



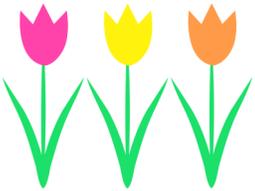
# THE FLASH

## FAMOS Newsletter

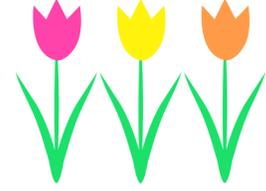
### Filipino American Military Officers Association

### Celebrating the Past & Inspiring the Future

FAMOS – Established in April 1990



# SPRING 2017



March 2017

<http://www.famosusa.org>

<https://www.facebook.com/famosusa>

Volume 3

Issue 1

### *President's Message*

The United States of America is under a new leadership. President Donald J. Trump is used to winning at all cost. For us who are immigrants, 2017 will be full of uncertainties and unwanted challenges. On the other hand, the military will receive the most needed financial support and encouragement from the new president who promised that America will be great again and it will be "America first" under his administration.



CAPT Elsa P. Ang  
MC, USN, Ret.

Being veterans will prove to be our advantage. We will look forward to increasing recruitment of more qualified people, better pay as well as retirement package. We will also expect much improvement in health care delivery to all qualified veterans and their dependents. We hope Mr. Trump can fulfill most if not all of his campaign promises.

Speaking of dependents, FAMOS will focus on the military spouses in 2017. The military spouse does not

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### FAMOS in Search of First Military Spouse of the Year

**Milagros Arconado** just found out her husband, **Chief Petty Officer Benito Arconado** is scheduled to go again on an **extended deployment** in the Western Pacific. This means she had to endure **arduousness** all over again as it was just a year ago. Aside from her customary house chores, she had to **take over** the responsibilities as head of the **household** and **take on** the job of a carpenter, plumber or a mechanic in emergency. She also had to take care of their two children, 2 and 4 years old. **Inevitably, Milagros had to face up to the extra hard work** and loneliness once more for **at least the next six months**.

**Meanwhile**, in an apartment not far from the Arconados, **Norberto del Prado** had just finished cooking breakfast for his four children. After breakfast, he would be driving the children to school. Upon return, he would do the dishes, the bed, house cleaning and also try to do the laundry. He hates doing the laundry. But he must do it. Nobody else will

*Continued on Page 3*

**2016-2017 OFFICERS**

**PRESIDENT**

**CAPT Elsa P. Ang, USN, Ret.**  
Email: roger0461@att.net

**1ST VICE PRESIDENT**

**CWO4 Manuel Supnet, USN, Ret.**  
Email: w4supnet@aol.com

**2ND VICE PRESIDENT**

**LCDR Joy Gacuya, USNR.**  
Email: jgacuya@gmail.com

**3RD VICE PRESIDENT**

**CWO4 Oscar S. Garcia, USN, Ret.**  
Email: ogarcia18@cox.net

**SECRETARY**

**EMCS(SS) Jay Ruiz, Sr., USN, Ret.**  
Email: juvigar@aol.com

**ASSISTANT SECRETARY**

**1LT Dennis Alcazar, USAR**  
Email: dtazar16@gmail.com

**TREASURER**

**CWO2 Ernesto Liwag, USN, Ret.**  
Email: ernieliwag@gmail.com

**ASSISTANT TREASURER**

**Mrs. Nancy Valerio**  
Email: nancyv1961@yahoo.com

**AUDITOR**

**CWO4 Ed Danico, USN, Ret.**  
Email: edldanico@yahoo.com

**PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICERS**

**CDR Benny Valerio, USN, Ret.**  
Email: valeriobenny@gmail.com

**CW5 Teddy C. Datuin, USA, Ret.**  
Email: tcdatuin@gmail.com

**Julio DeGuzman, Jr., NCIS, Ret.**  
Email: juliodeguzman@gmail.com

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**Automobile Payment Assistance**

Veterans and servicemembers may be eligible for a one-time payment of not more than \$11,000 toward the purchase of an automobile or other conveyance if they have service-connected loss or permanent loss of use of one or both hands or feet, permanent impairment of vision of both eyes to a certain degree, or ankyloses (immobility) of one or both knees or one of both hips.

They may also be eligible for adaptive equipment, and for repair, replacement, or reinstallation required because of disability or for the safe operation of a vehicle purchased with VA assistance.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Executive Council Meetings**

Meetings are held on the first Saturday of the month from 0900 to 1100 at 1341 East 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite A, National City, CA 91950  
Members are invited.

**Publication**

**THE FLASH** is the **FAMOS Newsletter** published quarterly by the Filipino-American Military Officers Association and distributed free to all members.

Readers are invited to send comments, news items and relevant articles to the editorial staff.

**EDITOR**

**Manny Supnet, CWO4, USN, Ret.**  
(Email: w4supnet@aol.com)

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**

**Teddy C. Datuin, CW5, USA, Ret.**  
(Email: tcdatuin@gmail.com)

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**

**Jay Ruiz, Sr., EMCS(SS), USN, Ret.**  
(Email: juvigar@aol.com)

**PHOTOGRAPHER**

**Elsa P. Ang, CAPT, MC, USN, Ret.**  
(Email: roger046@att.net)

FAMOS is a non-profit, educational and public benefit association under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code

**President's Message** - *continued from front page*

demand any special recognition or acquire special privileges while the active duty partner is away performing his/her duties. Household management, family discipline, religious and educational supervisions would fall on the shoulder of the military spouse, yet no medals are awarded nor statues erected to recognize his/her sacrifices.

On April 15, 2017 FAMOS will honor the military spouse of the year during its 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I will encourage all the FAMOS members to attend and to invite all their relatives and friends who are in the military.

We are all proud that we belong to the elite one percent of the entire population of the United States of America. We served to keep America free.

MABUHAY !

CAPT Elsa Peñaranda Ang, MC, USN, Ret.

\*\*\*\*\*

**FAMOS in Search of First Military Spouse of the Year** - *continued from front page*

do it. His wife, **Sergeant First Class Felicidad del Prado** is still in **Afghanistan** with the U. S. troops conducting counterterrorism operations against insurgents and training of the Afghan army. Unfortunately, she doesn't know when she could come home. **Until then, Norberto** had to do **all the work by himself**.

Such situation of **Milagros Arconado** and **Norberto del Prado** exemplifies the plight that besets the wives and husbands when their **military spouses**

**are away fulfilling their obligation** to the Nation. Yet, in spite of their predicament, most of them still advocate for their communities and **volunteer to work with charitable foundations** when time permits. Even so, they **do not have any medals or citations** to attest their profound contributions vis-a-vis trials and tribulations. Certainly, these **steadfast spouses are the unsung heroes**.

But not for long. The **Filipino American Military Officers Association (FAMOS)** is making preparations to honor the spouses of its members in conjunction with inaugurating its first **Military Spouse of the Year** on April 15, 2017 at the Scottish Rite Event Center. It's also the 27th anniversary of FAMOS.

**Everyone is cordially invited to the gala celebration. For reservation, please call any member of the able event committee: CWO4 Oscar SA Garcia, Chairman, 619-482-9680, CWO2 Ernesto Liwag, 619-690-2157 or CDR Benny Valerio 619-889-3420. All are U. S. Navy Retired.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**VA Home Loan Guaranty**

A VA loan guaranty to acquire a home may be available to an unmarried spouse of a veteran or service member who died as a result of service-connected disabilities, a surviving spouse who remarried after age 57, or to a spouse of a service member who has been officially listed as missing in action or as a prisoner of war for more than 90 days. Spouses of those listed as prisoners of war or missing in action are limited to one loan.

## **CWO4 Oscar S. Garcia, USN, Ret. Assumes Responsibility of Commander, Council of Kadosh**

In a colorful but solemn ceremony attended by his fellow honored Masons, their relatives and friends to near capacity, **CWO4 Oscar S. Garcia, USN, Ret.** was inaugurated along with others into their respective offices last January 11, 2017 at the Scottish Rite.

Oscar was sworn in as **Commander, Council of Kadosh**. His duties and responsibilities entail presiding over all meetings and other activities of the Council including reviewing and monitoring the activities of eight committees under his purview. The annual Mother's Day Brunch would also fall under his cognizance.



**CWO4 Oscar S. Garcia  
USN, Ret.**

His new position as Commander might be the highlight of his long awaited desire to be affiliated with the Masonry. "Before I joined the Navy I already heard about the Masonic Fraternity but the members in our city were doctors, engineers, lawyers and other professionals with lots of money. Since I was just an ordinary Juan dela Cruz without money, I could not mingle with the '*Rich and Famous*,'" Oscar articulated.

While in the Navy, he knew many of his friends were Masons and thus he was sure he would be invited to join them. But he did not know that Masons did not recruit. He found out it was the other way around. He was told that to become a Mason, he had to knock, meaning he had to ask a Mason. **So, he asked and was helped to become a Mason.**

Ironically, his Navy billet would limit his involvement with the Fraternity. This was so because he was an engineering type sailor who was virtually always on sea duty with frequent deployments. Even when he retired from the Navy he was overwhelmed with **his Vending Machine business, school attendance and employment with the State of California.** The Vending Machines located in Pizza Hut Stores and other shops from Chula Vista to the border and near the Coliseum and Clairemont Mesa sold assorted candies, soft drinks and snack items. He closed the business in 2000 due to back problems and numerous other commitments.

Oscar was Speaker of the House, then Vice Chairman and became the first **President of the Council of Philippine American Organizations (COPAO) of San Diego County** from 1996 to 2002. He was a co-founder and presiding officer of The Alliance (Empower the Filipinos) from 1997 to 2000. Meanwhile, he was the president of South Bay FilAm Community Association from 2000-2002. He was also a Commissioner for the City of Chula Vista actively spearheading the relationship between Chula Vista, California and Cebu City, Philippines. In recognition of his superior performance, he was awarded the "**Circle of Outstanding Volunteer**" medal by the **Sister Cities International** during its 50<sup>th</sup> International Conference in Washington, D.C.

CWO4 Garcia presently is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President of the **Filipino American Military Officers Association (FAMOS)**. He is one of the most prolific officers. He had spearheaded many of the activities for the Association. He was the chairman of the committee responsible for its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. The event was highly successful so that he was unanimously selected to also spearhead the FAMOS 27<sup>th</sup> commemoration on April 15, 2017.

## Editor's Nook

# FAMOS 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Takes Center Stage

LCDR Joy Gacuya, USNR, our debonair FAMOS 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President very soon will be allowed, nay, required to wear a **new look hat**. He has been selected for **promotion to commander**. His new look cap shall have one row of **gold oak leaves and acorn**, a.k.a.

“scrambled eggs” embroidered on its visor -- the same hat that Captains wear. Admirals' cap has two rows of “scrambled eggs”. There is no embroidery on the visor for junior officers and chief warrant officers.



LCDR Joy Gacuya, USNR

**CDR (Selectee) Gacuya** is presently assigned to the Naval Reserve Pacific Fleet Maritime Operations Center Detachment 601 as the **Communications Planning Officer**. He earlier served as the **Executive Officer** of NR Naval Computers and Telecommunications San Diego (NCTS SD) preceded by a tour of duty at Expeditionary Communications Det. 5 as **Officer-in-Charge**. The former NCTS SD Executive Officer **enlisted in the Navy on 12 April 1986 in Subic Bay Naval Base, Philippines** where he was employed at the Telecommunications Department of the Navy Public Works Center.

Joy who has a **Bachelor of Science degree in Electronics and Communications Engineering** from Mapua Institute of Technology **excelled in Boot Camp** and consequently was designated **Constructionman (Seabee)**. He was sent to Gulfport, MS for **Seabee combat and engineering training**. He subsequently was assigned to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Five (NMCB 5) as Electrical System Installer and later as Electrical Planner Estimator. **He deployed with NMCB 5** in support of **Operation Desert Shield** and **Operation Desert Storm** in 1990. He built the first ever military radio telephone station in the middle of the desert in Al Jubail, Saudi Arabia which was used extensively by the U.S.A. and allied forces before, during and after the first **Gulf War**.

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**Editor's Nook** - *continued from previous page*

In 1993, **Construction Electrician First Class Gacuya** elected to transfer to the **Naval Reserves**. I asked him why and reminded him he could have retired a long time ago had he stayed Regular without regard to age. In the Naval Reserves, one must be at least 60 years old before he/she could draw retired pay even though he/she already have been in for more than 20 years.

He said he transferred to the Naval Reserves so that he could practice Engineering in the field of Electronics and Telecommunications and could spend more time with his wife, Annabelle and their four beautiful children. *"They are and will always be the most precious and most important people in my life,"* he articulated.

**CDR (Selectee) Gacuya** who is a registered **Professional Engineer (PE)** in Electrical Engineering in the State of California is *"happily working in the cutting edge of Information Technology, Telecommunications and Computers. I wouldn't had been able to do this had I stayed on Active Duty; plus being in the Reserves enables me to enjoy the best of both military and civilian worlds and serve the country in a more meaningful way,"* he enunciated.

Joy works at the University of California San Diego as **IT Project Manager/Telecommunications Engineer** in the Information Technology Services Department. He has designed the IT infrastructure in the San Diego Super Computer Annex at UCSD and in several other high technology research buildings on campus. He also has modernized the campus IT backbone infrastructure from legacy technologies to the high velocity fiber-optic-based broadband network. Joy manages all of the major communications and IT facilities and the extensive optic networks serving the entire campus. Additionally, **he teaches Electrical Engineering** review classes at UCSD Extension.

Joy was a **Chief Construction Electrician** when he was commissioned **LDO Ensign, USNR, 1825 Information Professional (IP)**. However, he said he would have preferred to remain in the Seabees community had he been selected as a **Chief Warrant Officer**. He attributes his **BS degree in Electronics and Communications Engineering** and his experience in his civilian employment at the University of San Diego in the field of **Information Technology, Computers and Telecommunications** for his selection as LDO Ensign.

What is the **difference** between **Limited Duty Officers (LDOs)** and **Chief Warrant Officers (CWOs)**? **LDOs** are considered *more the officers* and *less the technicians* than the **CWOs**. While the Chief Warrant Officers can and do command units, vessels and aircraft, **their primary task** is to serve as **technical experts**, providing valuable **skills, guidance and expertise to commanders and organizations in their particular field**.

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**Editor's Nook** - continued from previous page

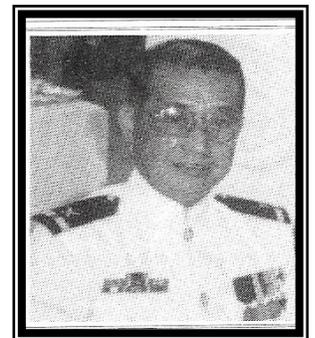
Joy's first assignment as a commissioned officer was with NR Space and Naval Warfare (SPAWAR) Systems Center 619 San Diego as **Configuration Validation (CONVAL) Officer**. He would lead several teams that conducted CONVAL of command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems for surface combatant ships. He later was assigned to Commander Naval Surface Pacific as **Communications Officer** followed by a tour of duty as the **Communications/IT Department Head** for Maritime Security Squadron One. He was then **selected to command** the Expeditionary Communications Detachment 5 (ECD 5).

LCDR Gacuya was called for active duty in 2013 and served for one year as the **Communications/IT Officer** for Naval Expeditionary Logistic Support Group Forward (NAVLSG FWD) at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. He subsequently served as the **Executive Officer** of NR Naval Computers and Telecommunications (NCTS) San Diego.

The **veteran of Desert Shield and Desert Storm** also holds a **Master of Science** degree in Software Engineering. Furthermore, he is a Registered Communications Distribution Designer and holds a **Global Information Assurance Certification** or GIAC Security Leadership Certification.

With a four-year college degree on hand when he first enlisted, Joy could have applied for the **Officer Candidate School (OCS)**. If accepted, he would have been automatically advanced to **Petty Officer Second Class (E-5)** and **commissioned Ensign** upon completion of OCS in about four weeks. Had he done so, however, he would have not been able to enjoy the peerless experience of **"rising through the ranks"**. He also would have missed the **festive atmosphere** of camaraderie in the general mess, the **peerless initiation** into the **exultant fraternity of chief petty officers** and the educational adventures while on liberty in foreign ports of call.

**Congratulations, Commander. You did it your way, the right way. Here's wishing you and your family fair winds and following seas!**



**CWO4 Manny Supnet  
USN, Ret.**

## JO + PH + LI + DM = MC

The **Mass Communication Specialist (MC)** rating was established on July 1, 2006 as the result of the merging of four ratings: **Journalist (JO)**, **Photographer's Mate (PH)**, **Lithographer (LI)** and **Illustrator/Draftsman (DM)**.

Mass Communication Specialists are Public Affairs and Visual Information experts. They **present the Navy story to audiences in the Navy and to the rest of the world** through a variety of media. MCs write and produce print and broadcast journalism news and feature stories for military and civilian newspapers, magazines, television and radio broadcast stations. They record still and video photography of military operations, exercises, and other Navy events. They serve overseas, on ships, and at stateside commands as photographers, public affairs specialists, newspaper and magazine staff, and TV and radio station staff and talent.

MCs also create graphic designs in support of the public affairs mission, create and manage official websites, and perform high-speed high-volume graphic reproduction.

**MCs write Navy news releases and feature articles from personal interviews, examination of messages, and witnessing of events.** They take news and feature photographs and develop photo stories with associated Visual Information Record Identification Number (VIRINS), captions and pertinent historical data. They understand the Navy Public Affairs mission for the acquisition, processing and marketing of all internal and external information products through web sites, news releases and internal information products.

MCs acquire, transmit, and print electronic imagery. They understand imagery and equipment life-cycle management and archival requirements, and prepare and lay out Navy information products, including web sites, newspapers, and command information brochures using desktop publishing systems. They provide still and video documentation of Navy and joint operational events, and provide visual documentation of combat, combat-support operations, and related peacetime training activities.

Mass Communication Specialists prepare material for broadcast use. **They serve on the staff of Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) detachments.** They operate and schedule command internal information and programming for Shipboard Information, Training, and Entertainment (SITE) systems. MCs troubleshoot mechanical and digital reprographic and photographic equipment; supervise shipboard and Sea Operations (SEAOP) detachments in support of the Navy Public Affairs mission.

MCs serve on combat camera deployable teams, research, develop, and write speeches using Navy talking points and messages, and fulfill duties of senior enlisted advisor for public affairs on select Fleet, Numbered Fleet, Type Commander (TYCOM) staffs, aircraft carriers, and large-deck amphibious ships. **They implement public affairs guidance and messages from higher public affairs authority, and serve as independent duty [Public Affairs Officers \(PAO\)](#) at small commands.**

## **TIDBITS**

### **Veterans Retirement Homes**

Veterans are eligible to live in Armed Forces Retirement Homes located in Washington, D.C. and Gulfport, MS if their active duty military service is at least 50 percent enlisted, warrant officer or limited duty officer if they qualify under one of the following categories:

\*Are 60 years of age or older and were discharged or released under honorable conditions after 20 or more years of active service.

\*Are determined to be incapable of earning a livelihood because of a service-connected disability incurred in the line of duty.

\*Served in a war theater during a time of war declared by Congress or were eligible for hostile fire special pay and were discharged or released under honorable conditions and are determined to be incapable of earning a livelihood because of injuries, disease or disability.

\*Served in a women's component of the Armed Forces before 12 June 1948 and are determined to be eligible for admission due to compelling personal circumstances.

Eligibility determinations are based on rules prescribed by the Home's Chief Operating Officer. Veterans are not eligible if they have been convicted of a felony or are not free from alcohol, drug or psychiatric problems. Married couples are eligible, but both must be eligible in their own right. At the time of admission, applicants must be capable of living independently.

For information, call (800) 332-3527 or (800) 422-9988, online [www.afrh.gov](http://www.afrh.gov).

### **Special Benefit Payable to Survivors**

Survivors of veterans who died of service-connected causes incurred or aggravated prior to August 13, 1981 may be eligible for a special benefit payable in addition to any other benefits to which the family may be entitled. The amount of the benefit is based on information provided by the Social Security Administration.

### **Contacting Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)**

For specific questions concerning annuities, to request certain document, to change an address or report other changes such as marriage, divorce or expiration of a child's benefits eligibility, or in the event of the death of an annuitant, contact Defense Finance and Accounting Service, US Military Annuitant Pay, PO Box 7131, London, KY 40742-7131, phone (800) 321-1080, fax (800) 982-8459, online [www.dfas.mil](http://www.dfas.mil).

### **Special Pay**

Navy officers in pay grade 0-6 and below receive a monthly special pay when assigned duties as a commanding officer over a ship or a unit designated by the Secretary of the Navy.

## **TIDBITS** - *continued*

### **Severance Pay**

Members with over six years, but less than 20 years of service, who receive an honorable discharge, while being separated from the service involuntarily (draw down, "up-or-out system," etc.) receive a severance pay (also called involuntary separation pay) equal to 10 percent of their annual basic pay, times the amount of years service they have.

### **Hazardous Duty Pay**

This is commonly confused with "Hostile Fire Pay," but actually the pays are two entirely separate things. Hazardous duty pay is paid to personnel who perform duties, which by their very nature may be hazardous. Payments are authorized for those performing duties concerning parachuting, flight deck duties, demolition duty, experimental stress volunteers (acceleration, low pressure, high pressure, etc.), duty involving toxic fuels or pesticides and duties involving dangerous viruses or bacteria.

### **Family Separation Allowance**

Military members who are separated from their legal dependents for a period in excess of 30 days to a location where the dependents are not authorized to accompany him or her at government expense is authorized to receive family separation allowance. There are two types of allowance: FSA-1 and FSA-2. A member may receive both. Type 1 is payable when a member may not reside on-base in their new location. It's equal to Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) at the "without dependent" rate. It's designed to help pay for rent and utilities for the additional household. FSA-2 is payable when the member is apart from legal dependents for a period in excess of 30 days. It's designed to provide assistance in paying for the incidental expenses incurred for maintaining a separate household away from family members.

### **Clothing Allowance**

There are two types of **clothing allowances: initial and annual maintenance**. The initial clothing allowance is paid when, for some reason, the service is unable to issue a military member's initial allotment of uniforms. The allowance is based upon the retail cost of uniform items and differs for each service, and for males and females. Additionally, there are numerous supplemental clothing allowances for special duties (such as band), or for those required to wear civilian clothing on duty.

### **Sea Pay**

Military members embarked on a ship are authorized sea pay, ranging in amounts for \$50 per month to \$620 a month. The amount of entitlement is based upon rank and number of years of logged sea duty. Additional amount may also be awarded for personnel who have been embarked on a vessel for over 36 consecutive months.



**FILIPINO-AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION**

*Founded in April 1990*

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION**

Regular ( ) Associate ( ) Honorary ( ) Student ( )

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Rank & Military Branch: \_\_\_\_\_ Commissioning Source: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: H: \_\_\_\_\_ W: \_\_\_\_\_ C: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ (Mo & Yr)

Children (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Designator/MOS: \_\_\_\_\_

Duty Station: \_\_\_\_\_

Billet: \_\_\_\_\_

Educational Background (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Yearly Membership Fees Attached – Circle One

Regular & Associate: \$25.00

Student & Honorary: Free

Regular member: Military Officer

Associate member: (a) Spouse of Regular or Associate member

(b) GS-11 or higher

(c) E-9

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your application with appropriate fees to:

F A M O S • 8850 Villa La Jolla Drive #215 • La Jolla, CA 92037

For more information visit our Website at [www.famosusa.org](http://www.famosusa.org)

# FAMOS Holiday Harbor Cruise Brunch Aboard the Hornblower December 11, 2016



*Dec. 11, 2016 FAMOS Hornblower  
Champagne brunch cruise, San Diego*

Standing from right: Mrs. Eleanor Sober, EMCS(SS) Jay Ruiz, Sr., LCDR Joy Gacuya, Mrs. Annabelle Gacuya, OSCS(AW) Jimmie Sober, CWO2 Ernie Liwag, Mrs. Remy Liwag, Mrs. Veronica Garcia, CWO4 Oscar Garcia, (2 unidentified guests), CDR Benny Valerio, Mrs. Nancy Valerio, and (3 unidentified guests).

Seated from left: CAPT Elsa P. Ang, CAPT Chuck Pierce, Mrs. Fida Pierce, Mrs. Gloria Supnet, CWO4 Manny Supnet, and COL Cef. Ruiz



*Dec. 11, 2016 CAPT Pierce, Fida Pierce, Gloria &  
CWO4 Manuel Supnet*

L-R:

CAPT Chuck Pierce

Mrs. Fida Pierce

Mrs. Gloria Supnet

CWO4 Manny Supnet