



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 15, Number 1 ★

P.O. Box 24112, Columbia, SC 29224 ★

★ Summer 2005 ★

FAAGC General Membership Meeting Set for August 21

The first general membership meeting to be conducted by the new Executive Board will be held on Sunday, August 21, 2005 at the residence of Noel & Helen Alon (2045 Cheltenham Lane, Columbia, SC 29223), starting at 3:00 p.m.

All members are enjoined to attend and present ideas on the future of the Association. Plans for upcoming activities and proposed projects will be discussed during the meeting. The meeting is also a good time to meet and get acquainted with the new Executive Board and other members.

This is a POTLUCK get-together so please bring a 2-liter soda and a covered
(continued on Page 2)

You are cordially invited to the
FILIPINO - AMERICAN
Association of Greater Columbia's
*Fifteenth Annual Gala and
Eleventh Induction Ball*

Dinner & Dance with **The Stargazer Band**
and **Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe Performance**

**Saturday
Sept. 10, 2005
6 PM - 12MN**

Donation:
\$45 adult; \$30 student
(proceeds will
benefit Fil-Am
community projects)

**Embassy Suites
200 Stoneridge Dr.
Columbia, SC 29210**

For reservations and more information, contact:
Alan Geoghegan (803) 787-6256 Alan Matienzo (803) 482-1073
Mario Viray (803) 899-5285 Odessa Brinkman (803) 216-7577
Grace Collins (803) 782-0952 Polly Pearson (803) 406-0586
www.FilAmSC.org

Columbia Fil-Am To Hold Annual Gala on September 10

The Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia will celebrate its **15th Annual Gala and 11th Induction Ball** on **September 10, 2005** at **Embassy Suites** from 6:00 p.m. to midnight. The venue is at 200 Stoneridge Drive, Columbia, SC 29210 (just off Greystone Blvd. & I-126, near the Riverbanks Zoo).

The gala is the Association's main fundraiser and benefits FAAGC's community-oriented programs such as a youth scholarship fund, our cultural dance troupe, and other public displays of *Filipiniana*. Proceeds also go towards a building fund for a Filipino-American Community Cultural Center in the Midlands.

The formal affair (*coat and tie or barong required*) includes a sit-down dinner (*London broil/chicken combination*) and an entertainment program featuring Philippine folk and contemporary dances. **The Stargazer Band**, a Filipino-American ensemble from Augusta, GA, will provide music for the listening and dancing pleasure of the attendees. A very special guest,

(continued on Page 3)

Multicultural President Heads New FAAGC Executive Board

Multiculturalism and new faces characterize the new Executive Board of the Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia. Alan Geoghegan was elected FAAGC President for the term 2005-2007 at the elections conducted during the annual Fil-Am spring picnic held at the Sesqui-centennial Park on March 27, 2005.

The 2005-07 Executive Board members is composed of a FAAGC pioneer mem-

ber (a continuous member since 1991 when the Association was formed), three officers from the 2003-05 Executive Board (two re-elected to the same positions, one elected to a new office), and eight first-time officers.

Here's a quick look at the leaders (*mostly in their own words*) who will guide the Columbia Fil-Am Association for the next two years.

(continued on Page 6)



Left photo: The 2005-07 FAAGC Executive Board: (front row, from left) Alan Matienzo, Alan Geoghegan, Galen Manapat, Keith Seymour; (middle row, from left) Bernadette Yavis, Cecille Wessinger, Edith Alston, Odessa Brinkman, Precy Walker; (top row, from left) Dan Adcock, George McNulty, Mario Viray. Right photo: (from left) Merlyn Bajamunde, Alan Matienzo, Polly Pearson and Cecille Geoghegan pose in front of the award-winning Philippine sari-sari (variety) store display during the 10th Annual Columbia International Festival held on April 30-May 1, 2005 at the SC State Fairgrounds.



The President's Corner by Alan Geoghegan
THE FIL-AM COMMUNITY NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

I am humbled and moved to be elected FAAGC President for the next two years. When I relocated to Columbia, SC, from the Philippines in 1997, I made a special pact with myself to make sure I could find ways to share even a glimpse of what those five years meant living and traveling in the country of my native birth. Little did I know that this would lead to six years of service with FAAGC.

FAAGC serves as the main contact point for Filipino-Americans and other interested parties in our area. We have used the media more effectively to inform the community of our events and people are getting to know about us more and more. Last year

we collaborated on a joint cultural presentation on Hilton Head Island during Philippine Independence Day, and for the past two years we were invited to Charlotte to represent the Philippines at the city's 5th and 6th Annual *Asian Festivals*. This year, at the *Columbia International Festival*, our cultural booth was awarded best-of-display, and our members were featured both on *WIS-TV* and *The State* newspaper.

In addition to collaborative events, some FAAGC members have been actively involved in other groups, including a Fil-Am Youth Club set up at Ridgeview High School specifically to help raise money for the FAAGC scholarship initiative, and the USC Filipino-American Student Association (FASA). The dancers in our cultural dance troupe continue to modify themselves in numbers and

scope, though our invitations to perform have not slowed down. Additionally, our goal of establishing a Fil-Am cultural community center in the Midlands remains steadfast and one day, our modular *bahay kubo* (native Philippine hut) just might have a permanent home.

Once again, we gather together to celebrate our **15th Annual Gala**, our largest annual gathering and fundraiser. Please support our Fil-Am community by selling tickets, placing ads, and soliciting benefactors, sponsors and donors. We intend to continue planning engaging projects to inspire both young and old, which are all in some way or another connected with this magical island group called the Philippines.

Mabuhay and Salamat,

A Message From The Past President . . . by Grace Collins
Some Fil-Am Accomplishments

As I left the president's post in the FAAGC, I was wondering, "What have I accomplished within the two years that I have been presiding?" Then it occurred to me that I did in fact accomplished every goal I set.

One goal was to increase membership and it has indeed gone up. I also wanted to improve our relationship among other Fil-Am groups and I feel it has been strengthened. Finally,

FAAGC was exposed more often on television, newspaper and a national magazine in the last couple of years and we should be very proud that we have gained such exposure.

To the outgoing officers, you've got great talents and ideas and it had been an honor to work with the best. I thank you for your help and support.

Congrats to FAAGC for being #1 at the 2005 *Columbia* (continued on Page 5)

Membership Meeting
 (continued from Page 1)

dish enough for your family and others (*white rice and gulay will be provided by the hosts*). Those who want to beat the summer heat by splashing in the swimming pool after the meeting should bring their swimwear and towels.

This is a good and fun time to meet and interact with all the new and old FAAGC officers and members

For further information and directions to the venue, please contact any officer listed here or Helen Alon at 738-0372. ❖

How To Reach Us

FAAGC

**P.O. Box 24112
 Columbia, SC 29224**

**www.FilAmSC.org
 www.FAAGC.org**

e-mail: **faagc@hotmail.com,**
 or **FilAmSC@yahoo.com**

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2005-2007 EXECUTIVE BOARD

President

**ALAN GEOGHEGAN
 (803) 787-5255**

First Vice-President

**ALAN MATIENZO
 (803) 462-1073**

Second Vice-President

**MARIO VIRAY
 (803) 699-9265**

Secretary

**ODESSA BRINKMAN
 (803) 794-3669**

Assistant Secretary

**EDITH ALSTON
 (803) 783-8715**

Treasurer

**GEORGE McNULTY
 (803) 781-9509**

Assistant Treasurer

**DANIEL ADCOCK
 (803) 926-5163**

Executive Board Members:

**GALEN MANAPAT
 (803) 808-1783**

**KEITH SEYMOUR
 (803) 252-6942**

**PRECY WALKER
 (843) 788-7101**

**CECILLE WESSINGER
 (803) 794-3664**

**BERNADETTE YAVIS
 (803) 691-1630**

FAAGC Annual Financial Report

(Fiscal Year 2004-05: July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005; *unaudited*)
 (As reported by George McNulty, FAAGC Treasurer)

OPENING FUND BALANCES

as of July 1, 2004:

General Fund	\$ 6,022.82
Building Fund	12,055.30
Scholarship Fund	1,746.50
Dance Troupe	500.00
Petty Cash	283.80
Total	\$ 20,608.42

CLOSING FUND BALANCES

as of June 30, 2005:

General Fund	\$ 8,531.19
Building Fund	12,837.30
Scholarship Fund	2,357.50
Dance Troupe Fund	664.14
Petty Cash	880.00
Total	\$ 25,270.13

2004-05

Net Income :

Membership Dues	\$ 1,287.00
14th Annual Gala	2,372.48
Scholarship Fund	611.00
Building Fund	782.00
International Festival	880.07
Dance Troupe	164.14
Christmas Party	142.49
Misc. Donation	0.20
Banking:	
Interest less Fees	18.69
Total Income	\$ 6,258.07

2004-05

Net Operating Expenses:

Newsletter/Website/ Directory/Postage	\$ 859.29
Representation at Fil-Am Events	97.50
Meeting Supplies	128.00
Easter Picnic	144.18
P.O. Box	38.00
Insurance	201.00
Total Expenses	\$ (1,596.36)

FY 2004-05 Net Annual Proceeds \$ 4,661.71

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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.

NOEL ALON

Editor

Tel. (803) 738-0372

e-mail: **FilAmSC@hotmail.com**

Helen Alon

Production/Circulation Coordinator

e-mail: **HELENQDA@yahoo.com**

Motions & transitions

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

★ **LARRY DURHAM** of Columbia, SC. A 7year area resident who likes golf, he wants to "be a part to promote the growth of ideas and goals" of the Association. A U.S. Postal Service supervisor, he would like FAAGC "members to get the word out about various activities and support the Association for what it does for the community."

★ **ROMMEL & DEBRA LOPEZ** of Columbia, SC. Originally from Manila, Rommel is a U.S. Army veteran. He owns and operates General Service and Repairs, a general handyman and home improvement/repair/maintenance busi-

ness. A native of Williamston, SC, Debra works in logistics with CSI. They have joined FAAGC to "help them get established here" and help "keep our heritage and traditions." Residing in Columbia for about a year now, they have three children: Demitri, 16; Isidra, 13; and Lexi, 4.

★ **DAVID & MARISSA LOPEZ MASSIE** of Columbia, SC. A three-year area resident, Marissa hails from Parañaque, Metro Manila and likes ethnic and contemporary dancing. He is from Columbia, SC. They both work at Blue Cross/Blue Shield. ❖

CONDOLENCES

† Our condolences to the families of:

- **Linda & Marie Brown** on the death of their mother in Manila on June 20;
- **Joy Clark** on the deaths of her father in January and her mother in March;
- **Gemma Geslani** on the death of her father in the Philippines last March;
- **Virgie Jeffcoat** on the recent death of her father in the Philippines;

➤ **Mario Viray** on the death of his father Leonardo in Pampanga, Philippines on May 25 ;

➤ any other FAAGC members who recently have lost loved ones but for which we had no details as of press time.

[FAAGC requests members with a death in the family to contact Spiritual Affair Committee co-chairs **Merlyn Bajamunde** (422-1524) or **Tessie Kenerson** (699-1178) ASAP so proper arrangements, if needed, can be made by the Association.] ❖

~ Congratulations ~

➤ to **David & Marissa Lopez Massie** on their marriage on June 25, 2005. The Columbia Fil-Am Dance Troupe performed *tinikling* and *pandango* during the wedding reception.

➤ to **Charles & Bev Goyeneche** on the birth of their first grandchild, Branson John Diven, born on February 2, 2005 to Rosie & JD Diven.

➤ to **Dr. Remie Morales Sarmiento** on her 70th birthday on June 16, 2005. A FAAGC organizer and charter member, she has been a sustaining benefactor even after she moved to San Antonio, Texas. ❖

15th Annual Gala (continued from Page 1)

the Most Reverend **Robert J. Baker**, S.T.D., the Bishop of the Charleston Diocese which includes all of South Carolina, will give the pre-meal blessing and invocation.

Despite venue price increase, tickets to the gala are still \$45 per person, \$30 for full-time students (*same as last year*). For purposes of hotel and seating arrangements, we would like all guests to reserve their tickets by contacting one of the officers by **August 27th. It is possible that due to demand, only a very limited number of tickets, if any, may be available at the door.** For a small fee, babysitting services will be available on-site for children from the age of 2-10.

Ten guest suites have been reserved at Embassy Suites for FAAGC members and out-of-town guests. The discounted rate per room is \$109 (king size) or \$119 (double) and **must be reserved by August 20th.** Breakfast is included. **Call Embassy Suites reservations at (803) 252-8700** and specify that your reservation is coinciding with the Columbia Filipino-American Gala.

Gala Souvenir Program

Since the gala is the major annual fund-raising event of the Association, we are also

soliciting all kinds of contribution in the forms of advertisements and donations. We request that all ads and contributions for being a sponsor, patron or donor be received no later than **August 22** to be included in the gala souvenir program.

Benefactors, sponsors, donors or advertisers who wish to donate or submit an ad in our **Souvenir Gala Program** should contact any officer for a donor/packet to be returned to us by **August 22**, or e-mail **Odess Brinkmann** (dobrink@bellsouth.net) and request a donor/ad packet to be e-mailed to you.

For tickets or more information about the Fil-Am Gala, please contact **Alan Geoghegan** (803) 787-5255, **Odess Brinkmann** (803) 210-7577, **Grace Collins** (803) 782-6952, or **Polly Pearson** in Sumter (803) 494-5613, or any other officer listed here.

For hotel directions and updated information, visit the Columbia Fil-Am website at www.FilAmSC.org.

Incidentally, photos taken during the 14th Gala last year can still be viewed online at

www.devcomm.com/filam_gala_2004.htm ❖

Thanks from the FAAGC Exhibit Coordinator

The success of the Philippine display at the 2005 *Columbia International Festival* was due to FAAGC incoming and outgoing officers and members who found time in their busy schedules to offer their services. It would have not been possible without the hard work and dedication of so many people involved. Indeed, it was team effort that lead us to the coveted first prize for the most unique booth display among the 50 plus countries who participated.

This year's theme depicted the Philippine *sari-sari* (variety) store that included a tricycle which gained the most attention from everyone. Looking at guests admiring and saying their ah's & oh's was a joy to behold. It was also gratifying because our time and effort were not in vain.

To those people who were involved in building, setting up, manning and taking down the *sari-sari* store, especially to our beloved treasurer, George McNulty, who tirelessly spends time to make sure everything was in good working condition -- I personally extend my sincerest thanks to each and every one of you.

The FAAGC food booth was equally successful when it comes to proceeds. Thanks to the master chief cook, Edith Alston and her able assistants namely, Odessa Brinkman, Cecille Wessinger,

Bernadette Yavis, Keith Seymour, the two Filipino airmen from Shaw Air Force & others.

I also extend my heartfelt thanks to the following people who manned the FAAGC food & display booths: Marj Pena, Mary Collins, Judy Salvador, Pete Liunoras, & Fred Balangue who stayed for after care. On that note, I salute everyone who was involved in the recent FAAGC participation in the International Festival of Greater Columbia.

I would also like to thank Cecille Geoghegan, Alan Matienzo, Helen Alon, Precy Walker, David Brinkman, and everybody else I may not have mentioned by name. Last but not least thanks to **Lowell & Joan Bartley** who graciously shared their tricycle to FAAGC for booth display.

My involvement with FAAGC has been very enjoyable and at the same time exhilarating in a way because it puts me in touch with the Fil-Am community and in a small way made a difference in the process.

In conclusion, to borrow from President JFK's quote: "Ask not what the Association can do for you, but ask what you can do for the Association." Together we make a difference indeed if we share whatever small time and service we can offer to the community.

— **Merlyn Bajamunde**



A★C★H★I★E★V★E★M★E★N★T★S★ G★A★L★L★O★R★E

Although the 2005-2006 school year is just around the corner, for posterity sake and historical record, we would be remiss if we don't carry on our annual tradition of recognizing high-achieving children (*and adults too*) in the extended Fil-Am community during the immediate past school year (2004-2005). Belated this may be, **CONGRATULATIONS** to the following graduates and awardees — and all others not mentioned here due to our lack of detailed information on their individual achievements — despite repeated telephone, e-mail, mailed and verbal reminders, only a few families submitted the needed information and/or photos.

THE GRADUATES

✉ **SOLOMON FLORES BASCONCILLO III** graduated on May 7, 2005 from the USC College of Arts & Sciences with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He served as President (2002-03) and Social Vice-President (2001-02, 2003-05) of the USC Filipino-American Student Association (FASA). ♦

✉ **PHILIP JEREMY PINEDA CAOILE** graduated on May 7, 2005 from the USC College of Arts & Sciences with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He served as the 2002-04 Advertising Vice-President and 2004-05 Historian of FASA. ♦

✉ **PIERCE EMBREE COOK III** graduated on May 7, 2005 from the University of South Carolina (USC) College of Arts & Sciences with a Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Media Arts. He served as the 2000-01 Advertising Vice-President of FASA. He is the son of Joellen Cook of Columbia, SC. ♦

✉ **CATHERINE PACITA GOYENECHÉ** graduated on May 7, 2005



from the USC College of Arts & Sciences with a B.A. in Psychology. On the *Dean's List* while in college, she is now pursuing graduate studies in clinical psychology at The Citadel. She is the second daughter of Charles & Bev Goyeneche of Hartsville, SC.

✉ **JESSICA CABADING CUARESMA** graduated on May 6, 2005 from the USC College of Mass Communications and Information Studies with a B.A. in Public Relations with a minor in Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management. She is now employed as a Recruiting Assistant at DP Professionals in Columbia. One of the pioneer dancers of the *Columbia Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe*, she is the second daughter of Manny & Leah Cuaresma of Columbia, SC. ♦

✉ **ALFRED JOSEPH MCNULTY** graduated on May 6, 2005 from the USC College of Engineering and Information Technology with a Bachelor of Science in Engineering, with a major in Computer Engineering. He is now working assisting the computer systems manager at the USC Mathematics Department. A pioneer dancer of the *Columbia Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe*, a 2004-05 *FAAGC Service Award* recipient and a FASA member, he is the eldest son of George & Nieves McNulty of Columbia, SC. ♦

✉ **JAMES T. PINEDA** graduated on May 15, 2005 from Duke University with a Bachelor of Arts degree. A former *Columbia Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe* performer, he is a son of Jaime & Alice Pineda of Columbia, SC. ♦

✉ **JUSTIN ANDERSON** graduated from Ridge View High School on May 25, 2005. A member of the RVHS AJROTC Blazer Battalion, he also served as secretary of the RVHS Fil-Am Youth Club. He plans to attend Midlands Tech. A *Columbia Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe* performer and a 2004-05 *FAAGC Service Award* recipient, he is the son of Leroy & Lulu Anderson of Columbia, SC. ♦

✉ **SAMARIA DELFINADO** graduated from Ridge View High School on May 25, 2005. The first president of the RVHS Fil-Am Youth Club, she received a full scholarship from the University of South Carolina. ♦

THE GRADUATES-TO-BE

✱ **JD SIAZON** had an exhibition of his art work at the East Hall Gallery of Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York on April 4-8, 2005. A graduate student, he was project coordinator of the *Neighborhood Gallery Project* of Pratt Collaboratives in which Pratt student art work was displayed at community businesses. He was also nominated to receive the *Collegiate All-American Scholar Award*. He is the son of Pete & Laura Siazon of Columbia, SC. ♦

★ **AMANDA GOYENECHÉ** was on the *Dean's List* at Coker College during the past school year. A junior majoring in elementary education, she was also a Coker Ambassador. She is the youngest daughter of Charles & Bev Goyeneche of Hartsville, SC. ♦

★ **AJ ALON** completed his sophomore year at USC's South Carolina Honors College on the *President's List* and *Dean's List* for the 2004-05 fall and spring semesters, respectively. He took a Maymester course in Costa Rica and did a 10-week summer internship at the NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, Ohio, under the NASA Undergraduate Student Research Program (NASA-USRP).

As the 2004-05 president of the Filipino American Student Association (FASA), he led the organization to present *FASA Night: A*

Philippine Cultural Showcase, a first-of-its-kind show at USC. He has been re-elected FASA president for 2005-06.

A 10-year *Columbia Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe* pioneer performer and a 2004-05 *FAAGC Service Award* recipient, he is the son of Noel & Helen Alon of Columbia, SC. ♦

✉ **JUDITH CHRISTA PEÑA**



finished her freshman year at the USC Honors College in the *Dean's*

Honor List. A FASA member, a former *Columbia Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe* performer and a 2004-05 *FAAGC Service Award* recipient, she is the older daughter of Edsel & Marj Peña of Columbia, SC. ♦

★ **AILEEN LEIGH ALON** completed 11th grade in the *Horizon* and the *Palmetto Center for the Arts* (PCA) magnet programs at Richland Northeast HS on the 4.0 honor roll and with some awards. Inducted into the National Honor Society and ranked third overall among all juniors, she received the *Washington & Lee Book Award* and served as a Junior Marshall during RNHS graduation.

Elected 2004-05 historian and photographer of the National Art Honor Society (NAHS), she received a "*Special Arts Faculty Award* in recognition of outstanding achievement in visual arts" and a third place TAG (talented & gifted) art citation during the juried *RNHS Spring Art Show*. She was elected NAHS co-president for 2005-2006.

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Aileen also got the *Horizon Community Service Award* for her volunteer work at God's Storehouse, Fil-Am cultural activities, and other community events. She was a member of the Junior House of Representatives and the Model United Nations (which won its 16th consecutive first place award at the annual MUN conference in New York City). She was also the vice-president of the Spanish International Club.

A *Columbia Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe* performer since 1995 and a 2004-05 *FAAGC Service Award* recipient, she is the daughter of Noel & Helen Alon of Columbia, SC.

★ **FAY MANAPAT** finished 11th grade at White Knoll HS and is "waiting for her AP test results for possible college credit." She has qualified as a scuba diver, having paid for the lessons from her own earned money, and is applying that diving experience at Bethel Christian Camp in Gaston, SC, where she is a camp counselor. She is also qualifying to dive safely doing aquarium maintenance at the Riverbanks Zoo. She is the oldest daughter of Galen & Johanne Manapat of Lexington, SC.

★ **MARK VIRAY** is an active member of the Ridge View High School Fil-Am Youth Club. He plays in the RVHS Marching and Symphonic bands. He is also a member of RVHS Army JROTC Elite Raider Team. He is the older son of Mario & Wyda Viray of Columbia, SC.



★ **NIKKI SAREEN** finished 11th grade in the *Horizon* and the *Palmetto Center for the Arts* (PCA) magnet programs at Richland Northeast HS. A National Honors Society member, she served as a Junior Marshall during RNHS graduation. A member of the award-winning Model United Nations team, she received an outstanding delegate award at the University of Virginia MUN Conference and a verbal commendation at the University of Pennsylvania-MUN Conference. She has been elected MUN secretary and yearbook co-editor for 2005-06. She is a daughter of Van & Lina de la Cruz of Columbia, SC.

★ **MICHELLE ANNE PEÑA** finished the tenth grade at Irmo High School with honors. The first chair cellist for the South Carolina Youth Philharmonic Orchestra, she won first place in the orchestra's annual solo concerto competition and performed at the orchestra's Spring Concert and at the SC Music Educators Association's conference in Charleston, SC. She is also first cellist of the Irmo High School Honors Orchestra which was invited to the *Annual Salute to the Veterans of America* at the Lincoln Center in New York City in March 2005. She also performs with the Lexington/Richland District V Honors orchestra and cello choir.

Michelle represented Irmo HS at the Regional Orchestra and the All-State Orchestra at Furman University and placed second place in the statewide competition. She presented two recitals at the USC Recital Hall under the direction of Dr.

Robert Jesselson. She performed in a cello master class at the *Bernard Greenhouse Cello Festival* at the University of North Carolina - Greensboro. This summer she participated in an intensive cello program at the *Green Mountain Summer Music Festival* at the University of Vermont in Burlington.

She has been accepted to the *International Baccalaureate* (IB) program at Irmo HS for her junior year. She is the younger daughter of Edsel & Marj Peña of Columbia, SC.

★ **SHANNIN SCOTT** completed fourth grade at Hopkins Elementary School with a number of awards. On the "A/B" honor roll, she garnered awards for excellence in math (highest average), reading, writing, science, social studies, citizenship, good conduct, homework, and community service. Named "most enthusiastic and dependable" in art, she also received First Year Chorus, USC Honor Chorus, West African Drum Ensemble and Governor's Carolighting citations. She is the daughter of Sean & Anika Scott and a granddaughter of Edith Alston of Hopkins, SC.

★ **HECTOR CONRADO ALCANTARA** "graduated" from K-4 and was promoted to K-5 at the St. John Neumann Catholic School. He was first runner-up at the *Glamour Modeling Pageant* held at Embassy Suites in February. He is the son of Conrad & Rita Alcantara of Columbia, SC.

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Fil-Am Accomplishments

(continued from Page 2)

International Festival. We did it again. This is the second time that the FAAGC festival display won the first prize award. This year's theme was *sari-sari* (variety) store and tricycle (motorcab). The first time was in 1996 and the theme then was the *bahay kubo* (bamboo hut).

My deepest thanks to our chairperson **Merlyn Bajamunde**. Special thanks go to of **Lowell & Joan Bartley** of Laurens, SC, for lending us the tricycle (see photo at right).

I also want to thank the following people as well:

George & Nieves McNulty, Polly Person, Marj & Edsel Pena, Annie Cooley, Judy Salvador, Pete Liunoras, Cecil & Alan Geoghegan, Fred Balangue, Alan Matienzo, Precy Walker, Helen & Noel Alon, Nick Roberts, Keith Seymour, Lauren Collins, Edith Alston, Asia Paguntalan, Cecil Wessinger, Jeremy Brinkman, Odess & David Brinkman, Mary Barradas, Jeannie & Andy Blakeley, and Lu Bajamunde.



P.S. The prize is a complimentary two-night/three-day stay at SpringHill Suites by Marriott in Orlando, FL. Those interested in joining the Fil-Am group going to Orlando should contact **Grace Collins (782-6952)** as soon as possible.

ALAN GEORGHEGAN

President

Multicultural by blood and in outlook, Alan G. is a U.S. citizen of French, Irish and British descent, born in the Philippines, educated in England and the U.S. and is a world traveler and worker. He has spent 15 years as a videographer, writer, editor, researcher and producer on a number of video and media projects in the Philippines, U.S., Europe, Africa and Mexico.

A liberal arts graduate of the State University of New York at Purchase, he operates MediaNetwork LLC, a video and web production company. A founding member of the SC Coalition for New South Carolinians and the South Carolina Traditional Arts Network, he is also the vice-president of the Ancient Order of Hibernians — St. Columba Division, SC.

First elected as a FAAGC Executive Board member in 2001, Alan G. was elected first vice president for 2003-05. He has been instrumental in getting publicity for the FAAGC locally and nationally, with newspaper and TV coverage of some Fil-Am activities and an article on FAAGC in the internationally circulated *Filipinas* Magazine.

Now as Association President, he would like FAAGC to:

(1) "continue to network, support, collaborate and grow along with the other Fil-Am, Asian, and multi-cultural organizations in the Southeast."

(2) "foster our Fil-Am Youth by improving and expanding scholarship initiative," and

(3) "renew our dedication to our dance troupe if numbers allow and if incentives are there to motivate them."

Regarding project or activities in the next two years, he would like FAAGC:

(1) to "seriously consider supporting a sister project in the Philippines, even at a small, manageable level, which will inspire us, and keep us close to our roots."

(2) to "consider cultural preservation or community development projects...and continue to be a leading cultural 'light'."

(3) to have "mechanisms to continue to attract new members and increase media presence."

To make the Association more vibrant and more effective, he thinks there should be:

(1) "more community involvement and more members' say in what goes on,"

(2) "continued participation from past officers and board members,"

(3) "more real Filipiniana when fostering cultural interpretations and exchanges."

Alan G. is married to the former Cecilia Sanchez from Mindanao whom he met while working in the Philippines. ❖

THE 2005-2007 FAAGC EXECUTIVE BOARD**ALAN MATIENZO**

First Vice President

Since joining last year, Alan M. has been very active in FAAGC affairs and has traveled to various places to help represent FAAGC in Fil-Am related events.

He would like FAAGC to "be an organization that continues to unite the Filipino and American communities while promoting the culture and lifestyle of the Philippines." He wants the Association to "continue to participate in functions that promote international flavor (i.e., festival, galas)" and "promote more the dance troupe" by involving it in more events.

Born in Charleston, SC, he graduated with a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Clemson University. He has been working as a civil engineer with the SC Department of Transportation in Beaufort, Hilton Head and Columbia. ❖

MARIO VIRAY

Second Vice President

Since arriving in the area a year ago, Mario and his family have attended most of FAAGC activities. Despite his "newness", he is more than willing to serve in the Executive Board.

As a FAAGC officer, he would like to "continue ethnic activities" and to promote "Filipino-American in the local community." He thinks "better communication among officers and members" is needed to help the Association achieve its objectives.

Born in San Fernando, Panganga, Philippines, he immigrated to the U.S. in 1977 and lived in Union City, CA. Since joining the U.S. Air Force in 1988, he has had duty assignments in Guam, Illinois, Arizona, Florida, Mississippi, Korea, Germany, and Saudi Arabia. With an A.A. (meteorology) degree from CCAF, he now works as a Lead Meteorologist at US-CENTAF supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom at Shaw AFB, SC. He was recently promoted to the rank of Master Sergeant in the USAF.

He and his wife Wyda have two sons: Mark, 15, and Joshua, 8. Wyda works at Ft. Jackson as a Human Resource Assistant at the 120th Reception Battalion personnel processing center. ❖

ODESSA BRINKMAN

Secretary

Originally from Itogon, Benguet, Odessa earned a B.S. Commerce (economics) degree from Saint Louis University (Baguio City) and an associate degree in computer technology from Midlands Tech. In the Columbia area for more than 10 years now, she works as a

works as a communications assistant at CSD.

Odessa wants the Association "to continue to strive to meet its goals" and "be able to increase its membership." She would like FAAGC to continue "international festival participation, the galas and perhaps form a committee that will conduct more fund-raising projects." It should also try "to get the members more involved — possibly through karaoke singing, dinner and dance with minimum charges, and other activities." She thinks that to be more effective, FAAGC needs to "reach out more to its members, by mail, phone calls, meetings, etc." and "welcome everyone's ideas and select the best ones that suit our goals."

She and husband David have a son, Jeremy, 5. ❖

GEORGE McNULTY

Treasurer

An active participant/supporter of the Association since its founding, George has been the FAAGC Treasurer since July 2001. He wants to "ensure the financial health of the Association and facilitate its cultural activities." He serves as faculty adviser to the Filipino-American Student Association (FASA) at USC.

A native Californian, he has a Ph.D. in mathematics from the University of California-Berkeley. A math professor at USC, he is married to past FAAGC president Nieves McNulty. They have two sons: Alfred and Michael. ❖

DAN ADCOCK

Assistant Treasurer

Dan is a veterinarian with a practice in West Columbia. Born in Alabama, he grew up in Louisiana and received his doctorate degree in veterinary medicine, with honors, from Louisiana State University (LSU).

He is married to the former Tess Lanuza from the Philippines. He notes, "I guess that makes me a half Filipino; so I'm here for her and to support our country, the Philippines."

"I will do my best in whichever way I can to support the Association," he adds. He was also the Assistant Treasurer for 2003-05. ❖

EDITH ALSTON

Assistant Secretary

A native of Masbate, who went to school at her hometown's Osmeña College, Edith has been in the U.S. for 35 years and in the Columbia area for 28 years. She is one of the sustaining charter members of FAAGC. She has also served as a FAAGC Executive Board Member in 1997-99 and Assistant Secretary in 1999-2001.

She would like FAAGC to "find more new members" and have activities like "garage sales and car washes to make more money for the building fund." She hopes officers and members can "be kind to each other and try to respect and help others" as well as "keep our culture, especially for our children and grandchildren — to let them who they are."

Edith works as a mental health specialist at the Bryan Psychiatric Hospital. She has two sons, Sean Mario Scott and Shannon Anthony Scott, and four grandchildren: Kris, 18; Shannin, 10; Shadé, 9; and Shaunques, 7. ❖

GALEN MANAPAT

Executive Board Member

Born in Manhattan, New York to a Filipino father and a German mother, Galen served in the U.S. Navy for three years. With an undergraduate degree from the local Columbia Bible College (now Columbia International College), he spent five years as a missionary with the Presbyterian Church in America / North Africa mission.

He works at the USC School of Medicine "keeping their air-conditioning going, and conditions safe" but he says he is "more excited about working as an apprentice for a group of businessmen out of Charlotte and the Upstate who are developing franchises. I do some promotions, and I'm also a talent scout with them."

He notes, "even though I'm not from the Philippines, I appreciate the way Filipino culture differs from American." He "wants to make some friends and get to know and talk to as many people as possible to 'get the pulse' of the group" so he can make suggestions to make FAAGC more vibrant and effective.

He met his wife Johanne in France. A French Canadian with a degree in cytology, she worked for the Canadian International Development Agency and helped establish the first cytology lab in Sousse, Tunisia. They have three daughters: Fay, 17; Christine, 12; and Melodie, 9. ❖

KEITH SEYMOUR

Executive Board Member

Born in Denver, Colorado, Keith lived in Virginia and England before his family settled in Columbia. He has a B.A. in Public Relations & Journalism from Benedict College and a paralegal certificate from South University. A freelance writer and media consultant, he is an advertising executive with *Carolina Panorama*, a prominent African-American targeted newspaper in the Midlands. He also serves as imaging specialist for a local law firm.

(continued on Page 7)

As Filipino-Americans, we draw from at least two cultural influences — Filipino and American. Our life in South Carolina and in the United States constantly reminds us of symbols of South Carolina (such as the palmetto tree) and the United States (such as the American flag). South Carolina's state flower and state bird are the Yellow Jessamine (*Gelsemium sempervirens*) and the Great Carolina Wren (*Thryothorus ludovicianus*), respectively. Here are the Philippine counterparts that remind us of our Philippine heritage.



The Philippines' National Flower and National Bird

by Imelda Go

vine/shrub that is used for jasmine tea and perfumes. It is also one of the three national flowers of Indonesia. *Sampaguita* has small white blossoms with a sweet fragrance. It is a symbol of purity, simplicity, humility, and strength. The plant does not have seeds and is propagated by cuttings.

Frank Murphy, the American Governor-General in the Philippines then, issued *Proclamation Number 652* on February 1, 1934. "Sentiment, likewise, has dictated in other countries the selection of national flowers either symbolical of certain national sentiments, or reminiscent of some important historical or traditional events. France has her *fleur-de-lis* and Japan her cherry blossom. In the same way the Philippines should have her national flower. ... considering its popularity, ornamental value, fragrance, and the role it

plays in the legends and traditions of the Filipino people, I hereby declare the *sampaguita* (*Jasminum sambac* [Linn.] Ait.) to be the national flower of the Philippine Islands."

The name *sampaguita* could have been derived from "*sumpa kita na di malilimutan*" (This literally means "I vow never to forget you" and was a parting vow between two legendary lovers), "*sampaga*" (a Tagalog word which means shrub or flower), and/or "*sambac*" (a Hindi word).

[Note: *Jasminum sambac* is commercially available in the U.S.]

NATIONAL BIRD

Eagles have a special place in many civilizations and countries. Considered a symbol of royal power and prestige, among other things, the eagle has been featured on coins, flags, and weaponry since ancient Egypt.

The Philippine Eagle (*Pithechophaga jefferyi*) was declared the National Bird effective July 4, 1995 via *Presidential Proclamation No. 615*. It is the largest eagle in the Philippines and is native to the islands of Luzon, Samar, Leyte, and Mindanao. It is the second largest eagle in the world next to the *Harpy Eagle*.

[Note: The eagle replaced the *maya* as the national bird. The *maya* is considered harmful because it feeds on rice grains in the farmlands.]

The raptor or bird of prey stands about a meter tall, has a wingspan of two meters, and preys on small mammals, fish,



and other birds. In 1896, English naturalist John Whitehead observed it eating monkeys and named it the *monkey-eating eagle*. Scientists later learned that its primary prey are flying lemurs (these are

not true lemurs, which would be primates) and flying squirrels. Hence, it was renamed the Philippine Eagle. Unlike most other eagles, the adult Philippine eagle has bluish eyes and has feathers around its head that can form a spiky head-dress when it is excited. Its estimated life span is 30-60 years.

The critically endangered eagle has been nicknamed *haribon*. This is a contraction of *haring ibon*, which means *king bird*. There are fewer than an estimated 200 birds in the wild. Unfortunately, it has a low reproductive rate of one offspring every two years. The Philippine Eagle Foundation also has a captive breeding program for it.

The *haribon* lives in rainforests and its survival is increasingly jeopardized due to habitat destruction (loss of territory, food, and nesting sites), wildlife trade, and illegal hunting/capture. It requires a large territory and the tallest trees in the rainforest canopy for nesting. It is prized as a trophy and as a captive in private collections and zoos.

NATIONAL FLOWER

Sampaguita (*Jasminum sambac*) is a variety of jasmine and is also known as the Arabian Jasmine. This is a woody

2005-2007 BOARD (continued from Page 6)

As a Peace Corps volunteer in 2001, Keith served as a business and youth development advisor to "Feed the Children - Philippines" in Bohol. He has been involved with FAAGC since joining in 2002 "to learn more about the Filipino people and culture."

As an Executive Board member, he hopes "to use his talents and skills in community and public relations to bring greater visibility to the organization, its programs and the Filipino culture." He would like to see FAAGC "obtain 501-c-3 status as a way of obtaining more funds" and have "more activities that attract youth participation."

A 3rd degree Knight of Columbus at St. Joseph Catholic Church, he is also involved in various other community and fundraising events, including several children's charities. He hopes to go to the Philippines soon to visit his host families and friends in Dumaguete City and Bohol.

PRECY WALKER Executive Board Member

Precy hails from Bogu, Cebu and attended the University of Visayas in Cebu City. Since her arrival in the U.S. ten years ago, she has been actively involved in FAAGC. She is a regular performer for the *Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe*. She has also been unselfishly willing to help other Fil-Ams. She would like to revitalize the cultural dance troupe.

Currently working at Ryan's, Precy is married to Charles Walker, a self-employed produce marketing consultant.

CECILLE WESSINGER Executive Board Member

Cecille lists Quezon City and Iloilo as her hometown and province. She has an agriculture degree from San Enrique Agricultural College and has also studied health science at Midlands Tech. She works at the Golden Choptix.

A performer for the *Columbia Fil-Am Cultural Dance Troupe*, she would like FAAGC to "continue its present functions and get-togethers" and be "more well-known and open to the public." She thinks aving "fun meetings [focused] on objectives to be discussed" can help the Association become more effective.

BERNADETTE YAVIS Executive Board Member

A two-year area resident, Bernadette came from Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija and studied tourism management at Sienna College. She works at AmeriSuites and Blue Cross/Blue Shield.

She says she'd do her best to help the Association. Even before becoming members, she and her family have participated actively in some FAAGC affairs. She is married to John Yavis; they have two children: Elaiza Leigh, 11, and Glaiza Glyde, 10.



The Fil-Am delegation, led by 2003-05 FAAGC President Grace Collins (fourth from right), poses with Columbia Mayor Bob Coble (fifth from left) during the 10th annual *Columbia International Gala* held on April 21, 2005.

FILIPINO—AMERICAN Association of Greater Columbia CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- * **August 21, 2005** (Sunday, 3:00 p.m.)
 - ▶ Fil-Am General Membership Meeting & "End of Summer" Get-Together
 - ◆ Alon Residence (Tel. 738-0372)
2045 Cheltenham Lane, Columbia, SC 29223
- * **September 10, 2005** (Saturday, 6:00 p.m.)
 - ▶ FAAGC Annual Gala
 - ◆ Embassy Suites Hotel (Tel. 252-8700)
200 Stoneridge Drive, Columbia, SC 29210
- * **December 10, 2005** (Saturday, 5:00 p.m.)
 - ▶ Columbia Fil-Am Annual Christmas Party
 - ◆ St. John Neumann School gymnasium
721 Polo Road, Columbia, SC 29223

Mark Your Calendars Now!



Members of the RVHS Fil-Am Youth Club take time to pose at the recent RVHS AJROTC Military Ball. (left to right): Suzanne Pondelicek, Mark Viray, Samaria Delfinado, Kevin Victoria, Mercedes Lennon, Justin Anderson, 1SG(R) Peter Liunoras (faculty adviser), Dale Elamparo, Cynthia Manning, Chris Elamparo, Marissa Manning & Marianne Magapan.

Since its formation in April 2004 under the direction of past FAAGC President Peter Liunoras, the Ridge View High School (RVHS) Fil-Am Youth Club has been instrumental in raising funds for the Columbia Fil-Am scholarship program. The club has conducted car washes with proceeds donated to the scholarship fund. Samaria Delfinado served as the club's first President for 2004-05; Chris Elamparo is the president for 2005-06.

In related news, 95% of the RVHS Fil-Am Youth Club is part of the Army JROTC program. The RVHS Army JROTC program has earned the title of Honor Unit with Distinction three consecutive times, and the U.S. Army has acknowledged RVHS as having one of the finest JROTC programs in the nation. The Ridge View JROTC has numerous alumni serving in all branches of the military throughout the world; three alumni were selected for Presidential Service under both the Clinton and Bush administrations.

The program recently celebrated its tenth year as the Blazer Battalion. Peter Liunoras has been serving as the assistant Army instructor of the unit since its formation. The battalion's color guard has also participated in the FAAGC annual galas since 2001. ❖



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FIL-AM BULLETIN

of the Filipino-American Association of Greater Columbia, SC

P.O. Box 24112, Columbia, SC 29224

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Summer 2005

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Volume 15, Number 1



Reminders:

- * FAAGC General Membership Meeting on Sunday, August 21, 2005 at the Alon Residence
- * FAAGC Annual Gala and Induction Ball will be held on Saturday, September 10, 2005 at the Embassy Suites Hotel