioned during the Caucus.

Pay attention to any amendment to the Annual Plan & Budget. Some officers may introduce revisions in the figures, either for addition or subtraction. You will need such for your final printout as approved during the Stated Meeting. Your revised and final output will again be disseminated in the next Stated Meeting.

Those appointed Chairmen of the Committees shall be required by the Master to submit their annual plan and budget for adoption and approval of the members. Secure a copy from each appointed officer for the Supplemental Budget presentation which will be done in the next Stated Meeting. Remember that not until the entire lodge financial structure is determined, any propose amendment of the Annual Dues, if any, should not be entertained by the Worshipful Master. Therefore, the presentation of the quarterly Member's Statement of Account will be in abeyance. Secure specimen

signatures, CTCs, and ID Photos of bank signatories. You may also give the Junior Warden a copy of the list of birthday celebrators for the month.

Do not forget to announce the result of the collection in the Almoner's Box. Take note of the remarks of the dignitaries and closing time.

In your next Stated Meeting, be sure to prepare scanned copies of the Minutes from the Previous Stated Meeting and Secretary's Financial Report. Organized these in a folder personalized with the name of active members in preparation for distribution before the start of the Stated Meeting.

Suggested Guidelines in the Preparation of Minutes

- 1. The report shall be printed on 8.5" x 11" (letter size) bond paper with a margin of 1" on all sides. Pages should be properly numbered. The proposed font is Arial Size 12. All reports must be neat without erasures, legibly typewritten, presentable, and readable.
- 2. All Lodge Secretary's reports on minutes of the meeting must be in the Lodge's official letterhead bearing the lodge logo, name, address, masonic district, and the time and place of the Stated Meeting.
- 3. The purpose of the lodge for the particular meeting (i.e. to conduct business for the month of October; to confer the 2nd degree upon certain brethren, etc.) should be duly indicated thereto.
- 4. The minutes should be presented in an outline form or by topics. Minutes must be brief, concise, and direct to the point. The duty of the Secretary in such cases is mainly to record what has been done by the assembly and not was said by the members. A record of lengthy discussion or deliberation should be avoided.
- 5. Edicts and Circulars must be read by the Secretary in summary form. Only vital Edicts/Circulars shall be discussed by the Lodge.

- 6. The minutes should follow the Agenda as prepared and approved by the Worshipful Master.
- 7. The minutes should accurately contain the names of the lodge members present as well as the brethren who took part in the opening and closing of the Lodge, indicating the positions they have assumed during such time. Should the elected and/or appointed officers be absent during such meeting, the minutes should indicate the proxy as pro tem (i.e. Chaplain pro tem, etc.) Likewise, to be recorded are the names of attending District Officers, dignitaries, and visitors. Latecomers should be listed as such. Members present during the closing of the lodge should also be reported.
- 8. The report should be signed by the Secretary and the Worshipful Master and attested by the Grand Lodge Inspector.

Suggested Sample Minutes

(Source: GLP Website/Resources/Forms and Templates/Blue Lodge Reports and Templates/Prescribed Format for the Minutes-Circular 08- MW Gazmin)

- I) Opening of the Lodge
 - 1) Recording of the Names of Brethren present inside the Lodge
 - 2) Entry of the Philippine Flag
 - 3) Singing of the National Anthem
 - 4) Recital of the Pledge of Allegiance
 - 5) Singing of the Grand Lodge Hymn
 - 6) Recital of the Obligation (Optional, at Discretion of the Master)
 - 7) Acknowledgment of the Past Masters of the Lodge
 - 8) Acknowledgment of Past DDGMs and other Dignitaries present
 - 9) Acknowledgment of the District Officers Present

II) Business Meeting

- 1) Reading and Approval of the Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)
- 2) Reading and Approval of the Secretary's Financial Report
- 3) Reading and Approval of the Secretary's Bills for payment.
- 4) Reading and Approval of the Treasurer's Financial Report.

- III) Reports of the Committees
- 1) Report of the Sunshine Committee
- 2) Report of the Charity Committee
- 3) Report of other Committees as Constituted by the Lodge

IV) Masonic Education

- 1) Masonic Education by a Brother
- 2) Masonic Education by the District Grand Lecturer, and/or District Official
- 3) Address of Visiting Dignitary, if any.

V) Balloting

- 1) Balloting of Candidates for Degrees, if any.
- 2) Balloting of Petition for Affiliation, if any.
- 3) Balloting for Dual or Plural Membership, if any.
- VI) Reading of Grand Lodge Edicts/ GLP Circulars, Communications, Letters, and other Correspondence
- VII) Reception of Petitions for Degrees
- VIII) Unfinished and Pending Business
 - 1) Matters arising from the previous Stated Meeting
 - 2) Proposal and Approval of Lodge Resolutions and Lodge Actions on Dispensation, Demit, Suspension, Restoration, Amendments, etc.)

IX) Miscellaneous Business

- 1) Acknowledgment of Birthday Celebrators
- 2) Bag of Fraternal Assistance
- 3) Acknowledgment of Visiting Brethren
- 4) Almoner's Collection/Report
- 5) Remarks, Announcement, Greetings of any Brother from the floor.
- X) Conferral of Degrees if any
- XI) Message, Report and Remarks of the District/Grand Line Officers
 - 1) Report of the Grand Lodge Inspector
 - 2) Closing Remarks of the District Grand Lecturer
 - 3) Message of the District Deputy Grand Master
 - 4) Address of the Grand Master or Elected Officer of the Grand Lodge if present.

XII) Closing of the Lodge

- 1) Members present before closing
- 2) Retirement of the Philippine Flag
- 3) Surrender of Officer's Jewels

Sources:

IMES LODGE MANAGEMENT MANUAL Lodge Secretarial 101 (2005 Edition by VW Lyndel Canda)

(Inquiries, comments, clarifications, or suggestions on this column can be sent to: isagani96.tarlac@yahoo.com or message me at my Viber numbers globe 0917-7712966 or smart 0920-9219452)

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 90 - REYOND BLOOD

Services." Our brother Chairman continued. "Health and Welfare is No. 4 & 5 on the list, and they are extremely crucial during this time of COVID-19".

The 6th Major Service under this humanitarian organization is about the Youth. Its mission to educate and empower the young through constructive trainings and effective leadership is parallel to our youth organizations under the umbrella of Philippine Freemasonry. What springs to mind at this point of our writing is the possible collaboration among our DeMolays, Job's Daughters and Rainbow Girls with Red Cross Youth (Philippines). The opportunities for directing and harnessing their energy and idealism into worthwhile humanitarian activities can make inspiring stories in future issues of our publication.

Profile of a Local PRC Chapter: Phil. Red Cross - Tarlac Chapter makes a good exemplar, established after the 2nd World War, it is noted for outstanding performance. From their humble beginnings in 1946, it catapulted itself as one of the most self-sufficient PRC chapter. Great strides were made under the late Doña Demetria S. Cojuangco whose 25-year chairmanship (1963-1988) who left the local organization with a building and an expanded property. Led by Administrator and Area Coordinator (A1) Mr. Luciano L. Paras, Jr. since 1991, Tarlac Chapter serves as a model for other local groups with its financial success and exemplary services. Among them the 150-Unit Red Cross Village which it had issued to families displaced by the 1991 Pinatubo Eruption. "We are not Government-funded." VW James clarifies. "PRC relies on charity and a chapter who has received more, can really do more."





Payinggalan Ni Xuya Pong ni MK Arnulfo Macatangay, NMG

KAPATIRAN SA TINAPAYAN

Magandang Araw Brethren! Para sa ating pangalawang byahe, dumayo tayo sa Panaderya ng isang Kapatid, ang Tinapayan Festival Bakeshoppe sa may Dapitan St., Sampaloc, Manila.

Ito ay itinayo ni Bro. Lucito "Chito" Chavez ng Pinaglabanan Lodge No. 374 taong 1982. Hindi pa sya maalam sa pagbe-bakery noon pero tulad ng mga bagitong nais matuto ay inaral ang negosyo. Unti-unti nakita nya ang kagandahan ng venture at dumami ang mga kaibigan hanggang sa dito na umikot ang kanyang mundo.

Nang mapangasawa si Ateng noong 1996 ay lalo pang tinutukan ang panaderya. Kanilang ibinenta ang ibang business tulad ng poultry at gasolinahan, bumili ng bakery sa Maynila at nakipagsapalaran sa larangan ng bakeshop. Malaking bahagi ng pag-unlad ay dahil na rin sa kanilang mga tauhan at kababayan mula Cuenca, Batangas na mahuhusay na panadero.

Ayon kay Kuya Chito, dalawang taon pa lamang sya sa negosyo ay nahahalal na syang pangulo ng iba't-ibang Baker's Association. Bagamat bagito, napakinabangan ng industriya ng tinapay ang kanyang paraan ng pagpapaliwanag, hanggang sa naging Presidente ng Metro Manila Bakers Association, at kamalaunay Director at Spokesperson ng Philippine Federation.

Naging tagaugnay ang ating kapatid sa pagitan ng mga magtitinapay at mga ahensya ng pamahalaan tulad ng DTI. Siya ang unang panaderong lumapit sa Kongreso, Senado



ANG TINAPAY NG MAYNILA

at maging sa tanggapan ng Pangulo upang maipabatid ang mga pangangailangan ng industiyang kinabibilangan. Sa panahon ni Pres. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo ay naaanyayahan Syang dumalo sa mga Cabinet Meetings. Doo'y nakapagmungkahi ng mga hybrid na tinapay gamit ang agricultural crops tulad ng kalabasa, kamote, ube, at malunggay. Sapagkat ang tinapay ay gawa sa trigo (wheat) na inangkat pa sa ibang bansa, hangarin ni Kuyang Chito na haluan ng mga lokal na sangkap ang tinapay sa Pilipinas upang mabawasan ang pag-angkat habang inaangat ang pangangailangan sa ating mga pananim at ng sa gayon ay lumago ang ating agrikultura. Naging patok ang mga tinapay na hybrid lalo na ang Malunggay Pandesal.

Naging supplier sa Malacanang at PAGCOR. Karamihan din sa mga ospital ng Maynila at Quezon City ay sa kanila rin humahango ng tinapay. Kamakailan lamang, ay nabigyang tatak mula DOST as the "only accredited manufacturer of Nutribun". Kung babalikan



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ang kasaysayan, ang Nutribun ay isang uri ng tinapay na ginagamit sa mga Feeding Programs ng United States Agency for International Development (USAID) noong 1971 - 1997. Isa ang Pilipinas sa mga nakatanggap nito at tinangkilik ng mga Pilipino dahil hindi nalalayo sa Pandesal. Nagsimulang ibalik ng pamahalaan ang Nutribun sa mga paaralan sa bansa taong 2014.

"Kung gaano natin minahal ang ating sarili, ganoon din natin minahal ang tinapay at pagluluto ng hurno (baking)" Banggit ni Kuya Chito na umaming dumadaan pa din sa kanyang kamay ang pagtimpla ng mga produkto bago ipakilala sa merkado. Patuloy ang kanilang pamilya sa paggawa ng mga bagong uri ng tinapay, kabilang dito ang "Soft Breads". "Sa ngayon ay ang mga pamangkin na ninyo ang namamahala sa Panaderya." Pagmamalaki ng ating Kapatid. "Adviser na lamang tayo." Dugtong nya.

Noong panahon ng ECQ, ang Tinapayan Festival Bakeshoppe ay nagbenta ng tinapay sa mga military and medical frontliners ayon sa puhunan lamang. Tatlong buwan nila ito ginawa, bilang tulong sa mga bagong bayani.

Bago pa iyan, noong Enero ay nagpadala din sila ng one hundred thousand pieces na tinapay (NutriAide Bread) bilang pag-alalay sa mga nasalanta ng pagsabog ng Bulkang Taal.



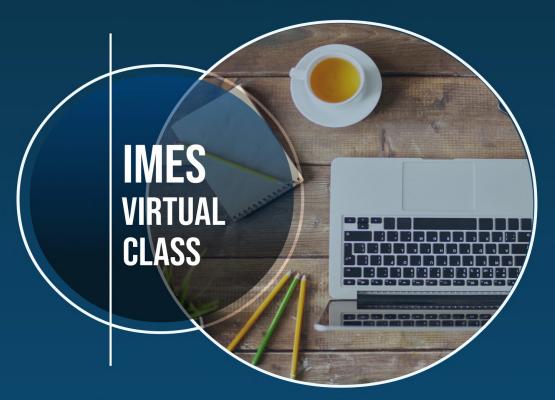
"Noong tayo ay nagsimula, 25 sentimo ang halaga ng Pandesal." Pagbabalik tanaw ni Kuyang Chito. "Ngayon ito ay 2.50 php na." Bago matapos ang aming panayam ay nagiwan ng palaisipan ang ating kapatid. "Ang Pandesal or Salt Bread ay sinasabing National Bread ng Pilipinas, ang siste - imported ang kanyang ingredients. Sa aking pananaw, naging Pambansang Tinapay lamang ang Pandesal nang ito ay haluan ng lokal na sangkap gaya ng Malunggay na tubong Pilipinas.



INSTITUTE OF MASONIC EDUCATION AND STUDIES



Every Last Friday and Saturday of the Month



IMES TOPICS

- ✓ MASONIC HISTORY
- ✓ MASONIC PHILOSOPHY AND SYMBOLISM ✓ MASONIC GOVERNANCE AND JURISPRUDENCE ✓ MASONIC DECORUM & PROTOCOL

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Kabakas
Kabanda
Kabarangay
Kabaro
Ka-barracks
Kabarter
Ka-basketball
Ka-batch

Kabatian Ka-beardie Ka-bengbeng Kabesobeso Kabilyaran Kabinguhan Ka-Birthday

Ka-Birtiday Kabiruan Kabiyak Kabiyahe Ka-block Ka-Blood Ty

Ka-Blood Tyn Ka-Board Ka-bonding Kabote* Ka-boksing Ka-brad Ka-brand Ka-broom2 Kabulungan Ka-channel
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Ka-Chapter
Ka-Charter
Ka-chat
Ka-chess
Ka-choir
Ka-Church
Ka-COC
Ka-coding
Ka-Commandery
Ka-community
Ka-coop
Ka-Council

Kadabarkads
Kadamay
Ka-darts
Kadasalan
Ka-DDGM
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Ka-DGL
Ka-diet
Ka-District
Ka-division
Ka-DOTA
Ka-downline
Ka-dual
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Kadutdutan***

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Kafederasyon
Ka-fellowship
Ka-flight
Ka-FM
Ka-foodtrip
Ka-frat
Ka-frequency

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Ka-JGL Ka-Jobbie Ka-jogging Ka-jurisdiction Kakapihan

Kakampi

Kakawang-gawa

Kakilala Kaklase Kakosa Kakulay Kakumpitensya Kakutso Kakutsaba **Ka-Kuyang** Kakwentuhan

> Kalaro Kalaban Ka-Layman kalinya Ka-LML

Ka-Knights

Ka-Layman kalinya Ka-LML Kalohiya Kamaganak Kamag-aral Ka-maintenance Kamajong Ka-mason Ka-match Ka-meeting Ka-member Kameryenda

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Kaprograma
Kapurok
Kapuso
Kapuso
Kapustahan
Kaputukan

Ka-Quarters

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Ka-Rainbow
Karehiyon
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Karetirado
Karibal
Ka-rider
Karouta
Ka-Rotarian

Ka-taste

Ka-Team

Ka-techie **Ka-Templ**o

Ka-tennis

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Ka-tiket

Katiwala

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Katsimisan

Katsokaran

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Katukayo

Katunggali

Katuwang

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Kaungguyan

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Ka-subdivision

Kasuki

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