



✓ **Annual picnic Aug. 11**

The annual picnic for San Diego Sillimanians is Saturday, Aug. 11 from 10am to 6pm at the Embarcadero Marina Park North.

Picnicking with SUAASC chapter

The more the merrier when it comes to alumni picnics - and every year SUAF of SD members make that drive north to partake in the SUAASC annual picnic. This year, last June 23, at the Whittier Narrows Reg. Park in South El Monte.

SUAASC returns the favor when SUAF of SD holds its annual Founders Day picnic next month.

(continued PICNIC page 3)

Quarterly Meeting

Saturday, July 14 from 1—4pm at the residence of Nate and Grace Tan in Escondido.

SUAfers in home trips for 111th FD

There will be a minor migration to Silliman University for several members of San Diego's alumni chapter to participate in Founders Day festivities in August. Some to attend reunions, make hometown visits, and gather for activities such as the SUCN 2012 **Balik-Talent** conference and the OSA awards.

Expected to be Dumaguete-bound are **Laarni Gularek** and **Ligaya Simpkins**, president and vice-president of SUAF, who will travel to represent the chapter during alumni events on campus.

Tenette Esperat is recipient of one of the four 2012 Outstanding Sillimanian Alumni award on Aug. 28 for nursing practice, education, research and administration. She becomes the first nominee to be selected from the chapter.

Dinah Penaflorida, voted last March to head the international nursing alumni association SUCNAAI (Silliman University College of Nursing Alumni Association, Inc) for 2012-2016 will be based in Dumaguete for at least one month to prepare for the holding of the three-day **Balik-Talent** conference Aug. 23-24, and Aug. 27. Tenette will deliver the keynote address Aug. 23 to be held at the Luce auditorium.



Priscilla (Gallardo) and **Efren Madrid** will be making a trip home for the first time in 26 years. Prescy is a '72 SUCN graduate and will attend the 40th anniversary reunion of her class. The Madrids plan to include travels to Palawan, Cebu, Bohol, Iloilo and Boracay — a treat for Efren who has not been outside of Luzon in his life.

Susan (Monte de Ramos) and **Bill Soldwisch** are currently in Southern Cal visiting families but are due to return to Negros Oriental for Founders Day. Susan is organizing a reunion of her pre-med class.

Prescy Madrid

Gino and **Chona Maribao** have a longer visit than the others — they already left for the Philippines June 24 to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary and to take Gino's mother **Cinona Maribao** home.

Precila (Fabugais) and **Allen Garrido** are making (continued FD Trips on page 2)

American Missionaries 7th in a Series

Good chemistry: Straw and Tants

by
Ligaya Magbanua Simpkins



Helen and Constantino Bernardez

Helen Mary Strawbridge (1946-1950; 1952-1966)

Regular missionaries served for "life" and usually spent five years on the mission field followed by a year in the U.S. visiting family and reporting on their work. Shortly after the end of WWII, the Presbyterian Church decided to modify the term of mission service and recruit young people to work in the Philippines for three-year terms. They were called the short-termers or at times, affectionately called "The Termites".

Dr. **Lisle Steiner** had come to teach at Hanover College (Indiana) while waiting to go to Silliman during WWII and he asked the graduating seniors whether they would consider working for the church. Perhaps it was her candor in stating that she was a chemistry major that spurred Dr. Steiner to send one of the graduates a letter a year later, and an offer was made nonetheless (continued STRAW page 2)

FD Trips ... the trip to visit friends and attend SUHS 1977 35th high school reunion Aug. 18—29. In addition to trips to Cebu, Vigan, Palawan, the Garridos will pay a visit with high school classmate **Felipe Remollo** at Clark base where he is CEO of Clark Development. Allen is SUAF chapter treasurer. The Garridos return via Bangkok, Thailand.



Allen and Precy Garrido

Laarni, the Maribaos and the Garridos will also make hometown trips to Guihulngan, Ayungon and Tayasan, respectively, to bring relief aid to the earthquake victims which hit northern towns in Negros early this year.

Readers' feedback

Here's sharing what readers say:

"Thank you for all your efforts to acknowledge the work of missionaries at Silliman".

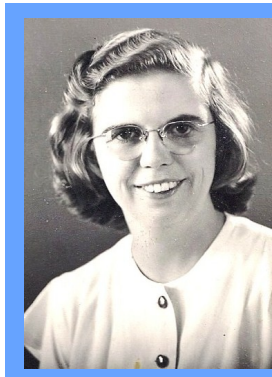
Jennifer Lauby

"In your January issue about the Mahys, I recognized the picture immediately of us kids listening to his stories. There was a huge tree across the road from the Pfeiffer's house that we called the Story Log. Dr. Mahy used to come there and tell us a continuing saga with the same characters. He always made us really special. In the photo I recognize Joy and Noel Florendo, Inday Utzurum, Mike Pritz, myself, Billie Grey P., Mark Pfeiffer, Peter Muilenberg and Bonnie Buchwalter. I saw Mark in the late 80s. He was living in San Francisco, retired from the Navy."

Betsy Bell Taylor

STRAW... stating that Silliman University in the Philippines needed a chemistry teacher and the rest is history!

Helen Mary Strawbridge, known to many as "Straw", had graduated from Hanover and obtained an M.S. in Chemistry from the University of Illinois. She was one of 10 chosen as a short termer and was assigned to Silliman along with **Dick Brown**, **Mary Kay Strathearn**, **Alan Gripe** and **Mary Marquis**. Mary Marquis began the BSN course at Silliman, the first in the Philippines. Mary Kay and Dick were married in the SUMC hospital chapel. One of the ideas behind their appointments was to give Filipino teachers an opportunity to take courses at Silliman and renew their training after the war years.



Shortly after Helen arrived in Silliman, Mr. **Felicisimo Kiamco** and later, Mr. **Gerardo Imperial** of the chemistry department, were sent abroad for further studies. In addition to her teaching

State. In 1952, they returned to Silliman and remained until 1966. Helen, having completed her short-term missionary service in 1950, resumed teaching chemistry as an Assistant Professor employed directly by Silliman University. Tants went to work at radio station DYSR where he served as program director. He became the station manager upon the death of Dr. **Henry Mack** in 1964, and in 1966, was asked to become Director of South East Asia Radio Voice (SEARV), a short wave station in Manila broadcasting to other nearby countries. This necessitated the move to Manila and Helen then taught at Philippine Christian College for several years.

At Silliman, Tants sang with the Faculty Four singers and was well known for his baritone voice. He would later have many opportunities to perform lead baritone roles in many productions at the Cultural Center in Manila. He was best known for his performances in "Man of La Mancha" and "Walang Sugat" and he also performed in several opera and oratorio presentations.



Straw with Dot Vernon, wife of pastor Doug Vernon (to her right) and troop leaders Esther Jorolan, Lilia Dominado and Aurora Evangelista.

load, Helen also spent two summers in church youth camps and served as adviser to the Silliman Girls Scout troop.

Constantino "Tants" Bernardez met Helen at Silliman and they got married at her home in Illinois in 1951. He came to the U.S. to undertake studies to prepare him for future work in radio broadcasting and programming and obtained his M.S. at Ohio



With children Barbie, Precy (center), Becky, David and Dan.

All five Bernardez children were born in Dumaguete and studied at Silliman. Twin daughters **Barbie** and **Becky** graduated with BSN degrees from Mary Johnston. Sons **David** and **Dan**, computer science majors, *(continued next page)*



The Barnardezes in Rose Bowl 2011 sweatshirts: Bob and Barb Verzosa, Ernest and Vickie Gonzaga, Luis and Precy Villamil, Sharon and Dave Bernardez, and Dan Bernardez.

(*STRAW*, continued from page 2)

and Precy, also a nurse, all graduated from Texas Christian University. Becky and **Ernest Gonzaga** were married by Pastor **Cirilo Rigos** at the Cosmopolitan Church in Manila as were Precy and husband **Luis Villamil**, a civil engineer. Sadly, Becky died suddenly from a wild virus in 1978 in Des Moines, Iowa and her husband, **Ernest Gonzaga** and baby daughter moved to Fort Worth to be with Helen and Tants. Ernest later married **Vickie Acuna** and they have one son. David and wife, **Sharon**, a physician assistant, and Barbie and husband **Bob Verzosa**, a veterinarian, each have two children, while Precy and Luis have three and Dan and his wife **Melissa**, have four.

The Barnardezes returned to the U.S. in 1976 after SEARV was closed and Martial Law was declared. They spent a short time in Milwaukee and then moved to Fort Worth after Tants was offered the position of KTCU Station Manager at Texas Christian University. Helen continued to teach in a junior college, did computer programming and helped care for the grandchildren. Three great grandchildren increased the Barnardez family as of this writing.

Tants suffered a sudden cardiac arrest and died 4 days later on March 26, 2012.

Helen and her children have fond memories of swimming at Silliman Farm and vacationing in the Chapman's old house at Camp Look-out. Helen still remembers the Shakespeare plays and the Gilbert and Sullivan productions which fellow short timer Alan Gripe helped produce. Carried on by others, these eagerly anticipated productions were among several regularly performed at the Silliman Amphitheater and the University gymnasium.

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References:

Bernardez, Helen Strawbridge, Personal Narrative, 2012.
 Carson, Arthur L., "Silliman University 1901-1959"
 Lauby, Paul T., Udarbe, Proceso U, and Lauby, Jennifer, L., "Clouds By Day and Fire by Night: The Silliman Story"

Picnic ...

SUAF of SD has scheduled its annual Founders Day picnic for Saturday August 11 from 10am to 6pm at the San Diego embarcadero.

Aside from the food and fellowship, highlight of the LA picnic was a raffle for an iPad. The winner was **Jovic Arevalo**, son of members **Jose and Vida Arevalo, Jr.** Beboy is administrator of a 100-bed nursing care facility in Pasadena and SUCN graduate Vida is director of nurses.

Among San Diego alumni who joined the SUAASC picnic were: **Frank and Laarni Gularek, Lloyd and Clavel Limpido, Allen and Precy Garrido, Joel and Ligaya Simpkins.**



Picnic table: Allen (red shirt), Precy, Gaya (seated), Zeny Bennett, Mileva Dime, Frank and Laarni.



Laarni drawing for raffle winners. **Monching Robillos**, husband of previous SUAASC president **Lady Hope Robillos** holds the draw box.

Everybody congratulates raffle winner **Jovic.**



PortalXtra has been recipient of many kind words from readers, especially relative to the series "American Missionaries".

We acknowledge and appreciate you.

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