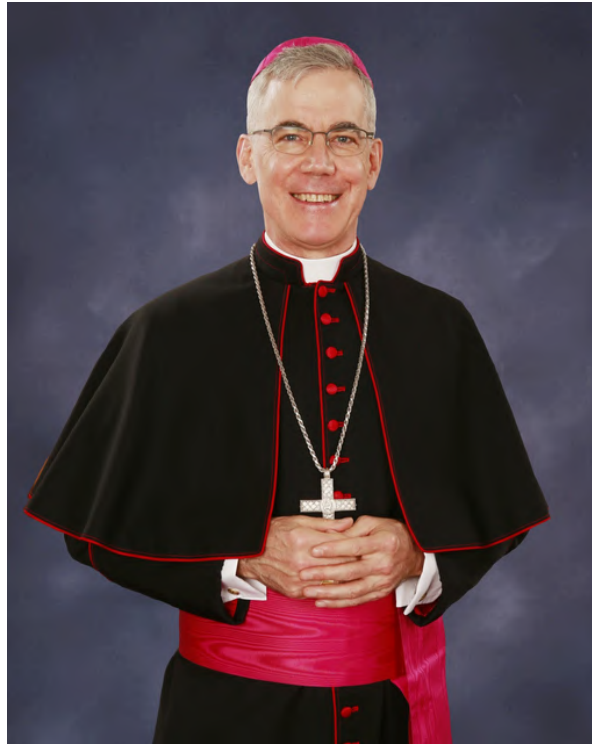


Official Newsletter of
Rotary Club of Manila

balita

ISSUE NO. 4000 | MARCH 7, 2024

GUEST OF HONOR AND SPEAKER



ARCHBISHOP CHARLES J. BROWN
Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines

Kabalita

The Lenten season is a perfect time to pause, reflect, and set aside our egos. It is an opportune time to recognize our brokenness as humans. We are all flawed and, through self-examination and prayer, must humbly acknowledge our sinful nature and the need for conversion. With an honest resolve to amend our lives by invoking God's love, wisdom, and mercy, we can surely all worthily receive the gifts of Jesus' resurrection -- the remediation of sins and the promise of new life.



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PROGRAM TIMETABLE

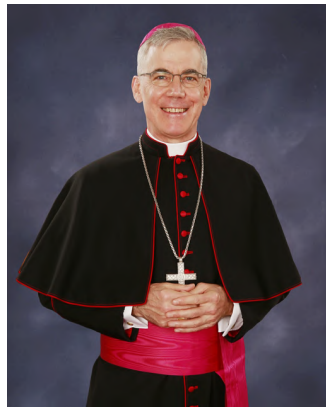
31st Weekly Membership Meeting

Rotary Year 2023-2024
Thursday, 07 March 2024, 12:30 PM
MANILA POLO CLUB

Moderator: PD ISSAM ELDEBS

12:00 PM	Registration	
12:30 PM	Call to Order	PRES. RAFAEL "Raffy" M. ALUNAN III
	Invocation	PDG ALEX ANDER "Alex" P. CUREG
	Philippine National Anthem	AVP of RCM Members
	Rotary Club of Manila Hymn	RCM WF Music Chorale
	The Four (4) Way Test	PD ISSAM ELDEBS
	Acknowledgment of Guests	
	Welcome Song	RCM WF Music Chorale
	<u>Birthday Celebrants</u>	
	Mar. 2 PVP Fausto Preysler	
	Mar. 7 Rtn. Tong Payumo	
	IPP Hermie Esguerra	
	<i>Maligayang Bati / Happy Birthday Song</i>	RCM WF Music Chorale
12:50 PM	President's Time	PRES. RAFAEL "Raffy" M. ALUNAN III
1:05 PM	Introduction of the Guest of Honor & Speaker	RTN. VICTOR "Vic" G. GARCIA III
	<u>Guest of Honor and Speaker</u>	
	Address:	
	His Excellency, the Most Reverend	
	CHARLES JOHN BROWN	
	Papal Nuncio to the Philippines	
1:30 PM	Open Forum / Q.A.	
1:50 PM	Presentation of Certificate of Appreciation	PRES. RAFAEL "Raffy" M. ALUNAN III
2:00 PM	Adjournment	PRES. RAFAEL "Raffy" M. ALUNAN III

GUEST OF HONOR & SPEAKER



ARCHBISHOP CHARLES J. BROWN

Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines

Born: New York City (USA), 13 October 1959

I. Academic information

B.A. (History) University of Notre Dame, 1981

M.A. (Theology) University of Oxford, 1984

M.A. (Medieval Studies) University of Toronto, 1985

M.Div. Saint Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie, Yonkers, NY, 1989

S.Th.D. (Doctorate in Sacred Theology), Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo, Rome, 2008

II. Professional Information

Ordained to the priesthood in Saint Patrick's Cathedral for the Archdiocese of New York on 13 May 1989

1989 - 1991: Parochial vicar in Saint Brendan's Church, East 206 Street, Bronx, New York

1994 - 2011: Officer of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Vatican City State

2011 - 2017: Apostolic Nuncio to Ireland (26 November 2011)

2017 - 2020: Apostolic Nuncio to Albania (9 March 2017)

2020 - : Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines (appointed 28 September 2020, presented Letter of Credence 14 December 2020)

Languages spoken fluently: English, Italian

EDITOR'S NOTE

THOUGHTS ON GOLF (PART 2)

Last week, I wrote about my fascination with golf and the lessons it imparts: humility, perseverance, the importance of being focused in the moment, and on savoring and enjoying each step, each stroke, each putt.

On the same day I wrote my piece last week, my wife surprised me with her first ever Ladies Golf Championship win in the San Beda Law Golf Club tournament. I am sure this milestone will further inspire her and make her love the sport even more. Instrumental to her good score was her ability to make consistent good swings, as well as her wise club selections during the game.



Raoul C. Creencia
Editor-in-Chief, *balita*

Wise club selection. This is important. It bears emphasizing that one's golf bag is equipped with several clubs, and each golfer uses these various clubs in the course of the game.

In each bag, there is usually the driver, fairway woods, hybrids, irons, wedges, and a putter. Each has its unique loft, shaft length, weight distribution, and shape. Each has its unique utility and value, too. The variety of golf clubs for a golfer's utilization brings some reflections.

Firstly, in life, as in golf, you need a different tool for specific and different situations. A golfer do not use a driver when a ball is in a fried-egg lie in the sand. A wedge, on the other hand, will surely not suffice if you need your ball to clear a 210-yard water hazard.

In life, as in golf, you need to wisely use the right tools to get out of tight situations. For each golf shot, especially the challenging ones, you need to know the line, angle and needed trajectory, and accordingly use the correct club to achieve your target.

In life, as in golf, you must be fully focused on your objective, trust your pre-determined and well-studied move, and just go for it.

In life, as in golf, you need to carefully study your environment. In determining a shot during a game, you must evaluate your situation: measure the length of the grass you are in, check the lie of the ball, know the direction and strength of the wind you need to contend with. It is only after then that you determine the appropriate shot to make.

EDITOR'S NOTE

In life, as in golf, you cannot allow yourself to be distracted or curtailed by hurdles and difficulties, including the noise and cacophony of useless gibberish around you. As a golfer, you cannot allow yourself to be intimidated by the bunkers, water hazards, cliffs, and ravines. Instead, you should boldly set your sights on the green and trust that your best shot will get you there.

In life, as in golf, you must know when to make a more conservative move. As a golfer, you will not always be in the best position to attack the green. It is thus advisable to adjust, wisely manage the situation, take a lay-up shot, and make the best up and down.

In life, as in golf, the journey is always best enjoyed in the company of friends. Every social golfer knows that, more than a good score, it is the time spent with friends, enjoying a good laugh, and having a couple of drinks after a game that make a golf day lovingly memorable. Indeed, what good is a hole-in-one if there is nobody there to witness you actually accomplishing it? Also, a funny goof in the golf course becomes more indelible when your best buddies are there to playfully sass you about it.

In life, as in golf, you become a true gentleman not just by what you say, but (more importantly) by what you do. The walk must match the talk. Golfers declare their own penalties in the course of the game, not necessarily because somebody saw it, but because it is the truth, it is fair, it strengthens the friendship and trust among fellow golfers, and quite simply, because it is the right thing to do.

In life, as in golf, you will make mistakes, you will falter, you will not always hit the ball perfectly, but there will always be a second shot, an opportunity to recover and redeem yourself.



30th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

March 1, 2024



PROGRAM MODERATOR



The much applauded and animated moderating job of **Rtn. Joaquin "Jop" Esquivias** gave the week's meeting a unique and cheerful vibe.

30th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

March 1, 2024

CALL TO ORDER



On behalf of **Pres. Rafael "Raffy" M. Alunan III**, VP **Reginald "Reggie" Yu** called the 30th weekly membership meeting to order.

INVOCATION



With a beautifully written prayer, **Rtn. Teddy Tee** led the invocation for the membership.

30th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

March 1, 2024

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL ANTHEM



Rotarians and guests took a position of respect as they sang the Philippine National Anthem.

FOUR-WAY TEST



Rotarians were again reminded of their commitment to live by the 4-Way Test, with the recitation of this mantra led by **Rtn. Christian "Chris" Bello**.

RCM HYMN



The singing of the Manila Rotary Hymn once again brought more meaning to the weekly gathering.

30th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

March 1, 2024

INTRODUCTION OF THE GUEST SPEAKER



PDG Vicente "Vince" Carlos introduced the guest speaker.

GUEST SPEAKER



Mr. Ramon "RJ" Jacinto gave an interesting talk, much to the delight of the Rotarians and guests in attendance.

30th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

March 1, 2024

OPEN FORUM



Mr. Ramon "RJ" Jacinto gamely engaged in an interactive conversation with visiting Rotarian from RC Sydney, (Australia) **PP Geoffrey Bernard William Little**.



30th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

March 1, 2024

TOKEN OF APPRECIATION



The RCM Plaque of Appreciation and meaningful tokens were handed to **Mr. Ramon "RJ" Jacinto** by **DGE Joaquin "Jackie" C. Rodriguez** and **Pres. Rafael "Raffy" M. Alunan III.**

30th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

March 1, 2024

PRESIDENT'S TIME



Pres. Rafael "Raffy" M. Alunan III delivered a very brief welcome message and thanked everyone present. He also shared some personal accounts and fond memories with Mr. Ramon Jacinto, and thanked him as well for hosting the venue for the 30th WMM.

ADJOURNMENT



After thanking the guest speaker and all attendees, the meeting was adjourned by **Pres. Rafael "Raffy" M. Alunan III**.

30th WEEKLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING: A RECAP

March 1, 2024

MEETING FELLOWSHIP





CLUB ADMINISTRATION

RCM Members' Attendance Report RY 2023-2024

FEBRUARY 2024	March 01, 2024 MR. RAMON "RJ" JACINTO
MEMBERS PRESENT	24
MAKE UP ATTENDEES	13
EXEMPTED FROM ATTENDANCE	1
ON LEAVE	0
Total Active Members	36
Total # of Members	240
TOTAL ATTENDANCE %:	15%
ROTARACTORS	0
MEDIA	2
EMBASSIES / DIPLOMATIC CORPS	0
DG, DGE, DGN, PDG	0
GOHS / GS	1
Visiting Rotarians	6
Guests of RCM MEMBERS	12
TOTAL ATTENDEES	43



CLUB ADMINISTRATION

LIST OF ATTENDEES

1	Albaña, Michael Jaey C
2	Alunan III, Rafael M.
3	Aragon, Joshua Reuben
4	Aventura Jr. Avenilo L.
5	Benedicto, Sixto T.
6	Bolton, Wilhelm
7	Cabangon, Edgard A.
8	Carlos, Vicente J.
9	Davis, Raymond N.
10	Esquivias, Joaquin Pablo A.
11	Garcia, Paul Joseph M.
12	Hernandez, Edwin H
13	Macatoman, Abdulgani M.
14	Palacios, Albert C.
15	Pallasigue, John Brian
16	Pineda, Jr. Patricio F.
17	Rodriguez Sr., Joaquin C.
18	Serapio, Carlos G.
19	Sibayan, Joselito H.
20	Tee, Teddy Jr. B.
21	Valencia, Rodolfo G.
22	Yu, Reginald Tieng
23	Simon, Juanito A.
24	Bello, Christian Cesar P.

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

LIST OF ABSENTEES

1	Aboy, Valentino G.
2	Abriam, Ariel
3	Acosta, Crispiniano G.
4	Agnes, Jerry A.
5	Alberto, Raymund Arnold S.
6	Alcantara, Isidro C.
7	Alday, Albert Singson
8	Alingog, Aldous A.
9	Ampil, Alvin R.
10	Andal, Avelino L.
11	Ang, Richard T.
12	Angara, Marius
13	Arguelles, Pablo C.
14	Balanay, Aries B.
15	Bartolome III, Arsenio M.
16	Batur, Sinan
17	Bautista, John Jr. I.
18	Bediones, Rodolfo P.
19	Bella Jr. Geronimo P.
20	Benedicto III, Bernardo T.
21	Bertelsen Bertel, Ingmar
22	Bhalla, Pardeep
23	Biltz, Olivier
24	Blanco, Manuel M.
25	Bogovich, Jason M.
26	Branellec, Jacques
27	Buendia, Carlos C.
28	Caasi, Jr., Urbano S.
29	Cabuñag, Rogelio R.
30	Camat, Nathaniel
31	Campos, Jr., Joselito D.
32	Camus, Jose Fernando B
33	Canon, Raul Jr. E.
34	Carranceja, Arvin Arik B
35	Castro, Karlo Eugene Josef M.
36	Catalan, Rodillo R.
37	Cenica, John T.
38	Chahwan, Rami
39	Chien, Liang-Tah Steve
40	Chotrani, Johnny N.
41	Co, Ferdinand C.
42	Coyiuto, Jr., Robert G.
43	Creencia, Raoul C.
44	Cureg, Alexander P.
45	Cutter, John Michael
46	David, Virgilio
47	Dayang, Jr Juan E.
48	De Castro, Juan Arturo Iluminado C.
49	De Venecia, Jr., Jose C.
50	Del Rosario Sr., Oscar A.
51	Del Valle, Randolph T
52	Dela Cruz, Artemio F.
53	Dela Cruz, Joseph Emmanuel A.
54	Diokno, Benjamin E.

55	Dionisio, Rafael Ignacio S.
56	Domingo, Rico V.
57	Dominguez III, Carlos G.
58	Dy, Manuel C.
59	Echavez, Antonio V.
60	Egan, Brendan W.L.
61	Eldebs, Issam
62	Engelbrecht, Francois
63	Enriquez III, Eduardo V.
64	Esguerra, Herminio S.
65	Eugenio, John Emyl G.
66	Fajardo, Beda G.
67	Fernandez, Antonio Jaime Jose V.
68	Flameño, Franco Martell Sacramento
69	Follosco, Ceferino Jr. G.
70	Garcia, Herbert Joey
71	Garcia, Theodore Q
72	Garcia, III Victor G.
73	Gaspar, Fernando L.
74	Gierran, Dante A.
75	Go, Daniel C.
76	Go, Henry S.
77	Go, Michael G.
78	Goco, Raoul Roberto P
79	Gonzalez, Michael Raymond L.
80	Guarin, Michael Arcatomy H.
81	Guevara, Jr., Domingo S.
82	Guevara, Ricardo S.
83	Hallare, Jr., Delfin T.
84	Hallare, Nicolo S.
85	Hallerbach, Mathias
86	Harle, Wolfgang Kurt
87	Hesse, Uwe
88	Hortaleza, Rolando B
89	Ibuyan, Benedict Julius F.
90	Jang, Jae Jung
91	Joseph, Ralph Lim
92	Joseph, Robert Ian M
93	Jucaban, Jeric J.
94	Juico, Francis E.
95	Kalaw, Teodoro Alejandro Y IV
96	Katigbak, J Alfonso L
97	Klebs, David
98	Koh, Paul Anthony T
99	Kunack, Lutz H.
100	Lacambacal, Alvin D.
101	Lacson, Sebastian Arsenio R.
102	La'o Emilio, Gonzales
103	Laurel, Ricardo P.
104	Laya, Jaime C.
105	Lazaro, Juan Miguel G
106	Ledda, Jaime Victor B.
107	Lee, Richard L.
108	Li, Richard Joseph Chang

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

LIST OF ABSENTEES

109	Liamzon Jr., Romeo Thaddeus R.
110	Lim, David Eduardo T.
111	Lim, Richard
112	Locsin, Arsenio Z.
113	Locsin, Roberto R
114	Lonzaga, Reinerio C.
115	Lopa, Antonio A.
116	Lopez, Antonio S.
117	Lopez, Arthur M.
118	Macapagal, Michael T
119	Magbanua, Gerry P.
120	Magpale, Jose Paolo A
121	Magsaysay, Francisco D.
122	Magsaysay, Jesus Vicente E.
123	Manalaysay, Cesar P.
124	Mangalile, Senen T.
125	Martinez, Ronald
126	Matschuck, Guenter Gerhard G.
127	Mauricio, Antonilo DC
128	Meloto Jr., Antonio
129	Mendoza, Estelito P.
130	Mendoza, Miguel
131	Mendoza, Raymund Joseph Ian O.
132	Mommaerts, Steve
133	Montel, Juan Manuel C.
134	Mueller, Klaus
135	Nolido, Ramon Alberto B.
136	Nones, Romeo C.
137	Nuñez, Jr., Jose A.
138	Obrado, Daniel Calzado
139	Ocampo, Teodoro J.
140	Ong, Jovee K.
141	Ong, Phillip L.
142	Ozaeta, Miguel Antonio L.
143	Pagdanganan, Roberto M.
144	Pañares, Ben Thomas P.
145	Pascual, Abraham F.
146	Patterson, Colin David
147	Payumo, Felicito C.
148	Peliño, Wilfredo M.
149	Pineda, Jr., Jesus M.
150	Pizarra, Jordan M.
151	Preysler, Jr., Fausto R.
152	Pujalte, Jr., Jose S.
153	Quisumbing, Ramon De Jesus DP
154	Ramos, Claver P.
155	Rast, Tobias
156	Recto, Philip H.
157	Reyes, Crispino P.
158	Reynolds, David J.
159	Robertz, Constantine Franz Josef
160	Rodriguez, Gerard Sean
161	Rodriguez, Joaquin Anthony H.
162	Romualdez, Ferdinand Martin G.
163	Romualdez, Jose Manuel G.

164	Roño, Marlon R.
165	Roxas, Michael D.
166	Sarasola II, Jose Ma. I.
167	Sarmiento, Ricardo M.
168	Schmitz, Stefan
169	Schneider, Bernd
170	Schouair, Farid Alain
171	Sevilla, Luis Angelo L.
172	Shimoda, Shigeru
173	Sicat, Michael Allan E.
174	So, Warren S.
175	Sobrepeña, Robert John L.
176	Soler, Jose Antonio A.
177	Stranathan, Ike Edward
178	Syjuco, Jr., Jose A.
179	Tagaysay, Hector O.
180	Talampas, Jose Angel L.
181	Talusan, Ferdinand E
182	Tamano, Shalimar H.
183	Tamayo, Victor L.
184	Tan, Eusebio V.
185	Tan, John G.
186	Tan, Lawrence Li
187	Tang, Jimmy T.
188	Tanglao, Noel V.
189	Taylor-Dormond, Marvin
190	Tejuma, Sham Michael
191	Tillmann, Hansel Joseph Michael L.
192	Uy, Ivan John Enrile
193	Valdes, Joel C.
194	Valdez, Amado D.
195	Valdez, Jason Rolando N.
196	Valencia, John Nico P.
197	Vazquez, Evaristo Jr.
198	Villarica, Henry R.
199	Villegas, Raoul A.
200	Wombwell, Philip B
201	Yap, Enrique Y. Jr.
202	Yu, Geoffrey C.
203	Yujuico, Brendon M.V.
204	Zaldarriaga, Felix Francisco S.
205	Zeitouni, Nagi
206	Zheng, Zhi Hao
207	Zialcita, Xavier Y.
208	Zimmer, Christopher
209	Cortez, Lorenzo
210	Steley, Colin
211	Yasushi, Iwata
212	Nomura, Kazuhiro
213	Almelo, Manuel G. MD
214	Co, Val Constantine L.
215	Lorenzana, Delfin
216	Hanada, Takahiro
217	Zosa, Rolando M.

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

List of Members Who Have Paid Their Annual Dues for RY 2023-2024

(As of March 6, 2024)

FULLY PAID

1	Aboy, Valentino "Val" G.
2	Abriam, Ariel
3	Acosta, Crispiniano "Cris" G.
4	Albaña, Michael Jaey "Mike"
5	Alberto, Raymund Arnold S.
6	Alcantara, Isidro "Butch"
7	Alday, Albert S.
8	Alingog, Aldous "Rex" A.
9	Alunan, Rafael "Raffy" M.
10	Ampil, Alvin R.
11	Andal, Avelino L. "Billy"
12	Angara, Marius
13	Aragon, Joshua
14	Arguelles, Pablo
15	Aventura, Avenilo, Jr. "Jun" L.
16	Balanay, Aries
17	Bartolome, Arsenio III "Archit" M.
18	Batur, Sinan
19	Bautista, John
20	Bediones, Rodolfo "Rudy" P.
21	Bella, Geronimo, Jr. "Jun" Dela Paz
22	Bello, Christian Cesar "Chris"
23	Benedicto, Sixto "Noy" T.
24	Bertelsen, Bertel Ingmar
25	Blanco, Manuel "Manny" M.
26	Bogovich, Jason M.
27	Bolton, Wilhelm "Bollie"
28	Branelec, Jacques
29	Cabangon, Edgard
30	Cabuñag, Rogelio R. "Roger"
31	Camat, Nathaniel
32	Campos, Joselito, Jr. "Butch" D.
33	Camus, Fernando "Nando"
34	Canon, Raul Jr. E. "Butch"
35	Carlos, Vicente "Vince" J.
36	Carranceja, Arvin Arik
37	Castro, Karlo Eugene Josef "Karlo"
38	Catalan, Rodillo "Teng"
39	Cenica, John
40	Chahwan, Rami
41	Co, Ferdinand
42	Co, Val Constantine "Val"
43	Cortez, Lorenzo Ruiz
44	Coyiuto, Robert, Jr. "Jun" G.
45	Creencia, Raoul
46	Cureg, Alexander "Alex" P.
47	Cutter, John Michael "Michael"
48	Davis, Raymond "Rey" N.
49	Dayang, Juan E. "Jed"
50	De Castro, Juan Arturo Ilumindo C. "Johnny"
51	De Venecia, Jose Jr. "Joe"
52	Del Rosario, Oscar
53	Dionisio, Rafael Ignacio
54	Domingo, Rico V.

55	Dominguez, III, Carlos "Sonny" G.
56	Dy, Manuel "Manny" C.
57	Egan, Brendan "Bren" W.L.
58	Eldebs, Issam "Sam"
59	Enriquez, Eduardo III "Jujut" V.
60	Esguerra, Herminio "Hermie" S.
61	Esquivias, Joaquin Pablo "Jop" A.
62	Eugenio, John Emyl "Emyl" G.
63	Fajardo, Beda G.
64	Fernandez, Antonio Jaime Jose V. "JJ"
65	Flameno, Franco Martell S.
66	Follosco, Ceferino, Jr. "Jun" G.
67	Garcia, Herbert Joey "Joey" D.
68	Garcia, Paul Joseph "PJ"
69	Garcia, Theodore Q. "Teddy"
70	Garcia, Victor III G. "Vic"
71	Go, Daniel "Danny" C.
72	Go, Henry Sy
73	Go, Michael Guy
74	Goco, Raoul
75	Guarin, Michael Arcatomy "Mike" H.
76	Guevara, Domingo, Jr. "Boy" S.
77	Guevara, Ricardo "Ricky" S.
78	Hallare, Delfin, Jr. "Jun" T.
79	Hallare, Nicolo "Nic"
80	Hanada, Takihiro
81	Hallerbach, Mathias
82	Harle, Wolfgang Kurt
83	Hernandez, Edwin
84	Hortaleza, Rolando
85	Ibuyan, Benedict Julius "Ben"
86	Iwata, Yasushi
87	Joseph, Ralph L.
88	Jucaban, Jeric J.
89	Kalaw, Teodoro Alejandro IV "Teddy" A. Y.
90	Katigbak, J Alfonso L
91	Klebs, David
92	Koh, Paul Anthony
93	Kunck, Lutz H.
94	Lacambacal, Alvin D.
95	Lacson, Sebastian "Basty"
96	La'o, Emilio Gonzalez
97	Laurel, Ricardo "Ricky" P.
98	Laya, Jaime "Jimmy" C.
99	Lazaro, Juan Miguel "Miguel"
100	Ledda, Jaime Victor "Jet" B.
101	Lee, Richard "Dick" L.
102	Li, Richard Joseph Chang
103	Liamzon, Romeo Thaddeus "Thad" R.
104	Lim, David Eduardo Ty
105	Lim, Richard
106	Locsin, Arsenio "Nick" Z.
107	Locsin, Roberto R. "Boj"
108	Lonzaga, Reinerio "Ner" C.

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

List of Members Who Have Paid Their Annual Dues for RY 2023-2024

109	Lopez, Antonio "Tony"
110	Lopez, Arthur "Art" M.
111	Macapagal, Michael "Mac"
112	Macatoman, Abdulgani "Gani"
113	Magbanua, Gerry
114	Magpale, Jose Paolo A.
115	Magsaysay, Francisco "Paco" D.
116	Magsaysay, Jesus Vicente Enciso "JV"
117	Manalaysay, Cesar P "Citos"
118	Mangalile, Senen
119	Martinez, Ronald
120	Matschuck, Guenter "Gunter" G.
121	Mauricio, Antonilo "Anton"
122	Mendoza, Estelito "Titong" P.
123	Mendoza, Miguel "Mico"
124	Mendoza, Raymund Joseph Ian "Raji" O.
125	Mommaerts, Steve "Momo"
126	Montel, Juan Manuel C.
127	Nolido, Ramby
128	Nomura, Kazuhiro
129	Nones, Romeo "Romy" C.
130	Nunez, Jose, Jr. "Pepo" A.
131	Obrado, Daniel C.
132	Ocampo, Teodoro "Teddy" J.
133	Ong, Phillip "Phil" L.
134	Pagdanganan, Roberto "Obet" M.
135	Palacios, Albert "Hans" C.
136	Pallasigue, John Brian "JB"
137	Pañares, Ben Thomas "Toby" P.
138	Pascual, Abraham "Abe" F.
139	Patterson, Colin David
140	Payumo, Felicito C.
141	Peliño, Wilfredo "Willie" M.
142	Pineda, Jr., Jesus "Susing" M.
143	Pineda, Jr., Patricio "Bebot" F.
144	Pizarra, Jordan M.
145	Preysler, Fausto, Jr. R.
146	Pujalte, Jose Jr. "Brix"
147	Quisumbing, Ramon "Mon" J.
148	Ramos, Claver P.
149	Rast, Tobias "Tobi"
150	Recto, Philip H.
151	Reyes, Crispino P. "Babes"
152	Reynolds, David John "Dave"
153	Rodriguez, Joaquin "Jack" H.
154	Rodriguez, Joaquin "Jackie" C.
155	Romualdez, Ferdinand "Martin"

PARTIALLY PAID

1	Agnes, Jerry A.
2	Buendia, Carlos C. "Caloy"
3	Chotrani, Johnny N.
4	Dela Cruz, Artemio F "Art"

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161	Schimitz, Stefan
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MARCH-APRIL 2024

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More than just venues

Asia-Pacific's top convention centres are proving to be more than just spaces for hire, as they play a bigger role in connecting event organisers and attendees with meaningful experiences in the destination

Philippines' MICE sector is thriving, but upgrades are essential | Jakarta's infrastructure evolution helps the city transform | Kobe and Osaka maximise potential with World Expo 2025

Room for much more

The Philippines has spruced up with new business events hardware, but more large-scale options and government budget are needed

By Rosa Ocampo

The Philippines business events sector is recovering at a steady clip, with wins including the Rotary International Convention 2028 – where 25,000 people are expected to attend – and the WorldChef's Asian Presidents Forum 2023, and Asia Pacific Confederation of Chemical Engineering Congress 2023.

Big-ticket entertainment events that the FIBA World Cup 2023 which brought in an estimated 50,000 visitors, are also contributing to the country's events industry.

However, industry stakeholders feel that the Philippines needs to construct larger venues and hotels to stay on par with other major business events cities.

Currently, the Philippines' capital Manila's three largest venues – the World Trade Center Metro Manila, SMX Convention Center Manila and Philippine International Convention Center – have a combined space of 25,000m², no match for venues in other Asia countries that are several times larger.

The lack of large-scale venues is skirted by holding events in multiple cities, similar to what was done when hosting the Southeast Asia Games in 2005 and 2019. Another way to hold a large-scale event in Manila, such as Philconstruct, is to split it into two venues.

For this reason, Joey Bondoc, Colliers Philippines associate director research, recommended that "developers build more MICE facilities, similar to the SMX model of building SMX convention centres beside Radisson or Park Inn hotels."

He added that such venues could be developed near regional airports, international gateways, or within massive integrated communities.

"Building a standalone MICE facility just will not cut it... One of our recom-

mendations is for developers to follow the airport modernisation and expansion thrust of the government," Bondoc said.

One destination that comes to mind is Cebu, which is currently undergoing massive airport and road infrastructure development. An SMX Convention Center – much bigger than the SMX Convention Center Manila – is currently under construction, and is scheduled to open in 2026. Cebu also opened the NUSTAR Convention Center earlier in 2023, which offers 2,500m² of venue space for up to 2,000 pax. The venue, part of Cebu's first integrated resort, hosted the Philippine Travel Exchange 2023. Adjacent to the convention centre is the Fili hotel, which provides 379 keys and another ballroom for up to 470 people.

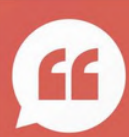
Joy de Mesa, director of sales and marketing of Robinsons Hotels and Resorts, said the NUSTAR Convention Center addresses the growing events demand, but this push for larger gatherings needs to be matched by more hotel rooms.

That is why, de Mesa shared, that apart from Fili, two more hotels will be built within the NUSTAR integrated resort, bringing its total to 1,000 keys.

Bigger hotels will not just benefit large-scale conventions, but also the burgeoning corporate meetings and incentive travel sector.

Mary Ann Ong, Bridges Travel general manager inbound, shared that her clients tend to select destinations such as Boracay and Bohol, where there are big hotels for groups to stay together.

Another up-and-coming business events destination is Clark. Bondoc explained Clark's appeal: "Given its foreign-branded hotels and the recent completion of Clark International Airport's new terminal, (along with the presence) of major BPO (business process outsourcing) firms and manufacturing locators, we believe that the Clark Freeport Zone is a good location for major local and international gatherings."



The safety and security of business events participants are essential in attracting international events to the Philippines.

Mike Albaña, Vice president and general manager of SMX Convention Center



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He opined that Clark's status as a business events destination will continue to rise as more domestic and international flights are added, and could potentially be a "spillover" city should there be a lack of event space in Manila.

SM Hotels and Conventions Corp. (SMHCC) expanded its portfolio with the opening of SMX Convention Center Clark in 2022. The second standalone convention centre after SMX Manila, the property boasts a gross leasable space of more than 4,000m², comprising two-level event venues and a mezzanine floor for offices. Function spaces comprise three trade halls, three function rooms, and 14 smaller meeting rooms.

"SMX Convention Center's presence in this vibrant district of the North solidifies SMHCC's unprecedented growth and optimism as Clark Freeport is poised to become the preferred MICE and tourism destination in the Asia-Pacific region by 2030," said SMHCC executive vice president Peggy E. Angeles.

Mike Albaña, vice president and general manager of SMX Convention Center, added: "To develop the Philippines' busi-



Clark International Airport

ness events sector, there should be sufficient funds. Hosting international event planners and organisers in the Philippines requires a big investment in their airlines, accommodations, etc. Planning for international conventions requires three years, not a year.

Without a sufficient budget (Editor's note: The approved budget of 2.6 billion pesos (US\$46.8 million) is 24 per cent lower than the 2023 budget of 3.4 billion pesos.), the Department of Tourism and Tourism Promotions Board cannot do it."



Bohol bliss

By Rosa Ocampo



Building destination experiences into an incentive trip was the top consideration for Koror's Authentic Financial Group (AFG), which is why the company chose Bohol to bring its top insurance sellers to in 2023.

Bohol offers natural scenery and rich marine life, which is why the itinerary featured activities such as whale shark interactions in Lila, island hopping, a trip to the iconic Chocolate Hills, and firefly watching.

Be Grand Resort, where the incentive group was billeted, also organised a pool party and awards ceremony. This served as an opportunity to promote AFG's brand and increase employee appreciation for the incentive group of 439 young achievers, who were mostly in their 20s and 30s.

These young achievers were also socially active online, and their Instagrammable experiences and videos that were updated on their social media channels went viral, a boon for the destination.

Bohol also appealed to AFG because it was a step away from more popular incen-



tive destinations, and itineraries could span just three to four nights.

There were also direct flights available, as well as short ground handling time, pointed out Chris Choi, corporate sales team leader of Seoul-based incentive trip organiser, Web Tour.

For the November 18-23 incentive trip, Choi shared that Web Tour and AFG visited Bohol earlier to work out the challenges of handling a large group.

Challenges included having to split the departures over two days, and working out the timetable for activities, before confirming both the flights and resort reservations.

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