



FAMOS NEWSLETTER

EDITION 4

WEBSITE: [HTTP://WWW.FAMOSUSA.ORG](http://www.famosusa.org)

DECEMBER 31, 2020

Filipino American Military Officers Association
Established in May 1990



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello everyone,

I almost could not believe how fast time went by. It's now over 10 months since our last meeting, but seems it was only the other day. This pandemic is holding us at bay, so, are we not bored yet? I know some of us enjoyed working in their back and front yards. Some

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FAMOS OFFICERS

PRESIDENT - CW04 OSCAR SA GARCIA

1ST V. PRESIDENT - CDR. BIENVENIDO VALERIO

2ND V. PRESIDENT - COL. CEFERINA RUIZ

3RD V. PRESIDENT - CW5 TEDDY DATUIN

SECRETARY - MRS. REMEDIOS LIWAG

TREASURER - CW02 ERNESTO LIWAG

AUDITOR - MR. ROGER ANG

ADVISOR - CAPT. ELSA ANG

ADVISOR - CW04 MANUEL SUPNET

PRO - CDR. MARIA BALOLONG

PRO - MACM CESAR ADAN



probably took the advantage of having ample time to finish your autobiographies or other projects that you could not finish due to lack of time. Anyway, the perennial humdrum of staying at home may hopefully come to an end. Our front liners started to receive their dose of COVID-19 vaccines which are now distributed to several states. It won't be long it will be our turn to be the recipient of the penetrating pain of those long and fat needles.

For now, while waiting for our turn and entering into more restrictive moves by our authorities, please stay safe, healthy and enjoy these coming Christmas and holidays as far as the cable of restrictions can reach. This is the first in my lifetime that Christmas is celebrated other than the usual way. However, all is out of our control and nothing we can do without going against the restrictions. So don't worry, be happy!

On the other hand, with the advent of new technology, we are able to hold meetings virtually. At the first meeting, I was not able to join due to lack of smarts.

Good that with OJT from Ernie Liwag, I was able to join the last meeting. I encourage everyone to join, and if you are like me, just contact CDR Joy Gacuya (contact info is in the latest Secretary's report) and I am sure it will be easy as eating pie. To avoid redundancy, just wait for the release of this newsletter, Ernie will cover everything to keep us abreast.

FAMOS VIRTUAL ZOOM MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 5, 2020

Meeting convened at 1300 with the following members present.

Oscar Garcia
Joy Gacuya
Benny Valerio
Ernie Liwag

Special thanks to CDR Joy Gacuya for making the necessary arrangement for the Zoom meeting. January meeting will be announced at a later date. Hopefully we will have more member participation next year.

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FAMOS MEMBER HIGHLIGHT OF THE QUARTER



UNITED STATES NAVY BIOGRAPHY

CDR Joy G. Gacuya N6 Director Information Technology and Communications NR COMMANDER Third Fleet JFMCC

CDR Gacuya is an Information Professional officer/ Information Warfare Officer in the US Navy Reserve. He recently completed a year-long mobilization in Bahrain where he served as the N6 and Deputy Director of Command Control Computer and Communications for Combined Task Force 51/ 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (CTF 51/5).

His first assignment as a commissioned officer was with NR SPAWAR Systems Center 619 (SSC 619) San Diego. As Configuration Validation officer with SPAWAR, he lead several teams that conducted configuration validation of Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems for several carriers, frigates and destroyers. He transferred to CNSP and served as the Communications Officer for the reserve unit there. He became the OIC of Command and Control Division of MSRON 1 and then Communications & Computers Department head at MSRON ONE. He transferred to Expeditionary Communications Detachment 5 and took command of the unit as the unit CO. He was called up to active duty to serve as N6 COMMS/IT officer for NAVELSG FOWARD in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait in 2013 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Upon his return from deployment CDR Gacuya became the XO of Naval Computers and Telecommunications

Station, San Diego where he served for three years. He detached from NR NCTS SD and rolled into another XO job at NR COMMAMDER PACIFIC FLEET MOC DET 601 (an IT and Communications support unit to the Navy Communications System Coordination Center for PACFLT). He is currently attached with NR C3F JFMCC serving as the Director of Information Technology and Communications (N6).

CDR Gacuya holds a Master of Science degree in Software Engineering. He is the Chief Telecommunications Engineer at University of California San Diego in his civilian employment. He is a board certified and licensed Electrical Engineer in the State of California. He is a Registered Communications Distribution Designer and certified Global Information Assurance analyst.

Some of his military awards/decorations are: 4 Navy Commendation Medals, Army Commendation Medal, 5 Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, Navy Reserve Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, Global War on Terror Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kuwait).

COMMANDER JOY GACUYA'S 2019-2020 RECALL TO ACTIVE DUTY AND SERVICE IN BAHRAIN

For military reservists, being called up to active duty accords many opportunities to contribute to the active component. Every mobilization is a unique experience and getting deployed overseas enriches the experience. I have been serving in the Navy reserve for over 20 years at the time of this writing. Within this period I have been called up to active duty twice. My second and most recent mobilization was in 2019, and I deployed in the Kingdom of Bahrain in the Middle East for about a year. I received my official orders in December of the prior year.

In January 2019, my boss at my civilian employment at UC San Diego passed on before I could tell him about my upcoming mobilization. (May his soul rest in peace.) It was the state of uncertainty that ensued at work that made it more difficult to inform my employer about my recall to active duty and that I will be on military leave for a year.

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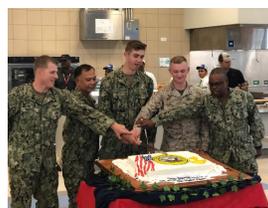


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CDR Joy Gacuya



Taken at 244th Marine Corps Birthday ball, Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain. CDR Gacuya first from the right.



Cake cutting at NSA Bahrain galley, US Navy 244th Birthday. CDR Gacuya second from the left.

Unexpectedly, the Navy Reserve pushed out my report date for a few months. It did not curtail my deployment, everything just shifted to the right. It afforded me some time to navigate the situation in my workplace. Eventually, I set down with my old boss' boss and we put a plan in place to cover for my job while I serve in active duty. At home I kept my family upraised and made all necessary preparations before I reported to active duty. I issued my wife a power of attorney to enable her to attend to business and legal matters on my behalf should the need arises and I re-enrolled my family to Tricare military health insurance for active duty. My wife and kids have always been very supportive of my military service. Notwithstanding, the pre-mobilization process was a roller coaster ride for me. The bottom line is that we in the profession of arms, active and reserve, must always be ready physically, emotionally and mentally to embark on a long deployment. One must ensure everything is in order before heading out. Be prepared to mobilize anywhere, anytime and be ready to support the the gaining operational command to the best of your ability. Maintain mobilization readiness and war fighting readiness. I reported to the Combined Task Force 51/5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (CFT 51/5) in August of 2019. CTF 51/5 is a crisis action/crisis response unit headquartered in Bahrain. It is a hyper tempo and operationally agile unit

It is a combined US Navy and US Marines task force but comprised mostly of US Marines. There were a few of us US Navy personnel in the unit. Being a Navy Information Professional officer, I served as the unit's N6 and also the Deputy Director of Command, Control, Computers and Communications (C4) directorate. As N6 I oversaw all aspects of shipboard communications on all the ships that were assigned to CTF 51/5 (Amphibious Ready Group ARG and the USS PULLER). As Deputy Director of C4, I was second in command of 30 Marines, Navy and civilian personnel. The C4 directorate provides information technology and communications support to CTF 51/5 headquarter and all the subordinate units throughout the Middle East. The Middle East is a very challenging and very dynamic operational environment.

The Kingdom of Bahrain hosts the commander of Fifth Fleet (C5F) and also the commander of Navy Central Command (NAVCENT). These units are headquartered in the country and both commander posts are filled by one and the same Vice Admiral in a dual hatted capacity. The region is in the US Central Command area of responsibility (CENTCOM). The Commanding General of CTF 51/5 reports to NAVCENT, CENTCOM and since it is made up of mostly Marines, the CG also reports to MARCENT. Most of the members of the unit have one-year or two-year orders with CTF 51/5.

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What the COVID-19 Resurgence Means for Access to Your Military Records

By: Kevin Lilley

November 23, 2020

The National Personnel Records Center’s Military Personnel Records facility is operating at less than 10% of normal capacity because of worsening COVID-19 conditions in the St. Louis area –a status that limits records requests to emergency needs only.

The facility’s on-site staff will continue its work to accommodate veterans or family members who need records in relation to:

- Burial honors
- Life-threatening medical emergencies
- Homeless veterans seeking entry to shelters
- Any “comparable emergencies,” [per the center’s website](#)

Individuals with emergencies can submit a [Standard Form 180](#) via fax to (314) 801-0764.

The center entered this emergencies-only status March 23, but began a gradual reopening on June 24 as COVID-19 cases slowed. This reopening process allowed a 20% operational capacity for most of October, but “on-site exposures to staff” led to a regression to emergency-only levels on Nov. 7.

Even emergency requests face delays under this process. Families seeking records to confirm burial eligibility in a VA national cemetery can visit [this website for detailed information](#); casketed interments will be prioritized over cremated interments.

The majority of burial requests can be approved without access to National Personnel Records Center materials. MOAA Premium and Life members can download [Your Guide to Military Burials](#).

FBI Warning: Beware of COVID-19 Charity Scams

By: Kevin Lilley

November 24, 2020

Early scams connected to the COVID-19 crisis preyed on [fears connected to the pandemic](#) – fake emails from financial institutions seeking phantom payments or offering investment-protection services, for example, or scammers pretending to be hospital administrators or health insurance agents, collecting on nonexistent invoices.

Later, scammers got creative, moving on to [miracle cures](#) or other novel approaches to drive a wedge between people, primarily senior citizens, and their money.

Now, the FBI has warned of scammers moving away from taking advantage of the population’s security or health concerns and instead targeting its generosity.

[A warning issued last month](#) outlines concerns with fake charities “leveraging the COVID-19 pandemic to steal your money, your personal information, or both.” The warning doesn’t cite specific cases, but these types of fraud have contributed to a reported [\\$145 million in coronavirus-related scams](#) since the pandemic began.

So, how do you avoid criminals posing as charity workers? Here’s a quick five-point plan, courtesy of the FBI warning and other resources:

1. Study up. Resources like the Better Business Bureau, [Guidestar](#), and [Charity Navigator](#) can help you separate the real groups from the fake ones.

2. Know the names. Scammers frequently use sound-alikes or slight misspellings to make their pretend charity seem like the genuine article. Don’t speed-read these requests – it’s not likely a major charity has a typo in its email address, or sends correspondence through anything other than its own web domain (check for a “.com” or a “.org” at the end of the email address, as appropriate).

3. Be cyber-aware. The Federal Trade Commission offers detailed advice on [avoiding “phishing” attacks](#) – emails or text messages from scammers attempting to pirate your personal information. The bottom line: Only open emails (and especially attachments) from trusted senders, and pay special attention to any messages requesting immediate action or payment.

4. Know the payment process. If you’re asked to pay with anything other than a credit card (cash, wire transfer, etc.), you’re probably being taken. If the charity’s online donation collection site raises any red flags, [do further research](#).

5. Double-check everything. Always look at your credit card or bank statement after a payment to ensure it went through at the amount submitted. Be wary of double (or more) charges.

The Latest on the SBP-DIC Offset Elimination

By: Shane Ostrom

December 02, 2020

The elimination of the Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) offset from the Survivor Benefit Program (SBP) payments is still a bit confusing for many. Let’s try to clear the air.

SBP is a survivor annuity administered by DoD. DIC is a survivor annuity administered by the VA. Receiving both payments simultaneously has been considered double dipping (two government payments for the same event), and so the DIC amount has been subtracted from the SBP to prevent double dipping.

The FY 2020 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) included MOAA-supported language that eliminated this offset, a change that will be phased in through 2023. The bill marked the [successful conclusion of a long advocacy process](#), but MOAA

remains engaged to assist members through its implementation.

The Details

This offset elimination only affects survivors who are eligible to receive both SBP and DIC payments. The offset is where the DIC amount is subtracted from the SBP amount. The DIC has and will continue to be paid in full; it’s the SBP amount that’s been reduced by the amount of DIC paid.

For some survivors, the DIC amount subtracted from your SBP left you with no SBP payment, as the DIC amount was greater than your SBP amount. You still have SBP eligibility, you just don’t receive your SBP.

Survivors who received an SBP premium refund in the past because you were denied your full SBP amount due to the offset do not have to pay back the refund.

Whether you received no SBP or a partial SBP amount due to the offset, all with the offset received the Special Survivor Indemnity Allowance (SSIA) payment. SSIA is a payment to minimize the damage done to your SBP amount by the DIC offset.

Survivors with both SBP and DIC will receive a letter from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS, the administrator of SBP) in December explaining how the first phase of the offset elimination (2021) will affect you. The letter will provide you with your payment amounts so you can see the benefit of the first offset elimination actions starting with your Feb. 1, 2021, payment. The offset elimination phase-out continues in 2022, and the offset ends in 2023.

The bottom line: The DIC offset amount in your SBP will decrease, thereby allowing you to collect more of your SBP amount. Plus, you will continue to receive SSIA.

The SSIA payment will continue until 2023, when it will be discontinued because all SBP and DIC survivors will be receiving their SBP and DIC amounts in full.




 DIRECTORATE OF COMMAND, CONTROL, COMPUTERS AND COMMUNICATIONS
 NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS TASK FORCE 51/5TH MARINE EXPEDITIONARY BRIGADE
 

My original military orders were for nine months of boots on ground in Bahrain. My redeployment was in March of 2020 but my orders were extended due to the outbreak of COVID 19 pandemic. The Secretary of Defense issued orders that stopped the movement of military personnel and dependents in CONUS and OCONUS. My redeployment date was pushed out automatically due to this reason. When I returned to CONUS, I completed the required fourteen days quarantine in Norfolk, Virginia before my demobilization process could start. The latter took another two weeks. It was in the middle of summer, July 2020, when I finally arrived home in San Diego, California. I used all thirty days of military leave I accumulated overseas before I reported back at work at University of California San Diego

Overall, my recently completed mobilization was challenging but very rewarding. I accomplished the mission I was set out to do and I feel that I contributed significantly to the betterment of CTF 51/5. I also feel that I have represented FAMOS to the best of my ability. My most sincere gratitude to FAMOS for supporting me and my unit during this deployment. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Famos Meeting Minutes -Continued from page 2

Topics of discussion:

1. FAMOS Anniversary Celebration scheduled for April 17, 2021 is cancelled due to the continuing COVID 19 pandemic. No plans to reschedule the event until the pandemic is over and it is safe to go back to normal activities again.

2. Decision was made to waive FAMOS membership dues for 2021 due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Payment of membership fees will resume in 2022. We all need a break during these challenging times.

3. **PHILIPPINE DISASTER RELIEF** By unanimous decision, FAMOS will donate \$1,000.00 each to Cagayan Valley and Bicol region to help our “kababayans” in those areas severely affected by the typhoon. Relief funds will consist of the \$600.00 donation from FAMOS members and the remainder, \$1,400.00, will be donated by the FAMOS organization.

The following members donated monetary contributions to help with the relief effort: Oscar Garcia, Joy Gacuya, Benny Valerio, Teddy Datuin, Rudy Bautista, Nap Ferraris, and Ernie Liwag. Total contribution was \$600.00. President Oscar Garcia thank everyone for supporting the victims of the devastating typhoons that inflicted considerable damages to lives and properties in the Philippines, specifically Cagayan Valley and the Bicol Region.

Distribution of funds to the Bicol Region will be coordinated by the United Catanduanes San Diego (UCSD) organization headed by Frank Enriquez, UCSD Treasurer.

The Cagayan Valley typhoon relief drive involved various organizations from the United States and the Philippines through the University of Santo Tomas Thomasian Nurses Association Class of 1970 headed by Blessida G. Diwa. Liaison for the transfer of donated funds to the Philippines was Erlinda Magalong, a member of the San Diego Roaring Lions Club and a University of Santo Tomas Alumnus.

Written acknowledgements of the receipt of FAMOS financial donations are shown on page 9 along with photos of the distribution of much needed relief to victims of the natural disaster.

MY HEALTH PLAN

GOAL: TO ADD 10 (TEN) YEARS TO MY LIFE

BY: OSCAR SA. GARCIA

I. STRATEGIES (*Long range objectives - achievable in a year or more*)

1. EFFECTIVE EXERCISE

A. TACTICS (*Short range objectives achievable in less than a year*): Enroll at a supervised Gym

- a. Start a light exercise/workout at least 30 minutes, three days a week, and progress as I ably can. Start at 10 am.
- b. Start slow, walking 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the afternoon, and progress slow towards 45 minutes brisk walking in the morning, and then in the afternoon five days week. Start at 7:00 in the morning, and 5:00 in the afternoon.

2. GOOD REST EACH AND EVERYDAY

A. TACTICS: Good Sleep.

- a. At night start no later than 10 pm and wake up no later than 6am and be ready to start walking routine by 7am.
- b. Take a 10-20 minutes nap at about 2pm.

3. GOOD DIET

A. TACTICS: Healthy Eating Habits Daily

- a. Eat a good breakfast
- b. Consume more fruits and vegetables.
- c. Light snack at 3 pm.
- d. Minimize fatty foods (use only olive oil as possible)
- e. Avoid toxic foods, i.e. oyster and other shell foods.
- f. Minimize eating anything white such as rice, bread, etc.
- g. Avoid eating food before bedtime.

4. TAKE MEDICINES RELIGIOUSLY

A. TACTICS: Discuss benefits and side effects of each prescribed medicines with the doctor.

- a. Do not forget taking medicines on time.

- b. Take same medicines on time, at the same time every time as prescribed.
- c. Bring to the attention of the doctor any sign of discomfort, allergy or any reaction from taking certain medicines.
- d. Do not stop any medicine without the knowledge and consent of the doctor.

5. REGULAR CHECK-UPS

A. TACTICS: Frequent check-ups and follow-ups with Medical and Dental Doctors as necessary.

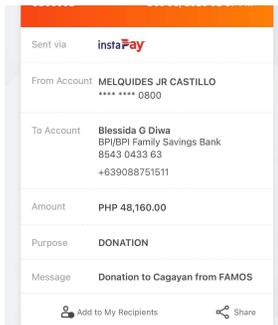
- a. Observe closely Doctors appointments, and be punctual to avoid rescheduling.
- b. Pay attention and follow Doctor's advice and instructions.

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c. Keep in mind questions or concerns which were formulated before seeing the doctor, and don't forget to discuss it before parting.

6. MORE WILL COME

CAGAYAN DISASTER RELIEF



CATANDUANES DISASTER RELIEF



United Catanduanes San Diego
Exempt Under IRS Code, Section 501 (c)(3)
Tax ID No. 37-1709722
7413 Los Brazos, San Diego, CA 92127

December 9, 2020

Oscar Garcia-President
Filipino-American Military Officers Association
1232 Cima Del Rey
Chula Vista, CA 91910

This is to acknowledge the receipt of your donation to the United Catanduanes San Diego (UCSD) fundraising to benefit the victims of super typhoon "Rolly" in Catanduanes, Philippines.

Our record shows that the Filipino-American Military Officers Association (FAMOS) have donated the following amount:

Date	Amount
December 9, 2020	\$ 1,000.00

On behalf of the United Catanduanes San Diego (UCSD), I would like to express my sincere appreciation and thank you to the officers and members of FAMOS for their generosity. Your kindness and generous support will definitely serve its purpose and make a tremendous difference in the lives of the typhoon victims in Catanduanes.

Please see next page for the status of the on-going relief effort.

Thank you so much!

Sincerely,

For UCSD:

Franklin Enriquez

Franklin Enriquez
UCSD – Treasurer

We ❤️ Catanduanes

United Catanduanes San Diego – "Gift of Love" Project Typhoon "Rolly" Relief Effort Status

The first batch of relief goods have been procured and prepared in Manila by reliable relatives, friends and volunteers. These are some of the essential items that are needed by the typhoon victims in the rebuilding process:

- Tarps/Lona
- Slippers
- Plastic Pails
- Hygiene Kits
- Solar Powered Flashlights and Lanterns
- Matlong (tapis for ladies)
- Various Prescription and OTC medicines
- Food Packs
- Others



Most of the goods have been shipped and received, and others are still in-transit. Distribution will commence as soon as all the items are received in Catanduanes that will be managed by reliable private person to ensure that relief goods are delivered to the right people who need them most. UCSD relief effort is an on-going project, and more relief goods are in process.

FILIPINO-AMERICAN MILITARY OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
Founded in April 1990
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL/APPLICATION

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

Name: _____ **DOB:** _____ (Month)

Rank & Military Branch: _____ **Commissioning Source:** _____

Address _____

Telephone: H: _____ **W:** _____ **C:** _____

E-mail: _____ **DOB:** _____ (Month)

Spouse: DOB: _____ (Month) **Anniversary** _____ (Month)

Designator/MOS: _____

Duty Station: _____

Educational Background (Optional) _____

Annual Membership Fee (\$25.00) - Check one

(Honorary & Student Members - Free) _____

Regular _____ **Associate** _____ **GS11 or Higher** _____ **E-9** _____

Please mail your application with appropriate fees to:

FAMOS * 1232 Cima Del Rey * Chula Vista, CA 91910

For more information, visit our website at www.famosusa.org

