



FILIPINO-AMERICAN VETERANS SOCIETY, INC.

NEWSLETTER

"Veterans helping veterans"

JANUARY, 2005



President's Message

The Super Bowl XXXIX is over and the City of Jacksonville is back to normal again. I hope everyone enjoyed all the festivities Jacksonville had to offer. Our City will remember the celebration and talk about it for a very long time.

In the past year, FAVS' membership had grown to over 55 veterans. We visit the sick, attended several funerals, donated some goods to our troops stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan and represented our community in the Veterans Day Parade. FAVS is also involved with the City's veteran programs and initiatives through the Northeast Florida Veterans Council. With that in mind, I like to thank our veterans, their families and others for their support and contribution to the society. Please join me in congratulating all our outgoing officers on a Job Well Done.

This year will be even much stronger and productive with new elected leaders. We will endeavor to increase our membership and reach out to our fellow veterans. FAVS will have several committees to handle projects to meet our goals and objectives. I will consult and submit these committees to our Officers and Board of Directors for approval. Each committee will have a chairperson and 2 to 3 members. FAVS will also reach out to other Filipino American veterans' organization throughout the nation to network and for support of each other's cause.

Last February 3rd, FAVS was present at the Veterans Memorial Wall during the presentation of the "Key to the City" by Mayor John Peyton along with Dan McCarthy and the Chairman of the Impact Player Partners to three Purple Heart recipients. The ceremony is the result of a joint effort with Impact Player Partners, a program where athletes, entertainers & community leaders working together to improve the quality of life of America's heroes wounded in the war on terror. We provided support and made our presence to the City and the veterans' community in an emotional but proud event.

Art Gandionco
President, FAVS

Induction of Officers

Shipmate Bob Ravago and his lovely wife Nellie hosted the FAVS induction potluck meeting/party last Saturday, January 29, 2005 at their new place in Old St. Augustine Road. It was indeed a relaxing atmosphere of camaraderie and friendship. Everyone walked around freely in and out of the house. Some settled inside, while most of the macho veterans braved the cool breeze and mild sprinkle and mingled in the spacious backyard. They naturally established a "mess deck" atmosphere as they chowed-down, all the while, enjoying their meals and shooting the breeze.



CDR. Ed Callao, USN, Retired, administers oath of office to FAVS officers.



Newly elected and appointed officers proudly posed for a group picture after the swearing in ceremony at Bob and Nellie Ravago's residence.

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The meeting was called to order, and the induction of new officers immediately took place, with Ed Callao (Cdr, Ret) administering the oath of office. The new set of Officers for 2005 is as follows: Art Gandionco (re-elected President), Will Hux (Vice-President), Bob Bontilao (re-elected Secretary), Nena Reed (Treasurer), Willie Reyes (Sgt at Arms), Fred Cabaes (Chaplain), and Ding Sabio (Public Relations Officer). Area Officers in Charge are Rudy Alcantara (Arlington), Joe Flores (Mayport), Willie Reyes (Beaches), Claro Magpantay (Orange Park and Argyle), Pat Patangan (Southside), and Bob Bontilao (Orange Park and Clay County). Board of Directors includes Nes Papel and Don Villanueva.



New members Enrique Aquino, 2nd left, and Agosto deAsis, far right posed with other members during December meeting at Dr. Patangan's office. Other new members not in the picture are, Ariel de Jesus, and Cesar Alaras. **Welcome Aboard.**

January Birthdays

A horde of FAVS members are celebrating their birthday this month: President Art Gandionco, ex-VP Gee Mercado, Don Villanueva, Emilio Reyes, Bob Luna, Adrian Almazan, Manny de Guzman, Greg Dorado, Nancy Quitevis, Nena Reed, and Ed Obrero. A Happy Birthday greeting goes to these awesome great Americans!

USO Volunteer Needed

With all the extensive movement of military personnel in and out of the country, the USO has extended its helping hands to the military member traveling to and from his/her next duty station. Any veteran at one point in their military career has been in those shoes before, fully understands the painstaking, arduous, and sometimes confusing journey. The USO is asking for volunteers at the airport, who would be able to help the exhausted traveler. Ed Damilao (AKCM, Ret) has already logged hours of volunteer work for this cause and is responsible for "passing the word" to FAVS. Well done, Ed... now if you kindly sign the FAVS membership form I sent you. I think you will be a good asset in the organization. For more info, or if interested in volunteering, contact Rennie Brown (SCPO, ret) at 741-6655 (work), or 662-7986 (cell).

Featured Veterans

This month's features are President Art Gandionco, Vice-President Will Hux, Treasurer Nena Reed, and Arlington Officer-In-Charge Rudy Alcantara.



Art Gandionco:

Art was originally from Cebu City Philippines and immigrated to the U.S. in June 1971. He enlisted in the US Navy and graduated from Boot Camp in Orlando, Florida in August 1971. Art's first duty assignment was aboard the USS Albany CG-10 stationed in NS Mayport, FL and NS Philadelphia. Following his honorable discharged from active duty, he was transferred to the Naval Reserve status. During his career in the Naval Reserve from July 1975 and upon his retirement in December 1997, he was assign to the Naval Reserve Center in Baltimore, MD, and the USS Stribling DD-867. He moved back to Jacksonville and was assign to NAS Cecil Field aboard MAG 7474, VA 1074, VA 203, and AIMD. He later transferred to NAS JAX, aboard AIMD, NSC 108, NADEP, and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 14. His military membership includes the Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) Branch 91, Society of American Military Engineers (SAME), USS Albany Association and Filipino American Veterans Society, Inc (FAVS). Art graduated from Florida Community College of Jacksonville (FCCJ) with an Associate degree in Mechanical Engineering and the University of North Florida (UNF) with a Bachelor degree in Industrial Technology. Presently, he is a Senior Civil Engineer at RAM Professional Group, Inc. for 12 years with more than 23 years of civil and transportation engineering experience. Art has been married to Yvonne for 29 years and has three children and a granddaughter. He enjoys camping and restoring classic Mustangs.



Will Hux:

Morehead City, North Carolina native, Will Hux spent his high school days at Wilson High School. After high school, he enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1969 and did a tour in Vietnam with the 3rd Marine Division. After his Vietnam tour, he went back to North Carolina and attended the North Carolina State University during his off time.

In 1978, he joined the Army Special Forces Program and was assign to the 3rd Special Forces Battalion, 11th Special Forces Group. In 1979, he graduated with a degree in Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering. He continued his service in the Special Forces Reserve Program and recently completed 35 year of service.

Awards include the Naval Distinguished Service Medal, Navy Marine Corps Medal, Bronze Star with "V", Purple Heart with two stars in lieu of subsequent awards, Combat Action Ribbon,

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Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Master Parachutists Wings, Combat Diver, Military Freefall Parachutist, Special Forces Tab, Ranger Tab, and several foreign awards.

Assignments include Basic Recon, Recon Airborne and Scuba, Drill Instructor, several Special Forces Groups, A-Team member, Company Op Sgt., and 3rd SF Bn, 20th SF Group, A-Company Sergeant Major. Will is currently assigned to the US Special Operations Command at McDill, AFB in Tampa, Florida. Will is also a distinguished rifleman, a member of the National Rifle Team (Army Reserve), and holds the title of Rifle and Long Range Rifle High Master.

Since 1979, Will has been in the commercial diving business and has developed his skills in this field. In 1982, he registered in North Carolina as a professional mechanical engineer. He founded the Marine Engineering Systems Company (MESCO), a diving and consulting business. He moved his engineering practice to Jacksonville and enjoyed tremendous growth in his company.

Will Hux is married to the beautiful and former Pina Hagan of Namatican, Santa Lucia in the province of Ilocos Sur, Philippines. They built a new home two years ago, and plan to spend their retirement between here and the Philippines.



Nena Reed:

Eugenia "Nena" Noceda Reed was born in Tabaco, Albay (Philippines) and grew up in Pandan, Catanduanes. She attended high school at Collegio de Santa Isabel in Naga City and Stella Maris College in Quezon City. She attended college at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila where she graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Foreign Service.

She attended graduate school at UST Law School and subsequently was assigned to the Philippine Embassy in Madrid where she served as Protocol Officer from 1972 to 1977. While in Madrid, she studied International Law at the Universidad Central de Madrid and took French and Italian language lessons.

In May 1977, she arrived in the U.S. and attended graduate school at the University of San Francisco where she earned a Master's degree in Public Administration. Joining the U.S. military in Sep 1978, she completed Air Force Officer Training School in Lackland, Texas and Personnel Officer School in Biloxi, Ms. Tours of duty included Eglin AFB in Fort Walton Beach, MacDill AFB in Tampa, Clark Air Base, Philippines and Mather AFB in Sacramento. She resigned her officer commission in Sep 1988 following her frustration in obtaining a joint-spouse assignment.

She went on, joined the corporate world, and worked for Nations Bank, Professional and Executive Banking Division. Nena later joined Process Technology Group, a Canadian software development company operating in Atlanta, Georgia as HR

Manager. Following her youngest son's high school graduation, she decided to retire and move here in Jacksonville where she plans to open a boutique shop. Nena is a proud mother to sons, Arthur and Alex.



Rudy Alcantara:

Rudy was born in Kawit, Cavite, Philippines. He attended Emiliano Tria Tirona High School and worked for his dad as a tailor at US Naval Station Sangley Point. In 1958, he decided to join the US Navy. His colorful Navy career took him in many different places in the U.S. and other foreign countries. Among his memorable tours of duty, include DaNang, Vietnam; two tours in

Annapolis, MD; and four different naval warships: USS Semmes (DDG18), USS APL 30, USS Twining (DD-540), USS Yosemite (AD-19), and USS W.S. Sims (FF-1059), and a tour with an experimental ship, USS Sarsfield (EDD-837). Shore duties include SERVSCOLCOM, San Diego, CA; Ellyson Field, Pensacola, FL; FLETRACEN Newport, RI; NAS Jacksonville, FL; and NAVSTA Mayport, FL.

Rudy retired from the Navy in November 1977 and upon retirement, he attended the Florida Community College of Jacksonville and pursued a course in Carpentry. He received his Associate's degree in 1978. He worked for Anheuser Busch and after 21 years with the company, he retired in 1999. Rudy was married for 36 years to the late Mary J. of South Carolina. They have four children, four grandchildren and two great grandchildren. Both grandsons are currently serving in the US Navy. Rudy is the society's ID Designer and sometimes fills in as our event photographer.



From your ship store:

FAVS' headgears shown above are now available to all members. Our official Pershing cap, which we normally wear during formal military events, can now be purchased at \$25.50 each. We have only a few sizes left in our ship store. Our ball cap is \$10 each and FAVS patches are \$5 each. Contact Art Gandionco at 237-4364 if you want to purchase any of the above.

Note: Please feel free to send any letters, articles and items on topics of general interest to our veterans. Email articles to illustrious2000@hotmail.com or mail to Bob Bontilao, 1671 Misty Lake Drive, Orange Park, FL, 32003.

Filipino - American Veterans Society

Membership Application Form

Membership for: All veterans who served one day or more or are currently serving; spouse of deceased veterans, who served in the Armed Forces of the United States; and qualified dependents of veterans are eligible for membership. Simply complete this form and return to:

FAVS, Inc.

Bob Bontilao, Secretary, USN Retired
1671 Misty Lake Drive
Orange Park, Florida 32003

Applicant's Name _____ Birth Date _____

Retired ____ Active ____ Reserve ____ Honorable Discharge ____ Rank _____ (Optional)

Branch of Service: USN ____ USMC ____ USCG ____ USA ____ USAF ____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Telephone # (____) _____ - _____

E-mail Address _____

Name of Spouse _____

Applicant's Occupation _____

Membership Involvement: Civic ____ Benefits ____ Political ____ Special Events ____ Scholarship ____
Charity ____ Finance ____

Membership in other military organization: (Y) ____ (N) ____

Signature _____ Date _____

Lifetime Membership Fee \$30 Payable to: Filipino-American Veterans Society

For FAVS use only:

Approved By: _____ Disapproved By: _____

Paid _____ Not Paid _____ Date _____

Member# _____