



FAMOS NEWSLETTER

EDITION 5

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

MARCH 31, 2021

Filipino American Military Officers Association
Established in May 1990



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



With great anticipation, I am optimistic that Year 2021 will be a lot better than 2020. With at least three (3) vaccines already authorized for emergency use in the United States, I believe that most if not all of our members had been fully vaccinated. It won't be long, almost everyone in the Country and hopefully all over the world will be vaccinated. Although I got my second dose over a month ago, my wife and I still wear masks and observe social distancing outside the house, and most especially in crowded places. I am hoping everyone does the same!

Continued on Page 2

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**
- PRO - MR. SIM SILVERIO**

Continued from Page 1

Zoom Meetings at this time is becoming more prevalent, and thanks to CDR Joy Gacuya for making this new technology available and for hosting FAMOS monthly meetings. Although meeting in person is much better, virtual meetings give us the opportunity to see each other. So, I am requesting other members to join us. CWO2 Ernie Liwag publishes through email the time and date of the meeting each month.

Also, I could not thank CWO2 Ernie Liwag for spending time, talent and treasure in putting together and publish each quarter the FAMOS Newsletter full of various information anent military and other everyday life issues.

It is with great sadness and deep regrets in my heart, the passing of our longtime Honorary Member, Jimmie Sober. Without question, I agree to what some are saying about Jimmie being more Filipino than some of the natural born Filipinos. He was not only willing, but most seriously in his kind heart, spent time and other resources, to resolve even the most serious concerns, be it legal, immigration or otherwise, faced by some Filipinos throughout San Diego County. I am a living proof to have been a benefactor of his unrestrained and most helpful heart and mind. He was more than a friend. He was a big brother to me. I missed him already and will continue to miss him for the rest of my life. Please join Veronica and me to keep Jimmie and Eleanor, his loving and caring wife in our thoughts and prayers!

Very Respectfully,

Oscar Sa. Garcia, CWO4, USN, Retired

Be Vigilant: Phone, Online Scams May Rise With COVID-19 Relief Legislation

By: Kevin Lilley

Even before the latest round of COVID-19 relief legislation cleared Congress, multiple agencies and news outlets warned of continued pandemic-related scams designed to nab personal information or cash from their targets.

With the publicity surrounding the new law – and some of the individual benefits it includes – it’s likely scammers could increase their efforts. Similar warnings were sounded [after previous relief legislation](#).

These scams may take many forms. Some of the latest warnings have included:

Vaccine rollout fraud. Scammers have taken multiple routes in this area, [according to the Better Business Bureau](#), with some promising home vaccinations or COVID-19 testing in exchange for Medicare account information, others offering to sell shots, and others engineering phony surveys about the vaccine, offering a prize at the end for those who give up personal information.

Ripped from the headlines. Many small businesses aren’t sure whether they qualify for the [Paycheck Protection Program](#), and many individuals don’t know whether they’ll see additional stimulus checks or unemployment benefits connected to new legislation. Scammers are happy to call and provide “free advice” on these and other topics in the news, often in exchange for Social Security numbers or other information.

Stick with the classics. As the pandemic stretches into spring, it overlaps with tax season – a traditionally fertile ground for fraud of all types. Some scammers have been [combining the stress-inducing topics](#) for maximum effect.



USS TELESFORO TRINIDAD CAMPAIGN (USSTTC) “Ship and Shipmate Before Self”

MISSION: Name a US Navy Warship (Destroyer-DDG or Frigate-FFG) after Fireman Second Class Telesforo Trinidad, an American national of Filipino descent who received the Medal of Honor on April 1, 1915, for extraordinary heroism in the line of his profession to memorialize his contributions to the US Navy and our Nation.

VISION: Perpetuate PO2 Trinidad’s heroic contributions to promote national awareness and education and bring pride and honor to the US Navy, its Sailors – officer and enlisted, their families and our Nation.

WHO WE ARE: USSTTC is a US registered non-profit corporation (IRS 501c3 in process) comprised of serving and retired members of the US Armed Forces, community leaders, academics, corporate executives, civic leaders, partners and sponsors, and veterans’ families committed to naming a US Navy Warship after Trinidad.

BACKGROUND: No US Navy ship has been named after a member of the US Armed Forces of Filipino descent, even though tens of thousands of Filipinos have served faithfully in the US Navy since the Civil War.

In 1901 President William McKinley signed an Executive Order allowing the Navy to enlist 500 Filipinos as part of the Insular Force. Approximately 6,000 Filipinos enlisted in the US Navy during WWI and many more joined through the interwar period leading up to WWII. After the Philippines obtained its independence from the United States in 1946, over 35,000 Filipinos were recruited into the US Navy from 1952 to 1992 under a provision of the Republic of the Philippines-United States Military Bases Agreement. In addition, thousands of Americans of Filipino descent enlisted during this same 40-year period, and continue to do so until today.

DISCUSSION: Trinidad remains the first and only American national of Asian and Filipino descent in the US Navy to receive a Medal of Honor for his extraordinary heroism in the line of his profession during boiler explosions onboard the USS San Diego (ACR-6) while the ship was underway in the Gulf of California on January 21, 1915. Trinidad brought two crew members to safety in spite of his own physical injuries from the explosion. He was awarded the Medal of Honor in accordance with General Order Number 142 signed by the Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels on April 1, 1915.

To date, there is only one ship, the USS Chung-Hoon (DDG-93) named after an Asian American in the Navy - Rear Admiral Gordon Pai’ea Chung-Hoon, Commanding Officer of USS Sigsbee (DD-502) during World War II, received the Navy Cross for his actions during a kamikaze attack on April 14, 1945.

RECOMMENDATION: Name a US Navy Warship--Destroyer or Frigate--after PO2 Telesforo Trinidad, which follows in the proud tradition of the US Navy in naming a ship after a Medal of Honor Recipient.

FAMOS 2021 Scholarship Award



Jacel Bautista Evangelista is a senior high school student at San Ysidro High School (SYHS) Class of 2021. He is the recipient of the Filipino American Military Officers Association (FAMOS) 2021 Scholarship Award. FAMOS will recognize Jacel with a certificate of award along with a \$1,000 scholarship money.

Jacel has held many leadership positions in JNROTC and he is presently the NJROTC Battalion Commanding Officer and NJROTC club president. Academically, he is at the top percentile of his class. He is consistently in SYHS honor roll and NJROTC honor roll in the last two academic years. He is in the NJROTC High Honor Roll in this current academic year. He achieved five semester qualification in the California Scholarship Federation, 2018-2021. He is also a recipient of Navy ROTC national scholarship.

Jacel aspires to be a commissioned officer in the US military and is aiming to go to the United States Naval Academy (USNA) in Annapolis, Maryland to become a commissioned naval officer. He has received official nomination from Congressman Juan Vargas (representative for California 51st district) for appointment to the USNA.

Jacel has performed many community service in varying roles. He was a teacher's aid at Vista Del Mar High School and volunteered at Most Precious Blood Church helping with retreat and retreat planning. Consistently and yearly for many years now, Jacel has served a bigger Filipino community by assisting in the preparations, set up and running the annual fiesta: The feast of Our lady of Solitude de Porta Vaga.

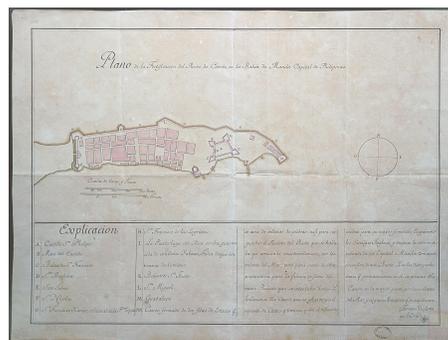
FAMOS congratulates Jacel for his achievements. He is deserving of the FAMOS Scholarship Award. Bravo Zulu Jacel. Keep up the excellent work! Good luck on your future endeavors.

PHILIPPINE HISTORY

BATTLE OF MANILA BAY 1898

The Battle of Manila Bay in the Philippines is one significant naval battle that took place during the Spanish-American war of 1898. Some history books do no justice in placing the exact location where this battle occurred and or the reason why it happened at this location. It was the first naval battle fought and won by the United States Navy overseas. Admiral George Dewey commanded the US Navy Asiatic fleet that destroyed the Spanish colonial naval force in the Philippines. This naval battle did not take place in Manila proper, at or near any of the harbors in Manila. It took place in the waters just west of the city of Manila.

In the course of the nearly three hundred years of Spanish rule in the Philippines, the Spaniards constructed two naval facilities in Cavite Nuevo—Sangley Point and the Cavite Navy Yard. They used these naval bases to build big ships called the Galleons and repaired them at these facilities. For over two hundred years the Galleons sailed back and forth from the Philippines to Acapulco, Mexico. These ships carried loads of raw materials, spices and all kinds of precious merchandise. These treasures were transported by land from Acapulco on the west side of Mexico to the eastern seaboard and shipped across the Atlantic to Spain. This trade route became known as the Galleon Trade route. Europeans carrying European wares travelled the opposite direction from Spain to Mexico and then to the Philippines on these great Galleons. The galleons along with the Spanish fleet stationed in Cavite moored at Sangley Point and



Spanish Navy's fortification plan of the Cavite Navy Yard

Continued on Page 5

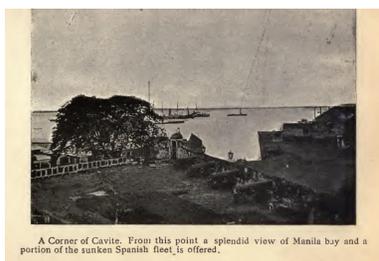
Continued from Page 4

at the Cavite Navy Yard. Cavite was the homeport of the Spanish fleet in the Philippines. It predated the Subic naval base in Olongapo. It was not until 1884 when Spain decreed Subic as a naval port. The center of gravity of the Spanish naval force had been in Cavite Navy Yard for a long time.

When the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898, Admiral George Dewey was given orders to head out from Hong Kong where it was visiting at that time to the Philippines. In the wee hours of the morning on May 1, 1898, his fleet sailed cautiously early morning into the mouth of Manila Bay through the south channel between the island of Corregidor and Cavite. As his Asiatic fleet passed Corregidor they immediately spotted Sangley Point on the starboard side and then spotted the Spanish Fleet moored at the Cavite Navy Yard. Admiral Dewey gave orders "You may fire when ready, Gridley!" and in a handful of hours, his fleet decimated the Spanish fleet. The Battle of Manila Bay did not take place in Manila proper or near any harbor in Manila. It took place in Cavite Nuevo presently known as Cavite City—a peninsula that shoots out in the water at the entrance to Manila Bay. The Battle of Manila Bay is also referred to by some historians as the Battle of Cavite City. The outcome of the war changed the future of the Philippines forever. It ended the nearly three hundred years of Spanish colonial rule in the Philippines. The rest is history.



Spanish artillery at Cavite Navy Yard. The original caption



A Corner of Cavite. From this point a splendid view of Manila bay and a portion of the sunken Spanish fleet is offered.

Your 2020 Taxes: Understanding the CARES Act

Article by Col. Curt Sheldon, USAF (Ret), CFP®, EA, is president and lead planner at C.L. Sheldon & Company, LLC, a financial planning and tax firm.

As 2020 clicked by, changes to the Tax Code probably weren't top of mind for you. That is understandable. But, between the SECURE Act and the CARES Act, there were significant changes to the Tax Code, and you'll want to be aware of them when you file your return this year and as you do your tax planning going forward. Below, you'll find what you need to know about CARES Act changes.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act became law in March 2020 in response to the growing severity of the COVID-19 pandemic. It included nearly \$2.2 trillion in stimulus, much of it targeted toward businesses and business owners. But there are provisions of the law that individual taxpayers need to be aware of.

Economic Impact Payments

The CARES Act provided taxpayers with income below certain limits with a payment of \$1,200. For married couples, the amount was doubled to \$2,400. The Economic Impact Payments also included \$500 per child younger than 17 on Dec. 31, 2020. Parents of dependents 17 or older did not receive the \$500, and the child did not receive a payment either. The payments were made based on your 2019 or 2018 tax return, but the amount you were eligible for is based on your 2020 income.

When you file your 2020 tax return, you'll need to reconcile the amount received and the amount authorized. If the amount authorized is greater than the amount received, you will get a credit toward your 2020 tax.

Continued on Page 6

Continued from Page 5

Charitable Contributions

If you live on base or in post housing, you probably don't itemize your deductions. That means you get no tax benefit from your Combined Federal Campaign or other charitable contributions.

You and others who don't itemize get a one-time good deal and can deduct \$300 of cash donated to charity in 2020 without itemizing. If you itemize, you'll deduct charitable contributions like you always have.

Reporting Retirement Account Distributions

If you took a coronavirus-related distribution from the Thrift Savings Plan or other retirement account, it will be included in your income over three years starting in 2020. You must elect to have the entire distribution included in your 2020 income. If you pay the money back within those three years, you can treat the funds as a rollover. You'll file an amended tax return to get the taxes paid on the prior years' distributions.

This is all similar to what I used to hear on active duty: The only constant in tax law is change. We'll probably see more.

VA Expecting Surge of Veterans Needing Care as Pandemic Restrictions Ease

This article by Patricia Kime originally appeared on Military.com, a leading source of news for the military and veteran community.

Anticipating a surge in veterans seeking medical care after the pandemic ends, [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) officials said Feb. 24 that \$17 billion marked for the VA in the Biden administration's \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill is needed so that it can continue providing all eligible veterans treatment.

Acting VA Under Secretary for Health Dr. Richard Stone said the department expects a "bow wave" of veterans seeking care that was delayed or deferred during the pandemic, and anticipates as many as 300,000 additional veterans enrolling in VA care, having lost their health insurance as a result of pandemic unemployment.

Stone said the VA is "down by 12,000 surgeries a month" -- such as knee replacements and other types of non-emergency treatment -- that were not done elsewhere, and it expects a surge in appointments in late 2021 and early 2022.

"When I was in [the Department of Defense] doing wartime funding, we viewed this as what we call contingency operation funding. I view the American Rescue Plan and the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security, or CARES] Act as a contingency operation," Stone said during a hearing before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee.

The Biden administration's American Rescue Plan includes a \$15 minimum wage, \$1,400 stimulus checks for those who make less than \$75,000 a year, an increase to the child tax credit, funds for the vaccine rollout, and money for reopening schools and supporting small business, as well as money for federal agencies for unexpected expenses related to the pandemic.

The House Budget Committee approved the package Feb. 22 in a 19-16 vote, largely along party lines, with one Democrat, Rep. Lloyd Doggett of Texas, joining Republicans in voting against it. The House is expected to vote on the measure later this week and, if it is approved, it will be considered by the Senate.

Continued on Page 7