

**FACSPS President Report to the General Membership**  
**May 7, 2005, Olympia Center**

Good afternoon dear Colleagues:

I am happy to report that my two years have passed with the Community by continuing to pursue its avowed objectives – those of projecting the image of Filipino Americans as model citizens vis a vis the pursuit of education for its youth and adults, civic mindedness, cultural adaptation, respect for elders, charity, and consciousness of their role in society. We remain to be a cohesive group willing to take on the challenges of our life in America, and helping one another. We are in the forefront of charity and scholarship. We spent a great deal of funds for scholarship grants, treating children who are physically impaired, and providing the needed impetus for the needs of women.

We have established a tradition for our year-round activities: seniors program in March, scholarship awards in May; performance of visiting artists from the Philippines in late spring or summer; participation in *Pagdiriwang* in Seattle; fellowship retreat and picnic in summer; formal ball in October; scholastic competition in November; Holiday party and home-to-home caroling in December. All of these are interspaced with our cultural and diversity involvement in the region, in senior homes and schools through folk dances, songs, and stage plays. The many private gatherings for birthdays, weddings, baptism, house blessings, and at times, prayer for the deceased all help in galvanizing us into a dynamic community of equals who truly love and respect one another. Let us continue to do so. Let us always be connected to one another.

One sticking point is our envisioned community center. On two occasions we were almost there – first in purchasing the Caubat lot at South Bay only to be advised by the County that we cannot be build on more than half of the area because of it being a wetland. The second, the stage was set to purchase the Bible Church (*thanks to Auring Chow*) only, again, to be advised by the County that indeed more than half the area is wetland, and so there is no room for expansion. Four of our realtor members (*Auring Chow, Ruben Ramos, Edgar Carino, and Arnold Aquino*) continue to find for us the real estate or property for even a modest community center. Imelda Ang is looking at the feasibility of the Olympia school district providing us with some old classrooms we can refurbish and use as starter community center.

Have you visited our FACSPS website yet? Please do so at [www.facsps.org](http://www.facsps.org). People say it is impressive and highly informative. Let's thank our webmaster Ted Zarate for that. The website for one of our main projects in the Philippines is [www.lovepres.org](http://www.lovepres.org), the Loving Presence Foundation. We are now known around the globe as an organization accomplishing significant charitable and educational inroads. We are a subject of a chapter in the monograph called on *Pulso* of the Institute on Church and Social Issues. Our project in the Philippines has caught the attention of national and international philanthropic organizations in Philippines, Canada, Holland and USA.

Our cash position is on the \$70,000 level. Last year, despite our big expenses for scholarship for students in the Olympia area, and in the Philippines on the treatment of children with physical defects, concern for women, we still have a net income of some \$12,000. We shall continue to build up our resources.

We have to be aggressive about collection of membership fees. However, we don't want to exclude members simply because of non-payment of membership dues. Perhaps, they just forgot. We need your suggestions on how to improve fee collections. We tried sending members self-stamped envelopes for

their payments. On the other hand, what is encouraging is when we have activities like concerts, balls, or games, campaign for used clothing and food for the poor, potluck, host family for visiting artists, and other projects needing warm bodies and in-kind resources, the support of the members has always been impressive. *Nakakagulat din.*

We need suggestions on innovative programs we could launch in addition to those we traditionally hold. Someone suggested inviting Sharon Cuneta or Martin Nievera to perform in Olympia instead of university groups for our shows. Well and good, let's look into that. As an aside, I heard that the talent fee of Sharon is some \$35,000 a performance, and Martin is some \$24,000. The market in Olympia may not be able to support such high financed concerts. The UST (University of Santo Tomas) Singers whom we are hosting on June 11 at River Ridge High School costs only \$2,500 for honoraria.

By the way, please don't miss the Concert of UST Singers for anything. They are very very good...singing and dancing, all 34 talented young artists from the oldest university in the Philippines.

A suggestion for fundraising is to have Seniors Queen or Teen Princess Contests by selling tickets for the candidates. Henceforth, a budding seniors queen or teen princess will have to spend some \$10,000 to win. Do we really like that? *Yayaman tayo eh baka maghirap naman yung pamilya.* They do these in Tacoma and Seattle.

We will pioneer on a TV regular program about our activities to be aired on Channel 3, TCTV. Ruben Ramos and I are presently on a crash program to learn the technology of television production. We have training classes from 6-9 PM at TCTV in Olympia, three days a week for the next three weeks. We hope others will find time to train so that we'll have more hands in the production process. Soon we will air our FACSPS TV shows to contribute to cultural interchange and diversity in the region.

I will now end this short report with a fervent thanks to everyone for your support. Let's look forward to another year, and the next, and the next to a progressive Filipino American Community of South Puget Sound. Let us show to the world that Filipino Americans are capable of running and managing a big organization. Let's think big... let's get away from this *sari-sari* store mentality of doing little things -- that being small is good enough. Let's not just be hardworking. Let us be smart.

Thank you.

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