



**THE FLASH**  
**FAMOS Newsletter**  
**Filipino American Military Officers Association**  
**Celebrating the Past & Inspiring the Future**  
**FAMOS – Established in April 1990**

December 2016

<http://www.famosusa.org>

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

Volume 2 Issue 4

### *President's Message*

I was very proud and impressed to note that three FAMOS members were distinguished winners of several awards. **CWO2 Ernesto D. Liwag** won the **Will Hays Lifetime**



**CAPT Elsa P. Ang**  
**MC, USN Ret.**

**Achievement Award** last November 4, 2016 at the well attended Scottish Rites luncheon. **COL Ceferina P. Ruiz** was awarded the 2016 **Veteran of the Year** by the Filipino American Retirees of Southern California (FARSOC) last November 5, 2016 and **Operations Specialist Senior Chief Air Warfare Jimmie Sober** received the 2016 **Veteran of the Year**, Pangasinan Association of San Diego County last November 12, 2016.

I am not aware of a single military association in San Diego County which has received that many such recognition and accolades that FAMOS has achieved in the same month of November and in the same year of 2016. Such achievements are strong testaments to the quality and unsurpassed motivations of each and every

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### **CWO2 Ernesto D. Liwag Chosen FAMOS Veteran of the Year**

**CWO2 Ernesto D. Liwag, USN, Ret.** was chosen Veteran of the Year 2016 - 2017 of the Filipino American Military Officers Association (FAMOS). He was presented with the **Will Hays Lifetime Achievement Award** at a presentation ceremony at the Scottish Rites on November 4, 2016. The awardee is currently the treasurer of FAMOS and of the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA), Sweetwater Chapter.

He is the past president of Castillejos Civic Club; former member of the San Diego City Citizens Review Board on Police Practices; and a former support provider for beginning teachers with the San Diego Unified School District.

CWO2 Liwag enlisted in the U.S. Navy on April 24, 1964 in the Philippines at Sangley Point, Cavite. He retired on September 30, 1990 after 26 years and 5 months of Distinguished Naval Service.

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## SOMETHING TO PONDER

Did you know that *America* could have been named “Columba” had the people responsible for naming the continent known it was Christopher Columbus and not Amerigo Vespucci who discovered it?

When Christopher Columbus discovered the **continent** in 1492, he thought he just found a new route to Asia and did nothing about it .

In 1499 and 1502, Americus Vespuccius traveled to the **continent** and called it the “Novus Mudus” (New World). He was the first one to write about it.

In 1507, Martin Waldseemuller, a German cartographer, made a map that included the “**new world**”. He and his two scholarly partners knew about Americus Vespuccius’ writings but did not know anything about Columbus’ expeditions.

Believing it was Americus Vespuccius who discovered the “**new world**”, the cartographers erroneously named the continent “America” in his honor.

Had the cartographers been correct, the **United States of America** could have been the **United States of Columba**. We would have a USC instead of a USA.

## 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.

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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

men and women who are Filipino American Military officers and proud members of our beloved association.

I am highly honored to be the president of an outstanding military association very well deserving to be FAMOS and FAMOUS.

MABUHAY !

CAPT Elsa P. Ang, MC, USN, Ret.

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**CWO2 Ernesto D. Liwag** - continued from front page

He spent his first six years in the Navy as a Steward for the Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Secretary of the Navy Mess in the Pentagon, and for the COMMANDER SIXTH FLEET aboard the flagships USS SPRINGFIELD and USS LITTLE ROCK.

His educational background and work experience in electronics in the Philippines enabled him to change his rating to communications. After **graduating first in his class at Radioman "A" School**, he was assigned to the Communications Center in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. His duties and responsibilities included processing incoming and outgoing messages, safeguarding classified documents, and maintaining and distributing publications and general messages to various commands and activities.

Subsequently, he completed Radioman "B" School and Communication Systems Technician School. He then served consecutively as Technical Control Chief of the Watch at the Naval Communications Area Master Station Eastern Pacific, Hawaii

and Naval Communications Area Mater Station Western Pacific, Guam. He was responsible for the overall direction of technical control operations, patching of long-haul defense communication systems and tactical communications media and local circuitry. As Office-in-Charge of the Communications Assistance Team, he provided communications support to various ships stationed at Yokosuka Naval Base in Japan.

His last duty assignment was as Director of Radioman "A" School at NTC, San Diego, California. He oversaw the training of hundreds of students in basic communication skills. He undertook the school's renovation that saved the Navy over \$500,000.00 for the refurbishment of command laboratories. He authored a project plan which identified curriculum, manpower, and equipment requirements necessary to support Radioman training well into the next century. For his accomplishments, he was awarded the prestigious Navy Commendation Medal by the Secretary of the Navy.

After retiring from the Navy, he completed his Master of Arts Degree in Education and taught Science and Mathematics in Middle School for 20 years. His commitment as a teacher was to provide the best education possible to his students and direct them to a path of success in life.

*SEE PHOTO ON NEXT PAGE*

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**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.

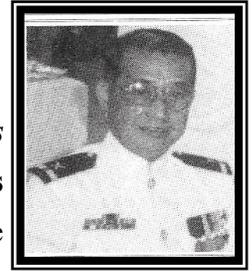
**FAMOS Personnel at San Diego County  
Veteran of the Year Event**  
**An Annual Recognition of San Diego County's  
Veteran of the Year, Selected from Many  
Organizations' Veterans of the Year**  
**November 4, 2016 at Scottish Rite Event Center  
San Diego**



Providing support for the **Veteran of the Year, CWO2 Ernesto D. Liwag** at the presentation ceremony are: (seated, l-r) Veronica Garcia, Nancy Valerio, CAPT Elsa Ang, USN, Ret., Gloria Supnet and her sister-in-law, Lolita Supnet. Standing (l-r) are CW5 Teddy Datuin, USA, Ret., CDR Benny Valerio, USN, Ret., EMCS(SS) Jay Ruiz, Sr., USN, Ret., CWO4 Oscar Garcia, USN, Ret., Engr. Roger Ang, the Veteran of the Year and his spouse, Remy Liwag.

## *Editor's Nook*

You and I know that **America** was named in honor of **Amerigo Vespucci** or *Americus Vesputius* who circumnavigated the continent. We also know the **Philippines** was named after **King Philip II (Felipe el Prudente) of Spain**, the kingdom which ruled the archipelago for more than three centuries.



**CWO4 Manny Supnet  
USN, Ret**

Spanish rule in the Philippines ended when the United States defeated Spain in the Spanish-American War in 1898. The war lasted only three months, two weeks and four days and was fought in Cuba. The Philippines consequently became an American colony.

On July 4, 1946 America granted the Philippines her independence after only 48 years of colonization compared to 377 years of Spanish domination that started in 1521. The Philippine Commonwealth was established in 1935 as a transitional administration in preparation for her independence. The Commonwealth went into exile from 1942 to 1945 during the Japanese occupation in the Philippines.

The **calling of America** and the **Philippines** is manifested in history as do other countries, counties, cities and towns. **But the naming of my hometown is legendary – more of a folklore.** I'm referring to the municipality of **Santa Maria, Ilocos Sur in the Philippines.**

**The legend dates back to the days of Spanish supremacy over the Philippines when oppression and atrocity ran rampant. Forced labor was widely imposed upon the Filipinos. Triggered by the obsession to spread Christianity throughout the world, the Spaniards decreed the construction of massive temples and cathedrals. This might explain why there are numerous colossus churches in the Philippines and other countries once dominated by the conquistadores. They are the living proofs of tyranny and forced labor.**

While most of the temples and cathedrals were constructed without tangible obstacles, there were a few that experienced unpleasant and unexpected eventualities. The Catholic church in the town of my birth had to be built thrice. The first one just crumbled for no apparent cause. There were no devastating earthquakes or violent typhoons and surely no *Katrina, Hagupit* or *Haima*.

By order of the Spanish tyrants, the cathedral had to be reconstructed. Alas! Not long after it was rebuilt, the church again collapsed mysteriously. **Once more, the phenomenon puzzled both the Spaniards and Filipinos. They became afraid and reluctant to rebuild the church all over again. Hence, the community was without a church for quite some time.**

Then it came to pass that one day an old man was gathering firewood from a mountain adjacent to the ruined church. Whereupon a beautiful lady with a long hair appeared before him and said; **“Tell the people to**

*Continued on Next Page*

## **Editor's Nook**—*continued from previous page*

**build the church here. And never shall it be destroyed.”** The elderly was bewildered and before he could regain composure, the lady had disappeared. But he remembered very well what she said.

The old man hesitatingly went to the authorities and related the message. As would be expected, the Spaniards did not believe him. They thought he was insane or merely hallucinating because who, in his right mind, would build a church on a mountain while there were plenty of other vacant wide spaces on the plains? The autocrats just drove him away.

**Thwarted the elderly could not sleep that night. In the morning, he would return to the authorities and audaciously repeated what he already had told them before. He was persistent and coherent in summing up his experience. Finally, the Spaniards believed him. Catholic by faith, they surmised the graceful lady with the long hair he was referring to was no other than Saint Mary (Santa Maria).**

Subsequently, the ostensibly impossible undertaking to build a colossal church on a mountain top would begin. The Spanish engineers, builders and artists would prepare a program of action. Every able-bodied Filipino would be ordered to work in the construction. There were hundreds, perhaps thousands of them. Using only crude tools they would painstakingly carved solid rocks for materials. One could only imagine the kind of equipment they used to help them carry out their mammoth venture.

**Many years of seemingly never ending hard labor would pass. Scores of laborers would die from fatigue, malnutrition or sickness. But amid the miseries and tribulations, the cathedral finally was built.**

**The church has since remained intact exactly as the beautiful lady had enunciated. It has outlived the Filipino Revolution against the Spaniards, the Philippines-American War, the Spanish-American War and the First World War. It has even survived the Second World War when most massive churches virtually were bombarded by the enemy.**

**Spaniards and Filipinos alike called it the miraculous church. They believed it was the miracle of *Saint Mary*. As a result, they exultantly named the town Santa Maria in honor of the graceful lady with the long hair.**

The phenomenal church is imposing and enormous as the cathedral in the campus of the San Diego University. Retaining walls of solid rocks surround its mountain base. It has three stairways. One is on the northwest, another is on the southwest and the third is on the east side.

**The stairway on the northwest has 85 steps made from granite. Parishioners, visitors and others would prefer to climb the northwest stairway over the others which are much steeper. On the south side is a road that was initially constructed for horse-drawn carriages or calesas and carabao-drawn sleds or carromatas.**

*Continued on Next Page*

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

On the north side is a convent connected to the church with a concrete elevated passageway about 70 feet long. The nuns who used to live in the convent had relocated. For several years, the nunnery had accommodated the Saint Mary's College, a private educational institution.

**Situated by the west side of the church is a four-story octagonal tower that is taller than the lighthouse in Point Loma. From the highest level of the tower, one could see the neighboring towns of Narvacan to the north, San Esteban to the south and the horizon across the China Sea to the west. To the east are meadows and mountains.**

The church was designated a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Site on December 11, 1993.

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**SALUTE FORBIDDEN:** When in a combat situation, a salute is forbidden because it could signal to a watching enemy who the officers are. They are more likely to be considered valuable targets.

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**SALUTE REQUIRED:** Military personnel are required to salute when they meet an officer their senior even though he is in civilian clothes if they recognize him.

**Fiduciary Services for Veterans**

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the fiduciary program provides oversight of the VA's most vulnerable beneficiaries who are unable to manage their VA benefits because of injury, diseases, the infirmities of advanced age or being under 18 years of age. VA appoints fiduciaries who manage VA benefits for these beneficiaries and conducts oversight of VA-appointed fiduciaries to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the beneficiaries they serve.

**VA closely monitors fiduciaries for compliance with program responsibilities to ensure that VA benefits are being used for the purpose of meeting the needs, security, and comfort of beneficiaries and their dependents.** In deciding who should act as fiduciary for a beneficiary, VA will always select the most effective and least restrictive fiduciary arrangement. For more information about VA's fiduciary program, visit the website of Veterans Affairs, <http://benefits.va.gov/fiduciary,index.asp>.

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**SALUTE NOT REQUIRED:** When military personnel are in a moving vehicle, it may be impractical to salute.

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**SALUTE AUTHORIZED IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES:**

A provision of the 2008 Defense Bill authorizes veterans and active duty personnel in civilian clothes to salute during the raising, lowering or passing of the flag.

## Estate Planning Presentation At FAMOS General Membership Meeting



**GUEST SPEAKER, ATTORNEY WENDY PIZZARO CAMPBELL** (second from left) obliges the photographer with her parents, **Dr. Priscila** and **CWO4 Tony Pizzaro**, USN, Retired, both members of the Filipino American Military Officers Association (FAMOS) and **CAPT Elsa P. Ang**, USN, Retired, FAMOS President. **Atty. Wendy** talked about **“A Living Trust, The Foundation of Estate Planning”** and other related topics. Her presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

The guest speaker is a Senior Attorney at California Law Partners, APC which she founded. She earned both a B.A. and M.A. as *magna cum laude* in political science and international relations from **Yale University** where she was **awarded the Distinction Prize in Political Science**. She was one of only 20 students in her class of 5,000 undergraduates who was accepted in the dual Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees to graduate with both degrees in four years. She sub-sequently earned a M.ST. in Modern History from **Oxford University, England** as a **Rotary Scholar**. She also earned a J.D. from the **Harvard Law School** where she simultaneously served as editor for the *International Law Journal* and the *Environmental Law Review*. She was a co-author of an article titled **“Jurisdiction, Venue and Choice of Law in Cyber-Defamation Cases”** for the New York Intellectual Property Journal and Symposium in the early stages of the internet. While in law school, Wendy was also a Harvard College proctor and teaching fellow in Government where she was **awarded the Derek C. Bok Award for Excellence in Teaching at Harvard**.

# FARSOC & PASDC, Two Major Fil-Am Associations, Selected Deserving FAMOS Members as their Veterans of the Year



**(Upper left photo)** FARSOC Veteran of the Year, COL Ceferina Ruiz, USA, Ret. displays her Commendation Certificate with FAMOS President, CAPT Elsa Ang, USN, Ret..

**(Upper right photo)** From left are CAPT Bonifacio Esperanza, USN, Ret., COL Ceferina Ruiz, her husband, EMCS (SS) Jay Ruiz, Sr., USN, Ret and MACM (SW) Cesar Adan, USN, Ret.



**(Left photo)** COL Ceferina Ruiz with MG Kenneth Herbst, USA, Ret.

**(Lower left photo)** PASDC Veteran of the Year, OSCS (AW) Jimmie Sober, USN, Ret. With FAMOS President, CAPT Elsa Ang, USN, Ret.

**(Lower right photo, 1st row, l-r):** Fida Pierce, Gloria Supnet, Veronica Garcia, Remy Liwag, Lt Col Marissa Manipud, USAFR, and Nancy Valerio. (2nd row, l-r): CAPT Chuck Pierce, USN, Ret., CWO4 Manny Supnet, USN, Ret., CWO2 Ernie Liwag, USN, Ret., CWO4 Oscar Garcia, USN, Ret., CW5 Teddy C. Datuin, USA, Ret., Lt Col Robert Calderone, USAFR, CDR Benny Valerio, USN, Ret., CWO4 Rudy Bautista, USN, Ret., and 1LT Dennis Alcazar, USAR



Nov. 12, 2016 Jimmie Sober, VOY of PASDC & CAPT Ang



# FAMOS Personnel at Walk for Diabetes

## November 20, 2016



*Nov. 20, 2016 FAMOS  
Participants at the Walk for  
Diabetes*

**FAMOS**, represented by its president, CAPT Elsa P. Ang (extreme left), COL Ceferina Ruiz (4th from right), EMCS(SS) Jay Ruiz, Sr. (extreme right) and Engr. Roger Ang (not in picture) participated in the Lions Diabetes Awareness and Walk. Also participating (from left after CAPT Ang) were Helen Quintanilla, Luz Galindez, PDG Art Arboleda, Linda Arboleda, Fe Rivero, Janet Quinto, and Alex Quinto (kneeling). The event was chaired by COL Ruiz.

## FAMOS Members Join Mother Goose Parade

**CWO4 Manny Supnet** and **MACM(SW) Cesar Adan**, both Retired USN of the **Filipino American Military Officers Association (FAMOS)** took time out to participate in the Mother Goose Parade in El Cajon, California last November 20. They rode on the float of the **Mobile Construction Battalion (MCB) Center**, Coronado with two Navy Seabee personnel, **EO2(SW) Randy Kepple** and **EO3 Jared Anson**.

The float, driven by former **Navy Lithographer Second Class Steve Haley** was adorned with the **Stars Spangled Banner**, flags of the **Navy, Army, Marine Corps, Coast Guard** and **Air Force**. It also carried assorted patriotic pennants and replicas of fighter aircraft, all of which impressed the spectators as evidenced by their loud applause, salutes and waves of enthusiasm as it passed by. Many had **even approached the float to shake hands** with the four Navy personnel and to thank them for their service. **The scene was quite touching to them.**

Approximately **250,000** lined up on both sides of the street to watch the parade of colorful floats, marching bands, drill units, elegant horses, clowns and giant helium balloons. More than **100** parade entries came from cities throughout the United States. The **Mother Goose** parade is the signature of the City of El Cajon and it is one of the **largest parades west of the Mississippi**. It is held annually on the **Sunday before Thanksgiving Day**.



**BEFORE BOARDING THE SEABEES FLOAT** (l-r) former Navy **LI2 Steve Haley**, **EO2(SW) Randy Kepple**, USN, **MACM(SW) Cesar Adan**, USN, Ret., **EO3 Jared Anson**, USN, and **CWO4 Manny Supnet**, USN, Ret. have their picture taken.



**WAVE OF ENTHUSIASM.** Master Chief **Cesar Adan** returns the salute from the spectators while **Chief Warrant Officer Manny Supnet** waves his hand to acknowledge their cheers.

**AFTER THE PARADE**, youngsters pose for picture taking with Navy personnel, Veteran **LI2 Steve Haley**, **CWO4 Manny Supnet** and **MACM Cesar Adan**, both retired and **EO2 Randy Kepple** and **EO3 Jared Anson**, both on active duty.





**FAMOS HOLIDAY CRUISE**

*December 11, 2016*

*Boarding: 10:30 am*

*Grape St. Pier – 1800 N. Harbor Dr.*

*Cruising: 11:00 am – 1:00 pm*

*\$50.00/pp*

**HORNBLOWER CHAMPAGNE BRUNCH  
CRUISE  
SAN DIEGO BAY**



*A lavish 2-hour brunch buffet with free-flowing champagne at your private reserved table. Enjoy unlimited, mimosas, personalized Eggo Benedict. French toast bar, carved prime sirloin with fresh rosemary and wide-variety of fresh sushi and deserts. Take a trip to the sundeck to soak in the sights.*

*It is not just a brunch, it's an experience!*

*Confirm your reservation by mailing your check (on or before 11-25-16) to  
Ernie Liwag at 1056 Fuchsia Ln. San Diego, CA 92154*

*For more info contact: Benny Valerie @ (619) 889-3420*