

12 Years After High School Reunion, Gathering, and

Christmas Party December 30, 2005

Unity in progress. That was the battle cry of batch 1993 last December 30, 2005 in a fun-filled extravaganza year-end reunion that lasted until 7 a.m. the following day – and this was in boulevard!

More than 70 batch mates gathered at the Hotel Tavern to celebrate friendship, memories, fun and laughter. The event was launched with a doxology of Give Thanks while the hall was lighted one at a time by candles as held by everyone. This was followed by the singing of the national anthem and Martsa Surigao that provided a glimpse of what was in store for the night. People behind these presentations were Corazon, Dexter, Jessie, me, Donna, Leonette, Victor, Julius.

Everyone sang with us that it gave me goose bumps! As in nanimbawot gajod ako mga balahibo.

I was supposed to host the reunion and I thought my experiences in hosting the wedding receptions of Myles, Ariadne and Loida would be enough for me to brave the occasion. But as soon as I've heard excited exclamations and exhilarating greetings from batch mates whom I hadn't seen for years and years, I turned my back and asked Dexter to host, instead. I thought I'd be stiff, very formal and would be conscious of my grammar and diction. Dexter would likely bring the house down. True to my hunch, everyone had so many laughs when Dexter started rolling the dice, so to speak. I was with him all the way though, giving instructions, cuing and pushing him there and everywhere. When Cosme didn't show up, I've asked Constancio Sarte, our elected president from 2004, who came all the way from Tag-anito, to welcome everybody. He was so humble and gracious that I never got tired rooting for him. The host acknowledged those who were present by section with Corazon, Julius and me giving souvenirs and a beso-beso.

Dinner went ahead at 8:30 pm. Can you imagine how hungry we were? A little sacrifice for the show must go on. There was so much food, courtesy of those who sent their pledges. Plus, Loida's lechon. Yummy!

Then, the host went hopping from one table to the next asking how one felt that night. Sort of ambushed

interviews. Yes showbiz, we've done it! Spouses of some of our batch mates were also asked at this point. Not about their married life but about how they felt being part of the occasion. Spouses of Alvin, Rico, Christie, Juan, Loida, echoed their message: congratulations for a job well done.

Roy A. Reyna, the instigator of a reunion with this scale in terms of attendance, contributions and directions, went on to say his opening remarks. First and foremost, he gallantly recognized the efforts of those who led the activity in Surigao months ago. He also made known those who were generous in giving their pledges, especially those that weren't around. In his speech, he noted how hard it was to roam the city looking for our batch mates. He wished there was a better way to do this. He also acknowledged the brewing differences of leadership and how the leaders handled our affairs vis-à-vis what we want to achieve in the future. Threats like magla-in kami nan amo reunion sab, should be confronted head on. He had hoped that problems like this could be identified as early as possible and be given solutions. In short, no faction, please. Unity in progress, there it goes.

Leading the pack of the guests were former principal Mrs. Elvira A. Egay, Mrs. Prosefina A. Nocon and two of our suki mentors, Mrs. Estrella M. Platil and Mr. Victorio A. Beltran. Mrs. Cecilia R. Condat and Mrs. Violeta E. Alutaya were also invited but were ill to come. Every guest received a token from the batch.

Dinah R. Ensomo introduced Madam Elvira in a manner that made research fashionable.

No less than a standing ovation was accorded to Madam Elvira. She was so proud and happy for us – that was very evident because despite her fever and another commitment, she came to celebrate with us. She was affable in reminiscing her days as our school principal and talked about her life after that stint. She said she was so lucky to be at SNNHS at that time because there were so many achievements that propelled her to receive the award as one of the most outstanding high school principals in the country. Not only did she mention, academic excellence but also our tradition in bagging the top prize in bonok-bonok and sinulog festivals, as well as other socio-cultural educational activities. She mentioned names. Yes, she did mention Corazon as the dancer of our batch.

Everyone clapped. But then, she mentioned my name also, Lipio, as the mathematician of the year.

Everyone fell silent. I was so hot I felt everyone's stare. When did I become mathematician, you might ask. I don't know. Maybe, the year everyone dropped out of school? Hahaha!!! My closest friends were around me later to talk about it and we had a blast laughing it hurt the back of my eyes. Well, at least Madam Elvira remembered me as an achiever. Now, I am a statistician by profession.

Towards the end of her speech when everyone was heady with praises, she told us that she is happiest when she would hear great news about us. She further observed that we are all so blessed, notwithstanding our divergence in status, adherence in life, interests and all, we are one in celebrating our being ka-batch. She challenged us to move forward, set our differences aside and continue our alliances in aiming high to reach our goals.

Messages of Mrs. Platil, Mrs. Nocon and Mr. Beltran interspersed with impressions of Christie, Rico and Donna delved on our previous lives as students, and what went through along the way to the present day. They all inspired us with our own stories of what we have become in the eyes of our mentors and in the eyes of our batch mates. In perspective, we've come a long way. But there's still a long way ahead of us.

In between these speeches, tokens and raffle prizes were given. Some of these prizes came from Osaka Iridology, courtesy of Roy. Trivia questions were thrown out too for a prize! Do you even remember your section? Or do you know what is the chemical symbol of chromium? The grand prize was a night for two at Hotel Tavern with an expiration date until the end of March. Guess who won?

Alvin A. Egay presented the plans and future directions of our batch (read: SEC registration). An article of incorporation was discussed and deliberated. After everything was in place, nomination for board of trustees (BOT) was made.

There should be at least 11 BOTs. From these nominated BOTs, election of the officers was done. Here's the list of officers:

President: Alvin A. Egay

Vice-President: Roy A. Reyna
Secretary: Dexter B. Lorente
Treasurer: Dinah R. Ensomo
Auditors: Gay M. Madelo
Ma. Myrla Solloso-Padayhag

Board of Directors:

Donna Marchie A. Nocon
Oliver Palma
Rico Q. Asumen
Juan Carlos Almeda
Jessie C. Saguran

The officers felt that auditors were deemed necessary. Gay M. Madelo and Ma. Myrla Solloso-Padayhag, both CPAs, were appointed.

Is it all there was? Of course not!

I went hysterically agog to tell Alvin that election will only be done after na makasalida kami. We've practically killed ourselves practicing Dangerous (by Roxette), the same song we danced back in high school, and waited for the night to show to all that we still had dancing muscles!

Corazon was our star. Behind her were Jessie, Dexter, Dinah, Donna, Leonette, Victor, Julius and I. We took it upon ourselves to entertain everyone and so we had to hide some silly crepe paper intended for a bongga na ending. We keep shouting, "Smile! Smile! Smile!" to each of us. But believe me, we were all nervous like our career and reputation depended on it.

As soon as the first line went, "Hold on tight, you know she's a little bit dangerous..." everyone went wild. I mean I could literally see batch mates ogling at us like we were some mentals. We thought we were so groovy and cool and into it that the music was like a lullaby. Everyone thought: oh gosh, it was the highest point of my career. Hahaha!!!

The dancing party began. Everyone from Randy Nonan to Mario Baquiroso, the dance fever hit us like no other. The girls weren't behind them. There was Anabel, Annie Rose doing all the moves.

Good timing was what matters on the dancing floor. We called in the couples to dance. They were so cooperative and everyone got some money to bet on the couple. I had to give my 50s to Loida and Rex.

There was one game that I enjoyed tremendously – egg relay, what else! And the winners were Leonette, Jessie, Dexter, Victor, Archimedes and I – from the swine family. Hahaha!!!

I had so much fun that I threw spoons and forks at Dexter. Soon, everyone was doing it! Alvin, the elected president that he is, went on to tell us to stop it since the waiters were looking madly at us. Hahaha!!! Was it the beer, gilbeys, lambanog, tuba?

Dexter was fabulous that night and came out as a great host. We cracked our jaws laughing at his antics and ad-libs.

There were so much fun that we had not noticed it was 1am already. More than 40 of us evacuated to the boulevard and talked and drank and talked and drank until 4am. But the rest went home at 7am when the sun was already up. Just asked Dexter and Victor.

Two days passed and in January 1, 2006, the first meeting of the BOTs came to order. The first agenda was to complete the forms for registration. It was partially filled out during the party. But everyone still gets the after-effect feeling of the reunion. We were still talking about it. Half of the batch mates who attended were first timers. I mean, they've heard the one party we had last 2004 and they were envious so they attended the one party last 2005.

How about you? Were you jealous you weren't there? I bet.

Hey, listen up. There will be lots of chances. The officers are doing their best to go on with the registration. A calendar of activities by month is up front. Those are fund-raising and socio-cultural activities. Everyone is invited to participate – either your participation is active or passive. You can send in your suggestions, donations or whatever. The important thing is that we need to hear your voice.

Didn't you answer my question? Were you jealous you weren't able to attend our reunion? I bet.

Our reunion happens more likely every December. Our reunion is a gathering that nourishes our soul and our thirst for seeing and enjoying each other's company.

It is more than a promise. It is a life-long journey.

Our plan is to eventually become an institution where we can be of service to our fellow batch mates.

We've met the challenge of December 2004 – that was to have a successful reunion in December 2005. Now, the challenge is to prove that we are dangerous – dangerous if we don't have a reunion in December 2006 being SNNHS Batch 1993 duly registered at SEC.

And I wish that by the next reunion, the grand prize would be a trip for two at the grand islands of GL (exactly my initials!). That and the raffle prizes I could get my hands to.

In December 2006, be there...