...A day in the life of a cardiologist in progress...
PCES is the acronym for Panganiban, Catanduanes Elementary School Campus. The organization has completed some projects and fund-raising activities, the proceeds were used in the redevelopment of the Panganiban elementary school campus.

The Panganiban Parish Rectory Construction Project is a work in progress and PCES Molave is sending 10 residents of the CSC Panganiban campus to college.

Why would someone like him who has a flourishing career as a heart doctor at the St. Luke’s Medical Center and The Medical City, and used to flying first-class, even think of buying promo economy tickets with an ungodly hour flight schedule. By 3am, he has to rush to catch the 6am Cebu Pacific flight. Upon arrival and on the succeeding days, he has to see a lot of patients.

Cebu Pacific flies four times a week as does Zest Air until recently when Zest Air scheduled daily flights. To save on fares I book my flights months ahead. My monthly booking is good till November 2012,” he said.

On countless times, he has had experienced travel blues but he has braced himself for cancelled or delayed flights, and a turbulent voyage.

Indeed, he flies to Catanduanes every last Friday of the month to do his self-imposed clinic with provincial rates and to check out his PCES Molave scholars, in keeping with his commitment to share his fortune. Patients who don’t have the financial capacity to pay get free consultation. By going there, his patients are spared from spending on airfare and accommodation in Manila.

Past experiences, good or bad, that are loaded with lessons can awaken the consciousness. One unforgettable adulthood scenario spurred his sensitivity and partly shaped his philosophies in life.

“I highly value honesty and integrity, as well as hard work. My principles are ‘share and give back’, there’s more to it than just losing a part of you. The value of sharing, if I may call it, made an imprint on me as I often recall a time in the past. I was in pre-med then, when I accompanied my mother to go to a certain politico’s house to ask for financial help for my tuition. We were told to come back...”

Looking back, he told PHAN: “I started holding clinic in Virac and in Payo in the mid ’90s when my mother was still alive and staying in Payo. Then, I had no cardio gadgets except for my portable ECG which I brought with me from Manila. I stopped...”

A firm believer of these sayings, Dr. Rene V. Reyes is euphoric when asked about Catanduanes, where he hails, the scholars of PCES Molave and his siblings and their respective families.

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my practice there when she fell ill and she stayed with me in Manila in 2001 until her death in March 2006.

Benevolence begets benevolence. He resumed his clinic in September 2006, this time in a small hospital, Immaculate Heart of Mary Hospital in Virac, whose owner he met by chance in one of his flights.

He added the "the hospital is her advocacy even if it was not really very profitable. To keep it operational, she maintained it with her business earnings in Manila. She equipped 'my clinic' with an echo machine, stress test and Holter monitors, the only ones in Catanduanes. Those are the best cardio gadgets there because they are the only ones available there. And being the only practising cardiologist in Catanduanes, I am also the best there. Maintaining my clinic there is my advocacy.

The unassuming Dr. Reyes was born and raised in a tiny town called Panganiban (also known as Payo) which is about an hour-and-a-half by car from Virac, the capital town. His brother and his family live in their old house.

“Our parents' humble properties in Catanduanes have been equitably distributed among us," he quipped. To provide his siblings’ growing family and their visitors roomy space, he had a guest house built right beside the old house. Seeing both abodes fully occupied during family gatherings and other important occasions like the death anniversary of his parents, fiestas in July, Holy Week, Undas (All Soul’s Day), brings him excitement.

To this day, PCES Molave is still active though not as much when they started in 2004, and were deep into the rehabilitation project of the Panganiban Central Elementary School.

It is providential that the periodic meetings were done when he was still based in Catanduanes. At the moment, the association does not have any fund-raising activity. The kind-heart cardiologist pours funds into the PCES Molave scholarship kitty to keep it going.

According to him "actually, the scholarship project is a grant. The recipients are not really the typical bright students who had to pass through rigorous qualifying exams to become scholars. They are sons or daughters of members of the association or their relatives who are enrolled in the Catanduanes State Colleges with courses like B.S in Agriculture or Industrial Education. Each grantee receives P4,000 per semester with additional cash incentives, the amount is based from their final grades at the end of the semester. To date, PCES Molave has 10 scholars.

Retirement from medical practice is still far-fetched.

“Maybe partial retirement or slowing down a bit, not total retirement. I probably would have another 15 or so years doing the things I am doing now. If I would retire I would be definitely spending more time in Catanduanes trying agri and aquaculture.”

He also said that “in fact, we have started planting fruit-bearing trees in a seaside farm we are developing in Lorong, my hometown. I am also experimenting on growing some crayfish and lobsters off the waters fronting the farm, very small scale, just for personal consumption. On another note, I foresee my 'retirement' years as just shifting gears, less of medical practice and more of involvement in socio-economic activities in the town like what we are currently doing with the church.”

Presently, he chairs the executive committee of the Panganiban Parish Rectory Construction Project. Started over two years ago, the rectory is now nearing completion, subject of course to availability of funds sourced from donations. During Christmas, they are at the peak of soliciting contributions for this purpose.

His favourite quote is: "You must give sometime to your fellowmen. Even if it's a little thing, do something for others - something for which you get no pay but the privilege of doing it" by Albert Schweitzer.

For as long as I am able, for as long as I can hop on a plane, I will stick to my advocacy. There is a sense of fulfilment and satisfaction in giving back part of what we’ve become to others. And you get the bonus, the same satisfaction in regularly enjoying the countryside and your hometown.

“Happiness is not so much in having or sharing. We only make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

– Norman Mc Ewan
After packing away his interventional tools, Dr. Jonas Del Rosario picks up an equally powerful gadget, his camera to seize moments that catch his attention. Del Rosario’s pictures speak of realism, uncertainty and risks. ♥ GPGagelonia

Photos by Jose Jonas del Rosario, MD

Twist

Perilous Puff

Sea breeze

Intense Act

Ebbing Tide
We encourage original contributions of jokes or cartoons or quotes inspired by work in the clinics or hospital arena or the humdrum of our daily routines. Please send to eic_phan@yahoo.com

Cardio Crossword

By Rei Salangsang, MD

ACROSS
1. Post myocardial infarction syndrome
2. A sign of clenched fist held against the sternum with STEMI
3. Juxtapleural pulmonary soft tissue density on a chest radiograph and is a manifestation of pulmonary infarction
4. To help or give support to
5. A deposit of fatty material on the inner lining of an arterial wall, characteristic of atherosclerosis
6. Drug for hypertensive crisis and is most effective with elevated DBP and aortic dissection
7. Anticoagulant by activating anti thrombin and accelerates the rate at which it inhibits clotting enzyme particularly thrombin and factor Xα
8. Hydroxymethylglutaryl coenzyme A (HMG-CoA) reductase inhibitor
9. Established guidelines for hypertension classification
10. A disease with an almost absent HDL cholesterol and manifests with enlarged yellow tonsils
11. A syndrome of esophageal rupture caused by severe vomiting with mediastinitis
12. Study comparing diuretic, CCB and an ACE inhibitor for hypertension
13. Most common symptom of AF
14. Inadequate blood supply
15. Atheroma regression study using rosuvastatin (crestor)

DOWN
1. A long narrow trench or furrow dug in the ground
2. Increased BP, proteinuria, wth headache, blurred vision, abdominal pain, low platelets and abnormal liver enzymes
3. Used to improve health,

CARDIO CROSSWORD ANSWER

1. B. Carisma
2. S. Javier
3. I. Ongtengco
4. T. Abola
5. F. Ibarra
6. E. Lopez
7. T. Dy
8. H.B. Calleja

10. An unpleasant sensation that can range from mild, localized discomfort to agony
11. Popular brand of entertainment systems
12. Major homeostatic mechanism to counter hypovolemic hypotension
13. Device used for mechanical revascularization
14. A thought or conception
15. Valvular heart disease common with Marfan’s syndrome
16. An enzyme that catalyzes the formation of cholesterol esters
17. Degenerative joint disease
18. Abbreviation for cancer

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noun, a challenge for the wits in the form of essay writing was held and artistic boundaries were pushed to the limit during a poster-making contest participated in by the nurses, clerks, interns and residents of The Medical City. The exercise opened insights and deeper understanding to one’s concept of what is the true essence of a healthy heart. Our body serves as the temple of our soul. Hence, a session of healing was held in order to attain this very goal. Free consultations were made at the outpatient department clinics as well as screening for cholesterol and diabetes. Later on that day, food enthusiasts from all over the hospital were asked to prepare a hearty snack for a healthy heart. The dish should be economical, nutritious, and must have the lowest calories possible without sacrificing the taste in order to be declared the winner. Amazingly, many participants took part in this endeavor. One particular dish outshone all the other entries and it came from the Wellness center section of the hospital. They made a pasta meal completely made out of tofu, from the sauce and all its components, to the garnish and even the pasta itself. It truly was remarkable.

Nearing the end of the week, activities catered to the very young and old, committee together with the Pediatric Cardiology section put up a healthy heart show in the form of storytelling for the pediatric cardiac patients of the hospital. Here they were read fun-filled stories with moral lessons most especially appropriate for children with heart ailments.

Parents who accompanied their children, were given advice on how to take care of their children’s heart condition so that they will grow up healthy. A zumba-filled afternoon was held in collaboration with the cardiac rehabilitation center for the post-cardiac bypass, angioplasty patients and for all those who wanted to participate. This latest Latin-highop dance craze did not slow down these people in fact towards the end of the class they were craving for more.

An extravagant show always culminates every heart week. This final event sums up everything that has happened throughout the week. It also showcases the talents of the different sections of the hospital with their own interpretation of Heart Week’s theme. On the lighter side, this event also introduces the incoming fellows to cardiovascular family in a performance of their choice highlighting their personalities. Every year, the presentations keep getting better, bolder and competitive with each one vying to be winner and be declared this year’s best section. This year’s show involves the participants in a variety of dance from adagio, hip-hop, jazz to hand-dance pantomime and the section of Pharmacy declared this year’s best. Overall this year’s Heart week had been very informative, wonderful and exciting.

for now, PHA NL limits the number of participants to 50 and acceptance is based on a first-come, first-served basis. Two more ACLS trainings are scheduled in Baguio City this year.

Heartweek... from Page 23

SLHIAA... from Page 21

growing number of cardiologists now scattered all over the country and abroad. In his usual homily, Calleja reminisced the days of his youth when he planted thousands of cacao trees, remembering his father who taught him how to plant. Recalling from a poem he had written, Calleja shared that to know the past, one must touch a rock, share a bread for the present and teach a child and plant a tree for the future. He then led the group in planting some 200 trees. Assisted by eco-volunteers of Timberland, each one beamed with a free-spirited attitude. Unmindful of the heat from the sun that was already up that time, the toil of managing the terrain of the mountain, and the earth that dirtied hands, a sense of fulfillment filled the heart of every planter.

Leaving an imprint of that day when Alumni gathered in bringing life to saplings, a marker was put in place by the officers- Drs. Malou Bunyi, Freman Cerezo, Malou de Jesus, and John Tan. A portion of the engraved marker read – As a tree holds the earth together and breathes an air of freshness, so do we as physicians affirm our purpose to keep mankind well. As a forest achieves a greater purpose, so are we gathered for a higher goal and wider influence.

Before leaving the place, the alumni gathered in a circle. With a butterfly in hand, each one expressed their hopes, wishes, and dreams for the Alumni with Cerezo, SLHIAA vice-president leading the group. It was a jovial time as varying hopes of good health, youthfulness, beauty, world peace, and a stronger Alumni, were voiced out. SLHIAA treasurer De Jesus expressed her wish that all the members pay their membership dues and this elicited applause and shouts of agreement from the crowd. Dr. Edgar Ongjoco, for his part, showed his elation by reciting portions of Joyce Kilmer’s poem “Trees.” “I hope that all your dreams for the Alumni would come true and I dream of an Alumni that is free to accomplish the purpose for which it was created; Bunyi ended. With that, everyone released the butterflies – a signal that the Alumni indeed has metamorphosed and ready for its flight.

The event was capped by a sumptuous breakfast at the Peak Bar of Timberland Sports and Nature Club where Cerezo and SLHIAA auditor and project leader Tan distributed tree-planting certificates.

The event was made possible through the help of Mr. Francis V. Ceballos, Senior Vice-President and Cluster Head, Arch. Noel V. Advincula, Business Development Officer, both of Filinvest Land, Inc., and their very able staff.

PHA NL: ACLS... from Page 18

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Boehringer Ingelheim (Phil.) Inc.
8741 Paseo de Rokas, Makati City.
They say that the city had its beginnings as a stopover for traders who ply the road between the Spanish town-fort of Zamboanga on the southern tip of the Zamboanga Peninsula and other bigger towns to the north of the old province of Zamboanga. Thus they believe that the name Pagadian came from the words of iranun dialect, ‘pagad’ meaning wait and ‘padian’ meaning market perhaps referring to its old beginnings as a market or barter place.

When the skies are overcast, it’s not hard to imagine that you’re in a coveted place where the mountains kiss the water, akin to being in such famous bay area cities like San Francisco and Hong Kong. But unique to the city is that there are so much more interesting natural spots that have yet to be uncovered like the myriad of waterfalls, beaches, and mountains all very near the rising city. Typhoon rarely visits this city because it’s not aligned within the Philippine typhoon belt. This is definitely a good destination for people who are tired of taking the beaten path and who crave for something closer to nature away from the harried crowd.

Since the transfer of regional offices from Zamboanga city to Pagadian city, it has seen fast growth in commerce. Now the city also has the biggest mall in Zamboanga...the Gaisano Mall, numerous private, government and rural banks, as well as restaurants to satisfy the taste of both the city slicker and those who wish to partake of natural bounty from the sea. The most distinct accommodation is the alluring Alindahaw Lakeview Resort in Bgy. Biswangan. It has the best view of probably one of the most beautiful and mystic lakes in the Philippines aptly called Lake Wood or cheekily Lake Lakewood. Lakewood, all 800 hectares of its still and scenic waters, is about 42 kilometers away from Pagadian City, accessible by shuttles and habal-habals.

PAGADIAN CITY – In the recent years, Pagadian City, the capital of Zamboanga del Sur, has emerged as one of the most promising destinations in Mindanao. It has earned several well-deserved monikers such as the Little Hong Kong of the South or the Baguio of Mindanao because of its rolling terrain bounded by scenic mountain ranges facing the bountiful sea. In fact 45% of the city proper is sloping terrain. That is why their iconic tricycle was made to tilt to an angle of 25-40 degrees, ferrying people across the grid-like rolling streets of the city not unlike riding a roller coaster to a child, both a novelty and a thrill.

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The health provider of the city and the province comprises of both public -- Department of Health (DOH) and local government unit (LGU) and private medical practitioners. There are around seven small private hospitals and one LGU-run medical center, the Zamboanga del Sur Medical Center that caters to the patients who usually come not only from Pagadian and Zamboanga del Sur area, but even from neighboring provinces of Zamboanga Sibugay, Lanao and Misamis Occidental. The Zamboanga del Sur Medical Center structure and facilities are being upgraded to a 350-bed capacity tertiary hospital to meet the increasing demand of admissions. It is the vision of the provincial government to make the Zamboanga del Sur Medical Center a competitive referral hospital in the area.

There are already several specialty groups in the city. About two years ago, PCP Northwestern Mindanao chapter was formed and is based in Pagadian City. Slowly, new graduates from Specialty trainings are starting to consider Pagadian City as based city for their practice. Among the must-see places in Pagadian are the following:

- Rotunda, a small beautiful park atop the beauteous Bulatoc Hill facing the tranquil Illana Bay where you can do horseback riding or just soak in the heart warming sights.
- Dao Dao Islands is within the Illana Bay of which the bigger of the two islands, boasts of artificial coral reefs, ideal for swimming, boating and fishing.
- Muricay Beach is very near the city proper. Swimming is allowed in some parts but to date is largely underdeveloped. Complementing its raw beauty are the mangrove and seaweed plantations nearby.
- The Springl and Resort has a rich source of natural spring water, boasting of three swimming pools and a fishpond. It also has a multi-function hall and a restaurant designed like a large nipa hut truly in native Filipino style where you can eat the best seafood the city can offer.
- Lourdes Waterfalls and Hot and Cold Springs that are irresistible. These are natural hot springs in Bgy. Lourdes, about 32 km. northwest from downtown Pagadian. Lison Valley Waterfalls is located about 42 km. northwest of Pagadian proper, in Sitio Santa Lucia with a height of about 20–25 meters with water outflow of five cu. m. per second. The spherical basin, 20 meters in diameter, is ideal for swimming. Ditoray Waterfalls is 14 km from the Pagadian Poblacion and five km. from Barangay Ditoray. For a small area of the peninsula, there appears to be no shortage of waterfalls in this area.
- Manga Falls and Twin Caves. These natural attractions are located in Bgy. Manga, 7 km. from the city proper. The two-layered and pristine cascading falls is surrounded by huge trees purported to be home to white monkeys. The charming twin caves can be explored along the two-layered waterfalls. It is currently in the process of being developed as a tourist spot.
- Kendis Cave is about 14 km. from Pagadian Poblacion and five kms. from Bgy. Ditoray is unfortunately not accessible to regular traffic but is a challenge to the more adventurous and sporty travel and health bugs.
- Among the many mountain ranges of the city is majestic Mt. Palpalan. This mountain is the promontory or the highest peak within Pagadian City. With a height of 684 ft. above sea level, it has a sweeping vista of Pagadian City and Illana Bay. Stunning Mt. Susong Dalaga is the literal translation for “Maiden’s Breast” for it is a nearly perfect cone, resembling a maiden woman’s breast reminiscent of Mayon Volcano. It is located in Bgy. Lourdes. Rustic Mt. Pinokis is located in Barangay Lison Valley.
- Bulatoc, Bogo, and Dumagoc Hills. These hills provide panoramic views of the Illana Bay and downtown Pagadian.
- Plaza Luz is where ingenuity and functionality meet. The City’s primary public assembly area and recreational park features a dancing fountain and the City Public Library.

Photos by Robert Capatoy

A tilted Pagadian trike (Photo by Mike Ocampo)