



LINGKOD TIMOG
Serving the Poor in the Southern Philippines
(U.S. 501c3 non-profit • www.lingkodtimog.org)
71 Miantonomi Ave., Middletown, RI 02842 U.S.A.
www.lingkodtimog.com info@lingkodtimog.com +1.401.848.0622



APRIL 2013 NEWSLETTER

US-Based Humanitarian Group Returns from 2013 Medical Mission in the Philippines - provided medical care in Palawan and Busuanga/Coron Islands

The Rhode Island-based humanitarian group “Lingkod Timog” that translates to “Serving the poor in the Southern Philippines” recently returned from its 9th annual medical mission in the Philippines from February 25 to March 3. The group first provided medical, surgical and dental care to indigenous patients in Taytay and El Nido in the northernmost part of Palawan Island. The group then travelled to Coron in Busuanga Island to treat mostly Tagbanuas who came by boats from the outlying remote islands between Busuanga and Palawan. Rhode Islanders Cecilia and Armando Heredia led the medical mission.

The group president Cecilia Heredia describes the medical mission: “Our partner, the Philippines’ Western Command did a fantastic job of providing security, prepositioning our medicine and supplies and moving the whole group northwards. We crossed from Palawan to Busuanga by helicopter, airplane and fast water craft. This time, we had to turn down volunteer doctors, dentists and nurses because we were limited by transport resources. We had only five doctors, one of them doubling as surgeon, and three dentists. Based on their ailments, we attended to more than 3,000 patients - giving medical, surgical or dental care. Those who agreed to were given haircuts. All were fed before being given truck or boat rides back to where they started.” Cecilia is the music teacher at St Philomena School in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, and a Companion in Mission of the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ). St Philomena School also raises funds through Broadway musicals for the Development Center projects of the Sisters FCJ in Manila.

Nurse and Executive Director Irene Covarrubias Sabban coordinated the volunteer doctors, dentists and nurses as well as security and support personnel. The mission team included US and Philippine-based volunteers, local private and public doctors and Philippine military doctors, nurses and dentists.

Dr Andrew Wilner of Newport, Rhode Island, the group’s medical director, manned the medical lines with Dr. Tiago Villanueva Marques, and Philippine Marines Col. Diamante and Capt. Saril. A six-time volunteer, neurologist, and medical author, Dr. Wilner combines the medical mission with his writing, diving and passion for underwater photography.

Dr. Tiago Villanueva Marques is a repeat volunteer to the medical mission. A family physician from Lisbon, Portugal, whose mother is from the Philippines, he finds the mission a unique way to rediscover his roots. Also a medical writer, he plans to join next year’s mission with his wife, Ana Costa, a Canadian-Portuguese doctor.

Nurse Ces Sabban-Marfil coordinated the pharmacy manned by yearly volunteers Ning Warren, Villa Halo, Bing Diones, Mon Covarrubias, Fil Gutierrez. US-based volunteers included two New York City-based nurses with their husbands – Emma Arceo and King Phojanakong, and Modesta (Mimi) and Richard Martin.

Medicine and supplies came from Lingkod Timog funds and private donors, such as Dr. Maria Petrillo-Bolanos of Portsmouth who responded to a last-minute list and donated surgical supplies, Dr. Mylene Santos of Fatima University Medical Center in Metro-Manila who donated surgical drapes and other supplies, and Johnson Tan of the Tan Lin & Ng Oh Tee Foundation of Manila who supplemented and transported the much needed medicine, and also volunteered for the mission. Palawan’s restaurateur, Butch Chase, donated food for the feeding program.

This joint Lingkod Timog and the Philippine military medical mission started when Lieutenant General Juancho Sabban, the Commander of the Philippines Western Command was studying in Newport’s US Naval War College in 2003 and Armando (Doy) and Cecilia (Cely) Heredia were his local sponsor. Cecilia Heredia formed the group and Irene Covarrubias Sabban coordinates the activities. All missions involve private and government agencies, military and police, and municipal and tribal health care providers. The indigenous people, such as the Tagbanuas in Palawan see not just the US and Manila-based volunteers, but their own community leaders and neighbors helping them. Lingkod Timog’s previous missions helped the Tao’t Bato cave dwellers in Palawan; Badjaos in Zamboanga, Basilan and Sulu; the Aetas in Zambales and Lumads in Davao.

Lingkod Timog congratulates Irene and Juancho Sabban on their 29th wedding anniversary last March 28, and wishes General Sabban the best of his retirement after completing 39 years of distinguished service to the Armed Forces of the Philippines on April 1.

For more information, to join or to donate, visit www.medmission.info or www.lingkodtimog.com .

LINGKOD TIMOG 2013 MEDICAL MISSION



ARRIVAL AT PUERTO PRINCESA, PALAWAN & CALL ON PARTNER, LT. GEN. SABBAN, COMMANDER PHILIPPINE WESCOM



EXEC. DIR. IRENE C. SABBAN BRIEFING



PARTNERSHIP & CONSULTATIONS BEFORE & DURING



PATIENTS ARRIVING FROM PICK UP POINTS, INFANTS, CHILDREN, ELDERLY



PATIENTS REGISTERING IN TAYTAY, EL NIDO & CORON



PRES. CECILIA HEREDIA & PATIENTS



PATIENTLY WAITING & ASLEEP



(LINGKOD TIMOG MEDICAL MISSION 2013 – CONT. P2)



VOLUNTEER DOCTORS: ANDREW WILNER, USA; TIAGO VILLANUEVA, PORTUGAL; CAPT. DIAMANTE, PHILIPPINES



DR. SARIL, NURSES MELOTORIO, EMMA PHOJANAKONG & MIMI MARTIN OF NEW YORK, & OTHER VOLUNTEERS AT WORK



DENTISTS PARTNERSHIP AT WORK, TEACHING PROPER USE OF TOOTHBRUSH, DENTAL PATIENTS IN LINE



CES SABBAN-MARFIL AND PHARMACY AT WORK



VOLUNTEERS: NING WARREN, VILLA HALO, RICHARD MARTIN, KING PHOJANAKONG, JOHNSON TAN, FIL GUTIERREZ

(LINGKOD TIMOG MEDICAL MISSION 2013 – CONT. P3)



FEEDING PROGRAM, HAIRCUT AND WATER SERVICE



MARINES AT WORK & SHARING A LIGHT MOMENT



TRAVEL BETWEEN MISSION SITES BY LAND, AIR & SEA



VOLUNTEERS: DOCTORS, DENTISTS, NURSES, PHARMACIST, CIVILIANS, MILITARY, GOVERNMENT



LINGKOD TIMOG MEDICAL MISSION 2013