



# FIL-AM BULLETIN

The Official Newsletter of the  
**Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia, SC**  
(A Non-Profit Organization to Promote Inter-Cultural Education and Understanding)

**"Together  
We Make A  
Difference"**

★ Volume 13, Number 2

P.O. Box 24112, Columbia, SC 29224

★ Fall 2003

## FAAGC General Membership Meeting on January 18, 2004

The first general membership meeting for the year 2004 will be held on Sunday, **January 18, 2004** at **Ridge View High School** (4801 Hard Scrabble Road, Columbia, SC 29229), starting at **2:00 p.m.** Plans for upcoming activities and proposed projects will be discussed during the meeting.

This is a POTLUCK get-together so please bring a 3-liter soda and a covered dish enough for your family and others. For variety, suggested covered dishes are as follows, based on the first letter of the family names:

- A** : Pork or beef dish
- B - E** : Cooked rice & bread
- F - J** : Chicken dish
- K - N** : Vegetable dish
- O - T** : Dessert (cakes, cookies, fruits, etc)
- U - Z** : Noodles (*pancit, palabok*, etc.)
- FAAGC**: Ice, plates, utensils

**FAAGC members, supporters and other interested parties in the area Fil-Am community are all invited to come and share the fun and food with family and friends.**

For further information and directions to the venue, please contact any officer listed on *Page 2*. ❖

## Fil-Am Scholarship Fund Needs Your Help

In order to continue to offer scholarships to our members, we need your help for fund raising suggestions. A car wash has been suggested as a possible activity in the spring. Please come to the general membership meeting on January 18, 2004 with great ideas for additional fundraisers.

As you know we have given our first FAAGC scholarship this year to **Raymund Elamparo** who was a regular dancer in the Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe in 2001-2003 and is now enrolled at the University of South Carolina. Immediate Past President Peter Linoras presented the scholarship award to Raymund during the FAAGC gala on September 13, 2003.

Graduating senior high school students who are or whose parents are members of FAAGC are eligible to apply for the scholarship. The decision to award the scholarship will be based on a combination of academics, extra-curricular activities, active participation in FAAGC activities, and an essay. The amounts and number of scholarships awarded will depend on available funds.

*continued on Page 2*

## Annual FIL-AM Christmas Party Set for December 20

The annual Columbia Fil-Am Family Christmas Party will be held on Saturday, **December 20, 2003** at the **St. John Neumann School gymnasium** (721 Polo Road corner Miles Road, Columbia, SC 29223; see map on *Page 3*), starting at **5:00 p.m.**

The holiday celebration will feature a catered Chinese buffet dinner with Filipino desserts in addition to a surprise-filled program of activities for both children and adults. **Marie Generoso** is coordinating a very exciting entertainment program and there will be an early visit by Santa and dancing to DJ music.

All Association members, supporters and friends (and their families) are all invited. Available from any FAAGC officer listed on *Page 2*, tickets are required for admission and dinner. To ensure an exact count of people served and accurate amount we need to pay the caterer, party-goers (including children) need to turn in their tickets in order to be served. **No ticket = No food service.**

Tickets are \$12 each for members and \$13 for non-members (tickets for children

*continued on Page 2*



FAAGC's 2003-2005 Executive Board takes time for a group portrait at the 13th Annual Gala on September 13, 2003. (Front, l-r): Alan Geoghegan, Grace Collins, Jojo Goyeneche. (Back, l-r): Marj Peña, Rex Santos, Amy Charles, George McNulty, Julieta Iglesias, Dan Adcock, Merlyn Bajamunde, Charles Goyeneche, Rudy Dizon.



Members of the 2003 edition of the Columbia Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe pause to pose after their performances at the last gala. (Front, l-r): Raquel Bagnal, Jasper Lim, Aileen Alon. (Back, l-r): Imelda Go, Florence DeGuzman, Cecille Wessinger, Cecille Geoghegan, Marianne Magapan, Tessie Kenerson (dance troupe director).

*The President's Corner* by Grace Collins  
**HOLIDAY GREETINGS**

With the Christmas holidays around the corner, I would like to take time now to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I hope that everyone will join us in celebrating the holidays during our upcoming annual Christmas party.

I would like to emphasize again the urgency for member participation, especially the younger generation. As we continue as an Association we must pass down our heritage and culture to our younger folk. So please consider becoming more active in our activities and projects.

I am confident with the New Year approaching that the Fil-Am will have another successful year. I look forward to a prosperous year with the help of the officers and members.

I would like to thank all the people, in advance, that are involved in the Christmas party. You know who you are.

Peace to everyone!!

*Grace Collins*

**FAAGC Explores Plans To Bring NY Cultural Ensemble to SC**

FAAGC First Vice-President Alan Geoghegan is currently exploring the possibility of bringing a Philippine indigenous dance, music, and martial arts ensemble to the Carolinas sometime in the spring.

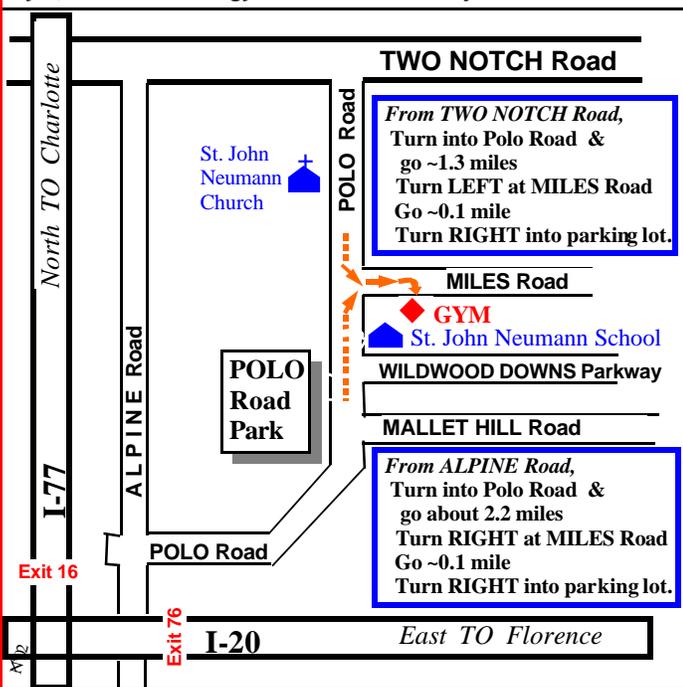
The New York-based *Kinding Sindaw*, whose name means Dance of Light, incorporates a broad repertory of dance and music dramas from several epic myths and legends of the Maranao, T'boli, Yakan,

Higaoonon, Tausug, Bagobo, Tiruray, Manobo, Mandaya, Iranun, Talaandig, Samal, Igorot, and other Philippine indigenous tribes. The troupe was founded in 1992 by Artistic Director Potri Ranka Manis, the daughter of a Maranao sultan from Mindanao, a true modern-day princess. Recently, *Kinding Sindaw* completed a one-week workshop residency at Kennesaw State

*(continued on Page 6)*

**FIL-AM CHRISTMAS PARTY Venue:**

Generalized map (NOT to scale) to the St. John Neumann School Gym; Entrance to the gym is on MILES Road just off POLO Road.



**SCHOLARSHIP**  
*(continued from Page 1)*

The deadline for next year's scholarship applications is **April 12, 2004**. Application forms will be available from the Scholarship committee and will also be online at [www.faagc.org](http://www.faagc.org).

For more information, contact **Peter Liunoras** (699-1214; e-mail: [pliunora@rvh.richland2.org](mailto:pliunora@rvh.richland2.org)) or **Nieves McNulty** (781-9509; e-mail: [nmcnulty@colacoll.edu](mailto:nmcnulty@colacoll.edu)). ❖

**Christmas Party**  
*(continued from Page 1)*

6-12 are \$5 each; children under 6 are free). FAAGC requests that tickets be paid for at least three days in advance so it can finalize details with the caterer. Also, to help defray expenses, each family is requested to bring a 2- or 3-liter bottle of soda.

A 50/50 raffle will be conducted during the party for the benefit of the Fil-Am Scholarship Fund. According to raffle coordinator Charles Goyeneche, half of the total proceeds from the one-dollar-a-ticket raffle sales will be awarded to the lucky winner.

Parents who are bringing their children (*and they should since this is a fun-for-the-whole-family affair*) are requested to bring a wrapped present (*just ONE each, please*) for each child to be placed under the Christmas tree for distribution by a certain jolly good fellow in red during the party. Each present should be clearly and **LEGIBLY** marked with the child's **FULL NAME**.

FAAGC officers and interested members will be setting up for the party starting at 9 a.m. in St. John Neumann School gymnasium and if any of you have any Filipiniana decor (like *parols*) that you wish to display for the public, feel free to stop by and add to our Fil-Am decor.

We sincerely hope you will join us, Saturday, December 20th, for a festive evening of fun, food and fellowship. ❖

**How To Reach Us**

FAAGC

P.O. Box 24112  
 Columbia, SC 29224

[www.FilAmSC.org](http://www.FilAmSC.org)  
[www.FAAGC.org](http://www.FAAGC.org)

e-mail: [faagc@hotmail.com](mailto:faagc@hotmail.com),  
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*The Official Newsletter of the*  
**Filipino-American**  
**Association of Greater Columbia, SC**  
 P.O. Box 24112  
 Columbia, SC 29224

The *Fil-Am Bulletin* is one vehicle of the Association to achieve its objectives and maintain regular communications with its members and interested parties. Contributions of articles (*as well as financial donations*) are most welcome; contact the Editor for more details.

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## Motions & transitions

### WELCOME New Members

★ **ZENY LAZARO** of Columbia, SC. A longtime area resident, she has recently rejoined the Association to "meet other Filipinos" and is interested in singing and prayer group. Originally from España, Manila, she works at the Thomas Cooper Library at USC.

★ **RUPERTO & NANCY MANANKIL, JR.** of Columbia, SC.

★ **JAMES & BETH MORRIS** of Sumter, SC. A one-year resident in the state, Beth is originally from Rizal, Kalinga. A registered nurse, she is interested in ethnic and contemporary dancing, food preparation, decorating and prayer group. James is U.S. Army retiree. ❖

### ~Congratulations~

➤ to **Ronnie & Tammy Collins** on the birth of their daughter **Emilie Paige** on October 19, 2003. Born at the Lexington Medical Center, Emilie weighed 7.7 pounds and was 20.5 inches long. She is a granddaughter of FAAGC president Grace Collins. ❖

### New Graduate

 **AMANDA GOYENECHÉ** will graduate in December ahead of her class at Hartsville High School. She has been accepted at Coker College where she will enroll in January 2004. She was chosen to play in the South Carolina Volleyball All-Star tournament held at Lander University in Greenwood on December 6. She will also play volleyball at Coker College. She is the youngest daughter of Charles & Bev Goyeneche of Hartsville, SC. ❖

### Come Back Soon

✈ FAAGC extends its thanks and best wishes to sustaining charter members **TONY & TESSIE DeCASTRO** on their recent move to Texas. Dr. Tessie DeCastro served as an Executive Board Member in 1992 and First Vice-President in 2001-2003. Actively involved in and very supportive of Fil-Am activities, they promised to continue supporting FAAGC despite their distance. ❖

### SC Fil-Am Student Wins in Jeopardy!

A sixth grader at Westview Middle School, Fil-Am **RANZ ERRAZO** appeared recently as a contestant on the popular TV game show *Jeopardy!* and won \$11,000. Ranz applied online, was accepted as a contestant, and auditioned in Atlanta in April. He then traveled to Sony Studios in Culver City, CA. The show he was on was recorded on August 26 and aired on September 25 on NBC during *Jeopardy!*'s "Back to School" week. Ranz is the son of Sonny & Debbie Errazo of Goose Creek, SC. ❖

### Just A Reminder

**Membership renewal for the Association Year 2003-04 is now due for many members. Please check the mailing address label on Page 6 of this newsletter — if there are three asterisks (\*\*\*) on the line above your name, then your membership has expired or will expire soon.**

**Your membership renewal and prompt payment of membership dues are crucial to the continued operations and success of the FAAGC.**

Please complete the enclosed renewal form and send your membership dues as soon as possible. If there are membership renewal questions, contact **Alan Geoghegan** (787-5255) or **Lily Iglesias** (736-0749). ❖

## The Philippine Embassy in Washington, DC

by Imelda Go

[Note: Many thanks go to Grace Divina V.S. Valera-Jaramillo, Cultural Attaché of the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines, who provided the information regarding the Embassy's *Filipino-American Heritage Month* activities.]

Our nation's capital is a most exciting place to visit. There is something that can surely please everyone — art, science, culture, nature, museums, historical places, monuments, and the list goes on. The United States' seats of executive (White House), legislative (the Capitol), and judicial (the U.S. Supreme Court) power are also prominent symbols in the city.

The presence of foreign nations' embassies is immediately evident along what is

known as *Embassy Row*, a stretch of Massachusetts Avenue. There are more than 170 foreign embassies in Washington, DC, and 45 of them, including that of the Philippines at 1600 Massachusetts Ave., are located on *Embassy Row*. Next in line is a stretch along New Hampshire Avenue with 12 embassies.

The diplomatic offices of the Embassy of the Republic of the Philippines (<http://www.philippineembassy-usa.org>) are located in the embassy's chancery, an elegant building whose construction started in 1991 and finished in 1993. It is on a trapezoidal lot and is bordered by 17<sup>th</sup>, Bataan, and N

(continued on Page 5)

### Balikbayan Notes

#### SAME TIME NEXT YEAR

by Imelda Go

If you grew up in the Philippines and you're like me, you're always excited about visiting the Philippines. I relish planning the trip. Time goes by in terms of how many more months or weeks there are before the trip. I'm always on the alert for that perfect gift ("pasalubong") item for family and friends there. For a trip I so eagerly anticipate, I ironically almost even dread going there because I know how sad I'll be when it's time to come back to the U.S. But I am so grateful for every single opportunity I have to visit the Philippines.

I was in the Philippines from mid-December 2002 till mid-January 2003 and like other trips, it was everything I expected. There's the food and eating is potentially a treat every single time. In the Philippines, people can tend to eat five times a day (breakfast, morning snack/*merienda*, lunch, afternoon snack/*merienda*, dinner). I could easily find most of the Philippine delicacies and specialties I was craving for. For example, I ate mangoes to my heart's content. The mango is the Philip-

pine's national fruit and the Philippine mango is, without any doubt, one of the world's best mango varieties for its flavor and texture.

There's the shopping. There are export overrun shops/outlets that sell excess goods manufactured in the Philippines but are for export to other countries. One also has to persevere in examining clothing among export overruns. The western-sized clothes are often too big for the petite sizes required for the Philippine market. However, it's so very nice to find U.S. designer label clothes at bargain Philippine prices. You can even nab a great fall jacket or winter coat deal in a country as warm as the Philippines.

The Philippines boasts the longest Christmas season in the world. That is why I love to go visit during the Christmas season. It is obviously the most festive time of the year there with so many family reunions, parties, gatherings, and celebrations. It is also not as hot then as other times of the year.

I thoroughly enjoy all my  
(continued on Page 5)

I am very honored to be with you this evening. I have been here with you before at your annual galas for several years, enjoying the evening's program while sitting amongst you. When Grace Collins asked me to speak, my immediate reaction was, why me? There are more important people to address this distinguished gathering. She was persistent, so here I am.

### Columbia Internationals

It has been a blessing and honor for me to get to know several of you over the years through, and because of the Columbia International Festival. Ever since we started the Columbia International Festival at the State Fairgrounds, the Filipino community of greater Columbia has become a major part of it. The Festival is the state's largest international event and was started in the summer of 1996, when the Olympics came to Atlanta.

The **Fil-Am Association of Greater Columbia** has been well represented on the Festival Committee, through the national exhibits, in the international food court, cultural presentations, international fashion show and pretty much everything we have done at the festival. I am very grateful to the Filipino-American community for all your support for the Columbia International Festival, and what the festival does for our communities and the state.

Before I go any further, let me back track and comment on my interactions with the Filipino community here in Columbia. Like many of you, I came to the United States as an international student at USC in September of 1976. Guess who I met while I was there? You guessed it! It was Dr. Noel Alon and Dr. Nieves McNulty. We were all very young and good looking at that time, and I won't make any comments on how we look now. It is really wonderful to be able to see, once in a while, some of the people you've met and known for more than 25 years, because we continue to live and work in the same city.

## FIL-AMS AS PART OF AMERICA

by Dr. Raj Aluri

**[ Editor's Note:** The following article is the complete text of the speech given by Dr. Raj Aluri who was the guest speaker during the Columbia Fil-Am 13th Annual Gala & 10th Induction Ball on September 13, 2003.

Dr. Aluri is the founding director of the Columbia International Festival, which has become an annual event since its organization in 1996. He also founded International Friendship Ministries in 1981 to serve the international student community in the United States.]

### A Country of Immigrants

We live in a great country which gives us the opportunities to get an education, develop professionally, start our own businesses and make a very good living. America has always been a great country because immigrants from all over the world — those adventurous, pioneering, and hard working people — could come to start a new life. The initial migration to this country came from Europe, then from Africa, then from south of the border and now it is coming mostly from Asia.

Nearly 40 million people living in this country are first generation immigrants like most of us here. That makes us one in 8 or roughly about 15%. The 2000 census documents a 69% growth of the Asian population in the United States in the last ten years, up to over 12 million people. The Chinese are the largest single national-origin group, now about 2.7 million, and nearly a quarter of the Asian total. They are followed by Filipinos (you maintained about a 20% share), now 2.4 million.

As we know, the migration of people from the Philippines came in various stages. There is evidence that Filipinos came to America in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries as seamen during the 250 years of the Manila Galeon Trade. In 1763 Filipino seamen established a settlement in the United States, in what is now known as Louisiana.

*Filipino-Americans have more than 400 years of history in America. You have been a part of America's joy, America's grief and everything that is American.*

### Fil-Ams & American Joy

Let me mention the names of some Filipino-Americans who

symbolize American Joy: The 2001 Miss America was Miss **Angela Perez Baraquio**. She was also Miss Hawaii. She was crowned as *Miss America* at the 80<sup>th</sup> annual Miss America Pageant in late 2000. Angela was a 5<sup>th</sup> grade school teacher in Hawaii; her parents immigrated from the Philippines. Much closer to home, **Miss Vanessa Minnillo**, who was crowned *Miss South Carolina Teen USA*, was also crowned *Miss Teen USA* in August of 1998. It was a great accomplishment for Filipino-Americans from South Carolina.

U.S. Olympic gold medal champion **Victoria Manalo Draves** was the first U.S. woman to win two Olympic gold medals in one Olympics. She won in both the platform and springboard diving events in London in 1948. **Tai Babilonia** was the gold medalist for ice skating during the 1979 Olympics. And we have the California inventor of the modern Yo-Yo in 1928 — **Pedro Flores**.

### Fil-Ams & American Grief

Filipino-Americans also shared in America's war on terrorism and America's grief when our soldiers were taken as prisoners or killed in action. We saw the faces of Filipino-Americans on TV or in the newspapers because of their bravery. **Joseph Hudson**, from El Paso, Texas, was captured by Iraqi forces in March and held as a prisoner of war in Iraq and was released on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

When a U.S. spy plane was forced to land on China's Hainan Island in the South China Sea in April 2001, **Ramon Mercado**, who was born in the Philippines and raised in California was one of the 24 Americans (crew of the

Navy EP-3 surveillance plane) who were taken into custody and detained for 11 days while the U.S. and China were at a diplomatic impasse. Another Filipino American, Marine Sgt. **Jesse Nathaniel Aliganga**, 21, was killed by a car bomb explosion along with 11 fellow Americans as he guarded the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya on August 7, 1998.

*We share everything that is American -- American joys and successes and American sacrifices and griefs. That is all part of being American. Filipino-Americans are everything that is American.*

### Fil-Ams & Sports

We all know sports is a major part of the American pastime and an industry in itself. **Pancho Villa** (*Editor's Note:* born Francisco Guilledo in Iloilo; came to the U.S. in May, 1921, first fight in 1922, elected to the Ring Boxing Hall of Fame in 1961 and International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1994) was the World Flyweight Boxing Champion in 1924. **Bobby Balcena** played major league baseball for the Cincinnati Reds in 1956. **Roman Gabriel** played American football as All-Pro quarterback for the Los Angeles Rams and Philadelphia Eagles. **Benny Agbayani** played baseball for the New York Mets Colorado Rockies and Boston Red Sox from the late 1990s to 2002.

### Columbia Fil-Am Awardees

The *Columbia International Festival Committee* also recognized four of our own local Filipino-Americans for their contributions to our community and building a better America and a better world. Dr. **Francisco Sy** was given the *International Professional of the Year Award* in 1997. Dr. **Noel Alon** was given the *1998 International Volunteer of the Year Award* for all his behind the scenes hard work in bettering our communities. Dr. **Nieves McNulty** was named the *2001 International Professional of the Year*. Finally, this past April, your incoming president for the Fil-Am Association, our own **Grace Collins**, received the *2002 In-*

## FIL-AMS AS PART OF AMERICA

(continued from Page 4)

ternational Volunteer of the Year Award, for all her tireless and countless hours she spends in volunteering not only for the Filipino community, for the International Festival and also to the community at large.

These four represent you. I have been in Columbia for the past 27 years. I cannot think of any other, for a lack of a better word, ethnic or cultural association, more active, more organized and more involved in the community as the **Filipino American Association of Greater Columbia**. Tonight's gathering is a testimony of your strength and your importance to our city and the state.

### Giving Something Back

Life has not always been easy for the first generation immigrants. Our fathers and forefathers have paid a great price, endured great difficulties, persevered great injustices and discrimination and racial hatred. That was the past. We have come a long way. But, we can all say that there is no better place on this earth for us to live than the land of immigrants, the United States of America. Let us continue to do our part in building a better Columbia, a better South Carolina, a better America and a better world for our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Finally, let us be seen by our fellow-Americans as people who give something back to their communities rather than being seen as people who are into themselves, pursuing their own American dreams and not caring for the communities we live in. There have been incidences in this country where we were not treated right because sometimes we were not doing the right things to or in our communities.

Here is my advice to all of us. *Let us give something back to our communities* which give us the jobs, hire us as medical professionals, engineers, computer programmers or where we start and grow

our businesses.

We can be volunteers, we can donate money to needs in our communities, or we can offer our professional services to the poor and needy. In this way, we receive the good will of the community we live in. Let me give an example from a story I read in the newspaper either today or yesterday. An advertising agency worked 24 hours straight as *pro bono* in making promotional brochures for several nonprofit agencies. How about if a Filipino-American business or an Indian-American business did something like that? Goodwill gestures like this will go a long way in building better community relations between the foreign-born and the locals.

Finally, let me conclude with this from the Bible. The Bible says that it is better to give than to receive. We receive so much from this country, let us continue to give something in return to this country and its communities.

Thank you and God bless you all. ❖

## SAME TIME NEXT YEAR

(continued from Page 3)

trips to the Philippines. I see so many happy faces in the airport full of *balikbayan* folks (those who live overseas and have gone back to visit the Philippines) and overseas contract workers (OCWs) making their way back home for a visit. The OCW phenomenon has been going on for many years and economists acknowledge the valuable contribution to the Philippine economy of OCWs' foreign currency remittances to their families in the Philippines.

On January 1, 2000 I was in Manila's Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA). I was not so ready to fly back to the U.S. and I was very sad. I enjoyed the previous night's Y2K celebrations with family so much that I was drowning in self-pity as my trip came to an end. Then I saw an OCW who was old enough to be my father and he was crying. He was crying very hard. I didn't know why he

## The Philippine Embassy (continued from Page 3)

Streets, and Massachusetts Avenue. The name Bataan connotes the *Battle of Bataan* in the Philippines during World War II. The fall of Bataan led to the infamous *Death March* where thousands of American soldiers died of hunger and intense heat during a forced march.

In October 2003, the Embassy hosted its annual *Embassy Friday Night Series* in celebration of *Filipino-American Heritage Month*. Performances were held in the Embassy's Romulo Hall named after Carlos P. Romulo, a Filipino statesman who was the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1949 and a Pulitzer Prize winner for correspondence in 1942.

This year's performances included poetry, *rondalla* (string band) music, dramatic readings, the *angklung* bamboo orchestra, operatic arias, and a violin and piano concert. In addition, the Advent Capelle Choir had performances in the Kennedy Center and other venues in the Wash-

ington, DC, area. The choir consists of 17 men and women from Davao City, Philippines, and uses music and choreography to illuminate Philippine history.

On October 18, 2003, the Embassy organized a wreath-laying ceremony at the William Atkinson Jones Memorial in Warsaw, Virginia. The event coincided with President George Bush's visit to the Philippines on the same date. The late Congressman William Atkinson Jones, known as the "Hero of Philippine Independence," was the author of the *Philippine Independence Bill of 1916*. Several bridges, avenues, and towns throughout the Philippines bear his name.

The Jones Memorial, designed by noted Spanish sculptor Don Mariano Benillure, was a gift of the Philippine Government and People (including Filipino school children who collected pennies as their contribution) to the town of Warsaw in honor of its famous citizen. Dedicated on June 20, 1926, the landmark is in the churchyard of St. John's Episcopal Church and is a symbol of the long-standing friendship between the two countries.

A wreath-laying ceremony was followed by a short cultural program that included a fashion show of Philippine national costumes, the Philippines' national dance (*tinikling* or bamboo dance) performed by the members of the Montgomery County Filipino-American Association. Consul Quintana delivered book donations from former Philippine President Fidel V. Ramos to the Richmond County Museum. Donations and pledges for the restoration of the Memorial by the Fil-Am communities in the Metropolitan Washington, DC, area were also given to the town of Warsaw.

Reference:

*Embassy Row Tour*. Retrieved October 20, 2003, from the Embassy.org: A resource of and for Washington, D.C. foreign embassy community. Web site: [http://www.embassy.org/embassy\\_row/](http://www.embassy.org/embassy_row/) ❖

was crying, but I was convinced he was sadder than I was. I learned something important then. What makes any nation great is its people and the sacrifices by Filipino OCWs count towards that greatness.

As we pulled up to NAIA early in 2003, I saw another visit come to an end. I fought the usual sadness and consoled myself that there will be another visit. I dragged my heels into the airport and lined up to check-in. I eventually made my way to my seat in the plane. I was still a little sad, but as I psyched up for the long flight back to the U.S.A., I pulled out a notebook and started making notes and plans for my next visit — gifts for family, people and places to see, favorite foods to eat, and things to do in the Philippines. Next thing I knew I was smiling again. ❖

## FILIPINO — AMERICAN Association of Greater Columbia CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**N December 20, 2003** (Saturday; 5:00 p.m.)

**K Columbia Fil-Am Annual Christmas Party**

**K** St. John Neumann School Gymnasium  
721 Polo Road, Columbia, SC 29223

**N January 11, 2004** (Sunday; 4:00 p.m.)

**K FAAGC Executive Board Meeting**

**K** Jojo & Eugenia Goyeneche's Residence  
1 Polo Hill Court, Columbia, SC 29223

**N January 18, 2004** (Sunday; 2:00 p.m.)

**K Fil-Am General Membership Meeting & Potluck Get-Together**

**K** Ridge View High School  
4801 Hardscrabble Road, Columbia, SC 29229

**N April 3-4, 2004** (Saturday-Sunday)

**K Columbia International Festival**

**K** SC State Fairgrounds  
1200 Rosewood Drive, Columbia, SC 29201

**N April 11, 2004** (Sunday; 2:00 p.m.)

**K Columbia Fil-Am Annual Easter Picnic**

**K** Sesquicentennial Park  
9564 Two Notch Road, Columbia, SC 29223

**Mark Your Calendars Now!**

### Cultural Ensemble *(continued from Page 2)*

University in Georgia and sold-out performances at Kenesaw-Atlanta venues.

Alan enjoins all area Fil-Ams to "please support FAAGC's efforts and attend our membership meeting on January 18th at Ridge View High School to get more details of what *Kindling Sindaw* can offer to our community and to discuss how we will bring them here." If you have any ideas about this initiative, e-mail Alan at: [alan@medianetwork.ws](mailto:alan@medianetwork.ws). More information about the troupe may be obtained online at [www.kindlingsindaw.org](http://www.kindlingsindaw.org).

#### T'boli Crafts

In a related development, in late November, Alan Geoghegan remitted to a T'boli cultural group a second payment for a shipment of traditional T'boli items that he assisted in selling in South Carolina to directly benefit the tribe.

He thanks, Polly Pearson of the Fil-Am Store, in Sumter, Conscious Creations in West Columbia, Merlyn Bajamunde and others for displaying and/or buying the items. Alan notes "in this way, we at FAAGC are playing a small though signifi-

cant part in helping traditional cultures, while showcasing their arts, culture and traditional items to an American audience."

As a rejoinder to the remittance, Maria Wanan, cultural director of the Helobung Cultural Troupe Cooperative of Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, sent the following e-mail to Alan:

"Tell the stores and individuals who sold the items, *maraming salamat*. I will send you the T'nalak cloth book "*Dream Weavers*" [in which I] and other members of the group served as consultants and researchers. This might help in selling our T'boli traditional cloth, "T'nalak." I am pleased that you have assisted us in establishing a partnership in selling T'boli arts and crafts. We will be doing a school sustainability project by training parents and pupils and teachers on quality production "in the traditional manner." I will send some good items by January 2004. We established a School of Indigenous Knowledge and Tradition. We are planning to do the networking advocacy with help from the Internet. I gave a letter to former Lake Sebu Vice Mayor Bao Baay for the amount you sent for the T'boli Museum. Thank you again and Merry Christmas." ♦

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#### Reminder:

The annual Columbia Fil-Am Christmas Party will be held on **Saturday, December 20, 2003** at the **St. John Neumann School gym**.

**Have a Happy & Safe HOLIDAY SEASON!**