



# FILIPINO-AMERICAN VETERANS SOCIETY, INC.

## Jacksonville, Florida

### FAVS NEWSLETTER

*"Veterans helping Veterans"*

MARCH, 2005

## KEEP THE PROMISE HEALTH CARE

Litigation was initiated in 1997 to obtain the lifetime health care promised to military retirees. Veterans William Schism and Robert Reinlie brought a Class Act Group [CAG] suit against the government to pay \$10,000 in damages to each veteran affected. The case involved reimbursement for their out-of-pocket expenses by veterans for private insurance coverage or supplements. The court case and its outcome were previously reported in the Bulletin under CAG Suit [Day]. A three-judge panel found the government illegally breached its promise of lifetime health care. The government's case was kept alive in the lower courts after the Bush administration asked that all eleven judges on a federal appeals court rehear arguments and reverse the previous ruling. Bush won. In ruling against the veterans, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit was sympathetic. The judges said that they could do no more than hope Congress would make good on the promises made in good faith to soldiers entering the service between 1941 and 1956. The Supreme Court refused to consider overturning that decision, which would have helped up to 1.5 million veterans, but could have cost the government as much as \$15 billion. Congress agreed to provide health care for the older veterans beginning in 2002 under the TFL program. However, to be eligible retirees are required to pay for Medicare Part B and not all medical care is covered by Medicare.

Although defeated in the courts the promise was pursued by Colonel Day and military fraternal organizations through legislative lobbying. The issue now has new life with HR 602 "Keep Our Promise to America's Military Retirees Act" introduced on 2 FEB 05. This bill would provide the lifetime medical care that military retirees say the government promised them in recruiting literature. This would be done by waiving health-care enrollment fees for World War II and Korean War-era retirees with Medicare Part B coverage, a requirement for those using Tricare for Life benefits. The bill also would open the Federal Employees Health Benefits program to retirees and reimburse any expenses under that plan that would not have been incurred under Tricare. Improvements in pharmacy benefits also are included. A corresponding bill S407 has been introduced in the Senate. You can view language of both bills by going to [www.classact-lawsuit.com](http://www.classact-lawsuit.com). Because of its sweeping provisions, the bill falls under the jurisdiction of four separate House committees. Congressional aides say that the Armed Services Committee [responsible for military health care] and the Ways and Means committee [which oversees Medicare] are the two with the greatest responsibility and the panels most reluctant to approve the bill. In an effort to gain support for the bill, military retirees and their families have been mailing empty brown paper

bags to lawmakers with a message that retirees expect the government to keep its promises. Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md, the bill's sponsor, has acknowledged that about 20,000 bags have been received. Passage of the bill is a high priority for military and veterans' groups, which have orchestrated the paper-bag campaign. The Bush administration has opposed making the military health-care program more generous for retirees and their families, arguing that money spent on retiree care would have to be diverted from programs aimed at active-duty member's pay and benefits, weapons modernization or ongoing operations. In congressional testimony last year and in interviews this year, David S.C. Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness, said spending more money on veterans and retirees is hurting national security. Rep. Van Hollen does not think it is wrong to provide retirees with benefits they were promised and asserts that the implications of Dr. Chu's words are undeniable in that keeping the promises our country made to our military veterans and retirees simply is not a priority for DoD. [Source: Navy Times staff writer Rick Maze article 21 FEB 05++]

## RESERVE RETIREMENT UPDATE

Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., has introduced S-337, the Guard and Reserve Readiness and Retention Act of 2005. The bill would extend Tricare coverage to members of the Guard and Reserve who are not on active duty if they pay premiums and co-payments. The bill also would reduce the age at which a Reserve-Component member can receive retirement benefits, based on years of military experience. Currently, RC members must wait until age 60 to draw retired pay and full benefits. S-337 is a companion bill to HR-558 [Source: Armed Forces News 18 FEB 05]

## MONTGOMERY GI BILL UPDATE

Under the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) qualified individuals who served a continuous period of at least three years of active duty, even though they were initially obligated to serve less, will be paid the maximum benefit, which is presently \$36,048. This sum is reached by multiplying the current FY maximum benefit of \$1004 by 36, which is the number of portions or months in your account. Your actual benefits may be higher if you signed up for the Army or Navy College Funds. Months only correlate with the calendar for full-time academic (non-active duty) students. The monthly benefit paid to you is based on the type of training you take, length of your service, your category, and if DOD put extra money in your MGIB Fund (called "kickers"). Benefits under this program generally end 10 years from the date

of the veteran's last discharge or release from active duty, but some extenuating circumstances qualify for extensions. A veteran with a discharge upgraded by the military will have 10 years from the date of the upgrade. In using the MGIB the following conditions apply:

1. In most cases, the school financial aid department does not consider the MGIB financial aid because it is normally paid directly to you, not the school. Most schools will require you to sign a promissory note, or apply for student loans to pay them upfront. This also means that you are eligible for student loans, scholarships, and Pell Grants along with the GI Bill. But it is important to note that your GI Bill income will reduce the amount of student financial aid you are eligible to receive. For help in locating scholarships, refer to [www.military.com/Careers/Education/ScholarshipSearch](http://www.military.com/Careers/Education/ScholarshipSearch).

2. Once you have separated from the service you have 10 years to use all of your benefits. Although separating from service "starts the clock" on your 10-year time limit, if you re-join Active-duty service for more than 90 days during the 10 year period, your 10 year clock is reset. In other words, you get 10 years from your last discharge.

3. You can use the MGIB for any period of time, take time off and reapply to use it again at a later date.

4. If you are currently on active duty, the VA will pay up to, but not to exceed the cost of your education tuition and fees.

5. If you have successfully completed your military service and are a full-time student (as defined by your school), the VA will pay you the full \$1004 per month regardless of the tuition costs.

6. Every time you use the current FY maximum "payment rate" (\$1004) of MGIB benefits you use a month. Thus, if you receive \$3,012, and your full-time MGIB rate is \$1004, divide \$3012 by \$1004. Your entitlement charge is three months. If you receive \$502 for a test or for a Top-Up, and your full-time rate is \$1004, divide \$502 by \$1004. Your entitlement charge is one-half month.

7. In most cases you will receive your benefits on a monthly basis. However, each month that you are enrolled in classes you are required to verify your "status". This can be accomplished through Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (W.A.V.E.) or by telephone. Within 3-5 days, you will receive a direct deposit of your monthly benefits. However, you will not receive your payment until you verify.

8. Your MGIB benefits are NOT taxable.

9. The MGIB Payment rates increase every year.

10. You may be eligible for more than one VA education benefit. If you are, you must elect which benefit to receive. You cannot

receive payment for more than one benefit at a time. The other benefits are:

a\* Training and Rehabilitation for Veterans With Service-Connected Disabilities

b Post-Vietnam Era Veterans' Educational Assistance Program

c\* Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance

d\* Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty Educational Assistance Program

e\* Educational Assistance Test Program

f\* Educational Assistance Pilot Program

You can apply by filling out VA Form 22-1990, Application for Education Benefits or call 1-888-GI-BILL-1 for more information. Many schools offer free information packets they will mail you. At [www.military.com/Education/Lead1](http://www.military.com/Education/Lead1), you can request information from multiple schools at once by filling out the form provided. [Source: [www.defenselink.com](http://www.defenselink.com) NOV 04]

### **President's Message**



I would like to thank once again Nellie and Bob Ravago for allowing FAVS to use their facility for meetings. In addition, we appreciate their gracious hospitality as well. Last January everyone had a good time at the Ravago's residence. This coming March 26th on Saturday, we will hold our general meeting there. Our guest speaker is Mr. Patrick Ganio, President of the American

Coalition for Filipino Veterans, Inc.

During our February meeting, we passed and approved some changes to our meeting schedules. Board of Directors will meet on the month before the general meeting. These are the month of February, May, August, and November. General meeting as defined in our By-Laws will meet in March, June, September and December. There will be no meetings on the month of January, April, July, and October. There will be a time that I will call an emergency meeting, but we will notify and inform everyone ahead of time. In addition, during the Northeast Florida Veterans Council meeting on the February 28<sup>th</sup>, I volunteered to help the Council to participate in their plans review of the Purple Heart Trail design during its design phase, which is spearheaded by the City of Jacksonville.

Last March 9<sup>th</sup> a number of FAVS members and friends of Will Hux bid farewell to Will at Hooters in the Jacksonville Landing. It was a moment to remember. Everyone present signed the big postcard and had a good time as you can see in the group picture below. Will gave a short speech about where he was headed and when he will be back, although he cannot revile much. I assured

him that if his back by December, his position as Vice President is still available. We will miss him.

This April 28 thru May 1, the City of Jacksonville will host again the World of Nation celebration in the Metropolitan Park. The Philippines will be part of that celebration and the Fil-Am Council has asked FAVS if we can participate to help their booth. Ed Callao, Nena Reed, Fred Cabales and John Wilde were present during the last Fil-Am Council meeting. We will wait and hear their reports and get the general memberships approval. Until then, I will see you all at the meeting.

*Art Gandionco*  
President, FAVS

### **Farewell to VP Will Hux**

Last Wednesday, March 9, 2005, FAVS officers and members and close friends of our beloved VP Will Hux gathered at the Hooters at Jacksonville Landing to bid farewell for his upcoming overseas deployment. Will, who is a reservist with the Special Forces, was recalled to active duty and will be headed to Mosul/Arbil area in Iraq for approximately 19 months. He will first undergo mobilization training for deployment at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina. Dick Aquino will take Will's place as the FAVS Interim Vice-President and will be assisted by Bob Ravago. We wish Will and his family all the best in the months ahead.



*Gathered during Will Hux farewell party at Hooters. April, our Hooter girl is scheduled to leave for the Marine Corps for training.*

### **Welcome Aboard**

Welcome aboard new FAVS members Ariel de Jesus, Rene Laguador, France Lee Barnard, Art Confiado, Albert Alcantara and Ben Ponce.

### **Active Military Combat Duty Grant**

The city of Jacksonville has created and passed a benefit to award grants to families of qualified military personnel (QMP) serving, or have served, in combat duty who have established a homestead in Duval County. Military personnel serving in an

active capacity including, but not limited to Active Duty Personnel, Reservists and National Guard Personnel in a combat zone for a named US military conflict (or veterans of such combat).

Qualified Military Personnel (QMP) include all residents who owned, resided, and had homestead exemption upon property in Duval County on December 31<sup>st</sup> of any given year; were serving in the military; and were ordered into a combat zone during that year. QMP shall be entitled to grants, not to exceed \$2,000 per calendar year or the QMP's ad valorem city tax contribution, to assist in the maintenance and support of their families and homes where said QMP has served in combat duty.

For the full disclosure of this grant, call the Jacksonville Military Affairs and Veterans Services at 630-3680, or visit their website at [www.coj.net](http://www.coj.net). Click on Departments, and then scroll down on Community Services, and then click on Military affairs and Veterans Services.

### **FAVS Supports WWII Fil-Vets**

As the new 109<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress convenes, they are now consigned to the judgment of American history, as the battle for our aging, dying WWI Filipino veterans looms anew.

At press time, two bills are now circulating in House of Representatives: HR 170 filed by Rep. Juanita Millander-McDonald (D, Ca) from California's 37<sup>th</sup> district, and HR 302 authored by Randy "Duke" Cunningham (R, Ca) of the 51<sup>st</sup> district. As expected, US Sen. Daniel Inouye (D, Hi), a WWII Congressional Medal of Honor awardee, introduced S.146, a companion bill in the senate.

The new strategy will now be focused on each state to generate support for the bill from both parties. Community leaders throughout the state of Florida are gearing up for an all-out aggressive effort in support of these bills. FAVS is readying its members to call and write Florida's 27-member delegation in persuading them to support our cause.

The battle for our FilVets is drawn in the 109<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congress. We need to achieve 221 supporting votes or more from the 435 House representatives to force a committee hearing or full debate in the House. We also need to garner 50 plus votes to have the Senate vote on the bill. We need all the help we can get to justify the sacrifices our generation ahead of us endured in the defense of freedom.

FAVS is committed to help and support these fine soldiers by writing letters and contacting all Florida U.S. Representatives.

### **FAVS Activities**

#### **Kudos to Super Bowl XXXIX Volunteers**

Bravo-Zulu to our own two Ed's for being the city's ambassadors of goodwill during the recent Super Bowl festivities. Ed Callao and Ed Obrero, and their wives shared their time and effort in assisting in the once-in-a-lifetime Super bowl experience as Host Committee Volunteers. Ed Obrero: *"The best part of the whole experience was the opportunity to meet people from all walks of life, from here and everywhere. My wife, Rose, and I got to meet not only visitors who came to support their teams, but local folks like us*

*who shared the same love and pride for our community. A good majority of our visitors have not been to Jacksonville prior to this event and were so amazed with our city and its friendly, hospitable people."*

Kudos to these two FAVS members for they took the lead in giving back to our community. Their marvelous job shines as a bright, burning example not only to our fellow veterans, but also to the rest of the Filipino-American community, and hopefully, encourages the community to be proactive in our wonderful city. If anyone else, there who volunteered, but was not recognized; thank you and our hats off for a job well done!

### **FAVS Support Tsunami Relief Fund Drive**

FAVS members actively supported the Tsunami Relief Fund Drive sponsored by The First Coast Asian American Chamber of Commerce, The Mayor's Asian American Advisory Board and the Jacksonville Asian American Bar association. Our own board member Nes Papel was the overall chairman of the Tsunami Fundraiser project, which pooled the three Asian organizations together that produced a successful outcome. Proceeds will be forwarded to the American Red Cross International Response Fund. The relief effort collected over \$2000.00 in donations. Congratulations to everyone involved for this great humanitarian cause.

### **Minutes Summary**

During our last meeting held at Rusty's Grill, much of the discussions centered at the upcoming events and tasks FAVS faces as a growing organization.

- In preparation for our VP Will Hux's departure for overseas deployment, Art announced that an interim VP would take his place. Enrique (Dick) Aquino graciously offered his time to take the Interim VP position during Will's absence. Bob Ravago will assist him on all the duties and responsibilities of the Vice President. Dick Aquino is a volunteer at the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Chapter 26. You can contact him at 720-0244. I
- A lot of positive remarks and suggestions were expressed about our newsletter. Requests were made to include the summary of the previous meeting, the mission statement of FAVS in its front page, and to use the newsletter as a medium to attract more members in the veteran's community.
- President Art announced the formation of nine committees to further assist our growing organization in the disposition of FAVS mission. The committees are: Congressional and Legislation, Membership, Special Events, By-Laws, Sick Bay, Newsletter, Community Outreach, Finance, and Color Guard committees.
- Our meeting schedules were changed into BOD meeting to be held every 2 months, preferably in the month before the general meeting. General meeting day was also moved into Saturday with the venue at Bob Ravago's place in Old St. Augustine, until further notice.

### **February and March Birthdays**

**February celebrant are:** Ben Ruedas, Fred Cabales and Nes Papel. **March celebrant are:** Emilio deGuzman, Manny deGuzman, Marcelino Ejercito, Tony Estoesta. **Happy Birthday to you all!**

### **This Month Featured Veterans**



#### **Bob Bontilao:**

FAVS Secretary Bob Bontilao was born in Manila, Philippines and grew up in the neighboring Pasay City. He attended 10 years of elementary and intermediate school at Malate Catholic School in Manila and completed high school at San Isidro Parish School in Cebu City. After 3 years of Electrical Engineering studies at the University of the East, he joined the US Navy in 1972 at Subic Bay. His subsequent tours of duty included 6 carriers (USS Ticonderoga CVS-14, USS FD Roosevelt CVA-42, USS Saratoga CV-60, USS America CV-66, USS Eisenhower CVN-68, and USS Forrestal CV-59); one overseas tour in Keflavik, Iceland; and three squadron tours (VA-46, VFA-106 and VFA-137). In the middle of his Navy career, Bob switched rate from Aviation Support Equipment Tech into Aviation Fire Control Technician and maintained the Navy's sophisticated FA-18 Navigation, Radar, Communications, Integrated Weapons Delivery systems. The highlight of his Navy career was being selected 1988 Sailor of the Year, and represented the Jacksonville area in the regional SOY awards in Norfolk, Virginia. Following Operation Desert Storm, Bob retired from the Navy in 1992 as Aviation Fire Control Chief.

He then continued his academic studies and achieved a Bachelor's degree in Computer Information Systems at Columbia College (Missouri). He is currently employed as a Process Tech with Vistakon, Johnson & Johnson Vision Care. He is an active member of St. Catherine's Parish, Kairos Prison Ministry and Cursillo in Christianity and occasionally volunteers with the I.M. Sulzbacher Center for the Homeless as kitchen server. He is also involved with Veterans of Foreign Wars, Fleet Reserve Association and serves as acting secretary of the First Coast Asian American Chamber of Commerce.

Bob has been a resident of Jacksonville for the last 30 years and currently resides in Fleming Island. He is happily married to the former Araceli Santiago for the last 28 years. They are blessed with a daughter, Angelica, who is pursuing Pharmacy at the University of Florida.



#### **Ed Obrero:**

Ed Obrero hails from Nabua, Camarines Sur in the Bicol Region. He graduated from Ateneo de Naga High School, and then attended the University of Santo Tomas and Adamson University before joining the U.S. Navy in 1980. After boot camp in San Diego, CA, and "A" School in

Meridian, MS, his first assignment was at NAS Cecil Field, FL. His various assignments at Cecil Field included VA-66, VA/VFA-37, AIMD, and VFA-106.

While on active duty, he completed his Bachelor of Science in Professional Aeronautics degree from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University where he graduated Magna cum Laude, and later on received his Masters in Human Resource Management degree at the University of North Florida. Much of these academic endeavors were achieved while he was a full-time student during his 2-year participation in the Enlisted Educational Advancement Program (EEAP). He was then assigned to a ship's company tour aboard the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower.

After his sea-duty tour aboard the IKE, he returned to Jacksonville (NAS) for his final assignment at Commander, Sea Control Wing, and U.S. Atlantic Fleet. Upon retirement from active duty in June 2001, he was immediately employed by the City of Jacksonville as Contract and Compliance Coordinator to oversee the residential solid waste collection contract and enforce city ordinance.

Currently, Ed is the president of Bicol Club, a member of the Fil-Am Veterans Society (FAVS) and a charter member of the Fil-Am Republicans of Northeast Florida (FARNEF). He is a United States Tennis Association (USTA)-certified sectional tennis umpire and has officiated in local tennis tournaments including the annual Bausch and Lomb at Amelia Island.

Ed and loving wife Rose, and their sons Nathan and Matthew) reside in Fleming Island. When not volunteering for civic and charitable projects such as HabiJax, Food Harvest, Big Brother/Big Sister, etc., or special events such as The Players Championship and the Super Bowl, Ed and family enjoy playing tennis, golfing and traveling. Incidentally, Rose, Nathan and Matthew do volunteer work, as well.



### **Fred Cabales:**

Our beloved chaplain, Fred Cabales hails from San Carlos, Negros Occidental. He graduated high school from Colegio de Santo Tomas-Recoletos in 1956. He attended Cebu Institute of Technology (CIT) and FEATI University in Manila. He joined the US Navy in May 20, 1960 at Sangley Point, Cavite and went through boot camp in San Diego, California. His tours of duty would take him around the globe in cities like Seattle, New York, San Juan, PR; Subic Bay, Hong Kong, Yokusaka, Rio de Janeiro, St. Thomas, Naples, Barcelona, Valleta in Malta, Athens, Sigonella, Taranto, Valencia, Marseilles, Cannes, Rome, and Sorrento. After a brief tour at Brunswick Georgia, this globetrotter was off again to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Oslo, Denmark, Frankfurt, Portsmouth, Halifax, The Bahamas, Montego Bay, and Jacksonville. His tours of duty include: the

“Hurricane Hunters” of AEWRON Squadron 4, NAS Roosevelt Roads, PR; NAS Jacksonville, USS FD Roosevelt (CVA-42), NAS Glynco, USS Wasp (CVS-11), USS Santa Barbara (AE-28), NAS Cecil Field, and USS Compass Island (AG-52).

Fred is a very active participant not only in the community, but in his church as well. He is one of the founding fathers of FAVS and serves as its chaplain and board member. Among his affiliations are The Visayas Mindanao Association (VMA), Bayanihan Club, the Filipino Political Action Group, Knights of Rizal, and the Filipino-American Republicans of North East Florida (FARNEF). He also finds time in serving his faith as the head sacristan in his church, RCIA catechist and team member, Kairos Prison Ministry member, Cursillo in Christianity, and along with wife Fannie, he leads wake novenas in the community. He also finds time volunteering for the American Red Cross as Naval Hospital parking shuttle driver.

Fred is happily married for 42 years to the former Fannie Castroverde Ronulo from Oslob, Cebu; a retired PRN, and together they are enjoying each other and their retirement. They are blessed with three children: Cindy, an RN who now lives in Baltimore, MD; and Lou Noel, a chef turned free-lance photographer who lives in LA. Their second child, Bernie succumbed to a Duchene type muscular dystrophy twenty-five years ago at a tender age of 14.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Our General meeting is scheduled on March 26th (Saturday) 12:00 noon at Bob Ravago located at 12078 Old St. Augustine Rd. (approx. 3/4 mile south of I-295 on the right. The meeting will start at 1:00pm following a potluck/lunch. All veterans, members and non-members are encouraged to attend. This is a potluck meeting, so please bring your favorite dish and goodies. Pat Ganio a WWII veteran and retired educator will be the guest speaker. Please invite any WWII veteran known to you and take them with you.

### **...About Pat Ganio**

Patrick Ganio Sr., 83, is a Filipino World War II veteran and a retired educator. He is one of the remaining defenders in the epic battles in Bataan and Corregidor. Captured and taken as a prisoner of war after the fall of Corregidor on May 6, 1942, Ganio survived the infamous O'Donnell concentration camp at Capas, Tarlac. He later joined the USAFFE Philippine guerrillas as 1st lieutenant, was wounded in battle and received a Purple Heart. After the war, he was a Major in the Philippine Army Reserves.

Ganio completed his university education at the National University and the University of the Philippines that took him into teaching. After 30 years of public service, he retired from the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology (Central Luzon Polytechnic College) as a math and science professor. He received the "Outstanding Professor Award" from the college in 1980. In 1980s, Ganio immigrated to Washington DC. He did extensive research in the National Archives and Library of Congress on the claims of Filipino WWII veterans for US benefits. He later submitted a position paper to President Corazon Aquino's government that led to the creation of the

Veterans Affairs Office under Ambassador Nick Jimenez in the Philippine Embassy in 1986. He organized the Filipino War Veterans, Inc. and founded the Filipino Veterans Families Foundation, Inc. With several key veteran leaders, Ganio lobbied on Capitol Hill for the passage of the naturalization bill for his comrades. In November 1990, President George H.W. Bush invited him to be the sole Filipino veteran to witness the signing of the Immigration Naturalization Act in the White House. In 1995, Ganio continued to fight for full veterans' benefits under the G.I. Bill of Rights as president of the American Coalition for Filipino Veterans, Inc., an Arlington-based advocacy organization that campaigned for veterans' equity. In 1996, he presided over the campaign that passed the House-Senate resolution, H.C.R. 191 "recognizing and honoring" Filipino veterans and witnessed President Clinton's proclamation signing in October 1996. In 1998, Ganio testified in the House Veterans' Affairs Committee hearings for Benefits for Filipino Veterans in 1998. The ACFV coalition and allied groups obtained 208 co-sponsors for the Equity bill, H.R. 836. In 1999, he presided over the successful campaign for the "Special Benefits for WWII Veterans," now Public Law 106-169 Title VIII. It allowed Filipino American veterans to return to their families in the Philippines with their Supplemental Security Income in 1999. Budget estimate: \$12 Million per year. In 2000, Ganio presided over the campaign for the "Filipino Veterans Benefit Improvement Act," now P.L. 106-377, Sec. 501 and burial benefits in P.L.106-419, Sec. 332 in 2000. Budget: \$6 Million per year. In 2002, he successfully lobbied to restore the \$500,000 US medical annual Grant-in-Aid to the Philippine Government's Veterans Medical Center. In 2003, Ganio advocated successfully for passage the "Health Care for Filipino Veterans" bill, now P.L. 108-170 that was signed into law by President George W. Bush. VA budget: \$16 Million annually for 8,000 US-based Filipino veterans. On May 19, 2003, President Bush invited Ganio to attend the State Dinner in the White House in honor of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. In 2003, Ganio advocated for the "Full Compensation" benefit now in Public Law 108-183 that provided VA compensation for war-related illnesses of Filipino New Scouts and widows. Budget: \$2.9 Million yearly.

For his accomplishments, Ganio was awarded the "Recognition of Merit" from the Veterans Federation of the Philippines of Col. Emmanuel De Ocampo in 1987; the "Twenty Outstanding Filipino Americans" from the Fil-Am Image Magazine in 1991; and the "Amity Award" from the American Legion during their convention in 2002.

Ganio now resides in Jacksonville, FL with his wife Nieves. He has six children from an earlier marriage.

***From your ship store:***



FAVS' headgears shown above are now available to all members. Our official Pershing cap, which we normally wear during formal military events, can now be purchase at \$25.50 each. We have only few sizes left in our ship store. Our ball cap is \$10 each and FAVS patches are \$5 each. Contact Art Gandionco at 237-4364 if you want to purchase any of the above.

***Note: Please feel free to send any letters, articles and items on topics of general interest to our veterans. Email articles to [illustrious2000@hotmail.com](mailto:illustrious2000@hotmail.com) or mail to Bob Bontilao, 1671 Misty Lake Drive, Orange Park, Fl, 32003.***