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JAN-FEB 2008

p.8
Note to
PGMA



p.18
farewell
Embassy



p. 21
where?



Completing Year 2007 Circle

FILIPINO Observer

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2008

COMMUNITY NEWS 39

Doce Pares invites participants to the WEKAF Open Invitational Tournament

Doce Pares is inviting participants to its 1st World Eskrima Kali Arnis Federation (WEKAF) Open Invitational tournament organized by Filipinos to be held on 02 March 2008 in Miles End in East London from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.



WEKAF was formed in 1989 in Cebu, Philippines, to promote Filipino martial arts through a sporting version of stick-fighting or *eskrima* throughout the world. It is the first world sporting organization for Filipino martial arts and is still to this day recognized as the largest organization promoting the Filipino martial arts through sports.

WEKAF world championships are held every two years with every second championships being held in Cebu City, Philippines. Participants from all over the world come together in competition to prove themselves and represent their country in different categories of full contact stick fighting and forms.

In addition to world championships, which have been held in the Philippines, the United States and the United Kingdom, European and national championships have also been held.

Doce Pares, a group of eskrima masters, has been actively promoting Filipino martial arts in the United Kingdom. Under the able leadership of two-time World Champion Ermar Alexander, more commonly known as "Alex", Doce Pares has elevated Filipino martial arts from what it has been traditionally known for – "simple" fighting technique.

Last year, Alex started seriously teaching Filipino martial arts to the British Filipino community. That same year, he opened his first class in Chatham, Kent. From Kent, it spread like wildfire and now, Alex conducts classes in several areas in London. Alex's efforts bore fruit when his London classes produced four British champions at

the British WEKAF Championships held in November 2007.

Alex's group is now preparing for the WEKAF World Championships to be held in July 2008 in Cebu, Philippines, where he is also to defend his world title.

"In the past 10 or so years, the Filipino stickfighting events have been run by non-Filipinos (which is alright, we're not racist) but for us it's getting a bit monotonous because the only thing that you see in the event is stickfighting. We'd like to make this more interesting and make this an opportunity for Filipinos to gather and be merry, and share Pinoy pride with Filipino Martial Art enthusiasts the other aspects of Filipino culture," said Alex.

The Philippine Embassy fully supports the initiative of Doce Pares in promoting Philippine martial arts and encourages second generation Filipinos to also support and participate in this activity and other similar endeavours.

For more information contact Alex at info@dgoceparens.co.uk or 078 900 40 222. /PhilEmb/□

2008 Presidential Awards nominations, now accepted

THE SEARCH for the 2008 Presidential Awards for Filipino Individuals and Organizations Overseas is now open. The Presidential Awards is a biennial search to recognize exceptional individuals and organizations for their outstanding contribution to Philippine progress and development. The Awards are also conferred on overseas Filipinos who have shown excellence and distinction in their work or profession. Instituted in 1991, it has so far been conferred on 283 overseas-based individuals and organizations from 37 countries.

There are four categories of the Awards: **Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino, Banaag, Kaanib ng Bayan, and Pamana ng Pilipino.**

Starting January 2, 2008, the CFO will be accepting endorsements from Philippine Embassies and Consulates for nominations to the Awards.

Awarding ceremony will be in Malacañang in December 2008.

For more information about the rules, guidelines and categories, the Primer for the Presidential Awards, as well as nomination and endorsement forms (which may be reproduced), may be downloaded at www.cfo.gov.ph. The completed nomination and endorsement forms with supporting documents should be forwarded on or before **30 May 2008** to the CFO at Citigold Center, 1345, Pres. Quirino Avenue cor. South Superhighway, Manila, 1007 Philippines. Said documents may also be sent through facsimile number (632) 561-8332 or through e-mail at info@cfo.gov.ph.

For further information, please contact the Philippine Embassy on 0207-451-1800; embassy@philemb.co.uk. □