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ESGUERRA FARMS & STUD INC.

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the Rotary Club of Manila

balita

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**Guest of Honor
and Speaker**

**Rafael "Raffy"
GARCIA III**
*RI Director
(2018 to 2020)*

Classification Talk

**Juanito "John" A.
SIMON**
*President & CEO
Primetech Oil, Inc.*



**Design, Fellowship, and the Rotary Spirit:
A Night at Kenneth Cobonpue BGC
Showroom and Fable Café + Lounge**

THE COMPASS OF FAIRNESS:

**The Maverick Spirit of Atty.
Amado Domingo Valdez**

**Larry Lunsford Named
President-Nominee
for RY 2027-2028**

**Amb. Victor
G. Garcia III**
Honored as
One of This
Year's 'Men of
Exemplary
Influence' by PCS

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PROGRAM

ROTARY CLUB OF MANILA 8th Weekly Membership Meeting Rotary Year 2025-2026



Thursday, September 25, 2025, 12:15 PM
Manila Polo Club

Moderator: DIR. EDWIN H. HERNANDEZ

PART I

- 11:30 AM Registration
- 12:15 PM Call to Order
PRES. RAOUL C. CREENCIA
- Invocation
DE DELFIN N. "Del" LORENZANA
- Philippine National Anthem
AVP
- Rotary Club of Manila Hymn
RCM WF Music Chorale
- The Four (4) Way Test
RTN. NICOLO S. "Nic" HALLARE
- Acknowledgment of Guests
DIR. EDWIN H. HERNANDEZ
- Welcome Song
RCM WF Music Chorale
- Birthday Celebrants:**
- Sept 13 Rtn. Che Soler
Dir. Rami Chahwan
- Sept. 16 Rtn. Roger Cabunag
Rtn. Sonny Dominguez
- Sept. 19 PT Lito Sibayan
- Sept. 23 Rtn. Inov Talusan
- Sept. 24 DE Nico Valencia
- Maligayang Bati/Happy Birthday Song*
RCM WF Chorale
- 12:30 PM Classification Talk
RTN. JUANITO A. "John" SIMON

PART II

- 12:45 PM President's Time
PRES. RAOUL C. CREENCIA
- Invitation to PETA's '2nd Animal Welfare Project'
 - Tree Planting Project
By: Rtn. Rafael S. "Raf" Dionisio
 - MOA signing of Rotary Club of Manila and RCM Manila Foundation with:
 1. Reading Specialists
 2. TopHealth Medical Clinic
 3. Dualtech
- 12:55 PM Overview of the Leon Lambert Program
RTN. ROMEO C. "Romy" NONES
- 1:00 PM Introduction of the Guest of Honor and Speaker
DE CARLOS G. "Caloy" SERAPIO
- Guest of Honor and Speaker
- PRID RAFAEL M. "Raffy" GARCIA III**
RY 2018-2020
- 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



WHEN the Rotary Club of Manila gathers for its 8th Weekly Membership Meeting on September 25, 2025, two powerful voices will converge: Rafael “Raffy” Garcia III, Rotary International Director from 2018 to 2020, and Engr. Juanito “John” A. Simon, an engineer, inventor, and entrepreneur whose classification talk marks the first of its kind in almost two years within the Club.

Their stories — one of global service shaped by decades in Rotary and international business, the other of Filipino ingenuity recognized across the world — resonate profoundly at a moment when clarity is urgently needed in public life.

Raffy Garcia: A Late Bloomer, A Global Voice

For Raffy Garcia, the path to Rotary leadership was anything but linear. A Rotarian for nearly five decades, he candidly admits he was not a model member during his early years. He joined the Rotary Club of Pasig in 1971 at just 26 years old but spent much of his life building an extraordinary international career in technology. Raffy was the first Filipino to graduate in Computer Science from Washington State University in the 1960s — an era when punch cards and room-sized machines defined the cutting edge. Nicknamed “Mr.



*Rafael “Raffy” Garcia III
Rotary International Director (2018 to 2020)*

EDITORIAL

Computer,” he quickly carved out a name for himself, working for Asia Computer Services and Meralco Securities Investment Corporation before founding and leading a multitude of technology corporations. These ventures culminated in the creation of the Mega Group of Companies, a multinational with 44 offices worldwide, delivering products and systems that powered both industries and governments.

His professional achievements were matched by recognition in public life: PeopleAsia named him one of its "People of the Year" for his work in strengthening government IT systems, underscoring the role of technology in advancing good governance.

And yet, for all these accolades, Raffy only considered himself a “real Rotarian” in 2006–07, when he could no longer evade the call of leadership and was voted president of his home club. What followed was an outpouring of service: roles as Endowment and Major Gifts Adviser, chairman of the Philippine College of Rotary Governors, chairman of the Rotary Magazine

“

When we are given more than we need, it is our duty to give that more to others.

- Rafael “Raffy” Garcia III

Foundation, and coordinator of Rotary Foundation initiatives in economic and community development. He established The ONE Philippines to honor unsung heroes, providing them with recognition, a ₱1.5 million prize, and a chance to compete on the international stage.

By the time he became Rotary International Director, Raffy had embraced service as fully as he had once embraced business, with a vision to expand membership in the Philippines by thousands through improved retention. His philosophy is simple yet profound: “When we are given more than we need, it is our duty to give that more to others.” For him, Rotary is nothing less than a privileged opportunity to serve.

EDITORIAL

John Simon: The Filipino Spirit of Invention

Complementing Garcia's global perspective is Engr. John Simon, whose classification talk rekindles a tradition of storytelling within the Club after a two-year silence. Simon is not merely an entrepreneur; he is a trailblazer in Filipino science and invention. In 1995, he achieved a singular distinction: recognition by the United States Patent Office for his lubrication technology, the first and only Filipino invention of its kind to secure such a patent. That same year, he was named "Most Outstanding Energy Manager" by the Department of Energy and the Energy Management Association of the Philippines. In 2008, he was further honored as the "Most Outstanding Inventor" by the Filipino Inventors Society.

Simon's journey is a reminder that innovation is an act of service. His work has contributed not only to technological progress but also to national pride, proving that Filipino ingenuity can hold its own in the most competitive of arenas. His classification talk offers not just personal anecdotes but an



Juanito "John" A. Simon, President & CEO, Primetech Oil, Inc. (Photo by Filipino Inventors Society)

affirmation of what Rotary gains when it nurtures diverse talents and celebrates the quiet heroes of invention and enterprise.

Rotary's Relevance in an Age of Obfuscation

The juxtaposition of Garcia and Simon is profoundly symbolic. One represents the global reach of Rotary, the other the deeply personal story of Filipino excellence. Together, they remind us of Rotary's enduring relevance in a world where clarity is often obscured by confusion, where truth is twisted by expediency, and where silence is mistaken for prudence.

EDITORIAL

Rotary was never meant to be passive. The Four-Way Test demands that we pursue truth, fairness, goodwill, and benefit to all concerned — even when these principles cut against the prevailing tide. In this age of obfuscation, when public discourse is riddled with half-truths and society risks surrendering to cynicism, Rotary must be a voice of clarity.

The Responsibility of the Rotary Club of Manila

For the Rotary Club of Manila — the first in Asia, the most prestigious in the region — the responsibility is heavier still. This is not merely another club; it is the progenitor of a movement in this part of the world, a crucible that has shaped statesmen, captains of industry, and civic pioneers. Prestige is not an ornament to be admired; it is a responsibility to be shouldered. The Club must continue to be a beacon where leaders are formed and where moral courage is spoken aloud.

In Raffy Garcia's story, we are reminded that it is never too late to answer the call to service, and that when one does, lives are transformed. In John Simon's journey,

we see the power of Filipino innovation and resilience to change the world. Both speak to a deeper truth: that Rotary is at its best when it unites vision with action, when it bridges the global with the local, and when it insists on clarity amid confusion.

A Call to Rise Above

As the Rotary Club of Manila sits in fellowship on this day, it is invited to see beyond the program, beyond the speeches, into the heart of what these two lives represent. They are not only voices from the podium — they are mirrors held up to the Club itself. Will we, like Raffy, embrace the full weight of service, even if belatedly? Will we, like John, channel our talents to create, to innovate, and to uplift not just ourselves but generations to come?

In their convergence, the answer becomes clear. The Rotary Club of Manila must continue to lead — not with prestige alone, but with principle. Not with silence, but with clarity. Not with apathy, but with action.

In this time of confusion, may their voices be heard as a call: to Unite for Good.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

EVERY September, Rotary International celebrates Basic Education and Literacy Month, one of the pillars of Rotary's seven areas of focus. The Rotary Club of Manila, in its unique way, is celebrating this month to reaffirm its commitment to foster education, nurture literacy, and empower communities through the gift of knowledge. For this purpose, we have formalized the adoption of various education and literacy programs:

1. Dualtech Scholarship

Program – This is a program that has benefited numerous students in the past years. We are again pursuing it this year and our new Memorandum of Agreement with Dualtech has been approved both by the Boards of both RCM and RC Manila Foundation, Inc.. This will pave the way for the funding



Raoul C. Creencia
President

of at least ten scholars with a total value of P650,000.00. Dualtech, our partner, is a private non-profit technical vocational school established with the goal of training young men from underprivileged backgrounds to become skilled electromechanical technicians. Dualtech is known for pioneering the Dual Training System (DTS) in the Philippines, which is patterned after Germany's successful dual-education model. What makes it distinct is that students spend time both in school (for theory and basic training) and in partner companies (for practical, on-the-job training).

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY

2. **Project Literacy** – This unique program aims to train our school teachers to better assist our grade schoolers to read better and improve their literacy skills. Through our partnership with Reading Specialists, and through customized training sessions, educators will gain familiarity with structured reading instruction based on the Science of Reading principles. The training program will equip teachers with practical techniques and lesson plans to improve reading skills; and also, will empower teachers to create a positive reading environment, focusing on the critical foundations of structured reading instruction, practical techniques, and strategies to foster a positive reading environment.

3. **Read Now, Lead Tomorrow Program** – our club is leading this effort, together with three other major hosts (Rotary Club of Manila Binondo Prime, Rotary

Club of Intramuros, and Rotary Club of Manila Chinatown), and 11 other Manila-based Rotary Clubs as minor hosts. The program is in partnership with Mariano Marcos Memorial High School, and involves the renovation of a specially designated a room (with an area of about 50 square meters) to be converted into an Annex Library and Reading Room, to be known as the “Rotary Quill”. A similar reading room is being eyed in Tukod Elementary School in San Rafael, Bulacan, this time in partnership with the Rotary Club of Makati and the Rotary Club of Makati West.

4. **Study Now Pay Later Program** is also being launched, inspired by the REAP project that was started in 2019. This year, we will utilize the Leon Lambert Fellows fund that was set up by a group of Manila Rotarians led by CP Susing Pineda, complemented by the generous contribution of PRID Raffy Garcia.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There is no doubt that education is the great equalizer. It opens doors of opportunity, breaks the cycle of poverty, and equips individuals to live with dignity and purpose. Yet, in our country, children and adults alike continue to struggle with illiteracy, inadequate learning resources, and barriers that prevent them from reaching their full potential. We in Rotary must rise to meet this challenge. Our projects and our collective effort as a Club, no matter how modest, contribute to a future where literacy is not a privilege but a right enjoyed by all.

As we observe Education and Literacy



**BASIC EDUCATION
AND LITERACY**

Month, let us be reminded that our role as Rotarians is not merely to provide assistance, but to be steadfast advocates for learning. Let us sow seeds of knowledge today so that tomorrow, communities may reap the harvest of wisdom, progress, and peace.

Together, let us light the path of education and strengthen the foundation of literacy—for in doing so, we illuminate the way to a brighter and more hopeful world.





cover story

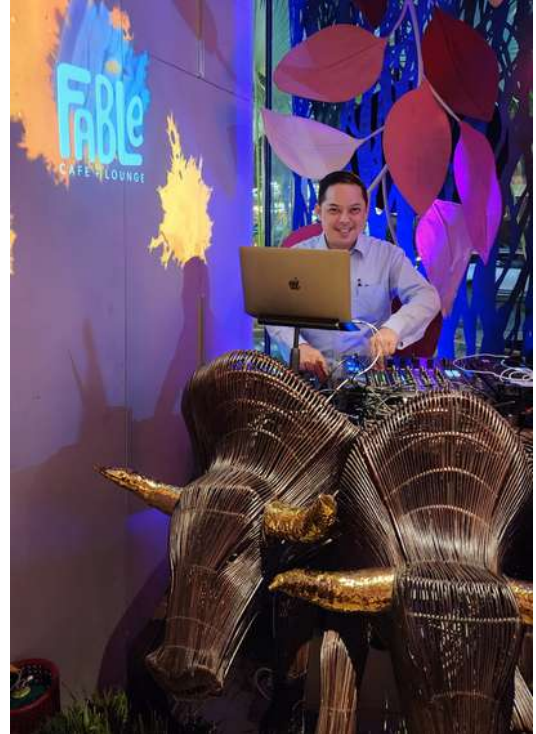
Design, Fellowship, and the Rotary Spirit: A Night at Kenneth Cobonpue BGC Showroom and Fable Café + Lounge

by PE Reginald T. Yu

BONIFACIO Global City is no stranger to light. As the sun dips low and the towers cast their long shadows across the avenues, a different kind of glow begins to fill the streets. Neon signage and soft amber lamps converge with the lingering warmth of the day, creating an atmosphere that is both electric and inviting. On this particular evening — September 17, 2025 — the vibrancy of BGC would host not just another gathering, but an affair of meaning, fellowship, and memory.

The Rotary Club of Manila, Asia's first and most prestigious Rotary Club, held its **3rd Fellowship of the year**, a celebration of friendship and camaraderie that would unfold in two remarkable venues: the iconic **Kenneth Cobonpue BGC Showroom** and the stylish **Fable Café + Lounge**.

By 5:30 p.m., Rotarians began to arrive, greeted by the familiar sight of friends, the warmth of handshakes, and the lighthearted anticipation that always accompanies a Rotary night. There was no podium to command the evening, no formal speeches or agenda to follow — only the unwritten program of laughter, food, drinks, and the intangible joy of being together.



A Showcase of Filipino Design: The Kenneth Cobonpue Experience

The first stop of the evening was the Kenneth Cobonpue BGC Showroom, a sanctuary of design that has placed Filipino artistry on the global stage. Known for his masterful blend of craftsmanship and imagination, **Kenneth Cobonpue** has become synonymous with innovation in furniture and interior design. His pieces, displayed throughout the showroom, speak of elegance born of nature and creativity born of culture.



For Rotarians, stepping into this space was more than just a visual experience — it was a journey into the possibilities of Filipino ingenuity. The **Yoda Chair**, with its playful structure made of rattan poles, sparked conversations about resilience and balance. The **Bloom Chair**, inspired by the delicate petals of a flower, evoked awe at how design could capture both strength and fragility. The **Cabaret Collection**, with its theatrical weaving and bold presence, inspired reflections on how art and function could seamlessly coexist.

As Rotarians moved from piece to piece, they did more than admire design — they connected its principles to the ethos of Rotary. Just as Cobonpue’s work marries tradition with modernity, Rotary too marries service with fellowship, idealism with

pragmatism. Here, amidst the artistry of Filipino design, members saw reflections of their own work in building bridges, fostering unity, and creating impact.

Transitioning to Fellowship: From Design to Delight

By early evening, the group transitioned from the artistic showcase of Kenneth Cobonpue to the inviting interiors of **Fable Café + Lounge**, where the heart of the fellowship would unfold. The shift in venue was symbolic: from appreciating design to experiencing togetherness, from visual artistry to culinary indulgence.

The café, with its cozy lighting, warm wood finishes, and an eclectic yet sophisticated vibe, became the perfect backdrop for what the evening promised — a tapestry of conversations,





laughter, and shared moments. The tables were arranged in a way that encouraged mingling; glasses were raised almost as soon as they were set down, and the clinking sound of toasts echoed like gentle affirmations of friendship.

A Gathering of 27 Rotarians

There is a unique quality to every Rotary fellowship, shaped by the people who attend it. On this night, **27 Rotarians** of the Manila club came together, representing different generations, professions, and personalities, yet united by the same bond of service and friendship.

Some came directly from their offices, still carrying the energy of the workday; others arrived ready to unwind, eager to let the evening's camaraderie take over. Each handshake was an embrace of continuity, each smile a reminder that in a world of constant change, friendships forged through Rotary endure.

For hours, conversations flowed seamlessly. One corner of the café resonated with laughter over old anecdotes, while another buzzed with discussions on upcoming projects, proof that service is never far from a Rotarian's mind even in moments of

leisure. At yet another table, a younger member listened intently to the stories of a seasoned stalwart, absorbing the lessons of years spent in service and leadership.

This intermingling of generations is part of what makes RCM fellowships timeless. They are not mere gatherings but **living classrooms**, where wisdom is shared as casually as wine is poured, and where the future of the club is shaped not by formal directives but by conversations that inspire and connect.



The Feast of Fellowship

If fellowship is the heart of the evening, then food and drink are its faithful companions. At Fable Café + Lounge, the spread did not disappoint. Plates arrived in waves: hearty appetizers that sparked appetites, mains that satisfied, and desserts that sealed the night with sweetness. Drinks — both spirited and refreshing — flowed generously, carrying with them the ease that turns acquaintances into friends and friends into family.

To describe the menu is to describe the spirit of the evening itself: diverse, flavorful, and shared. Each dish became a conversation starter, each toast an unspoken vow of camaraderie. The breaking of bread was not just nourishment of the body but a reaffirmation of Rotary's long tradition of shared tables.

Stories, Laughter, and Legacy

Beyond the food and the ambience, it was the stories that defined the night. One Rotarian recounted a recent project in the community, sparking pride among peers. Another shared a personal milestone, greeted with warm applause and heartfelt congratulations. Laughter was abundant, ringing out in waves that seemed to weave everyone closer together.





Moments like these remind us that fellowship is more than recreation — it is **re-creation**. It re-creates bonds strained by the busyness of life, it re-creates energy for the work of service, and it re-creates the sense of belonging that sustains the Rotary spirit.

Reflections: The Place of Fellowship in Rotary Life

In the annals of the Rotary Club of Manila, fellowships have always held a place of quiet importance. While board meetings deliberate, and projects transform lives, fellowships nourish the soul of the club. They are the moments when the weight of responsibility gives

way to the lightness of friendship, when the seriousness of service is balanced by the joy of simply being together.

For a club as historic and distinguished as RCM, fellowship nights like these serve as reminders that legacy is not built only in milestones and awards but also in **moments of togetherness**. A joke shared over dinner, a toast raised in laughter, a story passed from one generation to another — these are the threads that weave the fabric of continuity.

Fellowship sustains service. It provides the fuel of camaraderie that enables

Rotarians to give of themselves without hesitation. It is the quiet but powerful foundation upon which visible acts of charity and leadership are built.

A Toast to Fellowship

As the night stretched toward 11:00 p.m., the gathering began to wind down. Some members lingered for one last conversation, reluctant to let the warmth of the evening fade; others bid their goodbyes with promises of meeting again soon. The tables bore the remnants of a feast, but more importantly, they carried the invisible imprints of the laughter, joy, and unity that had been shared.



The **3rd Fellowship of the Rotary Club of Manila** was not merely an evening spent at two beautiful venues — it was an affirmation of what makes Rotary enduring. In the artistic elegance of Kenneth Cobonpue's showroom and the vibrant ambience of Fable Café + Lounge, members found reflections of their own calling: to blend tradition with innovation, service with friendship, and purpose with joy.



In every clink of a glass, in every shared meal, and in every hearty laugh, the spirit of Rotary shone bright. It was a night that reminded all present that beyond the projects, beyond the titles, and beyond the structures, Rotary at its core is about people — friends bound together in service, fellowship, and the shared pursuit of a better world.

And so, as the final lights dimmed and BGC resumed its usual evening hum, the memory of the fellowship lingered — not just as a recollection of food and fun, but as a living testament to the enduring truth: **service may be Rotary's work, but fellowship is its soul.**



CLUB ADMINISTRATION

RCM Members' Attendance Report
RY 2025-2026



ATTENDANCE REPORT
September 2025

SEPTEMBER 2025	September 04, 2025 SOL-GEN. DARLENE MARIE BERBERABE	September 11, 2025 TRIPLE TREAT: ATTY. PANOLONG / ATTY. HERMOSURA & BOOK LAUNCH	September 18, 2025 FELLOWSHIP
MEMBERS PRESENT	99	48	27
MEMBERS PRESENT %	46%	22%	13%
MAKE UP ATTENDEES	3	21	2
EXEMPTED	5	3	3
ON LEAVE	0	0	0
Total Active Members	102	69	29
Total # of Members	215	215	215
TOTAL %:	47%	32%	13%
ROTARACTORS	9	0	0
MEDIA	0	0	0
EMBASSIES / DIPLOMATIC CORPS	0	0	0
DG, DGE, DGN, PDG	0	0	0
GOHS / GS	1	1	0
VISITING ROTARIAN	0	2	0
Guests of RCM MEMBERS	9	4	0
TOTAL ATTENDEES	118	55	27



LIST OF ATTENDEES
September 18, 2025

- 1 Albaña, Michael Jaey C
- 2 Alday, Albert Singson
- 3 Benedicto, Sixto T.
- 4 Bolton, Wilhelm
- 5 Carlos, Vicente J.
- 6 Castro, Karlo Eugene Josef M.
- 7 Del Rosario Sr., Oscar A.
- 8 Gonzales, Jonas R.
- 9 Guevara, Jr., Domingo S.
- 10 Koh, Paul Anthony T
- 11 Locsin, Arsenio Z.
- 12 Lorenzana, Delfin
- 13 Macatoman, Abdulgani M.
- 14 Mauricio, Antonilo DC
- 15 Ong, Rowel Janson S.
- 16 Ozaeta, Miguel Antonio L.
- 17 Ra, Ingill
- 18 Serapio, Carlos G.
- 19 So, Warren S.
- 20 Talusan, Ferdinand E
- 21 Tee, Teddy Jr. B.
- 22 Tillmann, Hansel Joseph Michael L.
- 23 Valdes, Joel C.
- 24 Valdez, Amado D.
- 25 Valencia, John Nico P.
- 26 Yu, Reginald Tieng
- 27 Zeitouni, Nagi

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

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

As of September 22, 2025

1	ABOY, VALENTINO G.	51	GARCIA, HERBERT JOEY	101	PAGDANGANAN, ROBERTO M.
2	ABRIAM, ARIEL	52	GARCIA, PAUL JOSEPH M.	102	PALACIOS, ALBERT S.
3	ACOSTA, CRISPINIANO G.	53	GARCIA, THEODORE Q.	103	PALLASIGUE, JOHN BRIAN C.
4	AGNES, JERRY A.	54	GARCIA, VICTOR III G.	104	PASCUAL, ABRAHAM
5	ALBANA, MICHAEL JAEY	55	GO, DANNY C.	105	PAYUMO, FELICITO C.
6	ALDAY, ALBERT S.	56	GO, HENRY S.	106	PELIÑO, WILFREDO
7	ALINGOG, ALDOUS REX A.	57	GONZALES, JONAS R.	107	PINEDA, JESUS JR. M.
8	ANDAL, AVELINO L.	58	GONZALES-LA'O, EMIL	108	PINEDA, PATRICIO JR. F.
9	ARAGON, JOSHUA RUEBEN G.	59	GUARIN, MICHAEL ARCATOMY	109	PIZARRAS, JORDAN M.
10	ARGUELLES, PABLO C.	60	GUEVARA, DOMINGO JR.	110	PREYSLER, FAUSTO JR. D.R.
11	BAGATSING, VALENTINO	61	GUEVARA, RICARDO S.B.	111	RA, INGILL
12	BALANAY, ARIES B.	62	HALLARE, DELFIN JR.	112	RAMOS, CLAVER P.
13	BARTOLOME, ARSENIO III M.	63	HALLARE, NICOLO	113	RANKL, PETER
14	BAUTISTA, JOHN JR.	64	HERNANDEZ, EDWIN H.	114	RECTO, PHILIP H.
15	BEDIONES, RODOLFO P.	65	HESSE, UWE	115	REYNOLDS, DAVID
16	BELLA, GERONIMO JR. D.	66	IBUYAN, BENEDICT JULIUS F.	116	RODRIGUEZ, JOAQUIN ANTHONY JR. H.
17	BENEDICTO, SIXTO T.	67	KALAW, TEODORO ALEJANDRO IV Y.	117	RODRIGUEZ, JOAQUIN SR. C.
18	BERTELSEN, BERTEL INGMAR	68	KATIGBAK J ALFONSO I	118	ROMUALDEZ, FERDINAND
19	BLANCO, MANUEL M.	69	KLEBS, DAVID	119	ROXAS, MICHAEL D.
20	BOGOVICH, JASON M.	70	KOH, PAUL ANTHONY	120	SCHNEIDER, BERND
21	BRANELEC, JACQUES	71	LAUREL, RICARDO P.	121	SERAPIO, CARLOS G.
22	BUENDIA, CARLOS	72	LAZARO, JUAN MIGUEL	122	SEVILLA, LUIS ANGELO L.
23	CABANGON, EDGARD	73	LEDDA, JAIME VICTOR B.	123	SHIMODA, SHIGERU
24	CAMAT, NATHANIEL	74	LEE, RICHARD L.	124	SIBAYAN, JOSELITO H.
25	CAMPOS, JOSELITO JR. D.	75	LIM, DAVID EDUARDO T.	125	SIMON, JUANITO AYSON
26	CANON, RAUL JR. C.	76	LOCSIN, ARSENIO Z.	126	SO, WARREN
27	CARLOS, VICENTE J.	77	LONZAGA, REINERIO C.	127	STRANATHAN, IKE EDWARD
28	CARRANCEJA, ARVIN ARIK B.	78	LOPEZ, ANTONIO	128	SYJUCO, JOSE, JR. A.
29	CASTRO, KARLO EUGENE JOSEF M.	79	LOPEZ, ARTHUR M.	129	TAGAYSAY, HECTOR O.
30	CATALAN, RODILLO	80	LORENZANA, DELFIN	130	TALUSAN, FERDINAND E.
31	CHAHWAN, RAMI	81	MACAPAGAL, MICHAEL T.	131	TAMANO, SHALIMAR H.
32	CHAN, ROBERT JR.	82	MACATOMAN, ABDULGANI M.	132	TAN, EUSEBIO V.
33	CID, DEAN	83	MAGSAYSAY, FRANCISCO D.	133	TAN, LAWRENCE L.
34	CO, VAL CONSTANTINE L.	84	MANALAYSAY, CESAR P.	134	TEE, TEDDY JR. B.
35	COYIUTO, ROBERT JR. G.	85	MANGALILE, SENEN	135	TEJUMAL, MICHAEL
36	CREENCIA, RAOUL C.	86	MARTINEZ, RONALD	136	TILLMAN, HANSEL JOSEPH MICHAEL L.
37	CUREG, ALEXANDER P.	87	MATSCHUCK, GUENTER GERHARD G.	137	VALDEZ, AMADO
38	CUTTIER, JOHN MICHAEL	88	MAURICIO, ANTONILO DC	138	VALDEZ, JASON ROLAND N.
39	DAYANG, JUAN E.	89	MAURICIO, FRANCISCO C.	139	VALENCIA, JOHN NICO P.
40	DAVIS, RAYMOND N.	90	MENDOZA, MIGUEL	140	VALENCIA, RODOLFO G.
41	DEL ROSARIO, OSCAR	91	MENDOZA, RAYMUND JOSEPH D.	141	VAZQUEZ, EVARISTO JR.
42	DY, MANUEL C.	92	MOMMAERTS, STEVE	142	VILLARICA, HENRY R.
43	EGAN, BRENDAN	93	NOLIDO, RAMON ALBERTO B.	143	YORDANOV, STEFAN
44	ELDEBS, ISSAM	94	NOMURA, KAZUHIRO	144	YU, GEOFFREY C.
45	ENRIQUEZ, EDUARDO III	95	NONES, ROMEO C.	145	YU, REGINALD T.
46	ESGUERRA, HERMINIO S.	96	NUÑEZ, JOSE A.	146	ZALDARRIAGA, FELIX FRANCISCO S.
47	ESQUIVIAS, JOAQUIN PABLO A.	97	OBRADO, DANIEL	147	ZEITOUNI, NAGI
48	EUGENIO, JOHN EMYL G.	98	OCAMPO, TEODORO J.	148	ZIALCITA, XAVIER Y.
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ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE

PP Hermie Esguerra Inspects Centennial Glass Roster



PP Hermie Esguerra inspected the Centennial Glass Roster that was inaugurated last June 22, 2019 at the Grand Ballroom, Okada Hotel.

He also reviewed the roster of presidents inscribed over the Rotary Club of Manila rostrum.



PP Hermie Esguerra hosted the Rotary Club of Manila Secretariat for a sumptuous lunch at the Emerald Garden.



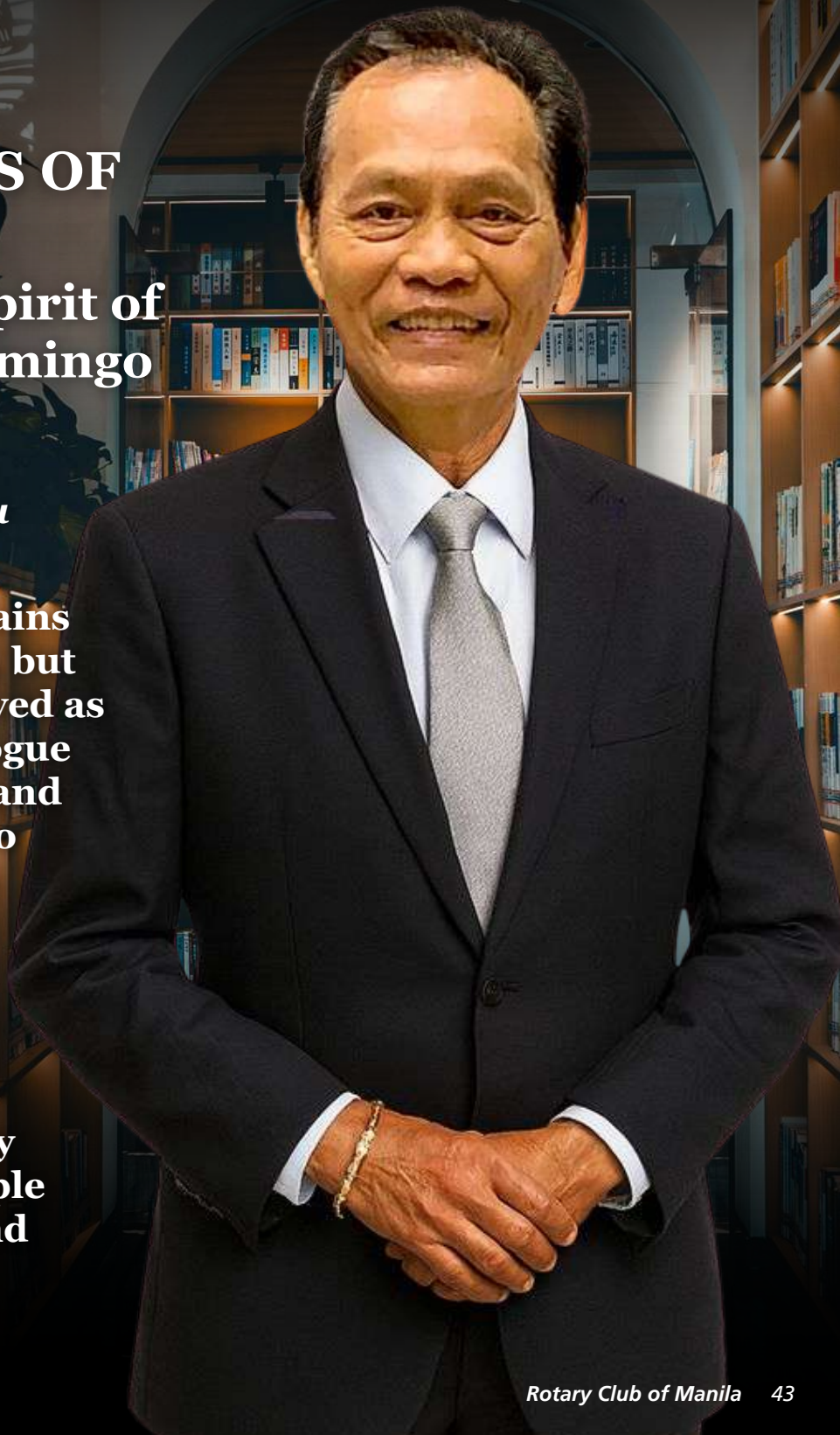
PEOPLE

THE COMPASS OF FAIRNESS

The Maverick Spirit of Atty. Amado Domingo Valdez

By PE Reginald T. Yu

EVERY life contains turning points, but few lives are lived as one continuous dialogue between conscience and circumstance. Amado “Amading” Domingo Valdez’s story is not simply a chronology of milestones; it is the narrative of a man who, again and again, chose curiosity over comfort, principle over convenience, and fairness over fear.



THE COMPASS OF FAIRNESS: The Maverick Spirit of Atty. Amado Domingo Valdez

To those who knew him only as a lawyer, he was a man of sharp arguments and firm convictions. To those who knew him as a teacher, he was the professor who asked unsettling questions, forcing students to wrestle with ambiguity rather than rest on easy answers. To those who worked with him in government, he was the official who believed that delay was the breeding ground of corruption, and that dispatch in decision-making was itself a moral act. To fellow Rotarians, he was the quiet voice reminding everyone that truth and fairness were not abstractions but daily practices.

But behind these public roles lay something deeper: a restless spirit shaped by paradox. Born into the discipline of a preacher's household yet nurtured by a mother's imagination, he carried within him both rigidity and fluidity, both reverence for rules and a hunger to question them. That tension — between obedience and curiosity, between faith and freedom — would become the engine of his life.

There is, in the life of Amading Valdez, a pattern worth noting. Again and again, he steps into arenas larger than himself — whether a courtroom filled with foreign lawyers, a classroom of restless students, a government office weighed down by expectations, or a service club navigating its own internal politics. And

again and again, he refuses to be cowed. He asks questions. He insists on fairness. He searches for clarity where others settle for compromise. He reminds us that to live fully is not to avoid struggle but to engage it. His story invites us to consider what it means to pursue justice when the law itself can be flawed, to remain fair when power tempts toward corruption, to keep questioning even when answers seem final.

In telling his story, we glimpse not only the arc of one man's life but also the echoes of a nation's own journey — restless, unfinished, striving always for a fairer reckoning.



THE COMPASS OF FAIRNESS: The Maverick Spirit of Atty. Amado Domingo Valdez

Roots in Faith and Curiosity

Every man is shaped first not by the world he conquers, but by the world into which he is born. For Amading, that world was at once strict and tender, bounded by the pulpit of a preacher father and animated by the imagination of a mother who told stories as if life itself were a tale waiting to be retold. His earliest years unfolded not in the bustling streets of Manila but in the slower rhythms of Northern Luzon — Pangasinan, La Union, and eventually Santiago, Isabela — where faith, discipline, and survival were the cornerstones of life.



Amading with his
parents and siblings

Amading's father was a preacher, the kind of man for whom scripture was not simply a guide but the governing law of existence. In their household, the Bible was more binding than any civil statute. Words like obedience, humility, and self-restraint were not ideals to aspire to; they were rules to be followed. Every day was marked by discipline. Sundays were sacred, mornings began with prayers, and every action was weighed against the eternal scales of sin and salvation.

To a young boy curious about the world, such discipline could feel like a cage. Amading never doubted his father's love, but it was expressed in correction rather than affection, in sermons rather than stories. The young boy absorbed the lessons — about honesty, duty, the fear of God — but deep inside he also felt the stirrings of rebellion, not out of malice but out of restlessness. He wanted to know why rules existed. He wanted to see what lay beyond them.

If his father represented law, his mother represented grace. Where the father's voice was firm, hers was lilting. Where his rules set boundaries, her stories opened doors. She was no teacher by training, but she had the instinct of one. With magazines like *Bannawag* and *Liwayway* in her hands, she would read to her children, embellishing the tales until they shimmered with magic.

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Sometimes she cast Amading himself into the stories — making him a hero, a wanderer, a boy capable of more than his small town might suggest. In those moments, the line between imagination and reality blurred. For Amading, it was not just storytelling; it was prophecy. His mother made him believe that he could step beyond the walls of their modest home and claim a larger destiny.

This dual inheritance — his father's rigid faith and his mother's imaginative grace — would stay with him for life. One made him disciplined; the other made him daring. One gave him moral compass; the other gave him curiosity. Together, they formed the paradox of a man who would one day be called both principled and maverick.

The Valdez family itself was not without its complications. Amading was technically the second of four children, but his position was not straightforward. His father had been widowed, and from that first marriage came an elder son, raised alongside Amading and his siblings. This half-brother, though part of the household, carried the aura of another life, another chapter of their father's story.

This dynamic meant that Amading often felt both the weight of being an eldest son and the freedom of being second-

born. He was expected to shoulder responsibility, yet he was also given space to find his own way. The tension between duty and independence — already present in his parents' differing influences — was reinforced at home, shaping his character in subtle but enduring ways.

Isabela: The Frontier Classroom

By the time the family settled in Santiago, Isabela, Amading was a teenager. Isabela in the 1950s was a province in transition. Migrants from Pangasinan, Ilocos, and elsewhere had settled there, creating a mosaic of dialects and customs. It was a frontier of sorts, where people came to seek better fortunes and where adaptability was key.



*Amading with wife
Nellie in their first home*

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For Amading, this environment became a classroom beyond school. He learned to listen to different tongues, to move among people with varying backgrounds, to see the world not as a single narrative but as a tapestry. This early exposure to diversity would later serve him well — as a lawyer negotiating with Americans, as a government counsel balancing competing interests, and as a teacher guiding students from all walks of life.

In school, Amading stood out not only for his intelligence but for his maturity. His mother had enrolled him early — at five years old — so his classmates were often two or three years older. To keep up, he had to grow fast. Teachers noticed his seriousness; classmates sometimes mistook his quietness for aloofness. But inside, his mind was racing. He was already asking questions others avoided.

It was during these years that he first encountered the figure of the lawyer. He admired their bearing — the broad foreheads, the eloquence, the way they commanded respect. In a country where political debates echoed through radio broadcasts and plaza gatherings, lawyers seemed larger than life, figures who could shape society with words as much as with deeds. For Amading, the allure was irresistible.

Yet destiny and desire were already on a collision course. His father, ever practical, envisioned him as a sugar technologist — an engineer of industry,



The newly weds. 1977.

someone who could secure stability for the family. Amading, however, had already tasted the dream of law. To him, the future did not lie in the cane fields but in the courtroom.

The tension would eventually come to a head. It was only a matter of time before the boy with the preacher's discipline and the dreamer's imagination would make his fateful leap — leaving home at sixteen with little more than his mother's secret savings and his own conviction that he was meant for something more.

But that is the story of the next chapter.

THE COMPASS OF FAIRNESS: The Maverick Spirit of Atty. Amado Domingo Valdez

Running Toward Destiny

At sixteen, Amading stood at the threshold of two worlds. Behind him lay the strict house of a preacher, where every action was weighed against scripture. Ahead lay Manila, a city teeming with possibilities but demanding grit from those bold enough to enter its chaos. The choice between obedience and ambition had crystallized. And one morning, with a small bag and a pocket of pesos slipped into his hand by a mother who quietly believed in him, he walked out of his father's will and into his own.

To his father, it was betrayal. The elder Valdez had planned his son's future carefully, charting a course in sugar technology — steady, practical, and profitable. It was the promise of security. But Amading was unmoved. He was already captivated by another calling: the law. The lawyers he admired radiated a kind of command that went beyond knowledge; they wielded words like weapons, their broad foreheads and confident bearing symbols of a life that mattered in the public sphere.

His father's refusal to support that dream was, for Amading, not the end but the beginning. His mother, perhaps sensing that her son's restlessness was irrepressible, became his quiet ally. The money she gave him — saved through sacrifice — was more than currency. It was an anointing, a signal that she entrusted him to carve his own destiny.



With eldest and second sons

First Steps into Manila

The Manila he entered was not the gleaming capital of modern highways and towers. It was a city of contradictions: neon-lit movie houses and dusty side streets, bustling jeepneys and cramped boarding houses, the clang of construction mixing with the chant of students calling for change. The 1960s was a decade on edge. Ferdinand Marcos had just risen to the presidency, promising reform, but unrest already simmered among the youth.

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For a boy from Isabela, it was overwhelming. He rented a narrow space as a bed spacer in Quiapo, where half a dozen young men crowded into a room, their possessions tucked under bunk beds. The air smelled of sweat, kerosene lamps, and the faint saltiness of dried fish. Meals were uncertain. There were days he stretched a few centavos across two meals, and days when hunger became part of his study routine.

Yet in the rawness of it all, he discovered resilience. Poverty sharpened foresight. Hunger taught discipline. Manila, with all its chaos, was a school more unforgiving than any classroom. He enrolled at Manuel L. Quezon University, (MLQU) beginning with liberal arts before moving to law. The university belt along Claro M. Recto Avenue became his world. Bookstores spilled secondhand volumes onto sidewalks; canteens overflowed with students arguing politics over cheap coffee; cinemas advertised double features of American and Filipino films. Here, Amading found not only a campus but a crucible.

Unlike the elite universities of Diliman and Loyola Heights, MLQU and the University of the East (UE) were schools of the working class. Many students were bed spacers like him — children of farmers, clerks, and small-town shopkeepers who had come to Manila with little more than determination. They did not have the luxury of idealism unmoored from survival. Every peso

... That identity — as a man who could not be boxed in — would define his later years as prosecutor, dean, government lawyer, Rotarian, and writer.

mattered. Every grade had to justify the sacrifices of parents back home.

But if their pockets were empty, their minds were rich with ambition. The classrooms and canteens buzzed with debates about nationalism, independence, and the possibility of a better Philippines. For Amading, these conversations were intoxicating.

“We were addicted to big dreams,” he would recall years later. “It was an opium to our minds.”

Unlike students from elite schools, who could afford to risk arrest in demonstrations, working students like Amading had to be cautious. Survival always came first. Yet this did not dampen his critical spirit. He began to see himself differently — not as a rebel, but as a maverick.

He did not fit molds. He did not follow scripts. He asked questions even when it was inconvenient. He sought fairness even when shortcuts tempted. That identity — as a man who could not be boxed in — would define his later years as prosecutor, dean, government lawyer, Rotarian, and writer.

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Law as Calling

By the mid-1960s, Amading had finished liberal arts and moved into law school. The study of statutes and precedents felt like a natural extension of the canteen debates. Law gave structure to the chaos of argument, form to the formless hunger for justice.

He admired lawyers not only for their intelligence but for their presence. Their speeches in Congress and courts were proof that words could shape society, that the human voice could move laws and lives alike. He wanted to join their ranks — not for prestige, but for purpose.

“I always asked questions,” he said. “And that’s what lawyers do — ask questions, challenge answers, demand truth.”



*With former Mayor Alfredo Lim and
Chief Justice Lucas Bersamin*

Yet through all this, the shadow of his father lingered. His departure had left a wound that neither spoke of but both felt. Amading buried it under the urgency of survival, but he could not escape its weight. He had walked away from his father’s plan, from the security of sugar technology, from the simplicity of obedience.

At sixteen, he could not yet see that his father’s insistence came not from cruelty but from protection. All he knew was that he had chosen his own road — and that road led through Manila’s chaos, hunger, and possibility.

It was a decision that would define his life: to trust his curiosity over caution, his ambition over fear, his own destiny over the one others had mapped for him.

Baptism by Fire: The Law and Olongapo

When Amading passed the bar in 1969, the path ahead was as uncertain as the times. The country simmered with tension; student protests were flaring, and rumors of authoritarian rule loomed in the air. But for the young lawyer from Santiago, Isabela, the first test of his profession would come not in Manila’s courts, but in the rough-and-tumble city of Olongapo.

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Olongapo was no ordinary Philippine town. It was a city whose pulse was tied to the Subic Bay Naval Base, the largest overseas U.S. military installation in the world. By day, its streets buzzed with commerce — surplus shops hawking American goods, jeepneys ferrying workers to the base, vendors thriving on the constant stream of dollars. By night, neon lights flickered over bars and nightclubs, sailors spilled into the streets, and the city transformed into an unruly playground. To step into Olongapo was to step into a cultural crossroads. American servicemen rubbed shoulders with Filipinos, local policemen clashed with military police, and cases of theft, brawls, and smuggling filled the dockets. Behind the façade of economic prosperity was a city rife with disputes — legal, political, and moral.

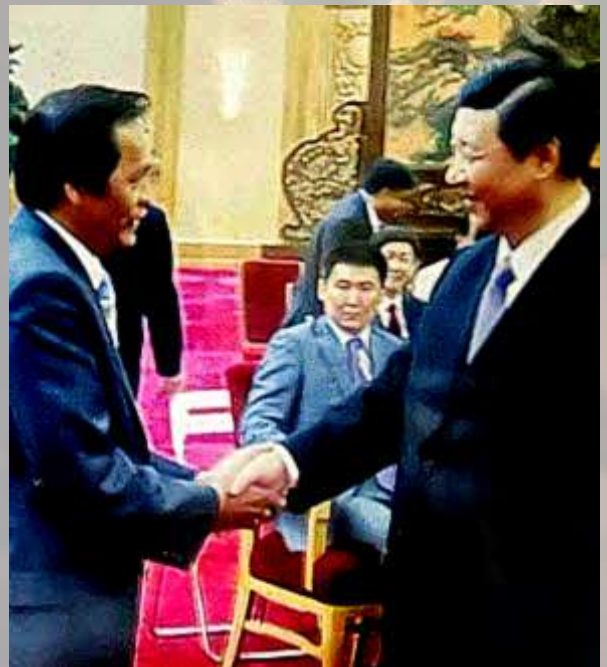
For Amading, it was a crucible.

He began modestly, as a legal researcher at the prosecutor's office. But it didn't take long for his diligence and sharp mind to be noticed. Soon, he was promoted to assistant city prosecutor.

The work was grueling. His days were spent poring over case files; his nights, preparing arguments for the next hearing. He quickly learned that Olongapo's cases were unlike those in the provinces. Here, the accused might be a Filipino policeman caught extorting a sailor, or an American serviceman

charged with assault in a nightclub. The complexity of each case lay not just in the facts but in the jurisdiction: who had the right to try whom?

For a young lawyer barely out of school, it was daunting. On the other side of the courtroom often stood Judge Advocates from the U.S. Navy — lawyers trained in Harvard, Columbia, Yale — armed with impeccable English and legal sophistication. At first, Amading felt the weight of their credentials. What chance did a provincial boy from Manuel L. Quezon University and University of the East have against the polished arguments of Ivy League attorneys?



With China's President Xi Jinping

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But intimidation soon gave way to resolve. He threw himself into study, dissecting treaties and agreements line by line, learning the language of international law on the fly. If his opponents had pedigree, he would meet them with preparation.

Court in Olongapo did not always end with the setting sun. There was “night court,” held to accommodate the unusual rhythms of a city tethered to a military base. By the dim light of electric bulbs, hearings stretched into the late hours. Prostitutes gave testimony against drunken sailors; bar owners pleaded for leniency; policemen defended themselves against charges of collusion.

For Amading, these sessions were more than legal exercises — they were theater. Each case carried the human drama of clashing cultures, economic desperation, and personal temptation. In one hearing, a serviceman might insist on the protections of U.S. military jurisdiction; in another, a local family might demand justice for an abuse committed against their kin. He learned to see beyond the paperwork. Every case was a story. Every crime revealed not just an individual’s failing but the fault lines of a city living under two sovereignties.

What began as intimidation gradually transformed into confidence. He discovered that the law was the great

“

I realized I could stand against the best-trained lawyers in the world and hold my own.

”

equalizer. Prestige mattered little if one could not argue clearly, if one failed to ground a case in fact and principle.

Amading began to match wits with the American lawyers, sometimes even gaining the upper hand. He realized that preparation could rival pedigree, that conviction could outweigh accent. Slowly, he shed the insecurity of being a “provincial boy” and grew into the role of a capable prosecutor standing his ground in an international arena.

“It gave me confidence,” he would later say. “I realized I could stand against the best-trained lawyers in the world and hold my own.”

Olongapo, however, was not only a courtroom. It was a city alive with distractions. Money flowed easily for those willing to bend rules; power was tempting for those eager to trade integrity for influence. Many were swallowed by the city’s vices — gambling, drinking, collusion.

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He knew the dangers. He had left home at sixteen to pursue freedom, not to lose himself. He remained grounded, finding solace in work and in the quiet conviction that law was a calling, not a hustle. The temptations were real, but he resisted them, determined not to let Olongapo consume him.

By the late 1970s, Amading had built a solid reputation. He was respected, if not yet widely known, for his fairness and skill. But the longer he stayed, the more he saw the city's culture of collusion — the quiet deals struck behind closed doors, the compromises that greased the system. It gnawed at him. He had not studied law to become a participant in corruption. He had come to fight for fairness, not to surrender to expediency. By 1977, he reached a decision: he would leave Olongapo.

He set up his own law office, stepping out of the shadow of the base and into independence. It was a risk, but it was also a declaration — that he would chart his own path, even if it meant walking away from the security of government service.

Olongapo had tested him in every way. It had exposed him to international law, pitted him against the world's best-trained lawyers, immersed him in the gritty realities of crime and desperation, and confronted him with the corrosive temptations of power.

Through it all, he endured. He emerged not jaded but sharpened. The boy who had run away from home was now a man who had proven himself in one of the most challenging legal arenas of his generation.

Olongapo had not broken him. It had forged him. And with that new confidence, he was ready to take his place on the larger stage of national life.

Love and Life Beyond the Base

The Olongapo years had been a crucible — intense, intoxicating, and sometimes corrosive. But just as Amading was beginning to feel the pull of disillusionment with the city's culture of compromise, another force was quietly anchoring him: love. In the midst of courtrooms and night hearings, of treaties and temptations, he had met Nelita “Nellie” Natividad, the woman who would steady his restless spirit and open a new chapter of his life.



*Romantic escape to nowhere -
early married life*

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Their paths crossed not in a courtroom or government office but in a church — a reminder that even in Amading's life, so marked by tension between obedience and freedom, providence had its role. Nellie came from Navotas, a fishing town with its own rhythm of resilience. Her family had made a modest living dealing in surplus goods from the U.S. bases, and from an early age, she learned the values of hard work and resourcefulness.

Amading noticed her independence before anything else. Here was a woman who carried herself with quiet confidence, who did not rely on anyone's approval to chart her path. She was pragmatic, sharp, and unafraid of responsibility — traits that resonated with this jurist, who by then had seen enough of life's unpredictability to know that strength mattered as much as tenderness.

For a time, Amading hesitated. He had spent his twenties consumed by law — by cases, by clients, by the need to prove himself. Commitment seemed like a risk. Marriage, after all, was not just about love; it was about responsibility, about putting someone else's future on the same pedestal as one's own.

But as the years passed and his disillusionment with Olongapo deepened, the question of what truly mattered grew louder. The city had shown him the dangers of losing oneself



in compromise, in vice, in empty pursuits. He knew he could not waste his life. In Nellie, he saw not only a partner but a compass — someone who could help him steady the restless currents of his soul.

In 1977, at the age of thirty-one, he chose to commit. He left Olongapo, established his own law office, and married Nellie. It was a double act of courage: leaving behind the familiarity of government service and embracing the uncertainties of family life.

Marriage changed him in ways the courtroom never could. Suddenly, his choices carried consequences not only for himself but for someone else. Nellie managed their household with the same

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Nellie with the 3 boys - now lawyer Marcus, Architect Yosuf and Dr. Jason.



Family as the center of life



Teaching children to experience heights

quiet strength she had shown in her youth, allowing Amading to focus on building his practice. Together, they created a home that, though modest, pulsed with warmth and purpose.

Soon came children — three in all — each a reminder of the future the couple were shaping together. Their eldest, Marcus, would grow into a lawyer and public servant, rising to the post of assistant secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry. Their second, Amadeus, became an architect, designing structures that embodied both utility and beauty. Their youngest, Jason Roland, pursued medicine, dedicating his life to healing.

For Amading, their paths were both vindication and inspiration. He had left home at sixteen with little more than ambition; now he was giving his children the stability he himself had once sacrificed.

Fatherhood forced Amading to revisit the lessons of his own childhood. He remembered the strictness of his father, the tenderness of his mother, and the silent rift that had haunted him for years. He vowed not to replicate the same mistakes.

Discipline, yes — but not without understanding. Expectations, yes — but not without encouragement. He wanted his children to inherit not the fear of authority but the confidence of freedom. If his own father had sought to protect him by closing doors, Amading would protect his children by opening them.

It was not always easy. The demands of law practice, and later government service, often pulled him away from home. Yet whenever he returned, he made sure his children felt his presence. He spoke to them not only as a father but as a mentor, instilling the same curiosity that had once propelled him out of Isabela.

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Through it all, Nellie remained his anchor. Where Amading's life tilted toward turbulence — cases, controversies, debates — Nellie brought equilibrium. She managed their household with steadiness, ensuring that their children grew up grounded even as their father's world expanded into courtrooms, classrooms, and eventually the corridors of power.

She was not a woman of speeches or titles, but her influence was profound. Without her, Amading might have continued drifting, consumed by professional restlessness. With her, he found balance.

If Olongapo had forged him as a lawyer, marriage forged him as a man. It taught him that courage was not only about facing Ivy League lawyers or standing up to corruption; it was also about choosing commitment over convenience, about embracing responsibility over freedom.



Playing golf

Love, he discovered, was its own discipline. It demanded patience, sacrifice, and humility — qualities that would serve him well in the years to come, when his career would take him into the turbulent arena of national politics and public service.



Playing together – bonding moments

Leaving Olongapo was not simply a geographic move; it was a symbolic one. It marked his decision to step beyond the shadow of Subic, beyond the city that had given him confidence but also threatened to erode his ideals. Marriage to Nellie was the counterbalance, the grounding force that ensured his principles remained intact.

Together, they built a life not of extravagance but of meaning. Their home was not a palace, but it was filled with laughter, stories, and the unspoken strength of a family united by love and discipline.

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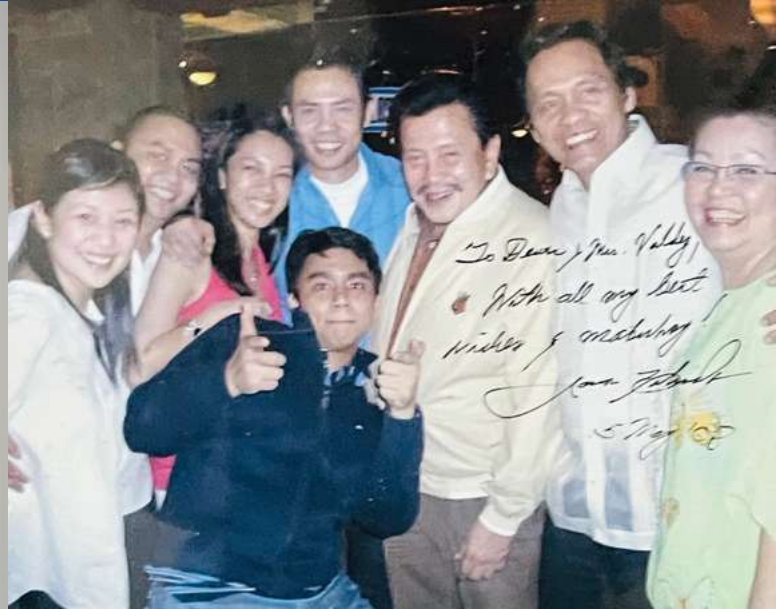
The National Stage: Law, Politics, and Service

By the 1980s and 1990s, Amading Valdez had already proven himself as a lawyer of principle and resilience. He had survived the crucible of Olongapo, built a practice of his own, and established a family life grounded in Nellie's quiet strength. Yet destiny had larger stages prepared for him. Slowly, his legal path intersected with politics, governance, and the rough seas of national controversy.

What began as modest advisory roles for friends in government soon grew into positions of responsibility that placed him at the heart of the Republic's most contentious debates.

The fall of Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and the rise of Cory Aquino's administration changed the political landscape of the Philippines. Old structures collapsed; new ones struggled to take shape. The country was experimenting with democracy again, unsure of its footing but determined to move forward.

In this environment, lawyers were in demand — not only for drafting contracts or defending clients, but for helping a fragile government build new foundations. Amading's reputation for fairness and clarity made him a natural choice. Friends in cabinet posts sought



With former President Joseph Estrada

his advice on agrarian reform, corporate law, and labor legislation. He found himself navigating not just private disputes but questions of national consequence.

For Amading, this was both exhilarating and sobering. “The law,” he realized, “was never simply about winning cases. It was about helping a society find balance — between property and justice, growth and fairness, power and responsibility.”

The defining moment of his public career came at the turn of the century. Joseph “Erap” Estrada, the movie star turned president, was facing allegations of corruption. The country was on edge, divided between loyalty to a populist leader and outrage at abuse of power.

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Amading was then dean of the University of the East College of Law, a position that gave him both influence and exposure. But it also put him in a delicate position. His university's benefactor, Lucio Tan, was known as a close ally of Estrada. To take a stand against the president risked professional fallout.

Yet when the time came, Amading did not hesitate. He drafted the impeachment complaint that would be filed against Estrada — an act of courage that would thrust him into the center of history. The complaint became the basis of the Senate trial that, though unfinished, triggered the second EDSA Revolution in January 2001.

For Amading, it was not about politics. It was about principle. "I thought I was doing what was good for the country," he would later recall. Still, he knew the risks. He was defying not only a president but the networks of power around him. To some, it was reckless; to others, it was heroic.

To this uncompromising advocate, it was simply the right thing to do.

Government Corporate Counsel

After Estrada's fall, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo rose to the presidency. In 2001, she appointed Amading as Government Corporate Counsel, the state's chief legal

adviser to government-owned and controlled corporations. It was a position of enormous responsibility. Billions of pesos flowed through these institutions — banks, utilities, energy firms — and every decision carried implications for the public good.



Amading as Government Corporate Counsel, the state's chief legal adviser to government-owned and controlled corporations

Amading approached the role with the same clarity he had carried since Olongapo: delay breeds corruption. He pushed for dispatch in legal opinions, insisting that hesitation created openings for graft. "Justice delayed," he believed, "was not only justice denied — it was also integrity compromised."

He emphasized to his team that they were not mere bureaucrats but guardians of the

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people's trust. Legal disputes, he argued, should not be viewed only as adversarial battles. They could also be opportunities for economic partnership, for turning conflict into cooperation. It was a pragmatic but principled stance — seeking both fairness and growth.

His government service expanded beyond the corporate counsel's office. He became Undersecretary in the Office of the President, Executive Director of the Visiting Forces Agreement Commission, and a board member of key corporations. Each role carried its own controversies, its own opportunities to either bend or stand firm.



With former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Through it all, Amado clung to his compass of fairness. He was not naive; he knew politics was messy, that interests often clashed in ways that left no one fully satisfied. But he believed that if the law could at least be a space for reason, clarity, and integrity, then society stood a chance.

What distinguished Amado in government was not only his knowledge but his philosophy. He often reminded younger lawyers that legal education was incomplete without economics. To him, law and economics were two sides of the same coin: one provided order, the other prosperity. A decision might be legally sound but economically destructive; true wisdom required balancing both.

He also believed that lawyers were not just technicians but moral actors. Their role was not merely to defend clients but to ensure fairness in society. This belief, born from his father's stern morality and his mother's imaginative grace, guided him through the thickets of politics.

The Price of Principle

Courage, however, comes at a cost. His stand during the Estrada impeachment had placed him at odds with powerful figures. His insistence on fairness sometimes frustrated colleagues who preferred expediency. Even as dean of UE's College of Law, he faced pressure — from business interests, from political allies, from those who wished he would simply play along.

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But Amading was not wired for silence. He had not run away from home at sixteen, faced Ivy League lawyers in Olongapo, or resisted Olongapo's temptations only to surrender now. If there was one thread that ran through his life, it was the refusal to accept less than fairness.

And so, though politics swirled around him, though compromises tempted, he remained steadfast. "I could not waste my life," he said.

Looking back, it was clear that the boy who once debated ideas in a university canteen, who once studied treaties late at night in Olongapo, had now stepped fully into the national stage. The same curiosity, the same refusal to fit molds, the same commitment to fairness — all now played out in the highest halls of power.

Perhaps one of the most dramatic moments of his government service came during his tenure as Chairman of the Social Security System (SSS). At stake was a proposed ₱2-trillion pension increase that many believed was unsustainable. The country's economic managers were firmly against it, warning of fiscal catastrophe. But Amading was not convinced. He undertook a close study of the actuarial report and, with the advice of an expert, saw a way forward that others dismissed.

The debate reached its peak in a Cabinet meeting that stretched into the early

hours of the morning. Voices clashed, tempers rose, and the weight of responsibility pressed heavily on everyone present. Against the chorus of opposition, Amading stood his ground, armed not with rhetoric but with reasoned analysis. In the end, President Rodrigo Duterte approved the pension increase as proposed by Amading and the SSS Commission.

It was a victory not of politics but of principle, a reminder that courage in leadership is sometimes measured not by following consensus, but by standing firm for what one knows to be fair and possible.

Amading Valdez had become more than a lawyer. He was a public servant, a man who saw law not as a shield for the powerful but as a covenant with the people.



Amading with former President Rodrigo Duterte, his two sons, DTI ASec Marcus Valdez, Philhealth Board Member RCMer Jason Valdez, and Mrs. Valdez

THE COMPASS OF FAIRNESS: The Maverick Spirit of Atty. Amado Domingo Valdez

The Dean and the Teacher

For all the drama of courtrooms and the turbulence of government service, perhaps no role gave Amado Valdez more quiet pride than teaching. If Olongapo had forged him as a lawyer and government service had tested his courage, then the classroom was where he multiplied his legacy. For it was here that he planted seeds in the minds of young Filipinos — seeds of curiosity, principle, and fairness — that would grow long after his own voice was gone.

By the late 1990s, Amading was already a seasoned lawyer, with years of government service behind him. Yet he accepted the challenge of returning to the university belt — not as a hungry student this time, but as a mentor. He became Dean of the University of the East (UE) College of Law, first in 2000–2001 and later from 2005 to 2014.

The appointment was more than a professional milestone. For Amading, it was a homecoming. The same canteens that had once sharpened his young mind were now filled with students looking to him for guidance. He knew their struggles intimately: many were working students like he had been, stretching pesos, fighting sleep after late-night jobs, clinging to big dreams with empty pockets.

He was determined to give them more than he had once received.

He believed law was more than memorizing provisions; it was about wrestling with life's questions.

Amading's deanship was not defined by pomp or ceremony but by presence. Students remember him as the kind of dean who was as comfortable in the classroom as in the office. He walked the halls, spoke to students, and engaged with them not only about their subjects but about their dilemmas. He believed law was more than memorizing provisions; it was about wrestling with life's questions.

In his classes, he often posed scenarios that had no clear answers. Could a lawyer serve justice if he had to bend the strict code of ethics? Was a law still moral if it led to unjust outcomes? Could economic growth be pursued even if it risked inequality?

Many students found his method disorienting. They came expecting neat definitions and black-and-white answers. Instead, Amading gave them dilemmas, paradoxes, the gray areas of life. Some were frustrated. Others were inspired. But all were challenged.

One of Amading's most enduring contributions to legal education was his focus on paralegals. He believed that the

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justice system was clogged not because of a lack of lawyers but because of an overburdened process. Paralegals, he argued, could ease the weight by handling tasks that did not require full legal expertise.

To prove his point, he created a bold experiment: he brought law students into jails to train as paralegals. There, inside the cramped cells of city prisons, students saw firsthand the subculture of incarceration — the economy of cigarettes and favors, the silent codes of respect and survival, the despair of detainees who had languished for years without trial.

For many students, it was a shock. But for Amading, it was essential. He wanted them to understand that law was not an ivory tower exercise but a lived reality for the powerless. By creating a cadre of paralegal-trained students, he institutionalized a system that helped speed up cases, decongest dockets, and make justice more accessible.

The program would later be adopted elsewhere, proof that his vision was not only radical but practical.

To his students, Atty. Valdez was not merely a dean; he was a mentor. He spoke to them about the importance of reading beyond law books — of immersing themselves in economics, politics, even literature. He reminded them that the law could not be divorced from the society it sought to govern.

“Lawyers are not just technicians,” he often told them. “We are part of the social order. Our duty is not only to clients but to fairness, to justice, to growth.”

His words carried weight not only because of their eloquence but because of his life. Students knew he was not speaking in theory. This was a man who had faced Ivy League lawyers in Olongapo, who had drafted the impeachment complaint of a president, who had resisted the temptations of collusion. When he spoke of fairness, it was forged from experience.

“Lawyers are not just technicians. We are part of the social order. Our duty is not only to clients but to fairness, to justice, to growth.”

Yet his tenure as dean was not without challenges. He was sometimes caught in the crosscurrents of politics and business, especially given the university’s ties to powerful benefactors. His decision to participate in Estrada’s impeachment trial had already ruffled feathers. But Amading never allowed external pressures to dictate his principles.

He believed a law school existed not to

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serve the interests of the powerful but to form lawyers who could stand firm against them. For him, the measure of success was not prestige but the integrity of graduates who carried fairness into their careers.

Looking back, Amading's years as dean may not have produced grand headlines or political revolutions. But they produced something subtler, perhaps even greater: a generation of lawyers who had been taught to see the law not as a tool of convenience but as a covenant of fairness. Some of his students would rise to public office. Others would build careers in corporations or private practice. Still others would labor quietly in NGOs, advocacy groups, or provincial courts. Wherever they went, they carried traces of his voice — his questions, his challenges, his insistence that justice mattered.



With President Ferdinand Marcos Jr.

In the end, Amading measured his success not by titles but by influence. A government position could be taken away; a deanship could end; even books could be forgotten. But a student shaped, a young lawyer awakened — that was a legacy no one could erase.

For Amado Valdez, the classroom was not a step down from politics or government. It was the highest form of service, for it meant multiplying his principles in lives he would never personally touch.

If Olongapo had given him confidence and government had tested his courage, teaching gave him continuity. It was here that his restless curiosity, his stern fairness, and his imaginative grace found their fullest expression.

The dean had become a teacher. And the teacher, in his way, had become a builder of the nation.

The Rotarian Spirit

When Amading Valdez joined the Rotary Club of Manila, Asia's first and oldest Rotary club, he was not seeking prestige. By then, he had already stood in the courtroom against Ivy League lawyers, drafted the impeachment complaint of a president, and guided the government's legal arm through billion-peso disputes. Titles no longer impressed him. What drew him to Rotary was something simpler, yet

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deeper: a creed that resonated with his lifelong compass.

The *Four-Way Test* — “Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned?” — was, for Amading, not a corporate slogan but a way of life. Long before he knew Rotary, these questions had already governed his choices: the boy who asked “why” in his father’s house, the student who debated fairness in Manila’s canteens, the prosecutor who resisted collusion in Olongapo. Rotary did not invent his principles; it gave them a fellowship, a community, a platform.

The Rotary Club of Manila was no ordinary gathering. It was where business leaders, diplomats, and civic-minded professionals mingled every week under the banner of “Service Above Self.” For a man who had spent his life wrestling with the law and public duty, the club was both familiar and refreshing.

Amading found in Rotary a civic home that did not demand political loyalty but invited moral clarity. Here, projects were designed not for profit but for impact: scholarships, health missions, disaster relief. For a man who believed that the law was a covenant of fairness, Rotary’s work was proof that ideals could be lived



At the book launch of his second book, "They Will Be in Heaven Before the Devil Knows," during the Rotary Club of Manila's Weekly Membership Meeting

out beyond the courtroom and the state.

Yet even in Rotary, Amading’s instinct to question was never dormant. The club, for all its noble traditions, was also home to entrenched personalities — “sacred cows,” as he called them — whose voices carried weight simply by virtue of history or wealth.

Amading respected tradition, but he resisted blind deference. To him, fairness demanded that even the most senior voices be subject to scrutiny. When debates arose over club policies or projects, he asked hard questions. He

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reminded his fellow Rotarians that truth was not measured by titles, and fairness was not negotiable by influence.

It was not always comfortable. Some bristled at his candor. Others admired his courage. But Amading never softened his conviction. He had not spent his life standing against presidents and prosecutors only to bend before sacred cows.

Beyond debates, Amading immersed himself in Rotary's mission of service. He supported literacy drives, health programs, and livelihood projects — always with an eye on fairness. He asked: Were these initiatives truly reaching the underserved? Were they empowering communities, or simply creating dependency?

He pushed for sustainability, for partnerships that transformed rather than temporarily relieved. To him, charity was not enough. Service had to be just, fair, and lasting.

The Rotary Creed in His Life

If the Four-Way Test was a motto on a banner for others, it was a personal creed for Amading.

- **Is it the truth?** He had lived this question since he walked away from his father's plans, since he faced American lawyers, since he stood against Estrada.

- **Is it fair to all concerned?** This was the thread that ran through his prosecutions, his teaching, his paralegal program.
- **Will it build goodwill and better friendships?** His mentorship of students, his role in Rotary projects, his insistence on dialogue in government service.
- **Will it be beneficial to all concerned?** His philosophy of law and economics, his drive to make justice accessible.

For Amading, Rotary was not an extracurricular activity. It was an extension of the life he had already lived.

In the Rotary Club of Manila, Amading became more than a participant. He became a conscience. He reminded the club that service was not about photo opportunities but about fairness. He reminded them that truth was not always comfortable but was always necessary.

And in doing so, he left behind not just projects or positions but a spirit — a reminder that Rotary's ideals were not abstract but attainable, if only its members lived them out with courage.

Looking back, Amading's entry into Rotary was not a new chapter so much as a continuation. The preacher's son who once wrestled with obedience and once stood against Ivy League lawyers, the dean who once challenged his students with dilemmas — all of them found their

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echoes in the Rotarian who asked whether projects were fair, whether leaders were truthful, whether service truly benefited all.

Rotary, in the end, was the community where his principles met fellowship, where his fairness met friendship, where his lifelong search for justice found new ways of being lived out.

The Writer and the Philosopher

By the time Amado Valdez reached the

later chapters of his life, he had carried many titles: prosecutor, lawyer, dean, government counsel, Rotarian. Each role demanded action — standing in court, drafting opinions, leading institutions, debating policy. But as the years ripened, another role emerged: that of a writer, a philosopher who sought not only to act but to reflect, not only to lead but to leave behind words that could guide others.

Writing had always been a quiet undercurrent in his life. From his mother's storytelling in *Bannawag* and *Liwayway*, to the canteen debates in Manila, to the careful crafting of pleadings in Olongapo, Amading had long known the power of words. But now, freed from the daily grind of deadlines and hearings, he wielded the pen with deliberate intention.

He began writing essays and books that combined his experiences as a lawyer, a teacher, and a servant of the state. They were not dry treatises filled with footnotes; they were meditations — on fairness, on justice, on the role of law in a fractured society. His writing carried the cadence of both the courtroom and the pulpit: firm, moral, and yet deeply human.

Themes of His Writing

Amading's works often circled back to the same themes that had shaped his life:

- **Fairness as Compass.** He argued

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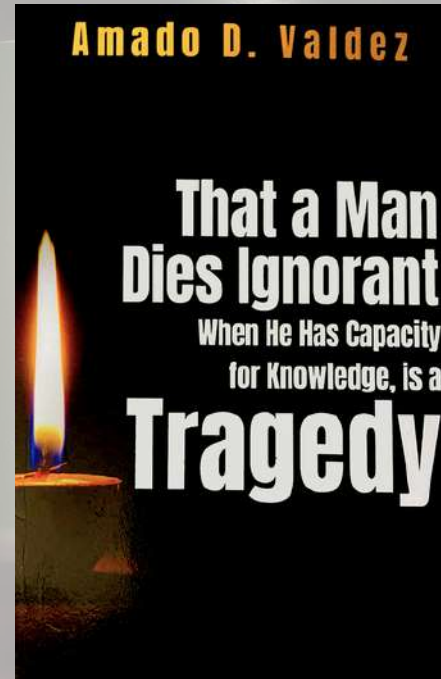
that the law without fairness was tyranny, and that fairness required courage to resist shortcuts and collusion.

- **Law and Economics.** He insisted that legal decisions could not be divorced from their economic impact, a lesson he had internalized as Government Corporate Counsel.
- **The Dilemmas of Law.** He invited readers to wrestle with paradoxes: Could a lawful act still be unjust? Could a just decision still be unlawful? For him, the tension between legality and morality was not a flaw but the essence of law's challenge.
- **The Filipino Spirit.** His essays often drew on national experience, weaving history and current affairs into reflections on how Filipinos might live with dignity, despite systemic failings.

Among his published works were volumes that blended jurisprudence with philosophy, manuals with meditation. Titles that might have seemed technical became, in his hands, vehicles for deeper reflection. Students and colleagues alike turned to his books not just for instruction but for perspective.

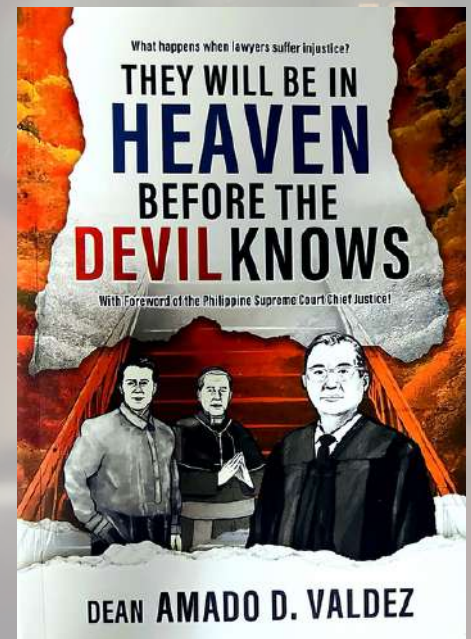
In many ways, his writing was his final classroom. The students were no longer confined to UE's halls; they were anyone willing to pick up his book. And his voice, once confined to lectures or Rotary speeches, was now etched on paper, immune to time.

Two books written by Dean Amado D. Valdez:



"That a Man Dies Ignorant When He Has Capacity for Knowledge, is a Tragedy" (Olympia Publishers, 2023)

"They Will Be in Heaven Before the Devil Knows" (C&E Publishing, Inc., 2025)



THE COMPASS OF FAIRNESS: The Maverick Spirit of Atty. Amado Domingo Valdez



Conferral of Honorary Doctorate degree by Laguna State Polytechnic University

Writing also allowed Amading to look beyond law into life itself. He reflected on dilemmas not only of statutes but of the soul. What does it mean to live truthfully? How does one balance freedom and responsibility, ambition and humility? How does one remain fair in a world that rewards expediency?

These were not questions of legal theory alone. They were the same questions that had animated his own journey — from the boy who asked “why” in his father’s house, to the prosecutor who resisted collusion, to the dean who unsettled students with unanswerable dilemmas. In his later writings, these questions crystallized as philosophy.

In his twilight years, Amading became something rare in Philippine society: a public intellectual. He spoke in forums, wrote for newspapers, appeared on television, offering commentary on constitutional issues, political crises, and moral dilemmas. He did not mince words. His candor sometimes made allies uneasy, but it also made him respected.

He was the kind of voice that cut through noise with clarity. In a nation weary of equivocation, his insistence on fairness was a reminder that principles were not luxuries but necessities.

For Amading, writing was not self-indulgence. It was responsibility. He had

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lived through poverty and power, through Olongapo's temptations and Malacañang's pressures, through classrooms and courtrooms. To keep those lessons to himself would have been wasteful. Writing was his way of handing the torch to others.

In recognition of his lifelong dedication to law, economics, and public service, Valdez was conferred with two honorary doctorate degrees — by Akamai University in Hawaii for Community and Economic Development, and by Laguna State Polytechnic University for Economic Development. His alma mater, the University of the East, named him one of its Most Outstanding Alumni during its Diamond Anniversary, while the Armed Forces of the Philippines honored him as one of the 100 Outstanding Alumni during the Centennial Anniversary of ROTC. These accolades affirmed that even a life once dismissed as 'inconspicuous' could illuminate paths for generations.

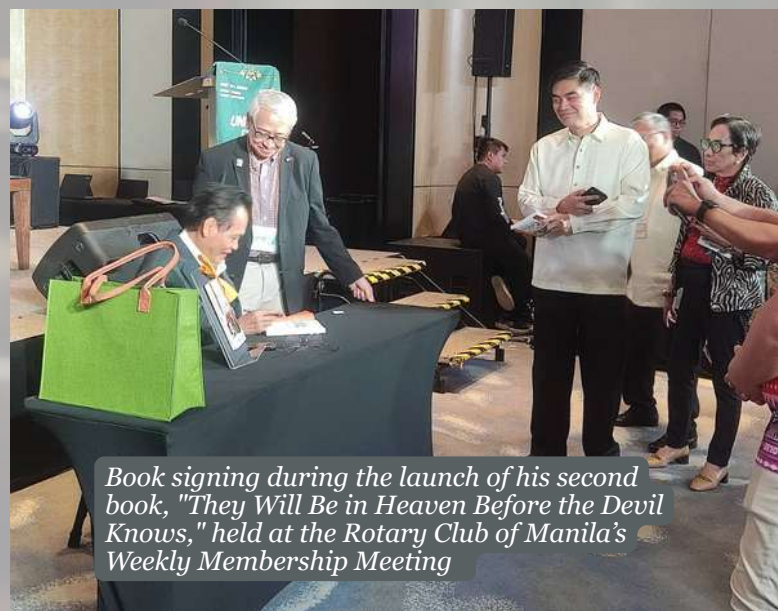
He also held significant leadership positions in legal and academic circles. He served as President and Chairman of the Board of the Philippine Association of Law Schools, where he helped shape the standards and direction of legal education nationwide. In addition, he served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, guiding one of the country's most respected public universities in its mission to provide accessible and excellent education.

"My life," he once said, "has been about dilemmas. If I can leave behind words that help others navigate theirs, then I will have served."

In the end, his legacy was not confined to the cases he won, the offices he held, or even the students he mentored. It was also in the words he left behind — words that challenged, unsettled, inspired.

For his readers, his books were more than academic texts; they were maps through the gray terrain of life, where fairness is fragile, and courage is rare.

And for Amado himself, writing was both culmination and continuation: the culmination of a life lived with principle, and the continuation of a conversation he had begun long ago — with his father, his mother, his students, his colleagues, and his country.



Book signing during the launch of his second book, "They Will Be in Heaven Before the Devil Knows," held at the Rotary Club of Manila's Weekly Membership Meeting

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The Final Reckoning and Legacy

In the end, every life is measured not by titles held or accolades received, but by the echoes it leaves in others. For Amado Valdez, those echoes resound in the classrooms he animated with hard questions, in the courtrooms where he insisted on fairness, in the government offices where he pushed for integrity, in the Rotary halls where he challenged sacred cows, and in the books that continue to whisper his philosophy to new generations.

His life was a tapestry of paradoxes. He was the preacher's son who learned obedience, yet became the runaway who chose freedom. He was the provincial boy intimidated by Ivy League lawyers, yet became the confident prosecutor who stood his ground against them. He was the dean who could have given students easy answers, yet instead handed them dilemmas. He was the Rotarian who respected tradition, yet refused to bow before sacred cows.

These contradictions did not weaken him; they defined him. They taught him that strength lies not in eliminating tension but in living within it — balancing discipline with curiosity, faith with freedom, law with fairness.

If there was a single word that bound together all the chapters of his life, it was *fairness*.

- As a prosecutor in Olongapo, he refused to collude with corruption.
- As a government counsel, he insisted that delay was the breeding ground of graft.
- As a teacher, he demanded that students confront dilemmas rather than escape them.
- As a Rotarian, he pressed his fellows to ask whether their service truly benefited all concerned.
- As a writer, he challenged the nation to see law not merely as legality but as justice.



Amading as a talk show guest

Fairness was not, for Amading, a lofty abstraction. It was the daily choice to resist shortcuts, to question authority, to stand for what was right even when it was inconvenient.

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With wife Nellie, son Marcus and family



Last summer with wife Nellie, sons and their wives

His life also bore witness to courage. He defied his father's plan to chart his own. He defied Ivy League lawyers by preparing harder. He defied the temptations of Olongapo by anchoring himself in integrity. He defied a president by drafting an impeachment complaint. He defied powerful benefactors by prioritizing principle over profit.

He was not reckless, but neither was he timid. He understood that silence in the face of wrongdoing was complicity. For him, courage was not the absence of fear but the refusal to be ruled by it.

The Teacher's Legacy

Perhaps his most enduring legacy is not written in laws or court decisions but in people. The students who once squirmed under his questions, the young lawyers who once accompanied him into jails as

paralegals, the Rotarians who once debated with him in weekly meetings — all carry fragments of his voice.

His influence was not loud but steady. It was the kind that seeped into minds and lingered long after the conversation had ended. Like his mother's stories that once made him the hero of imagined tales, his own stories now cast his students, colleagues, and readers as protagonists in their own struggles for fairness.

Measured against the standards of wealth or power, Amado Valdez's life might have seemed modest. He did not accumulate empires. He did not build dynasties. But he shaped lives, institutions, and ideas — and in doing so, he shaped the nation in ways less visible but more enduring.

His was a life lived not for accumulation but for reckoning: reckoning with law,

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with fairness, with conscience. And in that reckoning, he found purpose.

The Final Reckoning

In his later years, as he put pen to paper and reflected on decades of struggle and service, Amado saw life not as a straight line but as a series of dilemmas. He accepted that answers were rarely final, that truth required constant questioning, that fairness demanded vigilance.

If there was a final reckoning, it was this: that the measure of a man lies not in perfection but in persistence — the persistence to keep asking, to keep questioning, to keep choosing fairness over expediency.



Nellie in Manila Bay

Today, his name evokes different memories to different people:

- To some, he is the prosecutor who once faced down American lawyers in Olongapo.
- To others, the dean who unsettled students with questions that had no easy answers.
- To colleagues, the government lawyer who believed delay was the seed of corruption.
- To Rotarians, the conscience who reminded them that service without fairness was vanity.
- To readers, the writer who distilled a lifetime of dilemmas into words of wisdom.

Each memory is true, and together they form the mosaic of a man who lived fully, fearlessly, and fairly.

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The Echo of Fairness

Every story ends, but some lives refuse to fade. They linger — not in monuments or marble, but in the quiet spaces of memory, in the questions they leave us, in the echoes of their choices.

Amado Domingo Valdez lived a life that will not fade. His was a journey that began in the strict house of a preacher and found its way through the noisy streets of Manila, the smoky courtrooms of Olongapo, the corridors of government, the classrooms of a law school, the fellowship halls of Rotary, and the contemplative solitude of the written word. At every turn, he left behind a trace of himself — not in wealth or empire, but in fairness, the compass he never abandoned.

Fairness was his legacy. It was the thread that tied together his law, his teaching, his service, his writing. It was the standard by which he measured cases, the mirror he held up to institutions, the challenge he posed to students, the creed he lived among Rotarians, the philosophy he wrote into pages. It was, finally, the gift he left his family, his colleagues, his country.

He knew life was filled with dilemmas, that answers were rarely clear, that compromise was often tempting. But he



Sick Nellie cared by their grandchildren

also knew that courage was found in persistence — the persistence to keep asking, to keep questioning, to keep choosing fairness even when it was difficult.

That is the echo of his life. It calls to us still.

To the young lawyer facing a system riddled with shortcuts, his life whispers: *be fair*.

To the public servant tempted by compromise, his life insists: *stand firm*.

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To the teacher shaping minds, his life reminds: *ask questions, do not settle for easy answers.*

To the citizen weary of politics, his life offers: *service can still be honest, justice can still be real.*

The preacher's son became not only a lawyer, dean, and government counsel. He became a philosopher of fairness. And though his chapters have closed, his questions remain — nudging us, guiding us, reminding us that a life lived with principle is never wasted.



In the end, Amado Valdez did not simply live a career.

He lived a creed.

And that creed endures.

COGS IN THE WHEEL

AMB. VICTOR
GARCIA III



**Ambassador
Victor G.
Garcia III
Honored as
One of This
Year's 'Men of
Exemplary
Influence' by
the Philippine
Cancer Society**

AMBASSADOR Victor “Vic” G. Garcia III, distinguished Manila Rotarian and former Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of the Philippines to the Russian Federation (2008–2012), was conferred as one of this year’s **Men of Exemplary Influence 2025** by the Philippine Cancer Society.

The honor was bestowed during the **22nd Best Dressed Women of the Philippines (BDWP) Gala** held on **September 22, 2025**, at the Grand Ballroom of **Shangri-La The Fort, BGC**, Taguig City. The event, known as a premier charity affair, raises vital funds to support cancer awareness, patient assistance programs, and advocacy initiatives.

COGS IN THE WHEEL

Ambassador Victor G. Garcia III Honored as One of This Year's 'Men of Exemplary Influence' by the Philippine Cancer Society



The **Men of Exemplary Influence** recognition celebrates distinguished gentlemen whose leadership, service, and impact extend beyond professional achievements, reflecting a commitment to community upliftment. Ambassador Garcia's recognition highlights not only his contributions to diplomacy but also his dedication to supporting causes that bring hope and healing to Filipino families battling cancer.



ROTARY INFORMATION

Rotary International President Francesco Arezzo Declares Larry Lunsford President-Nominee for RY 2027-2028



John P. Hewko
General Secretary
Chief Executive Officer

T +1-847-866-3631
F +1-847-556-2198
jp.hewko@rotary.org

16 September 2025

To the Board of Directors, RI

Dear Directors,

The deadline for receipt of club resolutions suggesting a challenging candidate for nomination as president of RI in 2027-28 was 15 September 2025. The RI Bylaws provide that "where no challenging candidate has been suggested, the president shall declare the nominee of the nominating committee to be the president-nominee."

This is to inform you that no club resolutions suggesting a challenging candidate have been received by me, and, therefore, President Arezzo has declared Larry A. Lunsford to be the official nominee for president of Rotary International for 2027-28.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John Hewko", written over a horizontal line.

John Hewko

Cc: The Trustees of The Rotary Foundation
Directors-elect, RI
Past Presidents, RI
Past Directors, RI

ROTARY INFORMATION

Larry Lunsford Named President-Nominee for RY 2027-2028

LARRY A. Lunsford, member of the Rotary Club of Kansas City-Plaza, Mo., was today confirmed as president-nominee of Rotary International – the association of the membership service organization’s 45,000 clubs worldwide – and will begin his one-year term on July 1, 2027.

Lunsford, a member of Rotary since 1991, is committed to inspiring Rotary’s 1.2 million members across continents and cultures to deliver real, long-term solutions to the world’s most persistent issues, while building professional and leadership skills through meaningful connections.

From fighting disease to supporting education – Rotary members work toward building the optimal conditions for more peaceful and resilient societies. “Our greatest strength lies in our ability to unite people of all cultures and generations through a shared commitment to doing good,” said



Lunsford. “We exist without borders and boundaries, and we see each other as part of our collective Rotary family. I am inspired by our members’ relentless belief that peace is possible and will encourage them to continue to be the torchbearers of hope. Our world needs this today, more than ever.”

Larry Lunsford Named President-Nominee for RY 2027-2028

Rotary members throughout the world develop and implement sustainable, community-driven projects that fight disease, promote peace, provide clean water, support education, save mothers and children, grow local economies and protect the environment. More than US\$5.5 billion has been awarded through The Rotary Foundation – Rotary’s charitable arm that helps clubs work together to perform meaningful, impactful service – to support these initiatives over the last 100 years.

Lunsford will also oversee Rotary’s top goal of ending polio. Alongside its Global Polio Eradication Initiative partners, Rotary has achieved a 99.9 percent reduction in polio cases, and contributed more than US\$2.9 billion and countless volunteer hours to protect more than 3 billion children from this paralyzing disease.



About Larry Lunsford

A certified public accountant, Lunsford spent seven years working for Ernst & Young before joining a family-owned business, Bernstein-Rein Advertising, in 1990. He is currently executive vice president and chief financial officer for the Bernstein group of companies. Lunsford is currently on the boards of Global Ties KC and the Church of the Resurrection Foundation. Previously, he has held positions on the boards of the Kansas City Spirit Festival and the Variety Club as well as serving as director of a local bank and treasurer of the Epilepsy Foundation for the Heart of America. He has also served on Truman State University’s alumni and foundation boards and received the university’s Distinguished Service Award.

Born and raised in Macon, Mo., Lunsford attended Truman State University in Kirksville, Mo., on an academic scholarship, earning bachelor’s and master’s degrees in accounting. He first encountered Rotary when he received a Rotary Foundation Ambassadorial Scholarship to spend the 1981-82 academic year at the University of Newcastle in Australia.

INTERCLUB EVENT

Governor's Visit to the Rotary Club of Lubang Island

DISTRICT Secretary General Hermie Esguerra attended the Governor's Visit to the Rotary Club of Lubang Island last September 16, 2025 at The Cluhouse at Third Greenmeadows, Quezon City.



INTERCLUB EVENT

Governor's Visit to the Rotary Club of Manila Midtown



DISTRICT Secretary General Hermie Esguerra attended the Governor's Visit to the Rotary Club of Manila Midtown last September 17, 2025 at the One Shangri-la, Mandaluyong City.



INTERCLUB EVENT

Rotary Club of Manila Midtown's 41st Handover and 42nd Induction Ceremonies



DISTRICT Secretary General Hermie Esguerra attended the 41st Handover and 42nd Induction Ceremonies of the Rotary Club of Manila Midtown last September 17, 2025 at the One Shangri-la, Mandaluyong City.



FELLOWSHIP

Aleco Monday Breakfast Fellowship

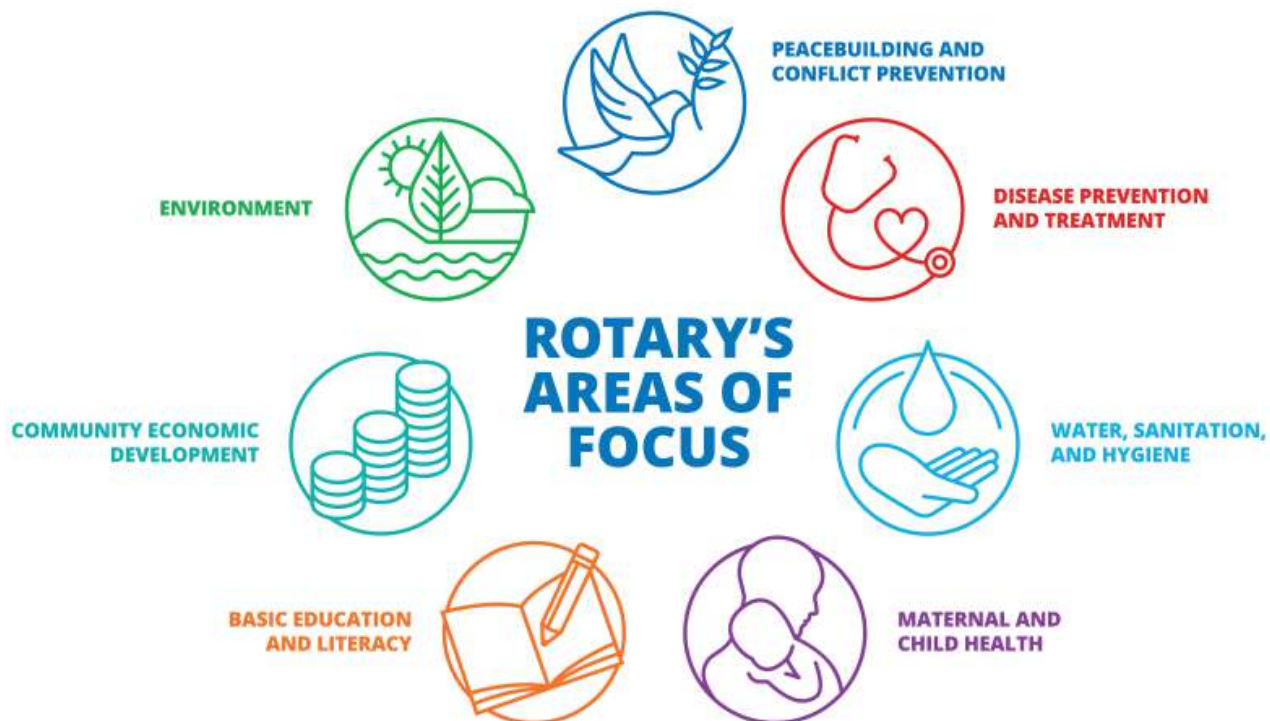


**SERVICE
ABOVE SELF**



THE Aleco Monday Breakfast Fellowship was held on September 23, 2025 at the Manila Golf and Country Club.

Present were (clockwise from left) Rotarian Willie Peliño, Past Director Pepo Nuñez, Mr. Raoul Villegas, Past Director Abe Pascual, Past President Jackie Rodriguez, Rotarian Cris Acosta, Secretary Anton Mauricio, Past Director Ner Lonzaga, Past President Ebot Tan, Past President Archit Bartolome, Past Treasurer Chito Tagaysay, Vice President Ricky Guevara, and Director Edwin Hernandez.





BOARD OF DIRECTORS & EXECUTIVE OFFICERS RY 2025-2026

RAOUL C. CREENCIA
President

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RCM OFFICE

543 Arquiza St. cor. Grey St.
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