

## THE HASTY TRAVELOGUE

When we make our yearly trips to the US to visit our three children, it also is to do other things. We usually fly into NJ to be with the older two, Ramon in NY and Babette in NJ, then to Joey in Los Angeles, where we also see our primary doctors, have tests if needed, and get our prescriptions for the year.

But more importantly, we try meet as many of our kith and kin: In the East coast, we have relatives galore, then also there are the many good friends, such as those in the Tanjayanon group, the 62nd Forum group, the Upsca group, my High School group, and Lisa's Pharmacy group.

In the West coast, we have an even larger circle of Upsca and Tanjayanon friends, and lately, a UP Engineering group

June 5 was the 50th Jubilee party of our batch of the UP Engineers in Los Angeles, and that happened to fall within the time frame when we were there.

The UP Engineering get-together was a great success, thanks to the organizing skills and cooperation of so many. The photo below shows the group, where about 18 engineering alumni and their families spent lunch to late dinner time in fellowship and camaraderie. Some hadn't seen each other in 50 years. One couple came from Mexico on the way back to

the Philippines, others were from Canada, SF, and the East coast. But what was even more enjoyable was the souvenir program.

I started on the UP Engineering Souvenir program by scanning all those graduates in the 1964 Philippinensian. This was just before we left for the US. Then, for those whom I've been in touch with recently and have pictures of, I paired "before and after shots", and made a short, sketchy write-up on what has happened to them (as far as I know) in between, and mind you, that's 50 years. Fortunately, over a period of two months, by email and phone and text, many others chipped in more info of themselves and others they knew more about, but whom we were unable to contact (or had since passed away). There were write-ups, pictures and google searches that we exchanged and edited. The final tally was a "before and after" roster of 55 graduate engineers spanning 1961 to 1968, from ME (mechanical engineer) to EE, ChE, CE, etc. and a generalized data spreadsheet of 220 engineering graduates.

In the East coast, our apostolic duties curtailed travel, and we managed to see only one Upscan and three 62nd Forum friends. Although in the West coast, it was a bit better since we managed to attend a Tanjayanon meeting, (aside from the Engineering bash) and did some sightseeing with our son Joey.



The montage of photos below show steering committee members of the Tanjay Association west coast chapter, having fun during their organizational meeting for the 29th fiesta celebration. Lisa and I and two others are the oldies, who as guests, represented the earlier generation of officers.



That's me on top-most photo, extreme right. This younger set of folks are more avant garde, including a six foot statuesque transgender board member. A closer view is shown on the lower right photo where he is being measured. This montage graces the present screen view of the Tanjay website.

But there was a site we went to visit that Lisa and I kind of cringed at: the Ronald Reagan Library at Simi Valley. Our son Joey took the day off to bring us around, and that was about the only nearby place that was interesting, even if it was Republican territory, anathema for Democrats like us.



When he asked Lisa to pose beside the statue of the Gipper, she adamantly refused, but I took a shot anyway.



I couldn't help but pretend I was a president by standing up at the podium of the mock White House press room. Only then did I see how elaborate and ingenious were the idiot-boards that projected text on adjacent transparent screens, unseen by the TV cameras.



Air Force One was fantastic. It was an earlier model Boeing 707 plane. Reagan ordered up the next version, a B-747 but it was delivered during the tenure of his successor, Bush Sr.

The interior of the plane was laid out like a compact Oval Office. I liked the "football" location – that brief case that carried the nuclear codes if ever the US had to go to war. I asked if it had a shower room; negative reply. On the left is Marine One, the presidential helicopter, and me as guard.



We didn't complete the rest of the walk-through tour since Joey and I were more interested in the technical exhibits rather than the rest of Reagan's memorabilia. Lisa kept muttering about how slanted the write-ups were, but really, as we all later agreed, he was a relatively liberal Republican, even started off his political career as a Democrat.



That's Joey and Lisa and his 3 month old Volt electric car. Here's some digression on my scientist-son. With a PhD in molecular microbiology, he plays around with viruses, but he also goes for and practices environmentalism. His previous car was a Prius hybrid, but as he explains it, the Prius shifts from battery power to engine power with regeneration, and vice versa, almost constantly, and so with its efficiency, it does save gasoline, up to a point. However, the Volt, with a much bigger battery, can run on battery power from his house to his work and back again (about 38 miles) without having to have the gasoline engine kick in. Then, once at home, he plugs the car into the house electrical outlet. But since his house is solar powered, the "juice" to run the car is practically free. His last electric utility bill was \$5 and he has gassed up the car only thrice so far, and the last was not full tank, but just 3 gallons or so, to save weight. In contrast, the Camry I rented for the 10 days in LA ate up about 80 bucks of gas.

Joey then drove by the Rocketdyne plant that had at the front entrance a real F-1 rocket engine that powered the Saturn series

of moon shots. Below is the photo. But this shot brought back more nostalgia.



Years ago when we still were in LA, Joey had a very good friend, a Korean orphan of sorts, named Yos. He accompanied us on a cross country trip to Disneyworld, FL, and we stopped at Cape Kennedy and saw the same rockets. Photo below was in 1991, with Yos, Joey and rockets.

In high school, both started a computer assembly venture together with two other friends. Yos stayed the course, while the others went off to other endeavors. Now, Yos has become a multi-millionaire, as his innovation and vision has guided his company to new heights. I don't quite understand what it does, but it has to do with computers, software, modeling and the like, and is still growing fast with new branches being set up here and abroad.



Once, he told Joey, he pulled out of his posh house in the expensive portion of Newport Beach driving his Lamborghini, and who should happen to sidle up beside him in a similar car, but his neighbor Kobe Bryant.

Though Yos has many other cars, Joey tells me that he is still trying to convince him to buy the premium of electric cars, a Tesla, which is all electric, no gasoline engine, and fast. Addenda: he has.

We fly back tonight from NJ to Manila, then home we will be, among the tricycles, jeepneys, buses, and other more down-to-earth conveyances far removed from electrics and fast cars.