

South Island's *Paskong Pinoy*

Central South Island was the place to be at on the night of December 18. It might have hailed heavily in some areas, even snowed at Pleasant Point but in Timaru, the mood was scorching hot and the party was livid with exacting *gusto!* It was to be the night when Filipinos from literally the whole of South island have converged in Timaru to rock all night long—spanning from Christchurch, West Coast, Ashburton, Geraldine, Temuka, Timaru, Pleasant Point, Fairlie, Tekapo, Pareora, Waimate, Kurow, Dunedin, and Invercargill and yes, we have *glitteratti* guests shooting straight from Auckland.

Mouth-gaping hula dance numbers of Ms. Rebecca Matthews, reigning Miss Teen Asia Pacific NZ 2004 left everybody mesmerised and the crowd clamoring for more. Nathan and Kyra Butler showing their *officio* tap dancing prowess (with Nathan eventually winning the top prize in this year's Timaru Intermediate Talent Competition at the Caroline Bay). Ashburton Filipino community led the cultural presentation with their very colourful bulaklakan and line dances tailed by Christchurch's Philippine Canterbury Society's *Fandango sa ilaw* and ballroom dance numbers. Invercargill Pinoys dished out the *cha-cha* and *boogie-woogie* dance numbers but nothing could beat the *tango* and the swing dance numbers performed by local home-grown "mature" talents headed by matrons Mrs. Glenda Weeks and Mrs. Tally Finnie as masterfully matched paws per paws by *Tatang* Nilo Alvarado!

Equally superlatives were the Kewl Babes duo of Joy Reynolds and Elle Wilson wowing the nonchalant audience with their ala-Sexbomb dance number fuelled incensely by the alluring solo jazz number of Danilyn Green, these as pre-empted by a song and dance number essayed by little miss Hillary Harris and the mesmerising twosome of Kim Dewe and Leilanie.

As earlier blessings were imparted by Fr. Earl Crotty through his invocation, and distinguished guests from the Mayor's office through Councillor Peter Field and affable wife Jenny dishing out their yuletide greetings, the night lived true to its radio and print calling: **PHILIPPINE FIESTA 2004—PASKONG PINOY IN TIMARU.**

Ante to December 18th Fiesta: Funny how radio DJ's get all tongue-tied pronouncing "*Paskong Pinoy*" and jostling the listeners to call in to impishly correct them unabashedly started the round-the-clock, whole week's wildcat publicities aired through Solid Gold FM, 98 Port FM and The Edge FM with the Timaru Herald joining the fray. What else could have gone wrong?

Lavish hall decors coming complete with colourful *bandaritas*, exquisite floral arrangements courtesy of the Butler, Dewe and Acero families and the highly caloric *noche buena* feasts ably managed by Mercy Reynolds, it was to be a memorable night adorned with unrestrained generosity as Father Christmas (Mr. Bill Schuster) showered the kids with gifts and lollies while fabulous door prizes were raffled off compliments of L&L International, Tres Marias Trading & Tranfex NZ, Forex-Umac NZ, Mrs. Mercy Reynolds, Mrs. Tally Finnie, & Mrs. Glenda Weeks.

That night also served as the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of The South Canterbury Filipino Association Inc (TSCFAI). And even before the night has ended,

a humble amount was raised as their meager donation to the many victims of the most recent devastating twin typhoons in the Aurora and Quezon Provinces...

And yes, Virginia, the Filipino community in South island is growing... BIG! Much bigger activities, more noteworthy community projects and more intelligible *Pinoy* initiatives will continue to permeate and pervade the friendly southern skies... Already we are gearing for our participation in the all out South Canterbury *Tsunami* Appeal Concert slated on the **19th of Feb** at the Caroline Bay where we will be rendering 3 *Filipiniana* numbers as our community's contribution. This will be apart from our **BIG 1st Year Anniversary Concert on June 11** so until the next update, we hope to see more of you, soon and here in the cool and sunny South island. ***Ramon Acero, dateline Timaru.***



TSCFAI Paskong Pinoy Management Committee

L-R: Seated in front—Jo Long, Mercy Reynolds (VP), Ramon Acero (Pres), & Belinda Dewe (Sec)

L-R: Standing at the back—Glenda Weeks, Inday Schuster (Treas), Chato Westgarth (Dir), Gloria Triggs, Amy Burke (Dir), Trudy Clark (Dir), Vivian Tinkler, & Mary Ann Bongay (Dir)