

Ang MaNggagamot



The Official Newsletter of the Philippine Minnesotan Medical Association

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PMMA Spring Meet and Greet



By Dr. Eleanor Bucu

The PMMA had another first in May! It hosted its first virtual Spring Social/Meet and Greet.

The purpose of this Meet and Greet was to get to know Filipino physicians who are new in MN – starting a practice, in training, looking for positions or retired and eager to share a passion.

We had an impressive group that joined seasoned members on May 5, 2021. Here is a list of physicians (in no particular order) to look out for at the next PMMA event.

ED AND RUPA AUSTRIA

Ed and Rupa are both originally from Kansas. They graduated from the University of Kansas and came to Minnesota to pursue specialty training – Ed in Emergency Medicine at Regions and Rupa in PM&R at the University of



Snapshot of the 2021 PMMA Spring Meet and Greet

L-R, T-B: Edgar and Rupa Austria, Jet Luna, Jonj Sembrano, Paul Soriano, Ben Fermin, Ed Santos, Simon Kung, Noe Mateo, Puring Lucas, Irineo Matias, Amy Ellingson, Cherry Bucu, Jose & Rachel Santos. Raymond & Janina Go, Gamaliel Ferrer, Ramces Francisco

Minnesota. Ed currently practices at Fairview Ridges Emergency Department in Burnsville and Rupa at the Pain Clinic at the Fairview Specialty Care in Burnsville.

JET LUNA

Jet graduated from the University of Santo Tomas. He did his Orthopedic residency at the Philippine General Hospital. He did fellowships in Orthopedic Oncology and Spine. He initially worked doing Spine and Joint Orthopedics in Iowa. Currently he is an Orthopedic Staff physician at the Minneapolis VA doing joint reconstruction and orthopedic cancer surgery.

PAUL SORIANO

Paul did his undergraduate studies at UP Manila. He is a 2018 graduate of the Ateneo School of Medicine. He is currently applying for residency positions.

GAMALIEL FERRER

Gam did his undergraduate and medical school studies at De La Salle

University. He is currently doing his Family Practice residency at Centra Care.

RAYMOND AND JANINA GO

Raymond and Janina went to medical school at the University of Santo Tomas. They did their Internal Medicine residency at the University of Hawaii. Currently, Raymond is completing his Infectious Disease Fellowship and Jenina, her Nephrology fellowship, both at the Mayo Clinic. They look forward to returning to Hawaii after their fellowships.

JONATHAN OLIVAS

Jonathan finished medical school at Mua Nevis. He completed a Psychiatry residency at Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine. He is currently practicing Psychiatry at Sanford in Fargo, North Dakota.

RAMCES FRANCISCO

Ramces went to medical school at the University of the Philippines and did

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Message from the President

Hello PMMA family and friends! I hope everyone is having a great summer, as we now gradually emerge from more than a year-long lockdown. I imagine this is probably how Noah and his passengers must have felt when they finally disembarked from their ark, to once again step on dry land.

I write this after just having participated in the Philippine Independence Day online celebration hosted by the FCO (Filipino Community Organizations). It is a great reminder of how much of what we now enjoy (and likely take for granted) we owe to men and women of previous generations who gave their all for their country at her time of greatest need. Last month, the UPAM (University of the Philippines Alumni in Minnesota) conducted an educational forum where present-days descendants of Bataan Death March (and other WW2 events) heroes shared their families' stories. I was one of the storytellers, and for this issue I would like to share with you my grandfather's story. I had a tough time choosing which story to share, as I had two relatives who survived the march, both of whose stories were very compelling in my admittedly biased opinion. In the future, I might still get to share my uncle's story.

This is the story of my lolo, my mother's father – Tristan Nubla MD (Captain, USAFFE Medic Corps) - born in 1914 to the Filipina wife of a rich Chinese trader, and thus to what our pure-blooded Chinese relatives refer to as the illegitimate side of the family.

He finished Medicine at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila. He was conscripted to the Medic Corps of the United States Armed Forces in the Far East, and, not long after, found himself fighting for dear life in Bataan when the Japanese

invaded. As we know, they eventually surrendered, and thus began what is now referred to as the Bataan Death March.

Malnourished, dehydrated, exhausted, and baking in the intense and stifling heat of the Philippine summer, my lolo did not think he could go any farther. He heard that Japanese death squads were at the tail of each marching unit, all too eager to decapitate or impale any stragglers unable to keep up. He turned to the person marching beside him - and I've no idea whether they were buddies or just happened to be next to each other - and told him that he would not be able to make it; and, if the other person survived, if he could find his wife and children, let them know he loved them and was thinking of them when he met his death.

If we were this other person, how would we have replied? I think most of us would say something like "Yes, I promise to look for them", perhaps even look after them. And maybe mutter "I'll pray for your soul."

But this person said "No, I won't do that.", followed by "I won't let you die here." He then did the unthinkable and lifted my grandfather onto his back, and carried him the rest of the way, however long there still was to go. Maybe they were truly close and he loved my grandfather so. Or maybe he didn't know him at all, that he was just sick of seeing so much death that he couldn't bear to let another person die if he could help it. Or maybe he had a death wish himself and he knew that carrying my grandfather made it more likely for both of them to perish.

I've often wondered how different our family tree would look like if not for that supreme act of love and selflessness that this person showed my grandfather. My grandparents ended up having a brood of 6. At

the time of Bataan, there were only 2, my mother being less than a year old. Two thirds of our clan would not be around today. My grandfather would not have built a hospital in Caloocan City in 1964, the year my mother graduated from medical school, and of which he served as Medical Director until his passing in 1982. It would have been unlikely that my mother would herself have become a doctor.

My mom recalls that when they were children, they would visit this person's family, and would spend Sunday afternoons with them, the kids playing in the fields, the wives puttering in the kitchen, and the two grown men sitting next to each other on the porch, looking out and seemingly without even exchanging words between them. Not that there was any need to. In their silence, there was already much that is said.

And the only other thing my mother remembers is that the person's name was Paraiso.

Have a fun-filled and illness-free summer everyone, and we all look forward to seeing you at our Annual Clinical Conference on August 21, 2021 (Saturday) at the Philippine Center of Minnesota in Maplewood!



Jonathan N. Sembrano
Jonj Sembrano

Meet and Greet

his Orthopedic residency at the Philippine General Hospital. He completed multiple fellowships in Orthopedics in the US, Australia, and Italy. He initially worked in Virginia and is currently an Orthopedic staff physician at the Minneapolis VA doing shoulder and joint surgery.

JOSE AND RACHEL SANTOS

Jamil and Rachel finished medical school at the University of the East and the University of the Philippines, respectively. Jamil did his residency in PM&R at the University of Miami and is currently working at Summit Orthopedics in PM&R/pain.

IRINEO MATIAS

Dr. Matias graduated from the University of the Philippines College of Medicine in 1966. He practiced General Surgery in Michigan and retired in 2010. He is a long-time friend of Dr. Puring Lucas. Dr. Matias spends his retirement painting. Do not miss his article and some of his paintings in this issue.

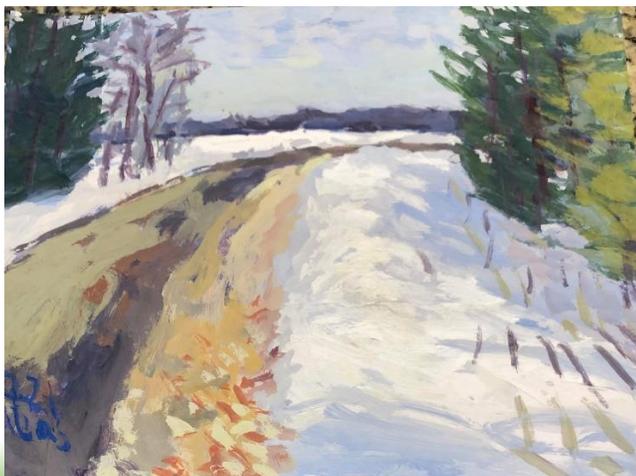
The officers and members of the PMMA enjoyed meeting all these physicians. We look forward to seeing and learning more about them in the coming months.

A Message from Across the Lake By Dr. Irineo Matias



First of all, I am happy and honored to become a member of the Philippine-Minnesotan Medical Association. I would like to thank Dr. Purisimo Lucas for nominating me. I have been living in Michigan ever since I came to the USA in 1966, right after graduation from the medical school at the University of the Philippines.

My life in the US was not extraordinary. I had my internship at Grace Hospital in Detroit and had my General Surgery Residency at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Michigan. After finishing my training, I moved to Gaylord, Michigan with my family in 1973. I practiced medicine 30 years and retired in 2010.



Reflection of Sunshine on the Lake. Watercolor. 2021

About 40 years ago, while I was still in practice, I started a hobby of painting landscapes during my free time. Now that I am retired, it consumes most of my time. The first thing I want to say about painting as an art is that it is a work in progress of a lifetime. It is a slow learning process and there are no shortcuts. It never ends for as long as you live.

When I was a little boy, I watched somebody painting with watercolor. It remained in my memory and since then I have always wanted to paint. Painting as an art, reflects your personal way of looking, of doing, and of thinking, about the things we deal with in life.

I was born in the Barrio of Ilocos Norte and so I love to paint trees, fields of corn, clouds, sky, sunlight, etc. My style of painting is impressionistic but done loosely. I like to do things the quickest way creatively henceforth loosely. I don't go for minute details. However one wants to paint, it should follow the rules of color, values (the lightness or darkness of things), and composition. I paint mostly on location (plain air) which is the best way to learn by studying nature.

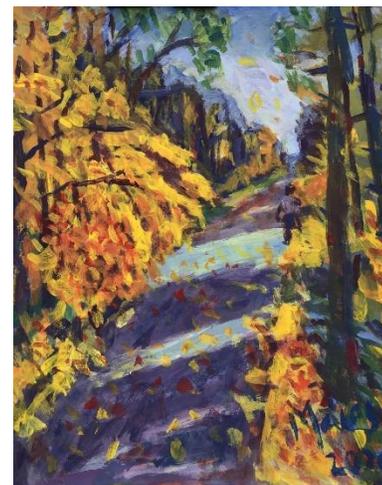
I paint almost every day during summer, spring, or fall. In the winter, when the temperature is above 30F, I

am out painting the snowbank, shadows of trees on the snow, etc.

Since I started painting, I have almost a thousand collections- sold some, gave away some.

Looking at them, I could see the progress through the years. Progress is not achieved in a straight line upwards. Sometimes you reach a plateau and not making any progress at all but keep on painting and then all of a sudden something clicks - you advance, then you get surprised. You read books, magazines, attend workshops, enter into competitions and talk with other artists.

There are sacrifices and rewards in painting. It feels good when you come up with a good one. When it is not so good, don't despair. Keep on painting!



Fall in Gaylord, Michigan, Watercolor, 2020

Interested in submitting an article or a letter to the editor? Care to share a story? Email Jonj Sembrano at sembro01@umn.edu

PMMA PICKS

A new segment of Ang MaNggagamot where we list PMMA Officers' and Board Members' recommendations.

This installment is on Podcast/Radio Program/Audiobooks. What is your recommendation? Let us know by emailing sembr011@umn.edu!

<i>Jonj</i>	Revisionist History – podcast by Malcolm Gladwell. Each episode is a real gem!
<i>Janice</i>	Catholic Answers podcast
<i>Noe</i>	Books: Tipping Point by Malcolm Gladwell; Blue Zones by Dan Buettner (also see my book review on this in the 2 nd edition of Ang MaNggagamot newsletter.
<i>Cherry</i>	App: Formed - The Catholic Faith. On demand.
<i>Amy</i>	The Silent Patient
<i>Laura</i>	Hallmark movies – Angel (husband) loves them.
<i>Sigrid</i>	The Chemist by Stephenie Meyer, The Silent Patient by Alex Michaelides, The Last Sword Maker by Brian Nelson
<i>Ed</i>	Dr. Death podcast – based on the true-to-life story of a neurosurgeon who was able to slip through the cracks in the system and continue practicing despite leaving a long trail of maimed and dead patients.

Announcement: PMMA Clinical Conference 2021 goes hybrid

After last year's first ever virtual PMMA Clinical Conference, we will be holding our 2021 Annual Clinical Conference as a hybrid (in-person and with option to join online) event. It will be held on **August 21, 2021 (Saturday) at the PCM** (Philippine Center of Minnesota) in Maplewood, MN, and we would like to invite everyone to mark your calendars and make plans on attending, as the planning committee has come up with a truly remarkable lineup for this year.

Doors open at 12 noon (bring your own lunch), with opportunities for socializing and to visit our pharmacy booths. Conference starts at 1 pm, with lectures on exciting medical topics from distinguished speakers:

- Pediatric Scoliosis - Dr. Walter Truong (Orthopedic Surgery - Gillette Children's Hospital).
- Movement Disorders – Dr. Kristine Domingo (Neurology – University of Minnesota).
- Ketamine for Depression – Dr. Simon Kung (Psychiatry – Mayo Clinic).
- COVID Updates – Dr. Noe Mateo (Infectious Disease – Sanford Health).
- Speaking Systemic Racism: Connection with Patients Through History and Lived Experience – Dr. Aaron Corfield (Podiatry and DEI [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion] Committee Chair – University of Minnesota).

The CME lectures will be followed by the PMMA Members Business Meeting (5-6pm), where we will also be electing new officers and board members. Capping off the event

would be delicious catered Filipino buffet food with wine selections.

Fees are as follows:

Annual membership dues:

- \$75 physician in active practice,
- \$50 semi-retired,
- \$25 fully retired and associate members,
- \$0 trainees (student/resident/fellow).

Registration Fee (in-person or virtual):

- Free with annual membership,
- \$25 (non-members / RN's / allied health professionals).

Note: non-member physician registration would follow the same fee schedule as for annual dues.

Dinner: \$20 (adult), \$10 (12-18 yrs old), free (0-11 yrs old).

Everyone is encouraged to register in advance, either online (phmma.org) or by sending checks (payable to PMMA) to Dr. Noe Mateo (PMMA Treasurer) to the following address: 8134 Somerset Rd, Woodbury, MN 55125. On-site payment is also accepted (plan to arrive early), but need to RSVP (for head count, including dinner) by August 14, 2021.

See you all there!

In the Spotlight

Get to know two of our very own PMMA members/officers! Be featured by emailing sembr001@umn.edu.

Dr. Marion Raffles

Specialization: Hematology/Med Oncology

Current City and State: Alexandria, MN

Where are you from in the Philippines? Las Pinas, Metro Manila

Family? Spouse: Jun; Kids: Isabella 15 and Alex 12

Describe Minnesota in one word: Nice

Favorite Minnesotan activity? Skiing during the winter/swimming in the lakes during the summer

Where do you tour your friends/family visiting MN? Mall of America, lakes, anywhere there is snow

Any advice to other Pinoys living in MN? Invest in good quality winter wardrobe



Dr. Raffles and her wacky family

What is your favorite Filipino food? Hard to pick but probably sauteed bittermelon (ampalaya)

Retire in warm sunny Philippines or in the four-season MN? divide time between Philippines and US

What's your inspiration or life mantra? Be in the moment, don't sweat the small stuff

Any pet peeves? The 'h' added to so many Filipino names like Jhun for Jun

Interests? Hobbies? Sports? Reading books, travelling, being outdoors as much as I can

What kind of music do you listen to? My daughter's playlist on spotify

If you did not have to worry about money or time, and were not working in the healthcare field, what would you be doing as a vocation? If I did not get married, I probably would have been a nun



Pre-COVID family reunion in Palawan

Dr. Arianne Agdamag

Specialization: Cardiology

Current City and State: Minneapolis, MN

Where are you from in the Philippines? QC but parents are from Vigan, Ilocos Sur

What is your fondest PMMA memory? The holiday party from 2019

How would you describe Minnesota in one word? Snowy

What's your favorite Minnesotan activity? Going to the Landscape Arboretum

Where do you tour your friends/family visiting MN? Landscape Arboretum, Lake of the Isles, Como Park Conservatory

What makes MN unique? How people embrace the cold

Any advice to other Pinoys living in MN? Phil oriental has a carindera style place (Pinoy Fusion) that serves Filipino food every weekend. :)

What is your favorite Filipino food? Sinigang

What is your favorite tourist destination in the Philippines? Boracay

Retire in warm sunny Philippines or in the four-season MN? Warm sunny Philippines

What's your inspiration or life mantra? Have courage and be kind.

What would you do if you won the lottery? Donate some of it, invest some of it, travel the world

Any pet peeves? Cluttered spaces

Interests? Hobbies? Sports? Playing the piano, badminton, Zumba, barre

What kind of music do you listen to? Pop, bossa nova, classical music

If you did not have to worry about money or time, and were not working in the healthcare field, what would you be doing as a vocation? Teaching



Exploring the Como Park Conservatory with my sister

Community Corner

Filipino community events
By Dr. Purisimo Lucas



CSFA

Philippine Week Activities (Facebook): April 23 - May 2, 2021
April 25 - An hour-long beautiful cultural presentation of singing and dancing hosted by Ligaya Carlos. There were greetings direct from the Philippines and there were also local businesses run by Filipinos who had sponsorship in the 1 hour presentation. The next day was another fabulous program of Filipino dances hosted by Jose Rivera and daughter, Jacinta. The activities were all spectacular.

PCM

The Philippine Center of Minnesota building had been beautifully renovated from first to third floor, with an inclined platform lift from the main entrance to second floor. The well-known 'Carinderia' was back last Sunday, April 18. The next was on May 2nd. It is planned to be held on a regular basis. Filipino vendors sell favorite food, like pancit, adobo, gulay, afritada, beef steak, and pastries like bibingka and leche flan. Pandemic rules followed strictly. Food is for pick-up only. There will be ushers to tour you around the building.

FCC

We just celebrated last April 25th, the Feast of Pedro Calungsod, the Patron Saint of Filipino Youth, at St. Jerome Church in Saint Paul celebrated by Fr. Vic Valencia. It was an in-person event.

FMA

A Debutante Memoir Video of past events is being prepared for viewing by the community sometime in May.

UPAM

Zoom presentation entitled, "Bataan Death March" held last May 23rd at 2 pm

CSFA - Cultural Society of Filipino Americans, PCM - Philippine Center of MN, SGM- Philippine Study Group of MN, FCC- Filipino Catholic Community, UPAM- University of the Philippines Alumni, Minnesota, FMA- Fil-Minnesotan Association, FRED - Filipino Renaissance for Educational Development, UPAM – UP Alumni in Minnesota

PMMA Trivia Time

Who had the most bruises during the "Paint Ball" Tournament at Sugar Lake Lodge in our annual PMMA Conference several years back?

- Dan Trajano
- Joe Kalugdan
- Noe Mateo
- David Ong
- Rodel Bucu
- All of the above

Answer: F. All of the above

In Memoriam

With heartfelt sympathy, PMMA would like to extend our condolences and prayers to the family of Dr. Joseph Kalugdan, our previous President, on the passing of his mom, Shirley Faustino Kalugdan on April 16, 2021. May she rest in peace.

PMMA would also like to extend condolences, sympathy, and prayers to the family of Rene Barrozo who passed away on April 20th. He had been a dear and loyal friend of our association. He was very generous and kind in giving help in our social events, specially his DJ services for so many years. A memorial service was held at the Holy Cross Catholic Church in Minneapolis with family and close friends. May he rest in peace.

PMMA Officers and Board Members

President Jonathan 'Jonj' Sembrano

Vice President Simon Kung

Secretary Janice Go

Treasurer Noe Mateo

Ex-Oficio Joseph 'Joe' Kalugdan

Advisor Purisimo 'Puring' Lucas

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Edward 'Ed' Santos

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Ang MaNggagamot

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