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AND GO FORWARD

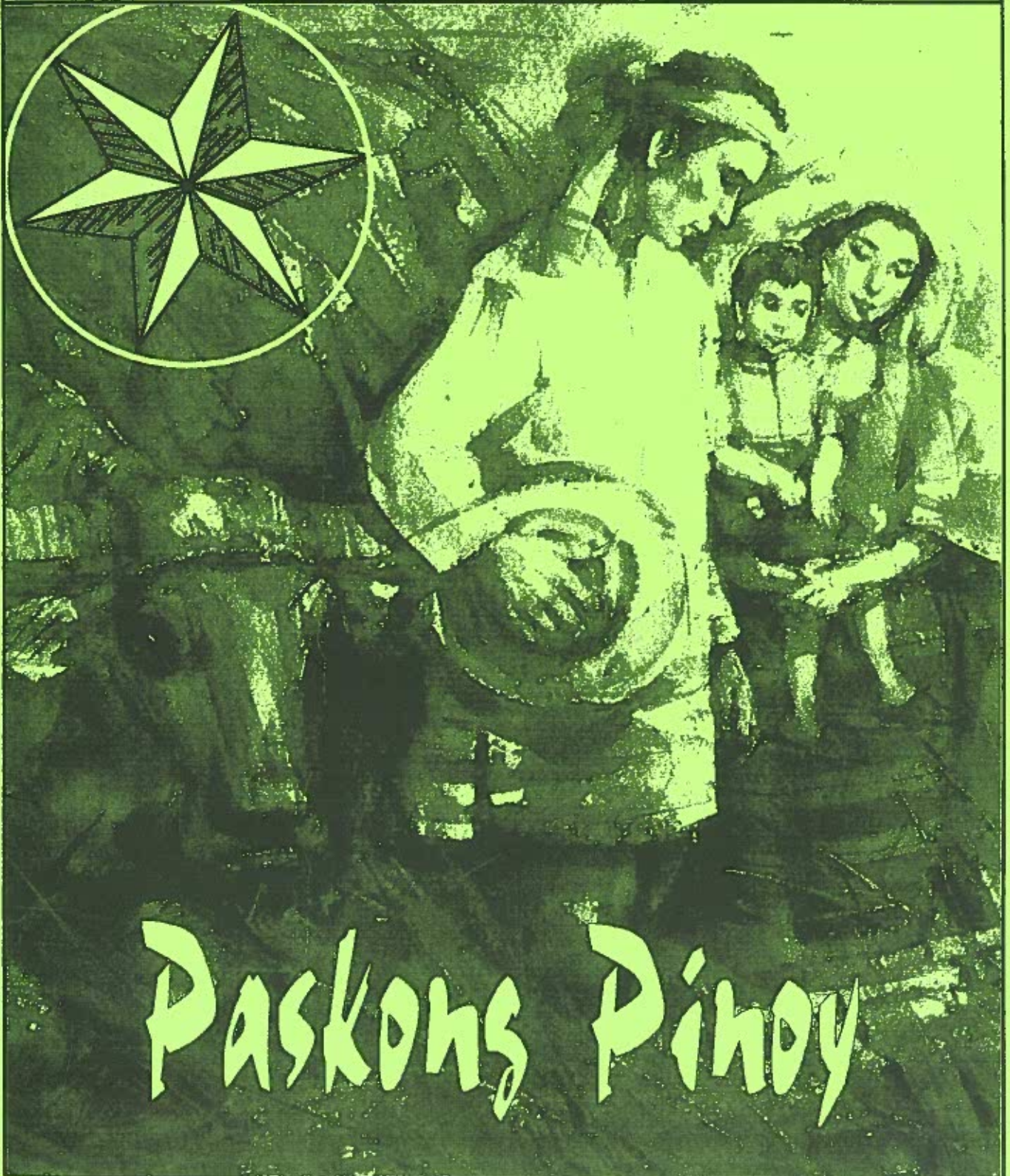
The Filipino Mirror

The Migrants' Newsletter

Vol. 6 No. 4

The official quarterly organ of the
Bayanihan Center for Filipino Migrants - Denmark®

December 2002



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and
accessorize
them.



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BCFM Newly Elected Officers



Filipino-American Political Clout



The Aetas in Copenhagen

BCFM Elects New Officers

A new set of officers was formally nominated and officially elected during the general meeting of the Bayanihan Center last 2 November. They are: Marc R. Dicay, President; Cezar B. Palad, Vice President; Cho T. Baldon, Secretary; Leonor V. Kristensen, Treasurer; Cora T. Magpantay, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer; Alena M. Uvero, Public Relations Officer; Pat D. Valenzuela and Elena B. Olsen, Project Coordinators; and Isabel M. Malacas, Auditor.

As stipulated in the BCFM By-Laws, the newly elected officers will have a two-year term of office from Year 2003 to Year 2004.

Following are other salient points discussed and decided during the general meeting attended by a majority of the members:

BCFM Constitution. Before the elections, the article re: Duties of Public Relations Officer of the BCFM Constitution was amended from "Be in-charge of the publications of the Bayanihan's official organ" to "Be the liaison and information officer of BCFM", and "Be in-charge of all press releases concerning BCFM".

Filipino Mirror. Due to some financial difficulties, the budget for the publication of the Filipino Mirror was cut down to 50%. From 2003 until further notice, the official newsletter will come out in June and December only.

Springfest. The annual Springfest, with a strong favored motion for a lottery



Marc R. Dicay



Cezar B. Palad



Cho T. Baldon



Leonor V. Kristensen



Cora T. Magpantay



Alena M. Uvero



Pat D. Valenzuela



Elena B. Olsen



Isabel M. Malacas

draw to raise funds, is slated to take place on the last Saturday of May at St. Anne Hall.

BCFM Family Picnic. Scheduled on 5 July, the annual family picnic will be held at Amager Strandvej.

Arsfest Cum Julefrokost. A year ahead of time, the *Arsfest cum Julefrokost* is confirmed to take place at the SID Kastrup *Afdeling* on 29 November 2003.

Munting Paaralan. The

Center commits to support the *Tagalog Summer Skul*, a language program pioneered by the KABATAAN of Denmark under the leadership of first cousins Katrina Palad and Amy Valenzuela. ❀

Arsfest & Julefrokost '02

Once again, the Bayanihan Center for Filipino Migrants-Denmark held a two-in-one celebration last Saturday, 7 December at Amager Kulturpunkt, Øresundsvej, 2300 København S.

At its 6th *Arsfest cum Julefrokost*, there were more than enough namedroppables to fill up this page, including guest of honor Ambassador Erlinda F. Basilio who thankfully avouched the Center's cooperation and coordination with the Philippine Embassy in Stockholm, and the Filipino community's spiritual mentors, Fr. Carroll Parker and Fr. Patrick J. Sheils.

The first highlight of the affair was the induction of the newly elected BCFM officers who took their oath of allegiance before the Philippine Ambassador. The other was the lottery draw, a fundraising campaign for the Filipino Mirror. The lucky winner, Shiela Freyberg, received a round trip ticket to Manila, courtesy of Mr. Gody Caluza of Bonus Travel.

Everybody enjoyed the sumptuous Christmas dinner buffet specially prepared by our culinary expert Leonor V. Kristensen, BCFM Treasurer.

The bash saw the gathering of the 30 BCFM chartered members whose confidence and support was gratefully acknowledged by BCFM Pres. Marc R. Dicay. For most of them, the gathering was a respite from the year-long activities, a time to relax and unwind, as well as to recharge used-up energy in preparation for another busy year. ❀



An Aeta Experience



Clockwise: Consul Stephen Andersen (back to camera 2nd from right) listens intently as Ruben Sison (partly hidden) narrates his story during a meeting at the Philippine Consulate General in Copenhagen. Others are from left: Ashley Manabat, Cho Baldon, BCFM Pres. Marc. R. Dicap and Cezar Palad. Ben Adriatico (middle) raises a point as Cezar Palad (left) and Dr. Jorgen Juhldal listen. Dr. Juhldal explains his views as Brigitte Nielsen and Adriatico listen. Doy Barbaso (2nd from left), Baby Urduja Holopainen and Andersen listen to the Clark Special Economic Zone presentation of Manabat.

The air travel took 17 hours and 45 minutes but as soon as Ruben Sison disembarked from flight KL 1127 at the Kastrup airport in Copenhagen last Sunday, 23 November, he made history. Sison is the first Aeta to ever set foot in Denmark! An Aeta tribal chieftain, Sison is also an elected barangay captain in Barangay Kalumpang, Mabalacat, Pampanga, where he comes from. As head of some 8,000 Aetas, Sison was chosen by Dr. Jorgen Juhldal of the Juhldal International Research Foundation and Juhldal Pharmaceutical Company to come to Denmark and share his expertise in herbal medicine. Sison's experience in Copenhagen, sometimes boring but

mostly funny, is truly worth remembering. Here are some of Sison's experience: The lunch with Dr. Jorgen Juhldal and his fellows at the JIRF consisted of the usual Danish fare of cold food and bread. Trying his best not to displease his hosts, Sison, despite downing everything that was offered to him, still looked hungry. Dr. Juhldal could not understand why since everybody got his fill until Sison mumbled something about rice. An Aeta dinner is never complete without rice, the staple food of Pinoy and, of course, of the Aeta. But there was no rice. Looking around as he munched the celery, he asked what it was. To his surprise, it was celery alright, but only a

different variety. "They taste different in Denmark," he remarked as he downed another glass of fresh orange juice. Sison was excited as we prepared to check out the erotic stores at Istedgade. "An Aeta is allowed to have many wives," he said, "but this is too much." Sison drooled over pornographic magazines at the store and got the surprise of his life when he saw the bargirl totally naked from the neck down. It was the first time Sison saw in person a naked white woman. The weather at first was alright. But soon, the penetrating cold was simply too much and Sison would rather stay home at Valdemarsgade instead of wandering around outside. It was at this house of Mr. and Mrs. Marc Dicap at the Filipino House in

Valdemarsgade that Sison felt home. Mrs. Bang Dicap has a catering business and there's plenty of rice. Dressed in a pullover sweater, a scarf, bonnet and heavy leather jacket, Sison, who insists that he cannot get much sleep, was often slumbering as soon as he got his back laid. "The cold is too much," he finally admitted. Like Jose Rizal, Sison was not spared of homesickness. After calling home, Sison was forlorn. "My wife is sick and cannot get out of bed. I miss her," he said "even if all the white naked women at Istedgade will offer me their beds." But home is where the heart is. And for Ruben Sison, the trip back home is waited in much anticipation. ❀

in Copenhagen

By Ashley Manabat

A Brief History of the Aeta

Aeta, Aya, Agta, Atta, Ati and Ita - these were probably derived from the root word 'it' which in various Philippine languages means black as inferred from the Tagalog term 'itim' and the Visayan term 'itom.' 'Negrito' or little black one is a Spanish term coined from the word 'Negro.'



On the other hand, the term 'Baluga' is acceptable to some Aeta groups since it means 'hybrid' akin to a positive connotation of 'meztizo' for lowlanders. But it is also considered insulting by other Aeta groups since it means 'brackish, half-salt and half-fresh.'

The Aeta are a mountain people who are dark-skinned, short, small of frame, kinky haired, snub nosed and with big black eyes.

The history of the Aeta dates back to about 30,000 years ago when land bridges linked the Philippines with the Asian mainland. One theory suggests that migrations may have occurred when the Malay peninsula was still connected with Sumatra and other Sunda islands. At that time, the islands of what is now the Philippines may have been connected, making probable the dispersal of the Aeta throughout what is now an archipelago.

Based on artifacts found where the Aeta live provide archeological evidence that in pre-historic times, the Aeta lived in the lowlands but gradually retreated into the hills and mountains when subsequent immigrants and conquerors, like the Spaniards, pushed them into the forests.

While resisting change from the outside for hundreds of years, the Aeta have adjusted to social, economic, cultural and political pressures with remarkable resilience; they have created systems and structures within their culture to cushion the sudden impact of change. But since the latter half of the 20th century, the Aeta have been declining in number. Their very existence has been threatened by problems brought about by other people and nature. Poverty stricken lowlanders seeking food have encroached on forest lands, displacing the Aeta.

The flora and fauna needed for Aeta survival are no longer available due to forest depletion. Expulsion, relocation, serfdom and mendicancy have plagued their lives.

Disasters like the Pinatubo eruption destroyed and buried Aeta ancestral lands in tons of ashfall and lahar. All these, aggravated by government negligence and public apathy, have marginalized the Aeta, some towards possible extinction. ❀



From Top: Dr. Jorgen Juhldal of the Juhldal International Research Foundation and Juhldal Pharmaceutical Co. meets Ruben Sison and Philippine National Commission on Indigenous People Provincial Officer Epifanio Quiambao. The Filipino community in Copenhagen led by their Pres. Marc. R. Dicap (extreme right) warmly welcomes Epifanio Quiambao (3rd from left) and Ruben Sison (middle). Others in photo are Pat Valenzuela, BCFM Vice Pres. Cezar Palad and Jeana Altamirano.