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Dr. GLENN S. BANAGUAS

UN Laureate

Chairman and President, ASEAN Science Diplomats
Chairman, US-ASEAN Science and Technology Fellows

**Diplomacy, Duty,
and the Moral
Compass of Nations**

*Rotary Club of Manila Welcomes
Former Consul General Atty.
Voltaire D. Mauricio at the 29th
Weekly Membership Meeting*

FORGED BY FIRE

The Life, Survival,
and Reinventions of
Dr. Günter Gerhard
Klotz Matschuck

Rotary Global Grant GG2572214
(Cleft Lip/Palate Surgery Project) Final Report

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PROGRAM



ROTARY CLUB OF MANILA

30th Weekly Membership Meeting

Rotary Year 2025-2026

Thursday, May 14, 2026, 12:30 PM

Manila Polo Club

Moderator: PE REGINALD T. "Reggie" YU

PART I

11:00 AM Registration /Lunch

12:30 PM Call to Order | **PRES. RAOUL C. CREENCIA**

Invocation

DE JOHN NICO P. "Nico" VALENCIA

Philippine National Anthem | **AVP**

Rotary Club of Manila Hymn

RCM WF Music Chorale

The Four (4) Way Test

Acknowledgment of Guests

PE REGINALD T. "Reggie" YU

Welcome Song | **RCM WF Music Chorale**

Birthday Celebrants

May 8 Rtn. Jun Coyuito

Rtn. Mac Macapagal

May 11 Rtn. Jun Bella

May 12 PD Ner Lonzaga

Rtn. Jack Rodriguez

May 14 Rtn. Jun Follosco

Rtn. J Alfonso L

Katigbak

Maligayang Bati / Happy Birthday Song

RCM WF Chorale

PART II

12:55 PM President's Time

PRES. RAOUL C. CREENCIA

1:00 PM Introduction of the Guest Speaker

DIR. MICHAEL JAEY C. "Mike" ALBAÑA

Guest Speaker

GLENN S. BANAGUAS, PhD.

UN Laureate

Chairman and President,

ASEAN Science Diplomats

Chairman, US-ASEAN Science

and Technology Fellows

Address:

***"Beyond Compliance: Private Sector
Leadership in Resiliency and
Sustainability"***

1:30 PM Open Forum / Q&A

1:45 PM Presentation of Certificate
of Appreciation

PRES. RAOUL C. CREENCIA

2:00 PM Adjournment

PRES. RAOUL C. CREENCIA

EDITORIAL

Reginald T. Yu
Editor-in-Chief



THERE was a time when sustainability was viewed as a peripheral concern — a matter delegated to annual reports, public relations departments, or regulatory checklists designed merely to satisfy minimum standards. Today, that illusion no longer survives contact with reality.

Across the world, climate disruption is no longer a distant scientific projection. It has become an economic force, a geopolitical risk, a supply chain disruptor, a public health challenge, and increasingly, a defining test of leadership itself. Typhoons grow more destructive.

Heat waves become more unforgiving. Floods cripple infrastructure and commerce with alarming regularity. Entire industries now confront a future where resilience is no longer optional, but existential.

In this new era, the question confronting the private sector is no longer whether sustainability matters. The question is whether businesses possess the courage to move beyond mere compliance and embrace genuine transformational leadership.

For far too long, many corporations have approached sustainability reporting and environmental regulations as burdens to be managed rather than opportunities to lead. Compliance became the goal instead of the baseline. Carbon disclosures became exercises in optics rather than catalysts for operational change. Net zero pledges were announced with fanfare, yet often detached from meaningful structural reforms within organizations themselves.

But the world has changed — and stakeholders have changed with it.

EDITORIAL

Investors today increasingly examine environmental, social, and governance performance not as secondary considerations, but as indicators of long-term institutional viability. Consumers have become more discerning about the values embodied by the companies they support. Employees, especially younger generations, increasingly seek organizations whose missions align with broader societal purpose. Regulators continue to tighten disclosure expectations. And communities, particularly those most vulnerable to climate impacts, now expect corporations to participate meaningfully in building resilience rather than merely extracting profit.

Against this backdrop, sustainability reporting must no longer be viewed as a compliance exercise imposed by the Securities and Exchange Commission or by evolving global standards. It must instead be understood for what it truly represents: a mechanism for transparency, accountability, and trust.

Trust has become one of the rarest and most valuable currencies in modern society. And transparency is the foundation upon which that trust is built.

Corporations willing to honestly measure, disclose, and address their environmental footprint signal something profoundly important to the public: that they are prepared to confront reality rather than

obscure it. Such transparency may expose vulnerabilities in the short term, but in the long run, it strengthens credibility, sharpens operational discipline, and reinforces stakeholder confidence.

The most forward-looking organizations now recognize that sustainability and profitability are no longer opposing forces. In fact, resilience itself has become a strategic economic advantage.

Companies that invest in energy efficiency reduce long-term operating costs. Businesses that strengthen climate resilience within their supply chains reduce disruption risks. Enterprises that innovate around sustainable technologies position themselves ahead of inevitable market transitions. Financial institutions increasingly favor firms with robust ESG performance. Even insurance markets now price climate exposure with growing sophistication.

Simply put, sustainability is no longer charity. It is strategy.

Yet beyond economics lies an even deeper moral imperative.

Every generation inherits obligations it did not choose but cannot ignore. Ours happens to confront one of the greatest collective challenges in modern history:

EDITORIAL

whether economic progress can continue without compromising the ecological stability upon which civilization itself depends.

The private sector cannot solve this challenge alone. Governments, civil society, academe, and communities all possess vital roles to play. But neither can business remain a passive observer. The scale of corporate influence — over capital, technology, labor, infrastructure, manufacturing, and innovation — places upon the private sector a unique responsibility to lead with vision and urgency.

Leadership in sustainability therefore requires more than polished declarations. It demands integration. Climate resilience must move beyond annual reports and become embedded within corporate governance, investment decisions, operational planning, procurement systems, risk management frameworks, and organizational culture itself.

The organizations that will define the future are not merely those that comply with regulations, but those that understand that resilience is now inseparable from leadership.

This is especially true in countries like the Philippines, where vulnerability to climate-related disasters remains

among the highest in the world. Here, sustainability is not an abstract global conversation. It is deeply personal. It affects livelihoods, agriculture, energy security, public health, infrastructure, and the survival of communities themselves.

For Philippine corporations, the challenge is therefore not simply to participate in sustainability conversations, but to help shape them with courage, innovation, and accountability.

The path forward will not always be easy. Genuine transformation rarely is. But history consistently favors institutions willing to adapt before circumstances force adaptation upon them.

Ultimately, the companies that endure will not be remembered solely for the profits they generated, but for the resilience they helped build, the integrity with which they operated, and the future they chose to protect.

For sustainability is no longer merely about compliance.

It is about stewardship.
It is about leadership.

And above all, it is about whether today's institutions possess the wisdom to think beyond the next quarter — and the courage to act for generations yet to come. ■

GUEST SPEAKER



GLENN S. BANAGUAS, PhD.

UN Laureate

Chairman and President, ASEAN Science Diplomats
Chairman, US-ASEAN Science and Technology Fellows

GLENN is a world-renowned science diplomat, multi-awarded scientist, and ESG expert whose pioneering work spans environmental stewardship, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and disaster risk reduction.

Widely recognized as the Father of Asian Science Diplomacy and the Guru of Resiliency and Sustainability, he leads transformative initiatives that integrate scientific modeling, participatory mechanisms, and evidence-based policymaking to address complex environmental challenges, estimate GHG emissions, implement net-zero strategies, and ensure ethical AI-driven solutions.

He is a UN Sasakawa Laureate for DRR, Bibliotheca Alexandrina Laureate, Kindness & Leadership 50 Leading Lights Awardee. Glenn holds fellowships with the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, the Royal Society of Arts, and the US-ASEAN Science and Technology Program, while actively engaging with Chatham House.

His work has been supported by The Royal Society, The World Academy of Sciences, and Environmental Defense Fund, earning him accolades such as Asia's Top 100 Scientists, Asia's Sustainability Leader, GWP Water Changemaker, ASEAN Champions for Biodiversity, and The Rockefeller Foundation Food System Vision Prize – Special Mention Award.

Honored as The Outstanding Filipino Laureate, Climate Change Hero, and a Men & Women of Science honoree, among other distinctions. He serves as an advisor to the World Bank's Climate

GUEST SPEAKER

Finance, UNDP's GEF and Climate Security Program, UNEP's HFC Life Cycle Management, UNCCD's LDN Programs, and GGGI's CCA-DRR Projects.

He is an IPCC Expert Reviewer, a Member of the EU-Asia Expert Panel for Climate Diplomacy & Environmental Security, Chairman of the US-ASEAN S&T Fellows, and Trustee of Statweather Institute, recognized as the world's leading climate technology and data services company. He contributes to the APN Advisory Committee.

As Chairman of Asian Science Diplomacy initiative, Glenn empowers policymakers, educators, decision-makers, and community leaders to bridge science and governance and champion inclusive, evidence-based solutions.

As Founder of the Environmental & Climate Change Research Institute and its "Climate Smart Philippines: Science for Service" program, he advances actionable strategies rooted in science and service. He studied Climate Change & Energy at Harvard Kennedy School, Sustainability Leadership at Yale University, Public Transportation Systems at MIT, Applied Remote Sensing at NASA, and Peacebuilding at the US Institute of Peace, further strengthening his global expertise. ■



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Quiet Architecture of Impact: The Beauty of Club Flagship and Signature Projects

IN every Rotary club, there are projects that respond to immediate needs, and there are those that ultimately come to define the club's very identity. Beyond its distinguished standing as Asia's First Club, the Rotary Club of Manila has likewise earned recognition, among many others, as a club whose awards carry genuine institutional weight, gravitas, and credibility — distinctions that are regarded not



Raoul C. Creencia
President

merely as ceremonial honors, but as meaningful affirmations of excellence, service, and public trust. Hence, RCM's Outstanding Ambassador Awards, the TOWER Awards, and the Journalism Awards.

These are the signature projects — initiatives that transcend routine service activity and become enduring expressions of vision, purpose, and institutional character.

While the terms “signature” and “flagship” projects are often used interchangeably, there is a subtle

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

distinction between them. A flagship project is usually the Club's initiated project for a particular year, which is aimed to be carried on in the succeeding years. A signature project, on the other hand, reflects the unique personality and values of the club — the type of service initiative that people immediately associate with it. One emphasizes prominence; the other, identity. Yet both occupy a special place in the life of a Rotary club.

This Rotary year, three flagship projects were implemented by our esteemed Club — the LEAP (Leaders Excelling in ADR and Peacebuilding) Awards, ARAL (Advancing Resources for Accelerated Learning) Program, and Project RIVER (Rotary Initiative for Vulnerability Elimination and Resilience).

The journey toward implementing these projects has made this Rotary year memorable for me and all those involved in its conceptualization and planning. Flagship and signature initiatives often require long periods of consultation, fundraising, and

execution. They demand not only financial resources, but also patience, persistence, and organizational discipline. Unlike one-time activities that may be completed within a single Rotary year, these projects frequently require continuity across multiple leadership cycles and the sustained commitment of many Rotarians.

And yet, precisely because of these demands, they become deeply fulfilling.

One source of fulfillment comes from the process of conceptualization itself. Every meaningful flagship project begins as an idea — sometimes modest, sometimes ambitious, but always rooted in a desire to create lasting value. Rotarians experience a distinct sense of purpose when they identify a community need and begin transforming abstract aspirations into a concrete service model.

The planning phase brings a different kind of fulfillment. Here, ideals are tested against practical realities. Budgets must be prepared. Partnerships must be formed.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Volunteers must be organized.
Timelines must be established.
Obstacles inevitably emerge.

This stage requires discipline and humility. We are fully aware that impactful service is not sustained by enthusiasm alone. It depends on structure, accountability, teamwork, and continuity. The challenge of transforming a vision into an executable program often strengthens club cohesion because members begin working not merely as volunteers, but as stewards of a shared mission.

Planning also teaches an important Rotary lesson: meaningful service is collaborative. No flagship or signature project succeeds because of a single leader. It succeeds because many individuals contribute different strengths — strategic thinkers, organizers, communicators, fundraisers, technical experts, and quiet workers who simply ensure that every detail is attended to. In this sense, the project becomes more than a community initiative; it becomes an exercise in collective leadership.

But perhaps the deepest fulfillment

comes during implementation itself.

There is a profound emotional reward in witnessing a project move from paper into reality. These moments validate the countless hours spent in meetings, planning sessions, and fundraising activities. They remind Rotarians that service, when sustained with seriousness and compassion, can create tangible and enduring change.

Flagship and signature projects also provide another form of fulfillment that is often overlooked: institutional legacy.

Many Rotary activities are necessarily temporary, responding to immediate concerns or annual opportunities. But signature initiatives have the capacity to outlive individual presidents and officers. Over time, they become woven into the identity of the club itself.

This continuity creates a powerful sense of meaning because Rotarians realize they are participating in something larger than a single Rotary year. They become custodians of an institutional tradition of service.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There is also fulfillment in seeing younger or newer members eventually assume ownership of projects once initiated by earlier leaders. This transfer of stewardship reflects one of Rotary's most important principles: continuity of service beyond individual leadership terms. A truly successful flagship project is one that no longer depends on its original proponents because the club itself has embraced and sustained the mission.

Importantly, not all fulfillment comes from scale or public recognition. Some of the most meaningful signature projects may remain relatively modest in size but deeply transformative in impact. The value of a Rotary project should never be measured solely by publicity, cost, or visibility. Often, the most enduring projects are those that consistently address genuine needs with sincerity and reliability.

Moreover, flagship and signature projects strengthen the moral identity of a club. They answer an essential question: What does this

club stand for? Over time, these initiatives become visible manifestations of the club's priorities, compassion, and values. They shape how communities perceive Rotary and how Rotarians perceive themselves.

Ultimately, the fulfillment derived from implementing flagship and signature projects lies not only in outcomes, but in the process itself. The experience demands vision, discipline, teamwork, resilience, and continuity. It transforms service from occasional activity into sustained institutional purpose.

And perhaps that is why these projects occupy such a special place in Rotary life. They are not merely programs. They are enduring expressions of commitment — reminders that when service is pursued with imagination, structure, and perseverance, it can leave a legacy far greater than any single year of leadership. ■

A man with grey hair, wearing a white long-sleeved shirt, is speaking into a microphone at a podium. Behind him are several flags, including the Philippine flag and the flag of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

cover story

by PE Reginald T. Yu

Diplomacy, Duty, and the Moral Compass of Nations

*Rotary Club of Manila
Welcomes Former Consul
General Atty. Voltaire D.
Mauricio at the 29th
Weekly Membership
Meeting*

THERE are some gatherings in the life of the Rotary Club of Manila that become more than mere weekly assemblies. They evolve into moments of reflection — occasions where history, public service, statesmanship, and moral responsibility converge in one room, among men and women bound by a shared belief that leadership is ultimately an act of stewardship.

The 29th Weekly Membership Meeting of the Rotary Club of Manila, held on May 7, 2026 at the historic Manila Polo Club, unfolded precisely in that spirit. Moderated by **Past Director Issam Eldebs**, the afternoon gathering carried the familiar warmth and dignity characteristic of Asia's first Rotary club, yet it also possessed a rare intellectual gravitas, owing largely to the presence of the Guest of Honor and Speaker, **former Philippine Consul General to Osaka and London, Atty. Voltaire D. Mauricio**.

The meeting formally commenced with the Call to Order led by **President Raoul C. Creencia**, whose steady stewardship throughout Rotary Year 2025–2026 has consistently emphasized fellowship anchored on substance and relevance.

An invocation was delivered by **Vice President Ricardo S.B. “Ricky” Guevara**, followed by the singing of the Philippine National Anthem through an audio-visual presentation and the Rotary Club of Manila Hymn rendered by the RCM WF Music Chorale. The Four-Way Test was solemnly recited under the leadership of **DSAA David J. “Dave” Reynolds**, reminding



President Raoul C. Creencia called the 29th Weekly Membership Meeting of the Rotary Club of Manila to order.



Past Director Issam Eldebs moderated the meeting.



Vice President Ricardo S.B. “Ricky” Guevara led the invocation.

everyone present that beyond business, politics, or diplomacy, Rotary's enduring relevance lies in its insistence on truth, fairness, goodwill, and mutual benefit.

Past Director Issam Eldebs acknowledged the distinguished guests in attendance before the atmosphere shifted into one of warmth and celebration with musical performances by the **RCM WF Music Choral**. Birthday celebrants included **Past Director Amading Valdez, Rotarian Jerry Agnes, and Rotarian J. Alfonso L. Katigbak**, all of whom were greeted with the traditional "Maligayang Bati" by the chorale.

Yet beneath the conviviality of fellowship and song lingered a sense that the afternoon's true centerpiece was still to come.



*DSAA
David J.
"Dave"
Reynolds
led the
recitation
of the
Four-Way
Test*



*President
Raoul
Creencia
addressed
the
membership
during
President's
Time.*

Presentation of The Rotary Foundation's Recognition Gift



From left: VP Ricky Guevara, Multiple Paul Harris Fellow; VPE Karlo Castro, Major Donor; STAR Rtn. Coco Mauricio, New Paul Harris Fellow; and STAR Rtn. Oliver Pantaleon, New Paul Harris Fellow



President Raoul C. Creencia led a special recognition for IT Arik Carranceja, acknowledging his invaluable support and contributions to the club.

During President's Time, **President Raoul C. Creencia** led a special recognition for **IT Arik Carranceja**, acknowledging his invaluable support and contributions to the club. The recognition reflected the Rotary Club of Manila's continuing appreciation for individuals whose quiet dedication often sustains the unseen machinery behind meaningful organizational work.

The introduction of the Guest of Honor and Speaker was delivered by **Rotarian Shigeru Shimoda**, who welcomed Atty. Mauricio not merely as a veteran diplomat, but as a public servant whose career had traversed some of the most important arenas of Philippine foreign service.



GIFT OF APPRECIATION
is proudly presented to
Rtn. Arvin Arik B. Carranceja
Incoming Treasurer
Rotary Year 2026–2027

In grateful recognition of your exceptional generosity and steadfast commitment to the ideals of Rotary, exemplified through your voluntary leadership in the renovation of the Rotary Club of Manila storage room.

Your invaluable contribution – from mobilizing your team to donating construction materials and labor – has greatly enhanced the functionality, organization, and overall safety of the Club's storage facility and office premises.
Your spirit of Service Above Self stands as an Inspiration to the entire Club.

Given this 7th day of May 2026, during the 29th Weekly Membership Meeting.



Rotarian Shigeru Shimoda introduced the Guest of Honor and Speaker.

What followed was not the conventional diplomatic lecture many may have anticipated.

Instead, Atty. Mauricio offered something far more compelling: a sweeping historical meditation on the origins of diplomacy itself—one that transformed centuries of geopolitical evolution into a vivid and remarkably accessible human story.

The Origins of Diplomacy: From Kingdoms to Nations

Speaking with the cadence of a storyteller rather than the stiffness of a bureaucrat, Atty. Mauricio began not with treaties or international law, but with the timeless opening line of childhood fairy tales:

“Once upon a time, in a kingdom far, far away, there lived a king.”

What initially sounded whimsical soon unfolded into an insightful framework for understanding the origins of diplomacy. Long before modern nation-states emerged, he explained, the world was divided into kingdoms ruled by kings, queens, princes, and princesses. These kingdoms were often in conflict, frequently over borders, territory, and power.

War, however, eventually exhausted even the mightiest rulers.

And so kingdoms sought peace.

To negotiate peace, one kingdom would send a trusted emissary—often a sibling, son, uncle, or other close relative — to another kingdom. The message carried by such an envoy was deeply symbolic: “Treat this person as if you were treating me, the king.”

In one of the afternoon’s most memorable lines, Atty. Mauricio described these early emissaries as “glamorized hostages.” If peace failed, the envoy’s life could be endangered. But if goodwill prevailed, these emissaries became living embodiments of trust between rival powers.

Thus, diplomacy was born not from abstractions, but from vulnerability, reciprocity, and mutual dependence.

As kingdoms evolved into empires and eventually into modern nation-states, the tradition remained. Relatives were replaced by professional diplomats, but the underlying principle endured: when one country sends an ambassador to another, it sends a representative who symbolically embodies the head of state itself.

Understanding the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary

Atty. Mauricio then guided the audience deeper into the architecture of modern diplomacy, particularly the meaning behind one of the most misunderstood diplomatic titles: Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary.

The term “Extraordinary,” he explained, signifies that the ambassador is to be treated as though he were the very president or prime minister of the sending nation. In many countries, only two individuals are accorded the title “His Excellency”: the nation’s head of state and the ambassador representing another sovereign state.

The second word — “Plenipotentiary” — derives from the Latin roots *plenum* and *potens*, meaning “full power.”

Such ambassadors possess the authority to bind their governments in diplomatic engagements and agreements within their jurisdictions.

For many in attendance, the lecture became an education not merely in terminology, but in the immense trust and responsibility carried by those tasked with representing nations abroad.

Equally fascinating was Atty. Mauricio’s clarification that only ambassadors assigned to capital cities truly carry the rank and privileges associated with ambassadors extraordinary and plenipotentiary. Consuls General, despite their importance, are not ambassadors in the technical sense.

He cited Israel as a unique exception in diplomatic history, where embassies had historically been located in Tel Aviv instead of Jerusalem due to geopolitical pressures from neighboring states.

The audience listened intently—not merely because the lecture was informative, but because Atty. Mauricio possessed the rare gift of making international relations feel deeply human.

Diplomacy as the First Line of Defense

As his discourse progressed, the former Consul General shifted from history to contemporary relevance.

Diplomacy, he stressed, becomes most crucial precisely during moments of conflict. Before nations deploy armies or engage in war, diplomatic channels must first be exhausted. Diplomacy remains humanity's first line of defense against violence.

The statement carried unmistakable weight in an era increasingly defined by geopolitical tensions, territorial disputes, economic rivalries, and ideological fragmentation.

For the Rotarians gathered inside the Manila Polo Club that afternoon, the message resonated beyond statecraft. It was also a lesson in leadership, communication, restraint, and moral courage.

Atty. Mauricio further distinguished between political ambassadors and career ambassadors within the Philippine foreign service. Political ambassadors, he explained, serve largely at the pleasure of the President who appoints them, while career ambassadors may continue beyond a



Atty. Mauricio actively engaged in an interactive conversation during the Q&A part with PD Amading Valdez, AS Paco Magsaysay, DSAA Dave Reynolds, Rtn. Gani Macatoman, and DE Caloy Serapio.



presidential term due to their professional standing within the foreign service corps.

But perhaps the most powerful part of his address emerged toward the conclusion, when he pivoted away from technical diplomacy and returned instead to Rotary itself.

Rotary as a Moral Compass

In a room filled with businessmen, professionals, civic leaders, and public servants, Atty. Mauricio reminded everyone that Rotary's Four-Way Test is not merely ceremonial rhetoric. It is, in many ways, a moral framework for diplomacy, governance, and human relationships themselves.

“Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned?”

These questions, recited countless times in Rotary meetings across the world, suddenly acquired renewed depth under the lens of international relations.

Diplomacy, he implied, is ultimately not only about treaties and negotiations. It is about trust. About

fairness. About the pursuit of peace without surrendering dignity.

And in that sense, Rotary and diplomacy share a common soul.

The Rotarian, much like the diplomat, serves as a bridge-builder.

The diplomat negotiates between nations.

The Rotarian builds understanding among communities.

Both seek peace, goodwill, and mutual progress.

By the time Atty. Mauricio concluded his address, the room was no longer merely listening to a lecture on foreign affairs. It had become immersed in a reflection on civilization itself — how societies evolved from kingdoms to nations, from warfare to dialogue, and from suspicion to cooperation.

An open forum followed, where members had the opportunity to engage directly with the distinguished speaker, further enriching the afternoon's exchange of ideas. President Raoul C. Creencia later presented Atty. Mauricio with a Certificate of Appreciation in recognition of his insightful and thought-provoking address.



President Raoul Creencia presented former Philippine Consul General to Osaka and London, Atty. Voltaire D. Mauricio with a Certificate of Appreciation.

The meeting formally adjourned under the leadership of President Creencia.

Yet long after the gathering concluded, the resonance of the afternoon lingered.

For in a world increasingly fractured by division, misinformation, and conflict, Atty. Voltaire D. Mauricio reminded the Rotary Club of Manila that diplomacy — at its finest — is not merely a profession.

It is an act of civilization.

And perhaps, at its deepest level,

Rotary itself is an expression of the same enduring hope: that human beings, despite differences in nation, ideology, religion, or background, can still choose dialogue over hostility, goodwill over suspicion, and understanding over conflict.

In the end, kingdoms may rise and fall, governments may change, and geopolitical alignments may shift.

But truth, fairness, goodwill, and service remain timeless.

And that, perhaps, was the afternoon's most enduring lesson. ■



President Raoul Creencia adjourned the meeting.





CLUB ADMINISTRATION

RCM Members' Attendance Report RY 2025-2026



ATTENDANCE REPORT May 2026

MAY 2026	May 07, 2026 FORMER CONSUL GEN. VOLTAIRE D. MAURICIO
MEMBERS PRESENT	40
MEMBERS PRESENT %	19%
MAKE UP ATTENDEES	2
EXEMPTED	4
ON LEAVE	0
Total Active Members	42
Total # of Members	212
TOTAL %:	20%
ROTARACTORS	9
MEDIA	0
EMBASSIES / DIPLOMATIC CORPS	0
DG, DGE, DGN, PDG	0
GOHS / GS	1
VISITING ROTARIAN	0
Guests of RCM MEMBERS	9
TOTAL ATTENDEES	59



LIST OF ATTENDEES May 7, 2026

1	Albaña, Michael Jaey C	21	Magsaysay, Francisco D.
2	Bartolome III, Arsenio M.	22	Matschuck, Guenter Gerhard G.
3	Benedicto, Sixto T.	23	Mauricio, Antonilo DC
4	Carlos, Vicente J.	24	Mauricio, Francisco Robert DC.
5	Carranceja, Arvin Arik B	25	Pascual, Abraham F.
6	Castro, Karlo Eugene Josef M.	26	Peliño, Wilfredo M.
7	Creencia, Raoul C.	27	Preysler, Jr., Fausto R.
8	Cutter, John Michael	28	Ra, Ingill
9	Davis, Raymond N.	29	Reynolds, David J.
10	Del Rosario Sr., Oscar A.	30	Serapio, Carlos G.
11	Egan, Brendan W.L.	31	Shimoda, Shigeru
12	Eidebs, Issam	32	Sibayan, Joselito H.
13	Garcia, Paul Joseph M.	33	Simon, Juanito A.
14	Guevara, Ricardo S.	34	Valdez, Amado D.
15	Hernandez, Edwin H	35	Yu, Reginald Tieng
16	Katigbak, J Alfonso L	36	Valderrama, Jason
17	Locsin, Arsenio Z.	37	Pantaleon, Oliver
18	Lonzaga, Reinerio C.	38	Ginez, Winston M.
19	Lorenzana, Delfin	39	Tamesis, Chris C.
20	Macatoman, Abdulgani M.	40	Pangiliinan, Manuel E.

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

List of Members Who Have Paid Their Annual Dues for RY 2025-2026

As of May 13, 2026

1 ABOY, VALENTINO G.
2 ABRIAM, ARIEL
3 ACOSTA, CRISPINIANO G.
4 AGNES, JERRY A.
5 ALBAÑA, MICHAEL JAEY
6 ALBERTO, RAYMUND ARNOLD S.
7 ALCANTARA, ISIDRO
8 ALDAY, ALBERT S.
9 ALINGOG, ALDOUS REX A.
10 ALUNAN, RAFAEL M.
11 ANDAL, AVELINO L.
12 ANG, RICHARD
13 ARAGON, JOSHUA RUEBEN G.
14 ARAMBULO, JOAQUIN JR. L.
15 ARGUELLES, PABLO C.
16 AVENTURA, AVELINO JR. L.
17 BAGATSING, VALENTINO
18 BALANAY, ARIES B.
19 BARTOLOME, ARSENIO III M.
20 BAUTISTA, JOHN JR.
21 BEDIONES, RODOLFO P.
22 BELLA, GERONIMO JR. D.
23 BENEDICTO, BERNARDO III T.
24 BENEDICTO, SIXTO T.
25 BERTELSEN, BERTEL INGMAR
26 BLANCO, MANUEL M.
27 BOGOVICH, JASON M.
28 BOLTON, WILHELM
29 BRANELEC, JACQUES
30 BUENDIA, CARLOS
31 CABANGON, EDGARD
32 CABUNAG, ROGELIO
33 CAMAT, NATHANIEL
34 CAMPOS, JOSELITO JR. D.
35 CANON, RAUL JR C.
36 CARLOS, VICENTE J.
37 CARRANCEJA, ARVIN ARIK B.
38 CASTRO, KARLO EUGENE JOSEF M.
39 CATALAN, RODILLO
40 CHAHWAN, RAMI
41 CHAN, ROBERT JR.
42 CENICA, JOHN
43 CHIEN, LIANG-TA
44 CID, DEAN
45 CO, VAL CONSTANTINE L.
46 CORTEZ, LORENZO
47 COYIUTO, ROBERT JR. G.
48 CREENCIA, RAOUL C.
49 CUREG, ALEXANDER P.
50 CUTTER, JOHN MICHAEL

51 DAYANG, JUAN E.
52 DAVIS, RAYMOND N.
53 DE CASTRO, JUAN ARTURO ILUMINADO
54 DEL ROSARIO, OSCAR
55 DIONISIO, RAFAEL
56 DOMINGO, RICO, V.
57 DOMINGUEZ, CARLOS G.
58 DY, MANUEL
59 EGAN, BRENDAN
60 ELDEBS, ISSAM
61 ENRIQUEZ, EDUARDO III
62 ESGUERRA, HERMINIO S.
63 ESQUIVIAS, JOAQUIN PABLO A.
64 EUGENIO, JOHN EMYL G.
65 EUGENIO, ERIC
66 FAJARDO, BEDA G.
67 FERNANDEZ, ANTONIO JAIME JOSE V.
68 FOLLOSCO, CEFERINO JR. G.
69 GARCIA, HERBERT JOEY
70 GARCIA, PAUL JOSEPH M.
71 GARCIA, THEODORE Q.
72 GARCIA, VICTOR III G.
73 GASPAR, FERNANDO
74 GINEZ, WINSTON M.
75 GO, DANNY C.
76 GO, HENRY S.
77 GONZALES, JONAS R.
78 GONZALES-LA'O, EMIL
79 GUARIN, MICHAEL ARCATOMY
80 GUEVARA, DOMINGO JR.
81 GUEVARA, RICARDO S.B.
82 HALLARE, DELFIN JR.
83 HALLARE, NICOLÒ
84 HARLE, WOLFGANG KURT
85 HERNANDEZ, EDWIN H.
86 HESSE, UWE
87 IBUYAN, BENEDICT JULIUS F.
88 JANG, JAE JUNG
89 JOSEPH, RALPH L.
90 JUCABAN, JERIC J.
91 KALAW, TEODORO ALEJANDRO IV Y.
92 KANDA, HIROYUSI
93 KATIGBAK J ALFONSO L
94 KE, ERIC CHAN
95 KHO, RALPH VALENTIN
96 KLEBS, DAVID
97 KOH, PAUL ANTHONY
98 LACAMBACAL, ALVIN
99 LAYA, JAIME C.
100 LAUREL, RICARDO P.

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

List of Members Who Have Paid Their Annual Dues for RY 2025-2026

As of May 13, 2026

101	LAZARO, JUAN MIGUEL	152	RANKL, PETER
102	LEDDA, JAIME VICTOR B.	153	RECTO, PHILIP H.
103	LEE, RICHARD L.	154	REYNOLDS, DAVID
104	LIAMZON, ROMEO THADDEUS M.	155	RODRIGUEZ, JOAQUIN ANTHONY JR. H.
105	LIM, RICHARD	156	RODRIGUEZ, JOAQUIN SR. C.
106	LI, RICHARD JOSEPH C.	157	ROMUALDEZ, FERDINAND MARTIN G.
107	LIM, DAVID EDUARDO T.	158	ROMUALDEZ, JOSE MANUEL G.
108	LIAO, CHRISTOPHER	159	ROÑO, MARLON
109	LOCSIN, ARSENIO Z.	160	ROXAS, MICHAEL D.
110	LONZAGA, REINERIO C.	161	SARMIENTO, RICARDO MANUEL M.
111	LOPEZ, ANTONIO	162	SCHMITZ, STEFAN
112	LOPEZ, ARTHUR M.	163	SCHNEIDER, BERND
113	LORENZANA, DELFIN	164	SERAPIO, CARLOS G.
114	MACAPAGAL, MICHAEL T.	165	SEVILLA, LUIS ANGELO L.
115	MACATOMAN, ABDULGANI M.	166	SHIMODA, SHIGERU
116	MAGBANUA, GERRY P.	167	SIBAYAN, JOSELITO H.
117	MAGSAYSAY, FRANCISCO D.	168	SIMON, JUANITO AYSON
118	MAGSAYSAY, JESUS VICENTE E.	169	SO, WARREN
119	MANALAYSAY, CESAR P.	170	SOBREPEÑA, ROBERT JOHN
120	MANGALILE, SENEN	171	STRANATHAN, IKE EDWARD
121	MARTINEZ, RONALD	172	SYJUCO, JOSE, JR. A.
122	MATSCHUCK, GUENTER GERHARD G.	173	TAGAYSAY, HECTOR O.
123	MAURICIO, ANTONILO DC	174	TALAMPAS, JOSE ANGEL L.
124	MAURICIO, FRANCISCO ROBERTO C.	176	TALUSAN, FERDINAND E.
125	MENDOZA, MIGUEL	177	TAMANO, SHALIMAR H.
126	MENDOZA, RAYMUND JOSEPH D.	178	TAMAYO, VICTOR L.
127	MOMMAERTS, STEVE	179	TAMESIS, CHRIS
128	NOLIDO, RAMON ALBERTO B.	180	TAN, EUSEBIO V.
129	NOMURA, KAZUHIRO	181	TAN, JOHN G.
130	NONES, ROMEO C.	182	TAN, LAWRENCE L.
131	NUÑEZ, JOSE A.	183	TAN, MYLES
132	OBRADO, DANIEL	184	TEE, TEDDY JR. B.
133	OCAMPO, TEODORO J.	185	TEJUMAL, MICHAEL
134	ONG, PHILIP	186	TILLMAN, HANSEL JOSEPH MICHAEL L.
135	ONG, ROWEL JANSON S.	187	UY, IVAN JOHN E.
136	OZAETA, MIGUEL ANTONIO L.	188	VALDES, JOELC.
137	PAGDANGANAN, ROBERTO M.	189	VALDEZ, AMADO
138	PALACIOS, ALBERT S.	190	VALDEZ, JASON ROLAND N.
139	PALLASIGUE, JOHN BRIAN C.	191	VALDERRAMA, JASON ROMEO
140	PANGILINAN, MANUEL E.	192	VALENCIA, JOHN NICO P.
141	PANTALEON, OLIVER	193	VALENCIA, RODOLFO G.
142	PASCUAL, ABRAHAM	194	VAZQUEZ, EVARISTO JR.
143	PAYUMO, FELICITO C.	195	VILLARICA, HENRY R.
144	PELIÑO, WILFREDO	196	YAP, ENRIQUE JR.
145	PINEDA, JESUS JR. M.	197	YORDANOV, STEFAN
146	PINEDA, PATRICIO JR. F.	198	YU, GEOFFREY C.
147	PIZARRAS, JORDAN M.	199	YU, REGINALD T.
148	PREYSLER, FAUSTO JR. D.R.	200	ZALDARRIAGA, FELIX FRANCISCO S.
149	PUJALTE, JOSE BRITTANIO JR.	201	ZEITOUNI, NAGI
150	RA, INGILL	202	ZIALCITA, XAVIER Y.
151	RAMOS, CLAVER P.	203	ZIMMER, CHRISTOPHER

Membership Committee Meeting



The Membership Committee met on Thursday, May 7, 2026, to get to know the proposed new members at the Turf Room of the Manila Polo Club, Makati City.

Present from the Membership Committee were Chairman/Past Vice President Fausto Preysler, Past District Governor Vince Carlos, Director in Charge of Membership Concerns VP Ricky Guevara, Director-elect/Program Chair Delfin Lorenzana, and Secretary Anton Mauricio.



*Mr. Jose P. De Venecia, III (Filipino)
Chief Executive Officer
Atreides Ventures, Inc.
Proposers: PVP Fausto Preysler/ Pres. Raoul Creencia*



*Mr. Hriday M. Parwani (Filipino)
President
Alpha Omega Impex Philippines Company
Proposer: PE Reggie Yu*

Membership Committee Meeting



Mr. Joseph Benedict G. Gesmundo (Filipino)
Partner
Picazo Buyco Tan Fider Santos & Dee Law Office
Proposers: ISIPD Albert Alday/DE Teddy Kalaw/
Rtn. Citos Manalaysay/DGN Hermie Esguerra



Mr. Ornel Jayson K. Sy (Filipino)
Chief Client Officer
Sy Chi Siong & Co. Inc.
Proposer: PE Reggie Yu



Rotary

THE FOUR-WAY TEST of the things we think, say or do

- I. Is it the TRUTH?
- II. Is it FAIR to all concerned?
- III. Will it build GOODWILL & BETTER FRIENDSHIPS?
- IV. to all concerned?

Russell-Hampton Co. Item #R89805M

RCM Pro Patria Journalism Awards Committee Meeting



RCM Pro Patria Journalism Awards Committee met on May 7, 2026 at the Manila Polo Club after the weekly membership meeting.



Present were President Raoul Creencia, Director Edwin Hernandez, Secretary Anton Mauricio, Committee Chair Dean Amading Valdez, Co-chair/Board Legal Adviser Caloy Serapio, STAR Rotarians Winston Ginez, Oliver Pantaleon, Chris Tamesis, Jason Valderrama, and Vice President-elect Karlo Castro. Also present were President-elect Reggie Yu, Rotarian John Simon, and Past District Governor Jackie Rodriguez.

RCM Pro Patria Journalism Awards Committee Meeting



The RCM Pro Patria Committee members with Amicus Curiae Past District Governor Jackie Rodriguez, President-elect Reggie Yu, and Rotarian John Simon





DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT



MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH

Final Report: Rotary Global Grant GG2572214 Cleft Lip/Palate Surgery for Marginalized Children/Youth

PROJECT PARTNERS:

Rotary Club of Manila/
RCManila Foundation, Inc. (Philippines),
Rotary Club of San Bruno (USA)
R.I. Districts 3810 & 5150, and
The Rotary Foundation, in partnership with
Operation Smile Philippines

Venue:

Operation Smile Philippines - Manila Cleft Care Center

Re:

2025 Census Final Report for Rotary Club of Manila





DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT



MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH

Final Report: Rotary Global Grant GG2572214 Cleft Lip/Palate Surgery for Marginalized Children/Youth

I. Executive Summary

This final report presents the 2025 patient census of the **Manila Cleft Care Center** under **Operation Smile Philippines**, implemented in partnership with the **Rotary Club of Manila**. The census documents patients served, cleft conditions addressed, procedures performed, surgery dates, and donor support recorded throughout the year. This partnership reflects a shared commitment to providing safe, timely, and comprehensive care for children and adults with cleft conditions.

Funding Source:

Rotary District Designated Fund
Contribution of RID 3810 and 5150
US\$ 18,278

Cash Contributions of Rotary Club of
Manila/RCManila Foundation, Inc.
US\$ 5,720.00

NON ROTARIAN MATCH
US\$ 9,400

The Rotary Foundation World Fund:
US\$ 14,622.00

TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING:
US\$ 48,020.00

II. Partnership Overview

The partnership between **Operation Smile Philippines** and the **Rotary Club of Manila** plays a vital role in expanding access to life-changing cleft surgeries. Through financial support, advocacy, and community engagement, the Rotary Club of Manila has helped ensure that patients receive quality surgical care regardless of their ability to pay.

This collaboration aligns with Rotary's commitment to health, service, and humanitarian action, and Operation Smile's mission that **a smile is a fundamental human right**.



DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT



MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH

Final Report: Rotary Global Grant GG2572214 Cleft Lip/Palate Surgery for Marginalized Children/Youth

III. Facility and Program Overview

- **Facility:** Manila Cleft Care Center (RMC)
- **Address:** 2629 New Panaderos St., Sta. Ana, Manila
- **Implementing Organization:** Operation Smile Philippines
- **Key Partner:** Rotary Club of Manila
- **Program Focus:** Comprehensive cleft care for surgical intervention and multidisciplinary support
- **Reporting Period:** Calendar Year 2025

IV. Patient Profile Overview

Based on the 2025 census records:

- Patients served were predominantly **infants and young** children, with ages ranging from a **few months old to early childhood**, highlighting the importance of early surgical intervention.

- Both **male and female** patients benefited from the program, ensuring inclusive and equitable access to care.
- The most frequently recorded diagnoses include:
 - Unilateral Cleft Lip
 - Other cleft-related conditions requiring surgical correction

V. Medical and Surgical Services Provided

The following services were documented in the census:

- **Dental Examination:** Conducted as part of the comprehensive cleft care protocol.
- **Surgical Procedures:**
 - **Cheiloplasty** was the most performed procedure during the reporting period.
- **Surgery Dates:** Procedures were conducted across multiple scheduled operating days throughout 2025, maximizing the



DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT



MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH

Final Report: Rotary Global Grant GG2572214

Cleft Lip/Palate Surgery for Marginalized Children/Youth

number of patients served.

All surgeries were performed following Operation Smile's global medical standards, ensuring patient safety, ethical practice, and quality outcomes.

VI. Role and Contribution of the Rotary Club of Manila

The **Rotary Club of Manila** provided critical support that directly contributed to the successful delivery of cleft lip and palate surgeries in 2025. This included:

- Financial sponsorship of surgical procedures
- Support for operating costs and patient care
- Strengthening awareness and advocacy for cleft care in the community

Through this partnership, Rotary members helped restore smiles,

improve health outcomes, and give patients renewed confidence and opportunity.

VII. Key Observations

- Early-age surgical intervention remains a priority and was consistently achieved throughout the year.
- The partnership with the Rotary Club of Manila strengthened program sustainability and reach.
- The Manila Cleft Care Center continues to serve as a critical access point for cleft care in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.





DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT



MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH

Final Report: Rotary Global Grant GG2572214 Cleft Lip/Palate Surgery for Marginalized Children/Youth

VIII. Conclusion

The **2025 Manila Cleft Care Center Census Report**, implemented in partnership with the **Rotary Club of Manila**, demonstrates the powerful impact of collaboration in delivering life-changing medical care to **97 beneficiaries**. Together, Operation Smile Philippines and the Rotary Club of Manila have helped ensure that more children and families can look forward to healthier lives and brighter futures.

This report stands as both an official record of patients served and a testament to the shared commitment to service above self.

Prepared by:
Operation Smile Philippines

In partnership with:
Rotary Club of Manila

Period Coverage:
April 2025 – February 2026





**DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT**



**MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH**

Rotary Global Grant GG2572214 Cleft Lip/Palate Surgery for Marginalized Children/Youth

5/6/26, 4:39 PM

Rotary Club of Manila Mail - Rotary Global Grant GG2572214: Grant Closed



Anna Kun Toledo <kuntoledo@rcmanila.org>

Rotary Global Grant GG2572214: Grant Closed

2 messages

joy.hammer@rotary.org <joy.hammer@rotary.org>

Fri, May 1, 2026 at 11:25 PM

To: Jujut.enriquez@gmail.com, megroces@yahoo.com, bryanv@amgen.com, raoulcreencia@ccvlaw.com, kuntoledo@rcmanila.org, MitoneRotary@gmail.com, vmarymei@yahoo.com, lizaelorde4459@gmail.com, gpchow@comcast.net, yukyyaong@yahoo.com, dlewdye@gmail.com, ericcandidato@yahoo.com.ph

Dear Rotary Members,

Thank you for submitting the final report for Global Grant GG2572214 and for working with me to submit the necessary documentation/information. The report has been reviewed and is complete. The Foundation will now mark the grant closed. Your cooperation in fulfilling this requirement is greatly appreciated.

We encourage you to share your successful global grant activities in Rotary's [Service Project Center](#).

Many thanks to all the Rotarians who gave their time, funds, and expertise to implement this grant. Your contributions support The Rotary Foundation's mission to advance world understanding, goodwill, and peace through the improvement of health, the support of education, and the alleviation of poverty.

Sincerely,
Joy Hammer

Joy Hammer (she/her/hers)
Regional Grants Officer
Tel 1.847.866.3305
joy.hammer@rotary.org

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL | One Rotary Center | 1560 Sherman Ave. | Evanston, IL 60201 USA

ROTARY'S AREAS OF FOCUS



PEACEBUILDING AND
CONFLICT PREVENTION



DISEASE PREVENTION
AND TREATMENT



WATER, SANITATION,
AND HYGIENE



MATERNAL AND
CHILD HEALTH



BASIC EDUCATION
AND LITERACY



COMMUNITY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



ENVIRONMENT

Rotary
Club of Manila



RCMANILA
FOUNDATION, INC.



Sta. Elena Golf Club
JUNE 22, 2026 (MONDAY)

REGISTRATION: 6:00AM
SHOTGUN TEE-OFF: 8:00AM

TOURNAMENT FEE
PHP 9,000.00

**Green Fee, Cart-sharing, Giveaways,
Breakfast, Lunch & Raffles**

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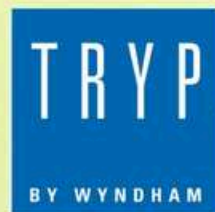
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HOLE



MALL OF ASIA
MANILA



PEOPLE

Forged by *Fire*

***The Life,
Survival, and
Reinventions
of Dr. Günter
Gerhard Klotz
Matschuck***

By PE Reginald T. Yu



FORGED BY FIRE

The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

BORN in the ruins of a collapsing Europe and shaped by war, displacement, engineering, migration, reinvention, and survival, Dr. Günter Matschuck's life journey spans some of the most transformative decades of the modern world. From surviving the bombings of Cologne during the Second World War to becoming an internationally respected engineer, industrialist, renewable energy advocate, institution-builder, and civic leader in the Philippines, his story is not defined by comfort or stability, but by repeated reconstruction.

Again and again, life

dismantled the world around him. Sometimes through war. Sometimes through grief. Sometimes through migration, loss, or physical catastrophe. Yet each stage demanded the same decision: whether to retreat into despair or begin again.

Again and again, he rebuilt.

Few experiences embodied this pattern more profoundly than the accident of May 14, 1986 — an ordinary Sunday afternoon in Makati that nearly ended his life, yet ultimately transformed the course of it forever.

What followed became not merely a story of survival, but of rebirth.

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

May 14, 1986.

The mangoes hung high above the garden wall, heavy and golden beneath the afternoon sun. It was supposed to be an ordinary Sunday.

Inside the house in Dasmariñas Village, preparations were underway for dinner with friends. Günter Matschuck had guests arriving later that afternoon — Dr. Cris Garcia and his wife Becky, part of the close circle of companions who had become his second family in Manila.

Before they arrived, he decided to harvest mangoes from the large tree inside the property.

Europe was still unsettled by the lingering fears following the Chernobyl disaster, and with an upcoming trip to Salzburg approaching, bringing fruit from home felt practical, almost comforting.

Using a lightweight aluminum skimmer pole normally intended for cleaning the swimming pool, Günter climbed high into the tree, maneuvering carefully between the branches in search of the ripest clusters.

Then everything changed.

Hidden beyond the upper canopy, invisible from where he stood, was a high-voltage transmission line.

The moment the aluminum pole touched the wire, the current surged violently through his body.
The shock locked his muscles instantly.

There was no time to react.

No time to let go.



Villa Pferdmenes in Cologne-Marienburg stood as an elegant symbol of pre-war German prosperity, refinement, and family life in one of Cologne's most distinguished residential districts. With its stately architecture, manicured gardens, and grand façade, the residence reflected the grace and stability of an era that would soon be disrupted by the upheavals of the Second World War. For the Matschuck family who once called it home, the villa was more than an architectural landmark. It was a place of everyday life, cherished memories, and quiet moments shared beneath its roof, including in the attic that became part of their personal story during a time of uncertainty and transformation.

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

Later, he would remember flashes of color and the strange sensation that time itself had fractured. In those suspended seconds between consciousness and oblivion, an unexpected realization surfaced with absolute clarity: he did not want to die.

Not yet.

The force of the blast hurled him downward.

When Joanne reached him moments later, smoke still rose faintly from his burned body.

"I am alive," he reportedly managed to whisper.

"Makati Medical... please inform Dr. Varwig."

The injuries were catastrophic.

Doctors would later struggle to explain how he survived.

But survival, as Günter Matschuck would discover repeatedly throughout his life, has a way of demanding reinvention.

And this would not be the first time life forced him to begin again.

Born Into the Collapse of an Era

Günter entered the world on February 26, 1939, in Cologne, Germany, only months before Europe descended into the Second World War. The timing of his birth would shape the emotional architecture of his entire life.



Taken in 1941 during the height of the Second World War, this portrait of the Matschuck family captures a deeply personal moment of tenderness and unity amid an era overshadowed by uncertainty and conflict. Günter, the young child seated between his parents, symbolizes innocence and hope, while the father's military uniform serves as a quiet reminder of the immense burdens and sacrifices carried by countless families during wartime Europe. Despite the tensions of the period, the photograph radiates warmth, dignity, and the enduring strength of family bonds, preserving a fleeting moment of normalcy and love in a world increasingly consumed by war.

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

Children raised in stable societies inherit continuity almost unconsciously — functioning institutions, predictable routines, secure homes, and the quiet assumption that the world around them will endure. But Günter belonged to another generation altogether.

He belonged to the generation born directly into collapse.

Before he could form conscious memories, the foundations of European civilization around him were already cracking beneath ideology, militarism, and total war. The Germany of his childhood projected discipline and certainty outwardly, yet beneath the spectacle of banners and patriotic rhetoric, the country was moving toward devastation.

For adults, politics defined the era. For children, history arrived differently.

It entered through atmosphere.

Through whispered conversations at home.

Through tension and fear.

Through ration cards, blackout curtains, distant explosions, and eventually, fire.

The Matschuck family itself reflected the complexity of old Europe.



This rare 1938 portrait of Ferdinand Klotz and his wife Christine of Ichenheim, Baden, captures a couple standing at the threshold of a world soon to be transformed by war and upheaval. Dressed in traditional attire that reflects the cultural heritage and customs of their region, they embody the dignity, pride, and simplicity of pre-war German provincial life. Taken just one year before the outbreak of the Second World War, the photograph preserves not only the likeness of two individuals, but also a vanishing era marked by deep-rooted family traditions, quiet resilience, and enduring devotion amidst the uncertainty of changing times.

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

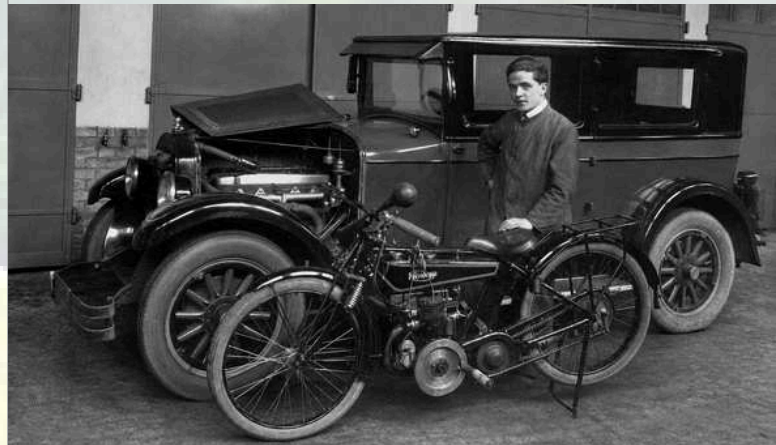
His father's lineage traced back to East Prussia near the Lithuanian border, descendants of disciplined Prussian "Soldatenbauern," or soldier-farmers, shaped by military culture, agricultural resilience, and practical survival. His grandfather Hermann Matschuck later became a master craftsman for the Royal Prussian Railways, specializing in precision woodwork for luxury train interiors, part of the skilled industrial class that fueled Germany's rise in the late nineteenth century.

His father Erich represented a newer Germany altogether — one driven by machines and modernization. As part of the pioneering generation of automobile mechanics during the 1920s and 1930s, he belonged to a profession that carried both prestige and technical importance at a time when automobiles remained rare and mechanically demanding. His expertise allowed him to work for wealthy businessmen and travel across Europe long before international travel became commonplace.

From him, Günter inherited discipline, mechanical curiosity, practical intelligence, and emotional restraint.

But his mother, Elisabeth "Liesel" Klotz, brought another dimension entirely. Coming from southwestern Germany near the Rhine, she embodied the

warmth, humor, openness, and sociability associated with Rhineland culture. Together, his parents represented two enduring strands of German identity — precision and warmth, discipline and humanity, technical rigor and emotional adaptability.



This remarkable photograph from the early 1920s captures a young Erich Matschuck standing proudly beside his motorcycle and automobile, symbols of a rapidly changing era driven by innovation, mobility, and industrial progress. Taken during a time when motor vehicles were still considered rare and sophisticated possessions, the image reflects both the fascination and optimism surrounding modern engineering in post-World War I Europe. The garage setting, with the automobile's engine exposed and the motorcycle prominently displayed in the foreground, suggests not merely ownership, but a deep appreciation for mechanics and technology. More than a portrait of machines, the photograph offers a glimpse into the aspirations of a generation eager to rebuild, advance, and embrace the possibilities of a modern world emerging from the shadows of war.

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck



This haunting aerial photograph shows the city of Cologne, Germany, after the devastating Allied bombing campaigns of the Second World War. The images capture the immense destruction inflicted upon one of Germany's oldest and most historic cities, where entire neighborhoods were reduced to rubble while the towering Cologne Cathedral stood almost miraculously amid the ruins. Beginning with the Royal Air Force's massive "Operation Millennium" raid on May 30–31, 1942, more than a thousand bombers unleashed waves of explosive and incendiary bombs that ignited firestorms across the city. Subsequent attacks by both the RAF and the United States Army Air Forces in the years that followed further flattened Cologne, leaving behind a shattered urban landscape that became one of the enduring visual symbols of the human cost and devastation of total war in Europe.

Those dual influences would remain visible in Günter throughout his life. Then war accelerated everything.

By the end of 1940, Erich was drafted into military service. For millions of European children, war first revealed itself through absence. Fathers disappeared into uniforms, train stations, military convoys, and silence.

Young Günter was too small to understand geopolitics, but he understood worry. He understood the emotional weight carried inside homes where women suddenly had to survive without certainty.

Soon Cologne itself became a target.

As one of Germany's major industrial

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

and transportation centers, the city endured increasingly devastating Allied bombing campaigns. Entire districts vanished beneath firestorms and collapsing masonry. For children, bombings created strange psychological contradictions where ordinary life and terror existed side by side. One moment families sat quietly at dinner. The next, sirens erupted and entire populations rushed underground into shelters.

Children learned sounds instinctively:

aircraft engines,
anti-aircraft fire,
the descending whistle of bombs,
the trembling earth after impact.

Before adolescence, Günter already understood that buildings could disappear overnight, systems could collapse, and adults did not always control events.

Yet another lesson formed alongside the fear:

Human beings could survive extraordinary destruction.

That belief would shape everything he later became.

Childhood Beneath Bombs and Ashes

One of the defining emotional experiences of Günter's childhood began with a telegram.

In wartime Europe, telegrams rarely brought good news. Families associated



Taken in the harsh aftermath of the Second World War in 1946–1947, this moving photograph shows young boys gathering pieces of coal from the ruins of a bombed railway station to help heat their school classroom stove during one of Europe's coldest and most difficult postwar winters. In a world still scarred by destruction, shortages, and hunger, even children were compelled to take part in the daily struggle for survival. Yet amid the rubble and hardship, the image also reflects resilience, responsibility, and the determination of a generation to continue learning and rebuilding their lives despite the devastation surrounding them.

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

them instinctively with death, injury, or disappearance. Every knock at the door carried anxiety.

When word arrived that Erich had been critically hospitalized with typhus near the Eastern Front, Günter's mother refused to wait helplessly. Instead, she undertook the dangerous journey across collapsing Germany with her young son.

The trip became one of the most traumatic memories of his life.

Railway stations overflowed with refugees, wounded soldiers, exhausted mothers, and frightened children as transportation systems struggled beneath the pressures of war and constant Allied bombing.

During the chaos of boarding one overcrowded train, four-year-old Günter slipped and fell into the gap between the train and the platform.

For one terrifying moment, he lay on the tracks beneath massive steel wheels.

Darkness.

Grease.

Metal.

The terrifying nearness of death.

Then anonymous hands reached down and pulled him back to safety.

He would never know who saved him, but the moment taught him something

profound long before he could articulate it: life could disappear instantly, and survival often depended on the kindness of strangers.

When mother and son finally reached the hospital, they found Erich emaciated and barely alive. The strong mechanic who once moved confidently through Europe now lay physically broken.



This charming photograph of Elise Matschuck and her young son Günter offers a tender glimpse into everyday family life in rural Germany during the mid-20th century. Standing beside a bicycle in a quiet village framed by traditional timbered homes, Elise embodies the resilience and simplicity of a generation that endured difficult times with quiet strength and grace. Beside her, Günter's curious presence adds warmth and innocence to the scene, reminding us that even amid periods of hardship and uncertainty, family life continued through small moments of love, routine, and togetherness.

FORGED BY FIRE

The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

For a child, seeing a parent weakened shattered the illusion of certainty that adults are supposed to embody.

Soon afterward, they returned to Cologne only to discover their apartment destroyed by bombing.

Everything had vanished:
furniture,
clothing,
photographs,
the fragile structure of ordinary life itself.

As British bombing intensified, Cologne descended further into ruin. Streets burned. Entire neighborhoods disappeared beneath smoke and collapsing masonry. Young Günter remembered melted asphalt and smoke hanging endlessly above the city.

Eventually, authorities evacuated mothers and children from heavily bombed areas. Günter and his mother were sent to the Black Forest region of southern Germany.

The relocation brought safety from bombs, but not comfort. They lived under harsh conditions among families who resented being forced to host evacuees. Food remained scarce. Winters were severe. Fear and exhaustion shaped daily life.

Then another tragedy arrived.



Taken in Berlin in 1944 during the final and most difficult years of the Second World War, this portrait of Herman and Elisabeth Sr. Matschuck captures the quiet dignity, resilience, and steadfast companionship of a generation shaped by hardship and uncertainty. Amid the devastation surrounding wartime Berlin, the couple's calm and composed presence reflects not only personal endurance but also the strength of family and faith that sustained countless ordinary people through extraordinary times. More than a simple photograph, this image stands today as both a cherished family heirloom and a moving historical reminder of the courage and perseverance carried silently by those who lived through one of history's darkest eras.

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

His baby brother Werner was born prematurely and weak during the final years of the war. Three days later, he died.

The image of the tiny white coffin and his mother's grief remained permanently etched in Günter's memory. Like many wartime children, he learned about death long before he fully understood life.

Yet amid hardship, moments of humanity still appeared unexpectedly.

One day after the war, while traveling through the forest, Günter encountered a Black French soldier for the first time in his life. Frightened at first, the boy froze.

Then the soldier smiled warmly and handed him a chocolate bar.

The gesture became unforgettable because it contradicted the fear and propaganda that had dominated wartime Europe. It taught him something simple but enduring:

Human kindness survives even after civilizations fail.

When Germany finally surrendered in 1945, the war officially ended. But for millions of German families, survival remained uncertain. The country lay shattered physically, politically, and morally.

For the six-year-old boy emerging from bombings, evacuation, hunger, and grief, childhood itself had already become inseparable from reconstruction.



This photograph captures a 19-year-old Günter riding his Vespa through Bergen aan Zee in the Netherlands in 1958, embodying the youthful optimism and spirit of postwar Europe. In an era marked by rebuilding and renewed opportunity, the Vespa became more than just a mode of transportation. It symbolized freedom, independence, and the promise of a brighter future for a generation emerging from the shadows of war. The simple scene reflects the excitement of youth, the pursuit of new horizons, and the quiet confidence of a young man beginning his journey into adulthood in a rapidly changing world.

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck



Taken in 1953 during the years of Germany's remarkable postwar "Economic Miracle" (Wirtschaftswunder), this photograph of the Matschuck family reflects a nation slowly rising from the devastation of the Second World War toward renewed stability and prosperity. Standing proudly beside their automobile against the backdrop of the German countryside, the family embodies the resilience, discipline, and optimism of a generation determined to rebuild their lives through hard work and perseverance. For families like the Matschucks, the postwar recovery was not merely an economic transformation, but a deeply personal journey from hardship and uncertainty toward dignity, mobility, and hope for the future.

The Farm That Saved His Soul

Relief finally arrived through his maternal grandparents' farm in Ichenheim near the Rhine meadows of Baden.

After years of bombings, evacuation, hunger, and emotional exhaustion, the farm became the place where life felt human again.

Like countless families in postwar Germany, the Matschucks arrived through landscapes crowded with refugees, discharged soldiers, widows, and displaced civilians carrying whatever remained of their former lives. People were no longer searching for prosperity, only stability.

For young Günter, the contrast felt overwhelming.

FORGED BY FIRE

The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

Unlike the devastated cities where destruction and starvation lingered, the countryside still produced food. The land continued functioning even after civilization itself seemed to collapse.

There was fresh bread.

Milk.

Fruit.

Animals.

Fields stretching toward open sky.

Most importantly, there was rhythm again.

Life on the farm restored continuity. Sunrise and sunset mattered. Planting and harvest followed natural cycles. Family members worked together toward visible, necessary goals.

The boy who had wandered through ruins now wandered forests and fields.

Farm life demanded hard labor. Günter carried hay, worked in tobacco fields, gathered firewood, planted crops, and helped during harvests. Yet the labor never felt meaningless. The farm taught him systems thinking long before he ever studied engineering.

Everything connected.

Weather affected crops.



During his years in Iran in 1973, Günter Matschuck embraced the rugged landscapes and traditions of the region, captured here with a majestic Urial sheep during a memorable hunting expedition.

Crops affected survival.

Tools required maintenance.

Animals depended on discipline and timing.

Nothing could be wasted.

In postwar rural Germany, scarcity sharpened awareness. Food did not appear magically. Warmth did not emerge effortlessly from invisible systems. Survival required coordination, discipline, and practical intelligence.

FORGED BY FIRE

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Young Günter watched adults repair broken tools instead of replacing them.

He learned that competence carried moral value.

His grandfather influenced him deeply. The older man understood weather, crops, construction, and seasonal rhythms instinctively. To the child, that practical mastery felt almost magical.

The farm also restored emotional warmth after years dominated by fear. Meals mattered again. Conversation returned. Children laughed. Ordinary family life slowly reassembled itself.

For a boy shaped by wartime instability, the farm offered more than nourishment. It gave him emotional grounding and, perhaps for the first time, freedom. He explored forests, riverbanks, fields, and barns with endless curiosity while nature itself became teacher.

Years later, despite his international achievements, Günter still spoke of those years in Baden with deep tenderness. He understood that the farm had done more than shelter his family.

It had rebuilt him.



Playing traditional hunting signals on the Fürst Pless Horn during his active years with AJ Hubertia in 1965 — a reflection of Günter Matschuck's lifelong appreciation for heritage, discipline, and camaraderie.

The values formed there never disappeared: respect for labor, discipline, resourcefulness, practical intelligence, and deep respect for systems and nature. Those traits would later shape the engineer, entrepreneur, and community leader he became.

By 1950, however, something had already begun to separate Günter from the expectations surrounding him.

Most members of the family before him had received only elementary education. In postwar Germany, especially among working-class households struggling

simply to rebuild daily life, higher education often felt distant and impractical.

But the boy who had already survived war and displacement sensed instinctively that education represented more than schooling.

It represented possibility.

Convincing his parents to allow him to pursue secondary education became one of the first truly consequential decisions of his life.

FORGED BY FIRE

The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

A Boy Fascinated by Machines

Even as a child, Günter Matschuck possessed an unusual fascination with how things worked.

Machines were never merely tools to him. They represented logic, structure, movement, and possibility.

Part of that fascination came from his father, whose work as a mechanic exposed him early to engines, automobiles, and technical problem-solving. In postwar Germany, technology also symbolized reconstruction itself. Cities lay in ruins, yet cranes still rose above shattered streets, railways reopened, and factories slowly awakened.

For a child emerging from devastation, machinery carried almost mythic power. It suggested that broken worlds could be rebuilt.

That fascination deepened in 1948 when he received a second-hand TRIX metal construction set. For the young boy, it became an entire universe. He spent endless hours assembling cranes, bridges, vehicles, and mechanical systems from metal parts, gears, and screws. Because the set was incomplete, he constantly improvised solutions.

Without realizing it, he had already begun thinking like an engineer.

Every failed structure taught him something:

weight distribution mattered,
alignment mattered,
balance mattered.

A single loose screw could compromise an entire design.



Tehran, 1978 — Dr. Günter Matschuck, Technical Director of Kupps, welcomes Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi and Empress Farah Pahlavi during a major industrial and technological exhibition in Iran at the height of the country's modernization era.

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

Soon another gift captivated him even more — a small toy steam engine powered by fuel tablets. The machine mesmerized him. Water heated, pressure built, and motion emerged. For the first time, he witnessed invisible energy transforming into mechanical power.

That childhood wonder eventually evolved into a lifelong fascination with thermodynamics and energy systems.

Yet what truly distinguished him was not mere curiosity, but persistence. He dismantled radios, tools, and household devices simply to understand their hidden logic. His mother occasionally worried about the endless disassembly of perfectly functional objects around the house, but the impulse already revealed the future engineer.

He wanted not merely to use systems, but to understand them from the inside.

That mindset later shaped his entire worldview. Whether dealing with engines, organizations, or communities, Günter instinctively searched for underlying systems:

What made things function?
Why did they fail?
How could they improve?

The boy fascinated by machines would eventually spend his life building systems across continents.



A young Günter Matschuck during his years in Tehran, Iran, serving as Technical Director and Member of the Management Board of Krupp Iran GmbH — already demonstrating the intellect, discipline, and international leadership that would define his remarkable career in engineering and industry.

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The Life, Survival, and Reinventions of Dr. Günter Gerhard Klotz Matschuck

The Apprenticeship of Hardship

After secondary school, Günter entered an apprenticeship at Klöckner Humboldt Deutz AG, one of Germany's major industrial engine manufacturers.

The experience hardened him.

Factory life demanded discipline, endurance, and precision. He woke before dawn and spent long days surrounded by heat, machinery, noise, and relentless industrial routine.

Postwar Germany during the 1950s remained psychologically marked by collapse but economically driven by reconstruction. Factories became symbols of national recovery. Engines, steel, machines, and infrastructure powered the country's "economic miracle," and industrial labor carried deep respect because rebuilding depended upon it.

Young Günter entered this world just as Germany itself was reinventing its future.

Yet the apprenticeship awakened something beyond technical skill. He respected labor deeply, but feared becoming trapped in a life without intellectual growth.

So, after exhausting factory shifts, he attended evening classes.

By day he wore blue overalls. By night he studied languages, mathematics, and advanced subjects. Sleep became secondary.

For many young workers, factory life offered stability. For Günter, however, machinery sparked intellectual hunger rather than complacency. He became fascinated not only by how engines functioned, but why.



The inauguration of MATEC's office in Libis, attended by Ambassador Klaus Zeller and Austrian Trade Commissioner Zamnik, marking an important milestone in German-Austrian-Philippine business cooperation and industrial partnership.

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What governed efficiency?
How did combustion generate motion?
Why did machines behave differently
under varying conditions?

The apprenticeship exposed him to industrial systems, but also to the limits of repetitive labor. He saw highly capable men remain economically trapped despite extraordinary practical skills. That reality intensified his determination to continue studying.

At the same time, the factory gave him something many academics never acquire: practical understanding. He learned how tools felt in the hand, how machinery failed under real conditions, and why technicians and mechanics deserved respect.

Those experiences later distinguished him sharply from purely theoretical engineers.

Alongside a friend, he also launched a small Vespa repair business after work, restoring damaged scooters and reselling them for profit.

The venture taught him entrepreneurship, customer relations, and the economic value of technical competence. More importantly, it reinforced a lesson that stayed with him for life:

Skill creates freedom.

The apprenticeship years also forged his extraordinary discipline. Long days, night studies, and constant self-improvement became normal. Eventually, he qualified as an English translator and interpreter, a remarkable achievement for a working-class young man in postwar Germany.

Language opened new horizons.

Soon afterward, he entered the Zweiter Bildungsweg, Germany's demanding "Second Educational Path," which allowed working adults to qualify for



In the forests of Germany, Günter Matschuck pursued one of his lifelong passions — hunting roebucks — combining patience, tradition, and deep respect for nature.

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university admission through extraordinary effort.

The years were brutal. He existed between worlds — no longer simply a worker, but not yet fully an intellectual.

Yet the hardship forged one of the defining traits of his life: relentless self-discipline.

Everything that followed rested upon that foundation.

The apprenticeship taught him discipline, but it also awakened dissatisfaction.

Factory life exposed him to the realities of industrial labor — the exhaustion, hierarchy, and narrow intellectual horizons that confined many highly capable men to repetitive routines for the rest of their lives.

Günter respected the dignity of labor deeply.

But he also understood, with growing clarity, that he wanted more.

So, after long factory shifts, he studied at night.

The mechanic was already beginning to transform into a scholar.



Standing joyfully amidst a sea of blossoms, Günter reflects the quiet triumph of a life that endured war, hardship, reinvention, and recovery, yet never lost its capacity for wonder and gratitude. The image captures more than a peaceful moment in nature; it symbolizes renewal itself — a reminder that even after life's harshest winters, seasons of growth, beauty, and joy can still emerge in full bloom.

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The Scholar of Fire and Energy

By the time Günter Matschuck entered RWTH Aachen University, he was no longer merely an ambitious student. He was already a man shaped by labor, hardship, and survival.

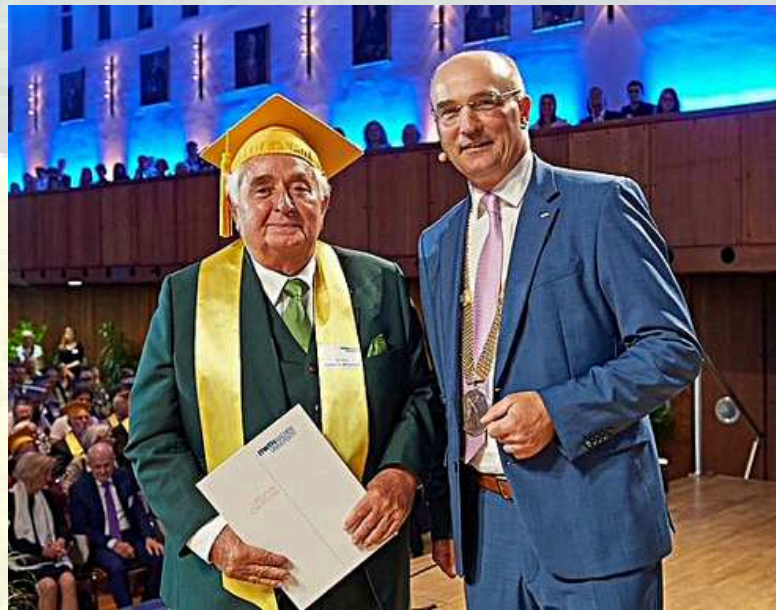
Unlike many classmates who arrived through traditional academic paths, he carried with him years of factory experience, mechanical apprenticeship, and the emotional maturity forged by postwar Germany's harsh realities. He had worked among engines, steel, industrial heat, and machinery long before entering lecture halls and laboratories. That background gave him an unusual perspective.

For Günter, engineering was never abstract.
Machines breathed.
They failed.
They consumed energy, transformed matter, and shaped civilizations.

At Aachen, he immersed himself in thermodynamics, combustion engineering, and energy systems — disciplines that fascinated him because they explored transformation itself: heat into motion, fuel into power, invisible energy into the functioning systems upon which modern societies depended.

German engineering education during that era carried a global reputation for rigor and uncompromising standards. Students were expected not merely to memorize formulas, but to understand entire systems intellectually and practically. Many failed under the pressure.

Günter thrived precisely because hardship no longer intimidated him.



Honored by RWTH Aachen University on the 50th anniversary of his doctoral dissertation in Thermodynamics, Dr.-Ing. Günter Matschuck receives the prestigious Golden Doktorhut from Rector Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Dr. h.c. mult. Ulrich Rüdiger — a tribute to a lifetime devoted to engineering, energy systems, and scientific excellence.

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Compared to factory labor combined with night studies, academic exhaustion felt survivable through discipline alone. The years of apprenticeship had already trained him to endure long hours, delayed gratification, and relentless precision.

Under Professor K. F. Knoche, he specialized in combustion science and eventually pursued doctoral research involving hydroxyl concentration distributions in methane-oxygen flames — work that demanded extraordinary precision amid unstable reactions, extreme temperatures, and highly complex thermodynamic interactions.

Yet beyond the mathematics and laboratory measurements, thermodynamics also shaped his philosophy.

The science itself revealed something profound: nothing remains static.

Every system undergoes transformation, exchange, instability, and entropy. Energy changes form continually. Equilibrium itself remains temporary.

Those ideas resonated deeply with a man whose own life had already passed repeatedly through destruction and reconstruction.

At the same time, Günter expanded his intellectual horizons beyond engineering alone.

Recognizing early that technology could never exist separately from economics, politics, and human systems, he also



A deeply significant milestone in Günter Matschuck's distinguished international career, as he receives the Cross of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany from Ambassador Thomas Ossowski on behalf of the German President. Held at the Ambassador's residence in the presence of close friends from the Rotary Club of Manila and the business community, the occasion honored decades of meaningful contributions to German-Philippine relations, industry, renewable energy advocacy, and civic leadership. For Günter, the recognition symbolized not only professional achievement, but also a lifetime devoted to building bridges across nations, cultures, and communities.

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pursued studies in economics and business administration. He understood instinctively that machines alone never solve societal problems automatically. Every technical system functions within larger human realities.

That broader perspective later distinguished him internationally.

He was not becoming merely an engineer.
He was becoming a systems thinker.

Yet even as academic life slowly restored structure and direction, the emotional devastation left by Marika's death never fully disappeared.

On July 23, 1966, only weeks after completing his final examinations and while finalizing his diploma thesis, Günter and his young wife had driven toward the North Sea coast in their white Volkswagen Beetle, looking forward to a quiet weekend in Domburg in the Netherlands. The future still seemed wide open before them.

Marika was radiant that morning, carrying a happiness he did not yet fully understand. Only much later would he learn that she had already been in the earliest stage of pregnancy.

Then, within seconds, everything collapsed.

A vehicle suddenly appeared airborne before them. Instinctively, Günter swerved, hoping to avoid the falling car. Instead, it crashed violently onto the right side of their Beetle.

The wreckage was catastrophic. Marika never reached the hospital.

Günter himself survived with severe injuries — a fractured skull, a shattered thigh, and months of painful rehabilitation. Surgeons later reconstructed his leg with metal plates and a Küntscher nail after his father arranged his transfer to the sports clinic of the University of Cologne.



February 2013 — Dr. Günter Matschuck joins German and Philippine business leaders in welcoming German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle during a high-level German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry dialogue on partnership, trade, and shared development.

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But the deeper wounds were invisible.

For many months afterward, grief consumed him almost completely. He later admitted that he became suicidal during the long recovery that followed. The physical pain mattered little beside the emotional devastation of losing both his wife and the unborn future they had unknowingly carried together.

A young Jesuit priest — also a fraternity brother — often sat beside his hospital bed speaking with him for hours about suffering, philosophy, and the meaning of life. Those conversations became part of what slowly kept him from psychological collapse.

Later, withdrawing alone to a small hut in the moors near Bentheim in Westphalia, he lived in near isolation while still moving on crutches. Days passed in silence among forests, open fields, and wildlife he once hunted before the accident. But during those months, he carried no rifle.

Only grief.

Slowly, the rhythm of solitude began calming his mind. Wandering through the moors from sunrise to sunset, he gradually rediscovered something fragile but essential: the will to continue living.

It was during those lonely months that Hermann Hesse's *Stufen* began accompanying him almost like a private spiritual guide. One passage remained especially etched in his consciousness:

"The heart must be prepared for departure and new beginnings, so that it may generously and without sorrow commit itself to other, new bonds."

At the time, however, Günter was not yet certain he truly believed those words. Pain became transformation.



Welcoming German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle during a German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry engagement, reflecting Dr. Günter Matschuck's enduring role in strengthening German-Philippine economic and diplomatic relations.

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The grieving husband slowly became the scholar.

And yet life, quietly and unexpectedly, was not finished offering him new beginnings.

During the summer of 1969, while attending sailing training at Lake Wörthersee in Austria, Günter met a young woman named Ulrike, who worked there as a sailing instructor during her vacation break. Coming from Salzburg, she had recently graduated from a food technology college in Germany.

She possessed a warmth, vitality, and openness that contrasted sharply with the emotional heaviness he had carried for years.

The setting itself seemed symbolic of transition. The calm Austrian lake, the movement of sailboats across open water, and the freedom of summer stood far removed from hospitals, funerals, and memories of wreckage.

What began as companionship gradually evolved into something deeper.

For Günter, Ulrike represented not the erasure of grief, but the possibility that life could still continue after it.



Bringing History to the Philippines — Turning over an authentic segment of the Berlin Wall through the German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as a symbol of freedom, unity, and enduring friendship between nations.

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In 1970, she became his second wife.

The widower slowly began learning how to love again.

By the end of his doctoral work, Günter Matschuck had already crossed extraordinary social boundaries.

The wartime child from bombed Cologne had become Dr.-Ing. Günter Matschuck of RWTH Aachen University — a scholar of thermodynamics and combustion systems shaped equally by intellectual rigor, practical labor, grief, resilience, and survival.

Yet even academic achievement did not quiet the restlessness within him. Beyond Germany, a rapidly industrializing world was beginning to open.

The Widower

For a long time after Marika's death, Günter no longer experienced life as forward movement.

He worked.
He studied.
He recovered.

But beneath the discipline and intellectual rigor remained a quiet uncertainty about whether the emotional



Günter Matschuck in the uniform of the Philippine Auxiliary Coast Guard as Lieutenant Commander — reflecting his enduring commitment to service, discipline, and civic responsibility in his adopted homeland.

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future he once imagined for himself had disappeared forever.

Hermann Hesse's *Stufen* stayed close to him during those years:

"The heart must be prepared for departure and new beginnings..."

At first, the words felt impossible to believe.

Then, during the summer of 1969 beside the waters of Lake Wörthersee, life began quietly opening once more.

Across Continents and Cultures

Leaving academe for industry meant abandoning the relative predictability of university life for the far more volatile world of international management.

It was another leap into uncertainty. And another reinvention.

For many engineers of his generation, academic life represented stability, prestige, and intellectual security. But Günter had never been entirely comfortable remaining still for too long.

The same curiosity that once drove him to dismantle machines as a child now pushed him toward larger systems — industries, countries, cultures, and emerging economies undergoing rapid transformation.

Professional opportunities soon carried him far beyond Germany. Together with Ulrike, he entered a period of movement across continents that would define the next stage of his life.

Through major industrial assignments with German engineering firms, he worked across Europe, North Africa, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, and Iran, entering a world where engineering no longer existed merely inside laboratories or lecture halls, but at the center of geopolitics, modernization, infrastructure, and industrial ambition.



A cherished moment with Fidel V. Ramos — soldier, statesman, and visionary leader whose steady hand helped guide the Philippines through a defining era of reform, stability, and national progress.

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By the early 1970s, Günter had already crossed extraordinary social boundaries.

From working-class apprentice, he had become Dr.-Ing. Günter Matschuck of RWTH Aachen University.

Yet he remained restless. The world beyond Germany increasingly called to him.

Professional opportunities soon carried him across Europe, North Africa, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, and Iran through major industrial assignments with German engineering firms. For many Germans of his generation, international work still carried an almost romantic sense of possibility.

While postwar Europe rebuilt itself, much of the wider world was rapidly modernizing, creating enormous demand for engineers capable of operating internationally.

German engineers, in particular, carried strong global reputations for precision, reliability, and technical rigor.

But what distinguished Günter was not merely technical competence.

It was adaptability.

The hardships of his early life had prepared him well for unfamiliar environments. War taught him instability. Farm life taught resourceful-

ness. Factory work taught discipline. University taught analytical rigor.

Together, these experiences created someone capable of functioning calmly under changing conditions.

Iran proved especially transformative.

Working in Tehran during the Shah's modernization years exposed him to large-scale industrial ambition, geopolitical complexity, and entirely different cultural systems. The country pulsed with contradiction: ancient Persian traditions coexisted with rapid industrial expansion and strong Western influence.



A memorable evening shared with Cesar V. Purisima and business statesman Oscar M. Lopez — two distinguished leaders whose influence helped shape Philippine finance, industry, and nation-building.

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Günter adapted naturally.

Unlike many expatriates who remained socially isolated, he immersed himself in local environments and quickly realized that international engineering required far more than technical expertise.

It demanded flexibility, observation, and emotional intelligence.

Technical systems alone never determined success.

Human systems mattered equally.

He studied how cultures approached authority, negotiation, hierarchy, hospitality, and communication. Rather than resisting differences, he tried to understand their internal logic.

The engineer inside him approached societies much as he approached machines — by searching for underlying systems.

That ability became one of his greatest strengths.

He could move comfortably between workers and executives, engineers and businessmen, Europeans and Asians, technical language and human relationships.

Professionally, the international years transformed him from academic engineer into industrial leader. Large-scale projects demanded not only scientific expertise, but also negotiation, crisis management, logistics, leadership, and strategic decision-making. Engineering became inseparable from politics, economics, and culture.



A memorable evening shared among friends, colleagues, and fellow Rotarians, made even more meaningful by the presence of Günter's dear friend, steadfast supporter, and sailing companion, Rotary Club of Manila's Past President Ed Reyes. Though he has since passed on, his warmth, generosity, friendship, and unwavering camaraderie continue to live on in the memories of those privileged to have shared life's journeys with him.

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The experiences broadened him profoundly. He no longer thought merely as a German engineer. He increasingly thought globally.

Travel also deepened something already rooted within him: movement itself had become part of his identity. Like earlier generations of his family who migrated toward wider opportunity, Günter continued that journey across continents.

Then, in 1979, he arrived in the Philippines.

At first, it seemed simply another assignment in an expanding international career.

Instead, it became home.

The Philippines: His Chosen Homeland

The Philippines transformed Günter's life more deeply than any country outside Germany.

When he first arrived in Manila in 1979 to help build Maschinen & Technik, Inc. — better known as Matec — he believed the assignment would simply become another chapter in an already international career. By then, he had already worked across Europe,

North Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. Movement had become almost instinctive to him. Countries changed. Projects changed. Industries evolved.

But the Philippines would become something else entirely. It would become home.

At first, Manila felt overwhelming. Germany had shaped him through order, punctuality, precision, and systems.



Representing the Philippines at the Rotary International Convention in Hamburg as ICC Chair for Germany–Philippines, promoting friendship, cultural understanding, and international service through Rotary.

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The Philippines introduced him to a society that often moved according to entirely different rhythms — warmer, more improvisational, emotionally expressive, and capable of remarkable resilience amid uncertainty.

The city assaulted the senses.

The tropical heat, crowded streets, jeepneys, informal markets, sudden downpours, and the striking contrasts between privilege and poverty stood far from the disciplined postwar Germany that had formed him. Many expatriates struggled with these realities, retreating into insulated circles where the country remained merely a temporary assignment.

Günter adapted.

Part of that adaptability came from experience. Having grown up amid war, collapse, and reconstruction, he understood instinctively that societies rarely function perfectly beneath the surface. What mattered was not superficial disorder, but whether people retained the capacity to endure, rebuild, and move forward.

And in the Philippines, he recognized that quality everywhere.



At the Rotary International Convention in Hamburg, during my appointment as ICC Chair for Germany–Philippines, strengthening bridges of friendship, cooperation, and goodwill between our two nations through Rotary.

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Resilience.

The country reminded him, in unexpected ways, of postwar Germany — imperfect, wounded, improvising, yet deeply alive.

But the deeper transformation came through Joanne.

Their meeting began quietly, without ceremony or dramatic intention, during a period when Günter's life was still largely defined by work, industrial projects, and the demanding rhythm of international business. Yet Joanne brought something into his life that no engineering system or professional achievement could provide: emotional rootedness. By then, Günter had already passed through earlier chapters of love, loss, remarriage, and international movement that had profoundly shaped him emotionally.

She possessed warmth, steadiness, intelligence, and a deeply Filipino sense of family and care that gradually drew him beyond the insulated world often inhabited by expatriates. Through her, Manila ceased being merely a place of contracts, meetings, and industrial negotiations. He began experiencing the country from within — through family gatherings, friendships, celebrations, everyday routines, and the deeply relational culture that defines Filipino life.

What began as companionship slowly deepened into love.

For Günter, whose earlier years had already been marked by profound personal loss, the relationship brought not only affection, but renewal.

Joanne entered his life during a period when he was no longer simply building a career, but unconsciously searching for permanence.



Celebrating friendship and international fellowship at the Rotary International Convention in Hamburg during my appointment as ICC Chair for Germany–Philippines, together with fellow Rotarians united in service above self.

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And in many ways, she became the bridge between the man who had spent decades moving across continents and the man who would finally choose to stay.

Marriage changed geography. The Philippines was no longer an assignment. It became personal. Over time, Günter built not only businesses, but roots.

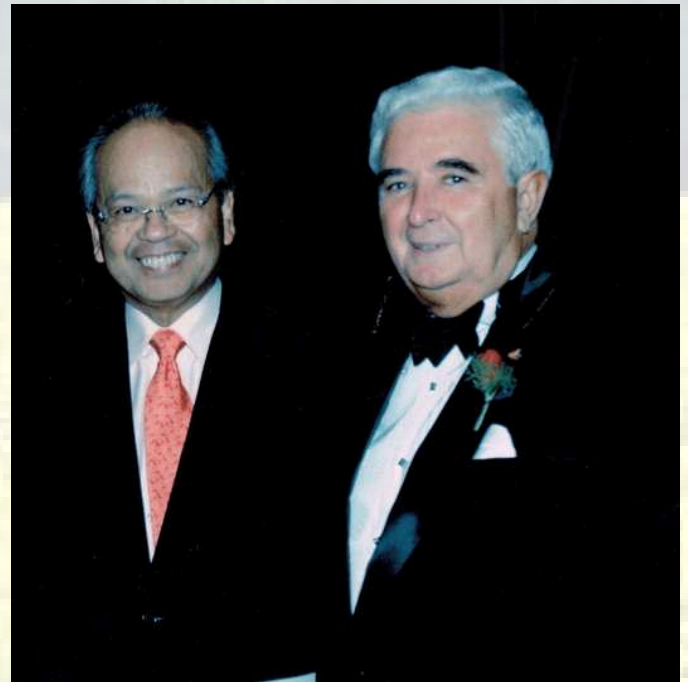
Through Matec and its growing role in Philippine industrial development, he became deeply involved in energy systems, infrastructure, and German technological partnerships in the country. His background in thermodynamics and combustion engineering naturally drew him toward questions of national development. He understood clearly that industrial growth depended upon reliable energy, long-term planning, and technological modernization.

Without infrastructure, development stalled. Without energy, industries could not grow.

As the Philippines confronted recurring energy shortages and industrial challenges during the 1980s and 1990s, Günter increasingly saw his work not merely as business, but as contribution. Through Matec, he helped introduce German engineering systems and

technologies into major Philippine industries, eventually participating in projects that would significantly shape the country's industrial and energy landscape.

Yet business alone never fully defined his life in Manila. What rooted him more deeply were the relationships.



A moment shared with one of the nation's most respected legal luminaries, former Chief Justice Artemio V. Panganiban — Rotary Club of Manila Past President, statesman, and beloved ninong to Günter's daughter Antoinette. A friendship grounded in wisdom, integrity, and a shared commitment to service.

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Over the years, he built lasting friendships across the expatriate, business, diplomatic, and civic communities. The Rotary Club of Manila became especially meaningful to him, not merely as an institution, but as a circle of friendship, service, and shared purpose. There he found men whose influence extended beyond business into nation-building, public service, and civic leadership.

The relationships formed within Rotary would later become especially important during periods of political and economic transition in the Philippines. Through the club, he encountered businessmen, diplomats, military leaders, technocrats, and public officials who were helping shape the country during a transformative period of its history.

But more importantly, he found community.

The same applied to his growing involvement in institutions that strengthened German-Philippine relations. Beyond his leadership within the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and the German Club Manila, he became one of the key figures behind the foundation and development of the German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

What began as informal business forums among German businessmen eventually evolved into a fully recognized AHK within the worldwide German chamber network.

Institution-building appealed naturally to him.

Perhaps because he had witnessed societal collapse during childhood, he understood the importance of durable systems, cooperation, and long-term structures that outlast individual personalities.



An evening of fellowship and friendship at Rotary with PD Roy Golez, Oscar Lopez, Claus Sudhoff, and Günter Matschuck — a gathering of distinguished minds bound by mutual respect, shared ideals, and enduring camaraderie.

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He approached organizations much the same way he approached engineering: carefully, systematically, with an eye toward continuity.

At the same time, the Philippines awakened dimensions of his personality that Germany alone had not fully drawn out. Beneath his disciplined exterior existed warmth, humor, sociability, and emotional openness inherited from his Rhineland roots. Filipino culture — with its emphasis on hospitality, family, friendship, and personal connection — resonated deeply with him.

Business meetings became dinners. Professional relationships became lifelong friendships. Communities became extended families.

Even his hobbies became extensions of relationship-building. Golf opened doors to friendships and business networks.

Sailing aboard his yacht became a setting for conversations, partnerships, and moments of trust that often mattered more than formal negotiations themselves.

Gradually, the city stopped feeling foreign.

Manila became the place where his professional ambitions, civic



A Lifelong Sailor at Heart — Günter Matschuck's enduring passion for the sea found a second home at the Manila Yacht Club, where friendship, adventure, and the spirit of sailing became part of his life's journey.

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commitments, friendships, and family life converged into something larger than career alone.

The Germany of his childhood had shaped his discipline.
But the Philippines expanded his humanity.

And by the time life confronted him with its next great turning point in 1986, the country had already ceased being merely the place where he worked.

It had become the place where he belonged.

Leadership Through Service

For Günter, leadership was never measured by titles alone.

He had witnessed too much of history's failure to believe that authority automatically produced wisdom. As a child, he saw governments collapse, cities burn, and societies descend into destruction despite powerful leaders and elaborate institutions. Those experiences shaped him permanently. They taught him that leadership without responsibility could become catastrophic. Perhaps because of this, he approached leadership differently throughout his life.

To him, leadership was not performance.

It was stewardship.

It meant assuming responsibility when systems became fragile or uncertain.

Every stage of his life reinforced that philosophy. The farm in Baden taught cooperation and discipline. The apprenticeship years taught respect for labor. University taught intellectual rigor. International engineering projects taught adaptability and strategic thinking. The Philippines transformed those lessons into something broader: service.

Over time, he came to see engineering itself as a form of service. Machines, energy systems, and infrastructure existed not merely for technical achievement, but to improve human life.



Günter Matschuck was recognized by fellow Rotarians for his meaningful contributions to service, fellowship, and international goodwill — honors earned through decades of commitment and leadership.

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Reliable electricity allowed hospitals to function. Efficient systems created jobs. Sustainable energy protected future generations.

That practical understanding shaped his later work deeply.

After settling in the Philippines, he did not isolate himself within corporate circles. Instead, he immersed himself in institutions, organizations, and civic life because he believed healthy societies required active participation from competent individuals.

One of the most important arenas for this involvement became the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP), where he served on the board for nearly two decades.

There, he helped strengthen European-Philippine economic ties while advocating responsible industrial and commercial development. But his involvement did not stop there.

Recognizing the need for a stronger and more structured platform specifically dedicated to German-Philippine economic cooperation, Günter became one of the driving forces behind the creation of the German-Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry. What began as regular business forums



An evening of fellowship and friendship as Rotary Club of Manila members gathered during the Consular Ball, celebrating camaraderie, shared service, and enduring international ties.

among German businessmen at the German Club gradually evolved into a fully institutionalized chamber that would eventually achieve official recognition within the global network of German foreign chambers of commerce as an AHK — *Auslandshandelskammer*.

He served the organization in multiple capacities: founding member, Vice-President, later President, and eventually Honorary Member. Under his leadership and alongside other committed pioneers, the chamber evolved from a locally funded initiative into a respected institution that significantly strengthened bilateral business, investment, and technological cooperation between Germany and the Philippines.

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Institution-building appealed naturally to him.

Perhaps because he had witnessed societal collapse during childhood, he understood deeply that stable societies depended not merely on charismatic individuals, but on durable systems capable of outlasting personalities and political cycles.

That memory never left him.

He understood that societies rebuild themselves through education, technical competence, infrastructure, and institutional discipline. At the same time, he recognized how corruption, weak systems, and short-term thinking could cripple development.

This gave his leadership seriousness and practicality. He cared less about appearances than about functioning systems.

The same mindset drew him toward renewable energy advocacy long before sustainability became globally fashionable. As an engineer trained in thermodynamics and combustion systems, he understood the long-term limitations of fossil fuel dependence and recognized the enormous renewable potential of the Philippines.

Rather than simply criticize slow progress, he became actively involved in improving it.



Günter Matschuck was honored by the Rotary Club of Manila for his steadfast service, leadership, and enduring contributions to fellowship and community as sergeant-at-arms in 2013-2014 — a fitting tribute to a life devoted to excellence and goodwill.

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Through organizations such as the Philippine Solar and Storage Energy Alliance and through his participation in discussions surrounding the Renewable Energy Law during the time of Secretaries Angelo Reyes and Raphael Lotilla, he helped promote dialogue among engineers, investors, policymakers, and business leaders, contributing to the early growth of renewable energy initiatives in the country. Under his guidance, Matec itself gradually reoriented toward renewable energy systems, solar technology, and EPC capacity-building.

Once again, his leadership reflected practicality rather than ideology. He believed environmental responsibility and industrial development did not need to conflict. Good engineering, he argued, should pursue efficiency, sustainability, and long-term viability together.

This adaptability distinguished him. Though trained during the industrial age, he remained intellectually flexible enough to embrace future-oriented energy solutions rather than cling rigidly to old systems.

He understood that survival — whether for individuals, companies, or societies — required the willingness to evolve.

His civic involvement extended beyond



Celebrating Oktoberfest in true Bavarian spirit together with Ambassador Vic Garcia, sharing friendship, laughter, and the enduring camaraderie of the German-Philippine community.

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business and energy. Organizations such as the German Club Manila became important to him because they fostered continuity, friendship, and mutual support for expatriates living far from home.

When he later served as president of the German Club Manila, he approached the role with characteristic seriousness and warmth. He believed organizations should not merely preserve tradition, but strengthen genuine human relationships.

People who knew him often noticed the unusual combination of discipline and sociability he carried. He could be demanding regarding competence and preparation, yet personally warm, humorous, and generous in conversation.

That duality reflected his roots:

from his father came structure and technical rigor;

from his mother came warmth and emotional openness.

The Philippines allowed both sides of his personality to flourish.

His involvement with the Rotary Club of Manila reflected the same philosophy of leadership through service. Rotary's emphasis on ethical responsibility, international friendship, practical action, and civic engagement resonated

naturally with his values. Within Rotary, he found not merely networking opportunities, but a genuine community of individuals committed to nation-building, humanitarian work, and professional integrity.

The friendships he formed through Rotary became deeply woven into his Philippine life. During periods of political



In conversation with Alberto G. Romulo — diplomat, statesman, and one of the most enduring figures in Philippine public service whose leadership helped shape the country's role on the global stage.

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Rotary Club of Manila members during our visit to Osaka in 2021, celebrating fellowship, friendship, and the enduring bonds of Rotary beneath Japan's beautiful cherry blossoms.

instability — including the coup attempts of the late 1980s — he helped coordinate evacuation and safety assistance for fellow expatriates and German nationals. Some people retreat during uncertainty.

Others step forward.
Günter belonged to the latter.

Perhaps because he had already survived catastrophe during childhood, crises did not paralyze him emotionally. He approached emergencies opera-

tionally: assess the situation, organize systems, help people, remain calm.

What mattered to him was never prestige.
It was usefulness.

Because he himself had risen from apprenticeship and factory life, he never lost respect for workers, technicians, and practical labor. He understood exhaustion, struggle, and the difficulty of social mobility.

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As a result, he moved comfortably across social boundaries — equally at ease with executives and diplomats as with mechanics and laborers.

Many successful professionals lose that ability over time.
Günter never entirely did.

Over time, his contributions to German-Philippine relations, civic life, business development, renewable energy advocacy, and international cooperation earned him prestigious honors from both Germany and Austria, including the Federal Cross of Merit.

Yet those who knew him closely understood that awards mattered far less to him than continued usefulness.

Even after decades of achievement, he remained intellectually curious and deeply engaged with ideas, systems, and community life. The boy who once dismantled mechanical toys to understand how they worked never disappeared completely.

He simply expanded his field of interest from machines to societies themselves. And perhaps that is the thread connecting every stage of his life.

Whether studying combustion systems, managing industrial projects, building

institutions, advocating renewable energy, strengthening German-Philippine relations, or serving communities through Rotary and civic organizations, Günter Matschuck approached leadership through a single enduring principle:

Build systems that help people endure, adapt, and move forward.



An evening of Oktoberfest fellowship together with former German Ambassador Dr. Gordon Kricke and dear friends, celebrating enduring ties between the German and Filipino communities through friendship, culture, and camaraderie.

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Because shaped by war, reconstruction, migration, and survival, he understood something many leaders never fully learn:

The true purpose of leadership is not power.

It is continuity.

It is helping people rebuild, again and again, whenever history demands it.

The Accident That Changed Everything

By 1986, Günter Matschuck had already survived enough upheaval for several lifetimes.

He had endured war, displacement, hunger, grief, industrial hardship, migration across continents, and the relentless demands of building businesses and institutions far from Germany.

Through discipline and adaptability, he had repeatedly rebuilt himself whenever life demanded reinvention.

Yet nothing in his earlier years fully prepared him for what happened on May 14, 1986.

It was a quiet Sunday afternoon in Dasmariñas Village.

Friends were expected later that day.

Among them were Dr. Cris Garcia and his wife Becky, part of the close circle of companions who had become deeply woven into Günter's life in Manila. Inside the house, preparations for dinner were already underway.

Outside, a large mango tree stood heavy with fruit.

With an upcoming trip to Salzburg approaching — and Europe still anxious over contamination fears following the Chernobyl disaster — Günter decided to harvest several ripe carabao mangoes to bring along.



Raising a stein in true Bavarian spirit during Oktoberfest celebrations, surrounded by dear friends, laughter, fellowship, and the joyful traditions of German camaraderie.

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It was an ordinary decision.
The kind that changes lives precisely
because it appears so ordinary.

Using a lightweight aluminum skimmer
pole normally intended for cleaning the
swimming pool, he climbed high into
the mango tree, maneuvering carefully
through the branches in search of the
best fruit.

The upper canopy concealed something
he could not see: a high-voltage
transmission line running above the
tree.

As he stretched toward one final cluster
of mangoes, the aluminum pole touched
the live wire.

The electrical surge exploded through
his body instantly.

The current locked his muscles so
violently that he could not release the
pole. Electricity coursed through him
with catastrophic force, entering
through his upper body and eventually
exiting through his right foot. Later, he
would describe the experience in
strangely vivid fragments — flashes of
color, suspended time, and the surreal
sensation that his entire life was
unfolding before him in seconds.



*An evening of warm conversations and
international friendship with Her
Excellency Bitra Rasoulia, Austrian
Ambassador to the Philippines,
representing the enduring ties between
cultures, diplomacy, and shared goodwill.*

But above all, he remembered one
overwhelming realization: he did not
want to die. Not yet.

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He later reflected that in those brief moments between consciousness and oblivion, thoughts of Joanne, family, unfinished work, friendships, and the life he had built in the Philippines surged through him with extraordinary clarity.

Then came the fall.

Several fortunate circumstances likely saved his life. The rubber soles of his shoes reduced grounding, preventing the current from instantly killing him. Even so, the injuries were catastrophic.

When Joanne reached him moments later, smoke still rose faintly from his burned body.

Despite the immense trauma, Günter briefly regained consciousness.

"I am alive," he reportedly managed to say.
"Makati Medical... please inform Dr. Varwig."

Still in her bathing suit, Joanne helped rush him into the car together with members of the household. There was no time to wait for an ambulance.

At Makati Medical Center, doctors were astonished that he had survived.

The burns were severe. Tissue damage spread across multiple parts of his body. His left hand and right foot had sustained

especially devastating injuries from the electrical current. The possibility of losing both appeared very real.

Back at the house, meanwhile, Dr. Cris Garcia and Becky had already arrived for their scheduled visit. In the era before mobile phones, they only learned of the accident upon reaching the residence.

Dr. Garcia immediately rushed to the hospital.

Although not formally accredited at Makati Medical Center, Dr. Heinz Varwig — one of the most respected physicians within Manila's expatriate community



The Rotary Club of Manila delegation during their 2025 visit to Japan, strengthening friendships, cultural ties, and the spirit of international fellowship beyond borders.



Standing atop a quiet hill overlooking the sea, Günter felt a deep calling to help build a chapel — a place of prayer, hope, gratitude, and peace for generations to come.

and specially authorized to practice in the Philippines — strongly urged the hospital administration to allow Dr. Garcia to assist in the treatment.

What followed became an extraordinary medical struggle.

The electrocution had critically compromised circulation to Günter's left hand. Doctors feared massive tissue death and possible amputation. Infection presented constant danger.

Dr. Garcia proposed an innovative reconstructive approach rarely attempted locally at the time.

To restore circulation and preserve the injured hand, surgeons temporarily attached it to Günter's lower abdominal area, allowing blood vessels from the abdomen to nourish the damaged tissues while reconstruction proceeded. For five weeks, his hand remained attached in this manner while surgeons painstakingly repaired tendons, nerves, and damaged tissue.

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The procedure later drew admiration even from specialists in Munich.

Months of recovery followed.

There were multiple operations.
Skin grafts.
Painful rehabilitation.
Long periods of immobility and uncertainty.

Eventually, three toes had to be amputated because of the injuries sustained by his right foot.

But both legs were saved.

For the second time in his life, Günter found himself confronting mortality after an ordinary day suddenly turned catastrophic.

The emotional toll proved equally immense. For a man whose identity had long been tied to movement, work, independence, and competence, the sudden vulnerability was deeply unsettling. Daily routines had to be relearned. Simple movements became exhausting. Even signing documents became temporarily impossible, requiring a notary public to visit the hospital because he could not hold a pen.

And yet, remarkably, his sense of humor survived.

Among the many visitors who came to



Raised by the sea and shaped by adventure — Günter Matschuck's younger children growing up aboard the family boat, where childhood meant freedom, discovery, and life close to nature.

Makati Medical Center were members of the Rotary Club of Manila Sunshine Committee and several close friends from Meralco.

Attempting to lighten the atmosphere, his Meralco friends jokingly told him they had actually come “to sue him for an illegal connection.”

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The room erupted in laughter.

For Günter, humor became part of survival itself.

Eventually, he traveled to Munich for further specialized treatment before returning once more to Manila.

But by then, something deeper had changed.

The accident forced him into direct confrontation with mortality. For the first time in many years, life no longer felt indefinitely expandable. Survival itself began to feel like responsibility.

And slowly, almost quietly, the event transformed his relationship with the Philippines.

Before the accident, the country had still remained — at least partially — within the framework of career and assignment. He had built businesses, friendships, and institutions there, but some part of him still belonged to the transient rhythm of international life.

The electrocution changed that. Surviving the accident clarified where he truly belonged.

At precisely the same moment, the Philippines itself was undergoing historic transformation following the People Power Revolution. A new political and

economic landscape was emerging, and many of the friendships Günter had cultivated through business, Rotary, and civic life would become deeply connected to that unfolding national story.

At the same time:

Matec's shareholders offered him partnership and co-ownership. The business he had spent years building had matured.



RCM members President Fidel V. Ramos, Trade Secretary Cesar Bautista, and Dr. Günter Matschuck in Prague, sharing discussions and fellowship before continuing their official journey to Vienna.

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And Joanne had become inseparable from his emotional future.

The accident no longer appeared to him merely as catastrophe.

It became transition.

Years later, Günter would refer to May 14, 1986 as his “second birthday.”

Not because the suffering was small.
Not because the trauma disappeared.
But because survival had given him another beginning.

Again, life had dismantled the world around him.
And once again, he chose to rebuild.

The Philosophy of a Life in Stages

In the later years of his life, especially after the electrocution accident of 1986, Günter Matschuck increasingly came to view life not as a straight and orderly progression, but as a succession of stages through which human beings are repeatedly forced to pass.

Again and again, life dismantled the world he knew.
Again and again, he was compelled to begin anew.

It was perhaps for this reason that Hermann Hesse's poem *Stufen*



Celebrating Günter's 85th birthday surrounded by dear friends from the Rotary Club of Manila, whose fellowship and friendship have enriched life's journey through the years.

resonated so deeply with him. The poem speaks of life as a sequence of rooms, each one temporary, each one eventually requiring departure. Every stage demands the courage to leave behind what once felt permanent in order to move toward something unknown.

Few ideas captured Günter's life more completely.

War had taught him that entire societies could collapse overnight. Grief taught him that even carefully imagined futures could disappear without warning. The death of Marika in 1966 became the first

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great fracture of his adult life. For a time, he believed no future could emerge from such devastation. Yet years later, meeting Ulrike beside the waters of Lake Wörthersee quietly revealed another truth embedded within Hesse's *Stufen*: that life demands not only endurance, but the courage to form new bonds after loss.

Migration taught him adaptability. The Philippines taught him rootedness and belonging. And survival itself — especially after the accident of 1986 — taught him that catastrophe could also become transition.

Over time, he stopped viewing reinvention as interruption.

It became part of life itself.

The frightened wartime child became a mechanic.

The mechanic became a scholar.

The scholar became an international executive.

The expatriate eventually became a man deeply rooted in the Philippines.

In one of those identities erased the previous one.

Each simply became another stage in an unfinished journey.



An unforgettable evening of fellowship and laughter as dear friends from the Rotary Club of Manila gathered to celebrate Günter's 85th birthday and a lifetime of shared memories, service, and friendship.

Perhaps this understanding ultimately freed him from the illusion of permanence. Nations changed. Industries evolved. Technologies advanced. Human bodies weakened. Even success itself proved temporary.

What endured was not stability, but the capacity to adapt without losing one's humanity.

That, more than professional achievement, may have been the defining wisdom of Günter Matschuck's life.

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Every stage eventually ends.

Yet within each ending remains the possibility of another beginning. And again and again throughout his life, he chose to begin anew.

Epilogue: The Courage to Begin Again

In the end, perhaps the most remarkable thing about Günter Matschuck was not simply that he survived so many upheavals.

It was that, after a lifetime of movement, he finally chose to stay.

The boy born into the collapse of wartime Germany could easily have remained a permanent traveler — another international engineer moving endlessly from country to country, project to project, never truly belonging anywhere. Much of his early life seemed to prepare him for precisely that kind of existence.

Yet somewhere along the way, the Philippines ceased being merely one destination among many.

It became home.

Not because the country was easy.

Not because life there was orderly or predictable. But because beneath its imperfections, he recognized something deeply familiar:

Resilience.

He saw it in the warmth of friendships, in the improvisation of daily life, in the endurance of institutions struggling to grow, and in the capacity of people to rebuild after hardship — qualities he himself had carried since childhood.



Two longtime Rotarians of the Rotary Club of Manila, Dr. Günter Matschuck and Manny Dy both inducted in 1980, reunited in friendship and fellowship after decades of shared service, leadership, and enduring commitment to Rotary ideals.

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Over the decades, his life became inseparable from the country that had adopted him. His work helped shape industries and energy systems. His leadership strengthened institutions and German-Philippine relations.

His friendships extended across business, civic life, Rotary, and the expatriate community. Through Joanne, he built not merely a household, but a sense of permanence after decades of motion.

And perhaps that became his final reinvention:

not the engineer,
not the executive,
not even the survivor —

but the man who finally found where he belonged.

Over the years, his relationship with the Philippines deepened far beyond business or civic involvement alone. In Tablas, Romblon — a place that became one of his personal sanctuaries later in life — he eventually built the St. Hubertus Chapel in Villa M, inaugurated on his 70th birthday.



A proud and deeply meaningful moment in Günter Matschuck's distinguished international career, as Austrian Ambassador Dr. Wolfgang Jilly formally bestows upon him the Austrian Cross of Merit in recognition of his outstanding contributions to industry, international cooperation, and German-Austrian-Philippine relations. The honor reflected decades of professional excellence, civic involvement, and leadership across cultures, affirming the remarkable journey of a man who rose from the hardships of wartime Germany to become a respected global engineer, entrepreneur, and advocate for progress and sustainable development.



The St. Hubertus Chapel in Villa M, Tablas, Romblon, inaugurated on Günter's 70th birthday — a solar-powered sanctuary of faith, gratitude, and quiet reflection overlooking the sea.

Overlooking the sea, the small chapel stood as a quiet expression of gratitude after a life marked by war, loss, survival, reinvention, and unexpected grace. Appropriately for an engineer who had spent decades advocating systems, energy, and sustainability, the chapel itself was solar-powered — a subtle fusion of faith, technology, and stewardship.

But more than architecture, the chapel reflected something deeply personal.

For all his industrial accomplishments and international success, Günter never viewed life purely through material achievement. Beneath the disciplined exterior remained a man profoundly aware of fragility, providence, and the mysterious ways life had repeatedly granted him another beginning.

The St. Hubertus Chapel became, in many ways, the quietest and perhaps most intimate expression of that understanding: a sanctuary of faith,



Celebrating his 80th birthday with elegance, warmth, and unmistakable vitality, Günter Matschuck stands as a living testament to resilience, reinvention, and enduring purpose. From surviving the devastation of wartime Germany to building a meaningful life across continents, his journey reflects not only professional achievement, but also the triumph of character over adversity. Surrounded by family, friends, and generations shaped by his example, this milestone celebration honored far more than longevity — it celebrated a life lived with courage, discipline, curiosity, and gratitude.

gratitude, and reflection overlooking the waters of the country he had ultimately chosen as home.

Today, the legacy of Dr. Günter Matschuck lives not only in projects completed, organizations strengthened, or technologies introduced. It lives in the

people whose lives he touched, the institutions he helped build, and the quiet example he set for others:

that resilience need not harden a person; that discipline can coexist with warmth; and that even after profound loss, life still permits renewal.

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Captured during Günter Matschuck's 80th birthday celebration, this family portrait reflects the enduring legacy of a life shaped by resilience, reinvention, and love across generations and continents. From the ruins of wartime Germany to a new life built in the Philippines, the journey that began in hardship ultimately blossomed into a thriving multigenerational family bound together by gratitude, strength, and shared history. Surrounded by children and grandchildren, Günter stands not only as an engineer and international businessman, but as the patriarch of a family whose greatest inheritance was never material success alone, but the values of perseverance, discipline, and unity passed on through generations.

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Above photo: Even after building a life across continents, Cologne always remained home in Günter Matschuck's heart. During his annual visits to the city where he grew up, memories of wartime survival, postwar reconstruction, and youthful dreams inevitably returned along the banks of the Rhine. Standing before the iconic Cologne Cathedral, he reflected not only on the city's remarkable rebirth from the devastation of the Second World War, but also on his own journey of resilience, reinvention, and gratitude. For Günter, returning to Cologne was never merely a visit — it was a quiet homecoming to the place where his story began.

Some lives are remembered for success.

Others for endurance.

A rare few are remembered for the lives they helped strengthen around them.

Dr. Günter Gerhard Matschuck belonged to the latter.

Rotary District 3810's DISCON AND AWARDS NIGHT 2026



DISCON & AWARDS NIGHT

MAY 22-24, 2026 | **LE PAVILION PASAY CITY**

Early Bird – Until March 15, 2026
Php 7500 DisCon & Awards Night

Regular Rate – March 16 to April 15, 2026
Php 8500 DisCon & Awards Night

MEALS INCLUDED
May 22 & 23 PM Snack & Dinner
May 24 Lunch, PM Snack & Dinner

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Chairperson for Promotion



Rotary
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FOR
GOOD

Event Schedule

DAY 1 MAY 22	7:00 am	UCP Breakfast, by invitation Le Parc UCP Uniform
	7:00 am	PE Breakfast, by invitation Le Parc ICP Uniform
	10:00 am	Business Meeting Le Parc
	10:00 am	Opening of Trade Exhibits Le Pavillon
	1:00 pm	Opening Ceremonies Business Attire
	6:00 pm	Talent Night Cocktail dress Business Attire
DAY 2 MAY 23	10:00 am	Youth Program
	1:00 pm	Plenary Session Filipiniana Barong Tagalog
	6:00 pm	Parade of Nations Filipiniana Barong Tagalog
DAY 3 MAY 24	9:00 am - 5:00 pm	District Awards Tuxedo Long Gown Governor's Ball
	6:00 pm	Tuxedo Long Gown (any color except for Royal Blue, Raspberry Pink and Gold)

DISCON 2026

DISTRICT ACTIVITY

District 3810 Public Image Team Attends Strategy Meeting



Incoming Deputy District Public Image Coordinator Albert S. Alday giving his insights during the meeting.

Incoming Deputy District Public Image Coordinator Albert S. Alday, Incoming Assistant District Public Image Coordinator-Manila Jujut Enriquez and Incoming Director for Social Media and Analytic Strategies Aries Balanay attended the District Public Image Strategy Meeting of Rotary District 3810 for RY 2026-2027 last May 10, 2026 at the Library of the Manila Elks Club in Makati City.



Incoming Assistant District Public Image Coordinator-Manila Jujut Enriquez listening intently to the exchange of ideas.

DISTRICT ACTIVITY

District 3810 Public Image Team Attends Strategy Meeting



Incoming Director for Social Media and Analytic Strategies Aries Balanay stressing a point on analytics.



The fellowship after the strategy meeting



**SERVICE
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RCM Past President/Former Supreme Court Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban's Column in the Philippine Daily Inquirer


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Editor
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Sink or sail with Potus and Scotus



WITH DUE RESPECT

ARTEMIO V. PANGANIBAN

Donald Trump can be labeled as the "best-suited" President of the United States (Potus) with more than 700 lawsuits filed against him and/or his actions in various US courts since he assumed office on Jan. 20, 2025. About 30 of these, per the New York Times, have been appealed to the Supreme Court of the United States (Scotus). Parenthetically, the Scotus normally adheres to the hierarchy of courts and handles only cases appealed from the lower courts. Very rarely does it accept original cases.

THE MOST CRUCIAL SUITS center on his massive crackdown against alleged undocumented or overstaying migrants, his tariff impositions, his cancellation of federal aid to education, and the consequences of the US war with Iran.

Despite widespread criticisms, Trump expressed confidence in winning in the Scotus, banking on the supermajority of six conservative justices named by Republican presidents, three of them by him during his first term in 2017-2021.

He was upset when the Scotus, in *Learning Resources, Inc. v. Trump* (Feb. 20, 2026), struck down his tariffs on imports from Canada, Mexico, and China. Chief Justice John Roberts was joined by two fellow conservatives, Neil Gorsuch and Amy Coney Barrett, plus the three liberal justices—Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, and Ketanji Brown Jackson. In debunking Trump, CJ Roberts clarified that while "the President asserts extraordinary power to unilaterally impose tariffs ... he must identify clear congressional authorization to exercise it."

STUNG BY HIS DEFEAT, Trump vented his ire on his two appointees, Gorsuch and Barrett, by lamenting that "they sicken me because they're bad for our country." Apparently, Trump conveniently forgot that the Scotus' conservative super majority had almost always voted unanimously in his favor. Let me cite two cases:

First, in *Department of Homeland Security v. DVD* (June 23, 2025), the Scotus reversed a Massachusetts district court that required the government to provide a "meaningful opportunity" for noncitizens to contest their removal, and lifted restrictions on deportations of undesirable aliens not only to their homeland but also to third countries "that would accept them." The three dissenting liberal justices criticized the ruling of the six conservative majority as a "gross abuse of the Court's equitable discretion."

Second, just days later, in *Trump v. CASA, Inc.* (June 27, 2025), the Scotus again voted 6-3 to reject "universal injunctions" issued by the lower courts prohibiting Trump from ending birthright citizenship for children born in the US to parents who are in the country illegally or temporarily. Writing for the majority, Justice Amy Coney Barrett emphasized the lack of historical precedent for such injunctions. In her dissent, Justice Sotomayor called the majority's decision "patently unconstitutional" that cuts into the heart of the US Constitution's guarantee that "[a]ll persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside."

With its recent decisions, the Scotus appeared to be supportive of Trump's questionable ways, never mind that the Potus is increasingly losing in public opinion polls. A 2026 survey by Reuters showed that 64 percent of Americans opposed his elimination of birthright citizenship (32 percent agreed, four percent abstained), while a Pew Research survey found that 60 percent disapproved his tariff expansions.

More telling, however, is the declining confidence in the Scotus. A 2025 Reuters/Ipsos poll found that 58 percent of Americans do not view the Scotus to be politically neutral, with only 20 percent expressing confidence in its impartiality.

HAVING SERVED THE BAR AND THE BENCH FOR ALMOST SEVEN DECADES, I have tried to emulate the Scotus of old when it was a bastion of liberty, prosperity, and the rule of law. I am totally disjointed when I hear how the present Scotus appears to be losing long-term public trust to "let justice be done though the heavens may fall."

Yet, I still hope against hope that the Scotus would one day catch up with the sparkle of Chief Justice John Marshall, Justices Oliver Wendell Holmes, Benjamin Cardozo, William Brennan, Hugo Black, Joseph Story, Louis Brandeis, Thurgood Marshall, and others. I may not agree with everything they have written, but I will always cherish the passion, scholarship, and independence with which they expressed themselves, whether for the majority or for the minority.

Yes, I still look forward to the day when the Scotus would rebound to its old glory, for what happens in "the land of the free and the home of the brave" reverberates around the world. When both its elected leader and its highest tribunal are perceived to be less than fair and trustworthy, the consequences ripple far beyond its borders. Governments recalculate, investors reassess, and jurists look elsewhere for models.

The Scotus is expected to rule on more cases involving immigrants and birthright citizenship by the end of June. One question remains: Will the Scotus sail fairly and independently, or will it sink in the whirlpool of history along with the Potus?

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