

Ellen

By MHC News Team

The last few days of Elena Bisares had been dreadful and sad. While her body finally gave in to her lingering kidney disease as a complication to diabetes, she ached to be with her only daughter who was in her home province in Danglas, Abra in the Philippines.

“Ellen” died on August 18, 2008 without any friend or family on her side.

She was in the US since 1992 and worked as a domestic helper to respond to her family’s needs. A few years after arriving in the US, she married an American, Mr. McNeal. But the marriage was not to last as her husband was suffering a mental illness and could not in any way support her either.

Ellen had to work her way through life until she was diagnosed to have diabetes in 2005. Four years before she died, Ellen was jobless due to her debilitating condition.

She stayed on with her friend Elsie Ribao since 2005 until she died. Elsie supported Ellen for her consumption needs and shared her room with her for free.

Ellen was confined at the Virginia Hospital Center since May this year until she gave up her fight against diabetes and kidney disease.

She was buried on August 24, 2008 by friends and the migrant community in Washington, DC as spearheaded by the MHC.

Two weeks later, another Ellen bowed out from life.

Fifty-eight-year old Erlinda “Ellen” Leuterio could have been a teacher at the Highbridge Elementary in Bowie, Maryland in early September. But a car accident ended her life on August 28 and dashed hopes for her family of an alleviated life in the Philippines.

Born in Plaridel, Bulacan, Ellen was a highly qualified teacher who had three master’s degrees in Special Education, Filipino, and English.

She came to the US to pursue the dream of emancipating the lives of her loved ones in the Philippines.

But God has definitely better plan for her, to be on his side, quips Arnedo Valera, MHC’s executive director in his eulogy.

The MHC has likewise facilitated the wake and funeral for Ellen Leuterio. In the spirit of the Filipino’s bayanihan, no one in the Filipino migrant community dies alone. The MHC has spearheaded raising funds for the funeral expenses



Ellen Bisares



Erlinda Ellen Leuterio

as Ellen was literally alone in her early days in the US.

Co-Executive Directors, Grace Valera-Jaramillo and Jesse Gatchalian led in mobilizing the Fil-Am community as hundreds of teachers and various organizations including Ang Bulakeno, Inc. paid their last respects to another modern day hero.

Valera-Jaramillo has negotiated for a hefty discount with the funeral home in Oxon Hill in Maryland while the Philippine Embassy had helped in expediting the papers necessary to send the remains home.

Ellen is the third Filipino teacher to die in Maryland since last year. Since she was a newcomer and had no known relatives in the US, it was left to the shoulders of her fellow teachers and community support groups to help Ellen get her last wish – to go home to her family. Her body was flown home on September 5, 2008. Ellen’s daughter, Madeleine had kept in constant communication with MHC since the tragic death of her mother. She and her family expressed thanks for the relentless effort of the Fil-Am communities and the MHC extended to her beloved mom.#

PINOY TRIVIA

We are the Happiest People in Asia

Despite the many problems hounding the Philippines, we Filipinos still consider ourselves as among the happiest people in the world. Results of regional surveys conducted by MTV-Asia, ACNielsen and the Economist magazine have indicated that Filipinos are the happiest people in Asia.

But in the World Values Survey conducted by University of Michigan in 1998, the Philippines was ranked 12th among 54 countries in the world in terms of happiness index. Among Asian countries, it was ranked first. According to the survey, the top ten happiest nations in the world were Iceland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark, Australia, Ireland, Switzerland, Great Britain and Venezuela.

81.2 Million Filipinos

The National Statistics Office (NSO) placed the Philippine population at 79.5 million at the start of 2002. This number is expected to grow by 1.7 million or over 2 percent annually to 81.2 million by the end of 2002. This makes the Philippines the world’s 14th most populous country in the world behind China, with 1.3 billion people; India, 1 billion; United States, 288 million; Indonesia, 218 million; Brazil, 176 million; Pakistan, 149 million; Nigeria, 147 million; Russia, 143 million; Bangladesh, 136 million; Japan, 127 million; Mexico, 100 million; Germany 82 million; and Vietnam, over 81 million. About 93 percent of the Philippine population is Christian, while the rest belongs to Islam and other religions. In 1799, Spanish historians said there were only 1,502,574 people living in the Philippines.



Half A Million More Men

Contrary to popular beliefs that women were as twice as many as men in the Philippines, the NSO said there are in fact more men than women in the country. In its latest estimate for 2002, the NSO said there were some 40 million Filipino men and 39.5 million Filipino women, resulting in a population discrepancy in sex of half a million.

Women Live Longer

Life expectancy is estimated at 72.2 years for Filipino women and 66.9 years for Filipino men. Around 38 percent of the population is younger than 15 years old and 28 percent belongs to the 15 to 24 age bracket. Population experts claim it would take 25 years before the Philippine population reaches its peak.

More Single Men Than Single Women

In the 2000 population census, the National Statistics Office (NSO) said that nearly 53 percent of the 25 million single people in the Philippines were males while only 47 percent were females. However, around 76 percent of the 2.6 million widowed persons were females and only 24 percent were males. (From www.txtmania.com)