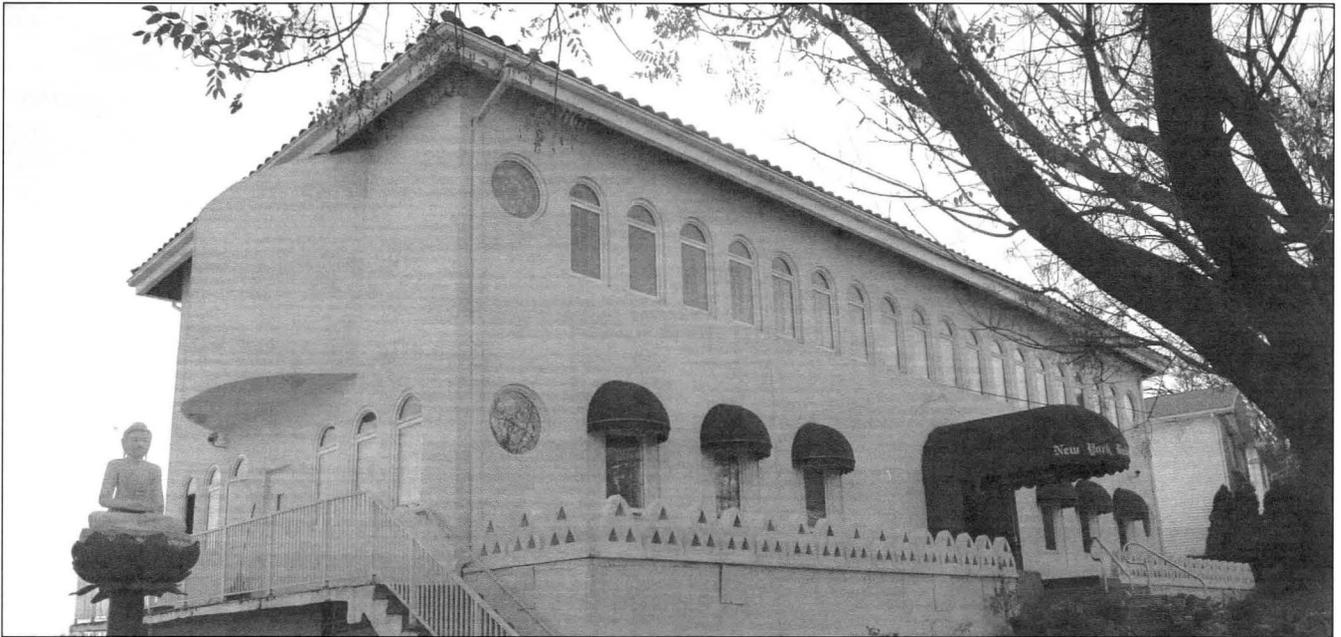


Welcome to the 21st Issue of our Newsletter



This monastery at 214-22 Spencer Avenue in Queens, New York serves Buddhists from Sri Lanka

A Temple Too Close To Home

Up a rise to a low hill on a dead end street, on a pedestal that flanks the entrance to the New York Buddhist Vihara, the Buddha sits serene on a bed of lotus leaves. Made of white marble, when the afternoon sun bathes it from behind, it glows, like lighted from within. Beside it, the “Vihara” (sanskrit for monastery) is a large, two-story, solid-looking cement structure. If not for the statue, it could easily be thought of as a school or a museum or a reception hall. But then, how to explain those three unusual bulbous shapes on the roof, topped by spires that look like communication or power transmission towers. Evidently, this is not your corner Buddhist monastery, the ones we are familiar with in Laos, which are called “wats”, and which need not be described here because they are all over that Buddhist kingdom during our times there.

When this Vihara was completed in 2001, we decided to give it a visit. As it happens, we live only three blocks away from it, on Spencer Avenue in this suburban neighborhood called Queens Village, in the borough of Queens, New York City. As I strolled up the hill, I surveyed the surroundings — over there, I thought, we could park the bus that we would charter. The exit from the nearby Grand Central Parkway provided easy access. There is ample parking space along several streets. And for those inclined to do so, they can skip across the Avenue and disappear into the woods to watch the ducks wading on a pond.

Inside the building, other conveniences began to come together. A spacious dining-kitchen area. A library. Even an elevator, tiny, but it's there to use if you don't want to trudge up the

winding staircase to the second floor. And there, to our pleasant amazement, was the best feature yet: the vast shrine hall, no pillars, golden sunlight streaming from rows of windows. A large gold-plated Buddha occupies one end, the floor around it a profuse collection of flowers, urns, small flags, fruits, statuettes. Perfect! we thought, for the baci welcome ceremony, able to contain as many as 100 people, seated on the bare, highly polished floor. You see, as hosts of the 2002 Mekong Circle reunion, we were scouting locations for the various activities. After the baci, we could bring up the food from the kitchen and everyone could eat, seated on the floor, as was customary in Laos (the customary round, rattan tables would have to be procured somehow).

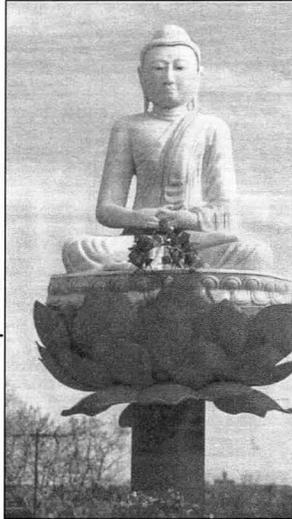
The head of the monastery, Venerable Kurunegoda Piyatissa Maha Thero's credentials are as lofty as he is short, standing barely five feet. Born in 1928 in Sri Lanka, ordained to the monkhood in 1941, he spent time doing missionary work in England before coming to New York in 1981. His first house of worship was a small apartment in Flushing, Queens. When he was appointed the President of the American-Sri Lanka Buddhist Association, Inc., he shouldered the enormous task of raising funds for the Queens Village site. Other exalted posts followed: President of Sri Lanka Sangha Council, Vice president of the World Sangha Council of North America, Executive Committee Member of the World Conference on Religion and Peace, and a Faculty Member of the New School in Manhattan. On the walls of the building hang photos of him with the Dalai Lama, with former U.S. President Bill and Hillary

Clinton. The guest book lists visitors from Texas and Kansas, from Dubai and Italy. We were told the Vihara served 500 Sri Lankan families from Queens who, like their Thai and Lao Buddhists, adhere to the conservative sect of Buddhism (as opposed to the more doctrinally innovative sects in Tibet, China, Korea and Japan). After the December 2004 Asian tsunami that killed some 230,000 coastal villagers in Thailand and Sri Lanka, the Vihara parked an 80-ft long steel shipping container on the street in front of the building. For days, people came and filled it with all sorts of relief goods. The library was turned into a phone banking relief operation.

When Venerable Thero visited Manila for a world Buddhist conference, he tells us a police motorcycle escort cleared the way for his car from the airport to the hotel. As to my request to use the monastery's facilities for our reunion, he said very politely that he will give it a thought and we should get back to him. We sweetened the request with an offer of not an insignificant cash donation and the information that among our Mekong Circle members are devout Lao and Thai Buddhists, and that the Filipino members, although mainly Catholics, had acquired an appreciation of Buddhism during their service in Laos. (Ultimately, we decided to use the Pennsylvania Hotel in midtown Manhattan).

The Buddhist rituals the Sri Lankan devotees practice in Queens Village are exactly those followed by the Lao in their village or city wats. The day in late October when we visited the Venerable Thero, multi-colored paper bunting festooned the front of the building. It was the occasion for "kathina puja", the day the faithful bring their donations of orange

robes and blankets for the seven resident monks. It also marked the end of the three-month Buddhist Lent. Soon cars lined up fender to fender on every side street, their occupants emerging with their donations neatly wrapped in transparent plastic. Children trailed elders cradling aluminum trays of food. So much of it piled on long tables in the kitchen (that explains why it was so spacious: the celebratory crowds will communally consume it right there through the day), the dishes tittered on the edges. The offerings of food, robes and blankets, as we all know, gain spiritual merit for the givers.



One morning in May we were awakened by the sound of drums and cymbals from the street. A procession was marching slowly up the Avenue towards the Vihara. Monks, children, adults in white attire, two floats, banners proclaiming the 2600th anniversary of the Buddha's enlightenment. Siddhattha Gotama (his personal name was born around 566 BC

near the foothills of the Himalayas just inside the borders of today's Nepal. There are striking similarities of his life to that of Jesus Christ. He left home at the age of 29 to begin his religious life. Gotama's birth is said to have been surrounded by miraculous events -- conceived during his mother's dream; then born under a tree while on a long journey to the home of a relative; heavenly apparitions right after his birth. (The Christian New Testament describes the Virgin Mary receiving news of her Son's conception from an angel; the trip to Nazareth, the birth inside the manger of an inn, the star in the heavens to guide the three kings to the inn). Gotama attained enlightenment at the age of 35, then spent the next 45 years of his life teaching until he died at the age of 80.

Jesus' tearful career lasted only three years before he was crucified.

"In Laos, we lined up beside the village road, on our knees, to drop our food offerings into their bronze bowls as the monks filed past us," we told the Venerable Bhante Sirusimana, a 30-year old Sri Lankan, and a five-year monastery resident.

"Ah, but this is America," he says. "You bring your offerings here or we go to your homes." Indeed, motorists would have jerked their heads in a sudden swivel if they were to see in the early morning hours a procession of bare-footed, bald men, heavily bundled from shoulder to ankles in what look like bright orange bed-sheets, shuffling down the cemented sidewalks along the manicured lawns of this town. More likely, you would spot a monk sweeping the grounds around the Buddha's pedestal.

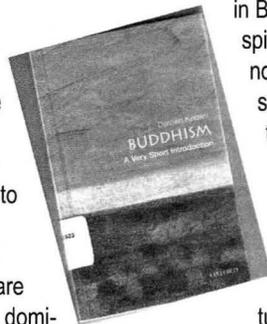
Then like a vision, we hear the muffled boom of the drum in the wat compound beside the OB Annex apartments at the That Luang district in Vientiane where we stayed during the 1960s. We see the women in the chilly morning mist on their knees at the wat's entrance, their straw baskets of sticky rice at the ready, as the monks emerge in single file. There is no drum to summon residents in Queens Village to meditation but the Vihara's website invites all to English-language discussions on the Dhamma (body of beliefs) every Wednesday and Friday evenings. Tea is served in the kitchen. Although Chinese, Japanese and Filipinos are among our Asian neighbors, none are Buddhists. A Thai and Indian neighbor hear Mass at our Catholic church.

The Queens Village Vihara is only a ten-minute walk away from our home. Every once in a while, when a strange urge stirs, we would enter the Vihara, slip out of our sneakers, climb up the spiral stairs to the empty shrine hall, sit on the floor by oneself, levitate, listening to the silence of the drum. -- by *J. Fuentesilla*.

Hey Buddy, You A Buddhist? Tell Me About It

A dizzying array of books in English on Buddhism (never mind in Pali or Sanskrit) can engulf those who wish to know more about it. And because Buddhists do not believe in a Supreme Being or a personal soul, there are as many commentaries debating on whether -- is it a religion? a philosophy? a way of life? a code of ethics? Some 500 million to 1.6 million are adherents, mainly South and East Asians.

Many a time would a Westerner, looking at our Filipino Asian features, conclude that we must be Buddhists, unaware that we are the only Asian country where Catholicism is the dominant religion. And when you tell them that you know a bit, (okay,



maybe some basics), about Buddhism, it is a legacy of our years in Buddhist Laos. Over there, missionary priests attended to our spiritual needs, mindful that our allegiance rests with Rome, not the Roman god Zeus, but with the Vatican. So, where to start if you wish to refresh some basic Buddhist tenets when there's so little time, and so many, 1,000 TV channels to watch. We found a wonderful book, a paperback really -- 4 1/2 inches by 7 inches -- "Buddhism -- A Very Short Introduction" by Damien Keown, one in a series of concise surveys on various topics published in 2000 by the Oxford University Press in London. At 136 pages, it's a page turner in one sitting. Mr. Keown is a scholar on the subject but his work is not a dense dissertation. Available from Amazon.com.

Mekong Circle and 9 -11

This was emailed to members on Sept. 11, 2011. It has been slightly edited.

New York City, September 11, 2011 -- Today, America is awash in events to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks that killed nearly 3,000 persons in three places on the East Coast. The epicenter of the events is in lower Manhattan, site of the two towers of the World Trade Center where more than 2,500 of the victims died (among them 21 Filipinoss). Here, this morning, a deeply solemn ceremony (which you may have seen live on nationwide TV) dedicated the two fountain-memorials, the base "foot-prints" from where the two buildings once towered.

Not too far away, perhaps the distance of two city blocks on 110 Liberty Street, on one side of the plaza that contained the dozen buildings that comprised the World Trade Center complex, was the site of Lemon Grass Grill, a Thai restaurant. It is no longer there, a casualty of the mountainous debris that rained on the area when the two towers collapsed. It was here on April 7, 2001 that the East Coast Chapter of Mekong Circle was born at 1 pm. It was here that 11 members gathered for lunch for their first meeting.

Walter "Ty" Voradeth, former OB bookkeeper and purchasing agent at OB Vientiane, Laos, was our host. He also happened to be the cashier of the restaurant. It is within my powers, he remarked with a wink, to take off 15 percent from our bill. The menu favors Thai cuisine. It is within my powers, he added, to order from the kitchen, food not listed on the menu. The reference was to Lao dishes that the Lao help in the kitchen could easily cook up. Everyone felt heartened — our chapter's birth was blessed with discounted ethnic food.

That first meeting was partly devoted to "socializing". There was no agenda. It was called to organize for the 2002 Mekong Circle reunion. We had no idea how many would turn up. At the 2000 San Francisco reunion, Salvador "Sas" Sayong, a former OB accountant, announced that he, on behalf of New York, was ready, willing and able to host the next reunion in 2002. Never mind that Sas actually lived in New Jersey. Never mind that he had not consulted with New York-based members. Indeed, at that time, NY-based members would number no more than the fingers of your two hands. (California, with their scores of members, could gather at a snap, a dozen for a potluck dinner on any weekend, which is why they had no problem drawing attendees for the previous two reunions held in their state).

Even when you count East Coast members, few to begin with, in the nearby metro states of Pennsylvania and New Jersey, we did not have the bodies to organize an international event. Moreover New York is expensive. Would California members fork over a sizable airfare and hotel expense to come over?

It was decided on that first meeting that these were details, small bridges to cross, when we get to them. The first order of the day was to socialize. For some of the attendees, this was their first face-to-face encounter after a separation of almost four decades. There was the initial shock of recognition, then the hugs and kisses, followed by the thought: "Wow what happened to his hair?" We parted with a promise to meet again soon. "Soon" stretched to four months when a dispute in our California chapter dimmed prospects of drawing a large attendance from our largest chapter.

We convened again on September 8, 2001 in the same restaurant. Three

days later, the World Trade Centers disappeared. Our first bridge to cross — a gargantuan one — loomed ahead of us. Who would dare come to New York now for our reunion? Sure it was another year to come, but with the city (and the nation as well) in a lockdown mood, anxious, fearful, we agonized to decide what to do. Finally, as Marie Aguilos, a committee member said, it came to this: "Bahala na. Kung pupunta sila or hindi, basta mag-enjoy tayo!" (If they come or not, let's go ahead and enjoy!)

And the rest, as they say, is history. We projected, budgeted and organized for 150 attendees; 167 came. Was it our cruise on a yacht around Manhattan?

The opportunity to see first hand the devastation at ground zero? To tell the grandkids — I went, I saw, I survived? Yes to all that, and more. Our Mekong Circle reunions strengthen friendships of a lifetime, friendships that remain when time and space are no longer shared, even in the darkest of times. We thank all who came.

Born during a historic tragedy, the East Coast chapter's founding members who met at Lemon Grass Grill on April 7 and September 8, 2001 (we kept the attendance sheets) deserves mention here:

From New York — Val Handog, Marie Aguilos, Vilma Valenzuela, Mart Martell, Florence Ongkingco, Becky Ciborski, Ty Voradeth, Pete Fuentesilla; from New Jersey — Tony and Cora Sazon, Conse Sotio, Sas Sayong, Red del Rosario; from Pennsylvania — Bac Bacordo. In the months to come, additional members came aboard, including Evelyn and Boni Alon from New Jersey; Cesar and Linda Mendoza from Pennsylvania. Yes, in all, a few more than the fingers of your two hands.



Founders of the Mekong Circle East Coast chapter (from left) Bing Belicena (visiting from Manila), Boni and Evelyn Alon, Pete Fuentesilla, Cesar Mendoza, Edith del Rosario, Marie Aguilos, Sas and Aletha Sayong, Bac Bacordo, Linda Mendoza. Those not shown are named in the text above.

HISTORICAL NOTES

TRY TO REMEMBER

In our last Newsletter issue (July 2011), we published an early 1960s-era large group photo of us (45 in all) at an airfield in Vientiane. We were able to recognize most of the persons and sought your help to identify the unnamed others. Take a look again (enlarge the digitized photo at right on your computer screen if necessary -- the issue was also emailed). Here are additional identities that were submitted -- first row, no. 3 **Gerry LaTorre**; No. 7 **Gil Cabrera**. Third row, no.6 **Josie Fernandez**; no. 9 **Toots Barros**. Eight more names are missing. C'mon, think! think! and email them. Big reward (in redeemable pre-debt crisis Euros).



YOU MUST REMEMBER THIS

There are pieces of paper we cherish of our Laos days. Photos. Old passports with their exit and entry date stamps into and out of Wattay airport. "Balitang Laos" newsletter issues. Love letters. There are other papers that are difficult to resurrect from our personal archives. Consider records with decades old, no longer existent Laos-based employers such as, for example, an employment record on official USAID Laos or OB stationary. We found ourselves in this situation many years ago to document a work history. Hence the documents are reproduced here to include among your own. The costs in the USAID table are in millions of dollars.

ANOTHER ONE TO REALLY REMEMBER

In 2002 after a visit by the first Mekong Circle Balik-Laos (Return To Laos) group to Vientiane and a meeting with the Laos Minister of Health, he wrote an official letter (at right) formally inviting us to provide services that were terminated in 1975 when his government took over the country. A historic document and a historic event for us. Energized, we proceeded by doing an onsite feasibility survey, putting together a proposal, coordinating with the Philippine Embassy in Vientiane, the Health Ministry and the Foreign Affairs office in Manila. The proposal outlined a hospital staffing and training mission that would last three months, then six, and nine. A call went out for the first volunteers. Then in quick order, the historic opportunity went to pieces. That year Laos hosted for the first time the Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit; our primary mover and fund raiser for the project died, Philippine

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523

Mr. Jos Puentecilla
216-27 Spencer Ave.
Queens Village, NY 11427

March 13, 1989

Dear Mr. Puentecilla:

As you requested, I have checked the A.I.D. records to confirm the existence of a project in Laos involving your former employer, Operation Brotherhood. As the attached Project Data Sheet from our Congressional Presentation prepared in 1965 indicates, there was indeed such a project.

The project, known as "Public Health Development (439-11-590-066)" began in 1957 and continued at least through 1966. It was a comprehensive effort to assist the Royal Lao Government in providing health services to areas under non-communist control. Among other activities, it funded a contract with Operation Brotherhood, a Filipino non-profit organization, to provide doctors, nurses and technicians.

I hope that this information will meet your need. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,
Christopher M. Brown
Christopher M. Brown
Laos Desk Officer

Attachment: a/s

PROJECT DATA (In thousands of dollars and equivalent)			
Country: LAOS	Activity: HEALTH AND SANITATION		
Project Title and Number: Public Health Development, 439-11-590-066			
Prior Reference: Page 94, FY 1965 CP			
Initial Obligation FY: 1957 Scheduled Final Obligation FY: *			
U.S. DOLLAR COSTS			
Through 6/30/64	Obligations 4,654	Expenditures 3,516	Unliquidated 1,138
Estimated FY 65	1,976	1,537	*****
Estimated through 6/30/65	6,630	5,053	1,577
Estimated, FY 66 Obligations	2,191	Future Year Obligations *	Estimated Total Cost to Complete *
Obligations			
Cost Components	Estimated FY 65	Proposed FY 66	
U.S. Technicians	182	182	
Participants	29	39	
Commodities	1,068	1,272	
Other Costs	697	698	
Total Obligations	1,976	2,191	
Obligations By Method of Financing			
Direct AID Costs	1,326	1,541	
Other Agency	-	-	
Contract	650	650	
ESTIMATED FOREIGN CURRENCY REQUIREMENTS			
Obligations of U.S. Owned		Commitments of Country Owned (Counterpart)	
Through 6/30/65	FY 66	Through 6/30/65	FY 66
-	-	1,734	726
Project Objective and Description: To increase support for the Royal Lao Government by extending health services in areas under non-communist control. The U.S. provides technical assistance.			

constructed under the R contract with A.I.D., O organization, supplies technicians for this project installations ranging in to a 15-bed hospital in selected for intensive Project Progress: During patients. 18 OB village cases and delivering 250 hospital patients and OB addition to home improve and boy scout units.

Apart from the OB f Valley, the USAID also s 280,000 people near comb 209 locally-trained Lao During one month, August 90,905 out-patient visit

The Village Health y villagers and in many hi logical boost to those w FY 1966 Program: Since t longer limited to the pro porting Assistance funds component. In other resp same costs and activities

* Reviewed annually.



LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

1112

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

6 June, 2003

Mr. Vic Marquez
President
Mekong circle

Dear Mr. Vic Marquez:

This is to formally invite the Mekong Circle to assist the Lao PDR in providing health care to people in and out of Vientiane, Lao PDR.

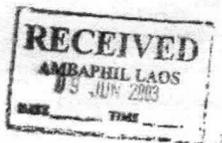
Hopefully, the initiative begun by the late Ambassador Mario Galman will bear fruit in the near future, enhancing cooperation between Lao PDR and the Philippines.

To this end, the Ministry of Health offers its full support.

Thank you very much.



Dr. Ponnem DALAL
Minister of Health



FROM VIENTIANE TO ISTANBUL

Philippine Ambassador to Laos Marilyn Alarilla was posted November 14, 2011 to her new assignment in Turkey after almost three years in Vientiane. Earlier this year we received from her a video documentary on the Lao capital produced by the Embassy and the Lao Department of Cinema. It was the Embassy's contribution to the celebrations marking Vientiane's 450th anniversary founding. A Manila-based Filipino film editor worked with his Lao counterparts in Vientiane to produce the video. Her predecessor was our host during our second Balik-Laos visit in November 2004.

From its peak in the late 1960s when the Filipino community in Laos reached an estimated 900 residents, there are not that many today. But still sizable, judging from the 260 guests who attended the Embassy Christmas Party in December 2010. Filipino medical personnel and military training advisors composed the bulk of the 1960s -1970s expatriates. Today, they are mostly teachers and technicians. An Australian company mining gold and copper ore some 100 kms. north of Vientiane employs 77 Filipinos as geologists, metallurgists, engineers, trainers and supervisors. Among their benefits: free meals, free accommodations, advanced mining technology seminars, work breaks six times a year. Except for the breaks and the training, does this sound familiar to us former expatriates?

Meanwhile in Turkey, the Philippine Embassy had its hands full in March this year coping with Filipino overseas workers fleeing the civil war in neighboring Libya. According to one report, some 194 overseas Filipino construction workers employed by Turkish and Korean companies in Libya were safely transported out, joining the fleeing thousands of foreign (and Libyan) residents. But two Filipinos -- lab technician Cecilia Castillo and nurse Lorna Improgo -- staffing the Nalut Central Hospital in western Libya chose to stay with their Egyptian and Pakistani doctors even as their town became a war zone between the anti-and pro-Qaddafi factions. "They need us here" said Lorna; the Libyan nurses had fled. Does this sound familiar (remember how some of us kept to our remote Laos provincial hospital outposts even as anti-government insurgent forces were reportedly closing in?

Ambassador to Laos **Mario Galman**. With ten Asian heads of state (including Philippine president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo) and their sizable retinues converging for the first time on Vientiane, this was THE priority for the government; our project was all but ignored. But we cannot let those who readily volunteered to be left forgotten. Here they were: **Dr. Larry Jardino, Dr. Ding**

Trinidad; nurses Marie Aguilos, Jojo Pablo, Rosalie Pablo, Lolit Abelon, Pet Sismaet, Gina Liwag, Keota Thongba and Sisouphone Phounsouk.

There were several members residing in the USA willing to go but could not be released by their employers. Much appreciation should also go to then Philippine Consul **Raul Dado** in Laos and **Fred Mendoza**, our pointman in Manila who tried mightily to revive the project with potential international sponsors after the Ambassador passed away.

Some areas are SECURITY CLASSIFIED and should not be divulged to unauthorized individuals. All other material is unclassified.

TABLE III

Funds: TECHNICAL COOPERATION
SUPPORTING ASSISTANCE

Development Project. In addition, under Operation Brotherhood, a Filipino non-profit OB operates 6 clinics from a 100-bed hospital in Vientiane (one of the village clusters development).

In FY 1964, OB hospitals treated 92,837 patients. Clinics were established, treating 21,007 patients. Three OB farms produced food for OB. OB nursery classes for 192 children in OB classes and assisting rural youth club

activities in the relatively secure Mekong health facilities, caring for areas. These facilities are operated by OB. In FY 64, 759 patients were hospitalized and care made at these rural health centers. OB program has improved RLG relations with the OB. OB program has given a crucial psychosocial support in the areas resisting PL/VN military encroachment. OB technical support on this project is no longer proposed in FY 1966 for the commodity program. The project will involve almost the entire OB budget in this fiscal year.



"Return to Laos 2" group in front of the Philippine Embassy in Vientiane.

Update On Our Tribal School Project : Thanks From The Kids

At right is one of several photos emailed to us by Fr. Nestor Lisondra, parish priest serving in Davao del Sur. Note the placard thanking us for our first donation of \$2,050 to the Ilian and Kitorok schools that we have adopted as our educational project. Since then more donations are being collected. Here is the full list of donors as of November 21 (we began our fundraising in March). The children need more help because they have so much less. Take a look at the sad-looking classrooms among the photos emailed to you last June and August.

- Tony & Cora Sazon
- Juanita & Aida Calalang
- Erlinda Masibay
- Rustico & Nemia Ramos
- Victor & Eufrosina Capili
- Leopoldo & Catalina Daulo
- rineo & Concordia Alon
- Robert Van Nest
- Romeo & Myrla Agbayani
- Marie Aguilos
- Patria Gonzales
- Penelope Flores
- Tacing & Tony Atienza
- Denis Hebreo
- Anita Marquez
- Lolita and Henry Stark
- Orlando & Cecilia Datu
- Pete Barsales
- Evelyn & Bonifacio Alon
- Reynaldo Zamora
- Tess Papa
- Somboune Phommalsack



Location of schools: Villages of Ilian and Kitorok, town of Santa Maria, Davao del Sur, Mindanao.

City. The schools receive no government funding.

Opened: 2008-2009 to serve the children of the Taga-Kaulo tribe of Davao del Sur.

Contact: Fr. Nestor Lisondra, Home of the Clergy, Aurora Extension St., Digos City 8002, Philippines.
Email: frneli@yahoo.com

Population: 203 pupils (7-14 years old); 7 teachers

A donation form is at the back of this newsletter. Mail to Mekong Circle, 1200 Bayhill, Suite 119, San Bruno, California 94066 USA. Tel. 650 589 3522

Sponsor: Catholic Diocese of Digos

Mekong Circle International
Cash Receipts & Cash Disbursements (Preliminary)
From 1/01/2011 - 11/30/2011

	Total	Illinois	N. California		S. California	
			General Fund	Iskolar Ng Mekong	Tribal School	2010 8th Reunion
Fund Balances 12/31/2010	3,571.85	-	685.26	1,361.33	-	1,525.26
Add:						
Advertising	-					
Newsletter	-					
Donations	-					
Scholarship donation	-					
Transfer/Tribal School donation	1,275.00			(1,361.33)	2,636.33	
Total:	4,846.85	-	685.26	-	2,636.33	1,525.26
Less:						
2010 Reunion expenses	-					
Bank Service Charges	-					
Adj to beginning cash balance	-					
Joe Barcelona balance	-					
Transfer to Tribal School	2,090.00				2,090.00	
CA Secretary of State IL disbursement	-					
Total:	2,090.00	-	-	-	2,090.00	-
Fund Balance as of 11/21/2011	2,756.85	-	685.26	-	546.33	1,525.26

Mekong Circle 2012 Ninth Reunion

Dates: **August 3, Friday**
 August 4, Saturday
 August 5, Sunday

Place Marriott San Diego Mission Valley Hotel

8757 Rio San Diego Drive, San Diego, California 92108 USA

Tel. 1800 228 9290 (toll free); fax 619 692 0769

Website: www.marriott.com/sandiego

Website has details on hotel – 345 rooms, 17 floors, local area tourist sites (including the world-famous San Diego Zoo, Sea World San Diego and Legoland), transportation and maps. Hotel is located 10 minutes from San Diego airport, Greyhound bus station and Amtrak train station), parking facilities, and much more.

Reunion registration fees:

\$125 per person (does not include hotel room rates that start with \$129 discount rate for Mekong Circle members, discounted from regular \$150 for single occupancy). Fee will cover expenses for program activities listed below.

Registration deadline: June 15, 2012. Fill up enclosed form and mail to indicated address.

Tentative program:

Friday, August 3	Welcome and Baci ceremony	6 pm- 11 pm
Saturday, August 4	Board of Directors meeting	9 am – 12 noon
	Cocktails, dinner, dance	5:30 pm to 12 midnight
Sunday, August 5	Lunch / swim party at poolside patio	12 noon to 5 pm.
	This takes the place of our customary third-day picnic	

Overall Chairpersons:

Sam Malaythong (228 East Mission Avenue, Merced, California 92154 USA)

Tel. 209 765 1696 email: drsmalaythong@yahoo.com

Pat Gonzales 4402 Ambrose Terrace, Los Angeles, CA 90027 USA Tel. 323 270 4971 p3gonzal@att.net

Pete Fuentecilla 216-27 Spencer Avenue, Queens Village, NY 11427 USA Tel. 718 468 3038 fuentecila@aol.com

In partnership with the Mekong Circle Southern California Chapter: Contacts:

Khamsy Siharath (4459 San Joaquin St., Oceanside, California 92057 USA)

Tel. 760 529 5532 email: oceansideresthome@cox.net

Tacing Atienza 6888 Sweet Clover Court, Eastvale, CA 92880 USA Tel. 951 371 6877

Jun Ilustrisimo 507 E. Cliffwood Circle, Anaheim, CA 92802 Tel. 714 750 4338 jilust@sbcglobal.net

Joe Barcelona 914 S. Cochran Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90036 Tel. 323 939 0634 joebarsr3@yahoo.com

Souvenir Program Journal Ads and Messages:

See enclosed for rates. Our reunion journals are treasured mementoes that we keep looking at. We welcome your messages and those of your chapters as well as family photos. Encourage your friends who have local businesses to advertise. Advertising revenues help finance our expenses.

Our biennial reunions have served as the central events that have kept the friendships of our lifetime endure through the years since the founding of our association in 1975 -- thanks to your support to the organizing committees. We call on all members once again to make our 2012 event another momentous success. We welcome your ideas, suggestions Start by spreading word about these dates. Reserve them now on your calendar. Fill out and send in the registration form. Expect ongoing updates by mail, email, our website and our Newsletter.

MEKONG CIRCLE

216-27 Spencer Avenue

Queens Village

New York 11427 USA

Date _____

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