



Tumbleweeds



The official publication of the Tumbleweeds Viber Groups of the UP Los Baños Beta Sigma Fraternity and Sigma Beta Sorority, College, Laguna, Philippines



71 Glorious Years... UPLB Beta Sigma Fraternity by Jim Gonzalvo '70B

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Seventy-one years ago this year, 62 young men were initiated as the charter members of the UP Beta Sigma Fraternity, Los Baños chapter. August 13, 1950 is a day that will live in glory for all UP Los Baños Beta Sigmans, for on this day, we marked the beginning of our history. It is a history that we can all be proud of because each of us have a thumbprint in writing it. We did so bound together as fraternity brothers no matter where we came from and without rumination of social standing. The Beta Sigma Fraternity has taken us in and provided us with opportunities not accessible to all students on campus. It nurtured our young minds with its principles, beliefs, and traditions to be good and noble men. And according to Brod Dutch Aragoness' records, from 1950 – 2021A (latest batch) there have been 259 batches producing a total of 1,547 members (1,528 UPLB-initiated; 19 honoraries).

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71 Glorious years by Jim Gonzalvo '70B

From the beginning, the UP Beta Sigma Fraternity Los Baños chapter has made its mark on and off campus. There are so many accomplishments, too many to mention, it would take several pages to cover them all in this article. Instead, allow me to highlight a few. Having been formed as a Brotherhood of Scholars, the fraternity has produced numerous scholars who distinguished themselves in their areas of endeavors, both nationally and internationally. Outside of academics, with talents abounding, the fraternity has a lot more to offer. From sports to rodeo to campus politics, the fraternity made the campus know it's a force to reckon with. One that sticks to mind is in theatrical arts. It was the Beta Sigma Fraternity that started the theatrical movement on campus churning out several productions tapping, in most cases, the acting abilities of its own members.

Committed to leadership and service, the fraternity carried out several humanitarian projects not only on campus but also among the less fortunate sector of the local communities. Working with the school administration, the Beta Sigma fraternity time and again answered the call and carried out projects like planting trees, dormitory fogging, Christmas gift-giving and much more. Beta Sigma Fraternity has always been a go-to organization always at the ready to lend a helping hand. Most recently, with the COVID pandemic, members of the Beta Sigma Fraternity helped students stranded on campus by providing basic necessities and fabricated personal protection equipment for healthcare workers in the local health facilities. Giving back to the community is also evident in the medical missions and in assisting and educating Filipino farmers led by UPLB Beta Sigma alumni.

Internally, we take care of our own. With the formation of the Big Brothers Bounty, the fraternity continues to recognize our brothers in financial need in pursuit of their academic dreams. Comprised of generous alumni brothers, Big Brothers Bounty has helped alleviate the financial burdens of the families of deserving brothers. With the same enthusiasm, financial aid is also provided to sick brothers and the bereaved families of our dearly departed brothers.

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Technical Tip 



For cellphone users...
Rotate your phone to landscape position for a better view of the contents of this Newsletter.

71 Glorious years by Jim Gonzalvo '70B

All the foregoing exemplify the actions of the GOOD AND NOBLE MEN of the UP Beta Sigma Fraternity.

But it's not all glory. Through the years, the fraternity has undergone numerous trials and tribulations but time and again it has overcome the adversities. It survived the social, cultural, and political turmoils of the past 71 years because it has members like us who have the resiliency and resolve to adapt. This we can attribute to the virtues and principles inculcated into our young minds as Beta Sigmans. WE REST BUT WE DON'T QUIT.

Today, we have UPLB Beta Sigmans scattered all over the globe. But, even though geographically separated and multi generationally distinct, we are very much connected to each other by our principles, traditions, and the bond of brotherhood we all promised to uphold.

As we look ahead into the future, let's focus on the challenges facing our fraternity today. First and foremost, membership declined due to the difficulty of recruitment. It would be preaching to the choir if I tell you that we have serious problems when it comes to recruitment. The heydays of the Greek letter organizations are long gone, and the Beta Sigma Fraternity is no exception. It has become more and more difficult to entice and recruit new members. We are at an inflection point in our fraternity's history. So, as we celebrate our 71st anniversary and to continue writing our history, let's make it our resolve to keep our beloved fraternity viable in the years to come. Collectively, let's look for ways to guarantee the survival of our fraternity for future generations of Beta Sigmans. This is our challenge, and it will be our legacy.

Let's move forward with the traditions of yesterday and a vision of tomorrow.





THE GREATNESS OF BETA SIGMA FRATERNITY, IN THE WORDS OF PRESIDENT AQUINO

67th Founding Anniversary Ball of the UP Beta Sigma Fraternity Grand Ballroom, Eastwood Richmond Hotel, Quezon City, 15 July 2013

“Sampung araw matapos nga po kilalanin ng mundo ang ating kasarinlan noong ika-4 ng Hulyo 1946, itinatag naman ang inyong kapatiran. Kasabay na hinarap ng inyong samahan ang mga hamon at pagsubok sa ating pagsasarili, at ang pinagdaanan ng sambayanan sa nakaraang animnapu't pitong taon.”

“Lumipas man ang mahigit anim na dekada, di pa rin kumukupas ang mga magpapakitang gilas ng inyong mga brod sa iba't ibang larangan. Nariyan ang labinlimang Beta Sigman na kabilang sa Outstanding Young Men awardees ng bansa.”

“Sa kasalukuyan, umabot na, balita ko, sa labinlimang libo ang kasapi ninyong talagang kumakatawan sa inyong paninindigan: ang pagtumbas ng gawa sa inyong salita at aktibong pagpapatotoo sa inyong prinsipyo.”

“Mula sa mga programa ninyong nangangalaga sa kalikasan, hanggang sa pagkalinga sa kalusugan ng komunidad, at sa iba pa ninyong makabuluhang programa, nagpapasalamat ang bayan sa pagsisikap ninyong itaas ang antas ng pamumuhay ni Juan at Juana dela Cruz.”

“Syempre, proud din tayo sa tatlo ninyong alumni na kasama nating naglilingkod at tumutugon sa mga problema ng bayan, sina: Kalihim Voltaire Gazmin, Procy Alcala at Mon Paje.”

“I think you can be proud of your brods. I don't have to second guess them. I don't have to look over their shoulders. I don't have to ask them to submit daily reports because I know even if I don't see them, they are doing what they are supposed to do and we can all be proud.”

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Excerpts from President Aquino's Speech
as posted in Viber by Brod Nugget Aquino '79B

“Pinili ng ating tatlong butihing mga kasamahan na itaguyod ang positibong pagbabago at ang kapakanan ng bayan bago ang sarili. Sagisag sila sa landas na tinatahak ng UP Beta Sigma mula noon hanggang ngayon: ang magbuklod, gamitin ang husay, at ialay ang bawat tagumpay para sa ika-aangat ng kapwa.”

“Parehong pagkalinga rin po ang natatamasa ngayon sa ating kalikasan sa pangunguna ni Secretary Mon Paje... Todo-kayod po si Secretary Procy upang lalo pang mapalago ang sektor ng agrikultura at mapaunlad ang kabuhayan ng mga pamilyang umaasa rito...Sa pangunguna po ni Secretary Volts, ang dating naisasantabing kapakanan ng mga kawal ng bayan, ngayon tinututukan na ng pamahalaan.”

“Umaasa akong patuloy ninyong isabuhay ang mga prinsipyong tumitimon sa UP Beta Sigma Fraternity, sa ngalan ng katuwiran at pananagutan.”

“Talagang ang bigat naman ng fraternity niyo, pati si Willie Nep eh brod pala niyo. Napalingon ako ng dalawang beses, pero mas maganda ang ayos mo ngayon keysa nung ginaya mo yung hairstyle ko.”



**10-10-22 UPDATES:
UPCA FOUNDATION
SITE PROJECT**

Every Sunday at 9 AM Manila Time we gather in our virtual tambayan via Zoom. Currently, several brods and sisters are brainstorming the design features of the UPCA Foundation Site renovation project. Headed by our Architect Brod Nap Cruz Dil '73C, his initial drawings have been posted in our TVG.

We are inviting brods and sisters to join these meetings every Sunday thru ZOOM MEETING ID:
922 5930 3657

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Contributing Writers/Editors:

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UPLB was yellow before it became red, then lost all color
by Eufemio T. Rasco, Jr. '67
reprinted from the 2020 Souvenir Program for the October
UPLB Alumni Homecoming



Contemporary historians refer to the first quarter of the 1970's as the first quarter storm. It was the peak of student activism in Metro Manila and surrounding communities, led by Kabataang Makabayan and other left-leaning groups.

There is little account of the quarter before this, the last quarter of the 1960s, which set the stage for the first quarter storm. It was actually a significant quarter, because it was during this period that the left movement gathered momentum and demolished all opposition among students. Yes, there was opposition. Not all students at that time were attracted to the glamor of reading Mao Tse Tung's red book and waving red flags like the Mao's youth brigade during China's cultural revolution.

In the UP College of Agriculture (UPLB was not founded until 1982, so the College of Agriculture was the bigger of the two colleges in Los Baños at that time, the other one being the College of Forestry), the struggle between the reds and all others took shape during the 1969 student election. The Kaunlaran Party (the red party) was a small, but noisy coalition led by the Kabataang Makabayan, running on the platform of establishing a communist dictatorship and toppling the Marcos government. A prominent member of this coalition was the UP Upsilon Sigma Phi Fraternity. The Pagkakaisa Party (the yellow party, no relation to Ninoy Aquino, who was a nobody at that time) was a big coalition of fraternities and academic societies branding itself as scholars whose ambitions are rather subdued: to offer the students responsible leadership and the farmers, land reform. This platform was a rehashed platform of the Duty Above All Party (DAAP), the predecessor of Pagkakaisa Party. Among these are UP Student Catholic Action, Symposium, and Espaleklek. A prominent member of this coalition was the UP Beta Sigma Fraternity, the perennial nemesis of UPSILON (or the other way around, depending on where one's sympathy lay). From my perspective as a die hard Betan, the UPCA events of these times were shaped by the perennial rivalry between these two fraternities.

The 1969 election was probably the most highly contested student election in the history of UPLB, not so much because of the ideological divide, but because of the rivalry between

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UPSILON and UP BETA SIGMA. At that time, these fraternities were the biggest and most active student organizations on campus. The election became the more civilized way of fighting, less bloody than rumbles, but more draining of mental and physical energies and financial resources as well. It was the time of colorful rallies, classroom-to-classroom, dorm-to-dorm campaigns, when handshaking was not forbidden unlike today, in the COVID era. It was a time when handmade billboards were the norm, and political parties tried to outdo each other in making the bigger billboard. Pagkakaisa's yellow billboards were bigger! It was also a time for glamor girls campaigning like in the real politics. (Emer Roman nee Ramos, one of the prettiest girls on campus at that time, was an active member of the Pagkakaisa yellow girls' brigade. With her were the Romero sisters, Bobot Alipit and many other campus beauties.) Of course our sister sorority, the UP Sigma Beta, was very active in supporting us. I remember Ching Paje, Nonie Pamulaklakin, Eloi Labadan. At stake was the prestige of the student organizations.

When the election was over, both parties claimed victory. Pagkakaisa, because it won the executive branch (President, Vice-President, and Secretary), and Kaunlaran because it won the majority in the legislative branch. I won the presidency, Resty Collado, the vice-presidency, Tess Cheng (nee Esma-ma), Secretary.

But the struggle quickly metamorphosed from a battle of prestige, to a battle of ideology, where the reds prevailed, where traditional student organizations practically lost their relevance and became instruments of the red movement. Looking back, I think both UPSILON and UP BETA SIGMA lost after the election. The red movement swallowed both of them. That was also the time when whatever sympathies I had for the red movement, hidden during the election, was lost forever, when our Party was subjected to a very vicious character assassination using the most blatant lies (the trademark of the communist movement) and fake news. (Yes sir, uso na noon ang fake news).

The root of this was Pagkakaisa's brand of leadership, which is reaching out to other sectors such as the faculty, administration, and farmers. The Student Council under my leadership sought, and was given support, by these sectors. For example, we organized a long march from Los Baños to Luneta Park, along with farmers, eventually camping at the lobby of the Bureau of

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Lands (now the Department of Tourism) for weeks to dramatize the plight of farmers. I remember Oscar Mora and Manny Arejola with the Khi Rho movement were very active in organizing farmers.

We organized work camps where students and faculty members camp in a barangay to help them organize and implement community projects such as gardening and road and community hall improvement. We were given access to university resources such as mimeographing machines and some faculty members assisted us in editorial work. The Dean of the College of Agriculture at that time, Dr. Dioscoro Umali allowed students to participate in mass action, and gave financial support for hiring jeepneys during the extended camping at the Bureau of Lands. We united the Los Baños community in these simple projects.

But the reds would not have any of these. To them, any semblance of cooperation with symbols of the status quo would tend to delay the revolution. So we were branded as reactionary, and accused of receiving money from the UP Administration (of course, it was true, but the slant was vicious; it was that we pocketed it!). No one bothered to check with our treasurer, who gave Dean Umali the proper receipts and who spent the money to pay for jeepneys shuttling students to Manila, as well as for their food and other provisions). In the fog of war, the accusation undermined our credibility, and eventually became the basis for the red's dominance in student affairs in the next election.

After my term, UPLB became pure red. Many students, some of them my friends, joined the armed struggle and died for what they believed in. I miss and respect their passion to fight for what they believe in. The others continued to foment violence to call attention to the perceived excesses of the Marcos regime. Alas, poetic justice intervened, and the yellows of the 1986 ED-SA revolution eventually hijacked their cause. After the revolution, they were hunted relentlessly.

I personally supported many of the red's causes but simply could not generate sympathy to a movement that subjected the UPLB community to the most vicious of fake news. This is the communist legacy in my mind that will never go away. No doubt, many constituents of UPLB share this feeling. With time, the glamor of communism faded. China, UPLB red's model,

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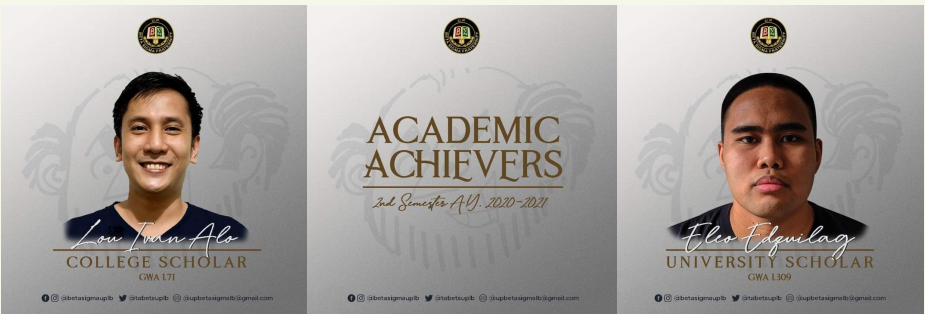
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UPLB was yellow by Eufemio T. Rasco, Jr. '67

junked the ideology and became the leading capitalist country. I certainly do not miss the campus communist movement, but I miss those days when students truly cared about Philippine society, in its purest form, devoid of foreign ideology. Today, I think UPLB students do not care for any color. In my mind, this is youth wasted. Because right or wrong, learning to fight for what one believes in is the essence of true university education.



OUTSTANDING RESIDENT BRODS from UPLB Beta Sigma Fraternity's Facebook page



FRATERNITY'S SUSPENSION IS LIFTED by Freddy Fajardo '64

Official letter from the University of the Philippines Los Baños, Office of the Chancellor, dated 18 November 2020. The letter addresses Mr. Renato Hernandez Jr., President of the UPLB Beta Sigma Fraternity Alumni Association, regarding an appeal to lift the 'Lifetime Suspension' of the Beta Sigma Fraternity in UPLB. The letter states that the Board of Regents has authorized the UP Beta Sigma Fraternity to apply for recognition, provided that penalties are served and requirements are met. It is signed by Jose V. Camacho, Jr., Chancellor.

THE SIGMA BETAN SAGA

by Norms Fajardo, UPLB Sigma Beta '68

REMEMBERING OUR ROOTS

The UP Sigma Beta Sorority was first founded in UP Diliman on 14 February 1932 and the Los Baños Chapter was established 15 August 1955.



“...They were known as the Betans, as ‘fragrant as the flowers’ wherein they were gathered, tied in one common bond of friendship and helpfulness.”

THE FOUNDERS



Student leader Cely Kalaw (left) and UPLB Zoology instructor Erlinda Quaioit-Lawson (right)

THE FIRST MIS



Ligaya Aparte – campus beauty, student leader, scholar, writer

U.P. SIGMA BETA SORORITY LOS BAÑOS CHAPTER

by Sis Cely V. Kalaw '55 Charter Member and Founder

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

The person who helped me form the UPLB Sigma Beta sorority was someone I saw inside the faculty room of the Zoology building, an instructor from UP Diliman named Erlinda Quaioit, who happened to be a Sigma Betan. Throughout a period of about two months, we met and talked about the Sigma Beta Sorority and its objectives. The Scholarship Project attracted me and so I got convinced to form the charter membership at UPCA (UP College of Agriculture). Within two weeks, I was given the constitution and by-laws so the sorority was born on August 15, 1955.

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I was an active student leader, a local resident who was very close to the Betans at that time. I had a strong orientation and was very familiar with the lifestyles of the fraternity brothers. Knowing that in the future the sorority would be fielding candidates for various organizations, I had to invite ladies who had good scholastic standing and seemed capable of being responsible officers. The brainy and the beautiful were also high in my list of possible recruits. My colleagues and I worked hard enough to get the most talented ladies on campus and our efforts paid well.

The sorority's top objective then was to raise enough funds for the scholarship project and also make these scholars future candidates in various political organizations in the campus. I am proud to recall that we were never short of strong candidates (beauty and brains) and we practically won almost all important positions in campus organizations.

The fund-raising campaigns were always a hit. We produced a "Filipiniana Night" of songs, dances and costumes; poem interpretations by the famous poet Rolando Carbonel; violin and piano concerts by the international artists – the Kabayaos. Because of the success of these shows, our fund-raising for the scholarship project proved successful also.

I remember one of the biggest affairs we held at the Baker Hall was a "Bal Masque". We featured twelve booths with corresponding themes. We sought the help of the Beta Sigma brothers and members of various regional organizations. We sold all tickets including our décor Masques of the ball at the Baker Hall. We were able to collect a large amount and boosted our scholarship fund. The project also made us closer to each other and made the Sigma Betans the talk of the campus.

Proudly we can claim that the Sigma Betans at that time were the "cream of the crop" of the UPCA. For the next three years after the founding of the sorority, we were able to maintain a membership of students with high scholastic standing, active student leaders, and responsible sisters.

The elders tried hard to pass on to the new sisters the fulfillment of the sorority's objectives most especially to mold them with the values that a Sigma Betan stands for. It is a wonderful feeling to recall this beautiful experience of the Sigma Beta Sorority of which I am proud to be a member.

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Right now, I wish I were with some elder sister who could help me recollect our beautiful and colorful life during our college/sorority days.

This is all that I can remember. I will be happy if my sisters can add to this story.

THE UP DILIMAN CONNECTION

U.P. Diliman Sigma Betans played a major role in the organization of the Los Baños chapter of the sorority.

Corazon Basas-Colanta and Linda Banzon-Madamba, charter members, recall: “Many UP Diliman Sigma Betans who worked and stayed in Los Baños lent a significant helping hand in organizing our chapter. Sister Linda Quiaoit-Lawson was one of the founders and Ning Samson-de Padua assisted us in the documentation process for recognition of our chapter. Officers of the Diliman Sigma Betans led by Sister Sofie Nietes, then the incumbent Most Idyllic Sister went to Los Baños and inducted us on a hot afternoon on August 15, 1955. Others worked here in the faculty, and joined our sorority activities. The rest is history.”

Sister Ning Samson-de Padua, now professor emeritus at UPLB narrates: “In 1955, I transferred from UP Diliman to Los Baños, and worked as a staff of the then department of agricultural botany of the UP College of Agriculture starting 1 August. I was then newly married to a young instructor at the department of agricultural engineering, and we started our family in Los Baños. At this time, I helped the founders of the sorority in the documentation process that would lead to the recognition of the Los Baños chapter by the mother organization in Diliman. I also became the *ninang* of the Banzon sisters (Linda and Rec) when they were inducted into the sorority.”

Sister Venus Joaquin-Calilung joined the faculty of the UP College of Agriculture’s department of entomolgy as a young graduate from UP Diliman. Now retired but also a UPLB emeritus professor, sis Venus has actively served the UP Sigma Beta Sorority Los Baños chapter in many ways, but more importantly, as adviser of the sorority for many of her active faculty years.

Some joined the UPLB faculty and made their career in Los Baños. They were the late Ampy Goseco-Rigor, Virgie Bedaso-Fernandez, and Jo Sevilla-Eusebio of the department of home technology. Others who served in the faculty for a few years

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U.P. SIGMA BETA SORORITY by Sis Cely V. Kalaw '55

and moved on were Virgie Samson-Cariño and Jessica Castillo, zoology; Lita Yumol-Veracruz, Lorna Tolentino, Tess Corcuera, Melinda Tria, Elvie Santos-Verano, humanities; Eppie Cruz-Skinner, chemistry and Concepcion Batas, mathematics.

INDUCTION OF CHARTER MEMBERS: OUR FIRST BIG AFFAIR

The Big Event that sealed our membership in the U.P. Sigma Beta Sorority was the induction of our charter members held on Sunday, the 26th of January 1956, at 5:00 p.m. at the Senior's Social Garden. Highlight of the induction was the awarding and actual pinning of the much-sought sorority pins to the charter members.



The Great Moment

Sister Linda Banzon-Madamba (right) receives her sorority pin from Faculty Sister Venus Joaquin-Calilung while other sisters wait for their turn in this solemn event.

Reference:

Fajardo, Norma. 2005. *The Sigma Betan Saga in Los Baños. "On Turning Gold: Our Spirit, Our Best, Our Pride" 50th Anniversary Commemorative Directory UP Sigma Sorority Alumnae Association. College, Laguna, Philippines. 150pp.*

HOW I WAS RECRUITED TO THE SORORITY

by Jovit Marasigan, UPLB Sigma Beta '65



Joining a sorority was the last thing on my mind when I entered College. Even when my close friends at the Center Dorm where I stayed were Sigma Deltans, I never was interested joining their group, and thankfully they never attempted to recruit me either. Another sorority

pursued me, but I consistently refused their invitation. When I cross registered in Diliman for a semester and summer and I met some sorority members, the more I became firm on not joining a sorority. I was convinced their lifestyle was just not my type. How wrong I was.

On my third semester back in Los Baños, I was on my way to my Physics class one morning. I was running late. Back then, we had only ten minutes (if I remember right) in between classes and I just came from another Building. I hated to be late in that class because the doors to our Physics classroom, if you remember, were facing the whole class. Physics is not an interesting subject, so expect every one to welcome any distraction especially a classmate fumbling her way to her seat which happened to be somewhere towards the far end of the room.

That morning, three ladies accosted me. I remember Edeng Piamonte, and I think Glo Mejia and another lady. I knew them to be Sigma Betans, and I suspected right away what their intention was. Even before they started talking to me, I tried to dodge my way through them to rush to my class. I was so adamant about not joining any organization much less a sorority. But they blocked my way and told me that they were not really recruiting me. They asked me to just meet them to discuss something, and assured me that if I was not interested, I could always leave. They asked me to sign a piece of paper. I was reluctant, but by then, I just would barely make it on time for my class. So I quickly scribbled my signature where they asked me to on that innocent looking 1/2 sheet of bond paper. I was so naive, I didn't even read it. I just trusted them, their sweet smiles and soft voices, when they assured me that signing it was not a commitment to anything.

When I arrived at the room where the "meeting" was held, the room was almost full. Although it was a small room, it appeared so big to me, and the number of people seemed so many. I can't remember who were the others like me, but we were all

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HOW I WAS RECRUITED by Jovit Marasigan '65

seated in the front chairs, and all eyes were on us. I was very shy back then, so to be a center of attention was daunting to me.

When the meeting started, it was announced that they had only one agenda. It was only then that I found out what my signature on that small piece of paper actually meant. It signified my intent to join the Sigma Beta Sorority, and that the single agenda was to present us, the supposed "recruits". I could'nt believe it. I wanted out then because I felt I was duped, literally. But when the chairwoman started talking about quitters being losers and all that stuff, and they all appeared dead serious I was scared to walk out. Then we were called on stage one by one and "presented". As I climbed up the stage and introduced as a pledgee, I still could not believe that those seemingly nice ladies did one on me, and that for a moment, I was really that stupid.

During the presentation and even while under going initiation, I must have had more than enough reasons to quit and I did seriously thought of that a lot of times. But somehow, I could not make myself to just go. Despite my initial reluctance and doubts, I continued even when I went through several physical hits, ridiculous banter and petty tasks which at times I felt were out of line.

After more than half a century of being a Betan, I must admit I am grateful I was "duped" by those ladies, my Dear Sisters. Being a Betan has its ups and downs, but when the UPS are so good, the DOWNS barely matter.

Sigma Beta Merchandise
for pre-order

SIGMA BETA JACKET
available in S, M, L
PHP 1000.00
(Free shipping nationwide
+ free face mask)

SIGMA BETA NECKLACE
PHP 899.00
(Free shipping nationwide)

EB Car Stickers - PHP 99.00

EB Face Mask - PHP 150.00

UP Sigma Beta Sorority, 1932

Sigma Beta is Home

For more details, contact our FB page - UP Sigma Beta Sorority Los Baños Chapter or contact Princess Reyes on Facebook. You may also reach us at 09166941840 / 09083112926.

The Betan SEEDS, a fulfilled dream, a continuing aspiration . . .

by Nathan Abaño '77A



After a tree-planting initiative in Mt. Banahaw of a few brothers and sisters from different chapters on March 14, 2015, followed by mangrove planting on the coastline of Sariaya, Quezon, four Beta Sigmans namely Dr. Rommel Castillo – FEUNRMF'85C, Dodie Abaño – UPLB'77A, Rodol Mendoza – MSEUF '82B and Nolan Abaño – MSEUF'95A, conceptualized a non-government organization that they called Betan SEEDS. It is now composed of 37 alumni members of Beta Sigma Fraternity (including Brod Tony Barroso'70B, Brod Arno Cardenas'73A, Brod Dodie Abaño'77A and Brod Dante Cardenas'82E of UPLB Chapter; and Brod Nestor Marquez'69 and Brod Melvir Buela '2002C of UP Diliman Chapter) and eight alumnae of the Sigma Beta Sorority from 17 different school chapters, ranging from UNP-Candon, Ilocos Sur to Notre Dame College de Jolo, Sulu, who believe in the advocacies focused on Socio-civic, Environment protection, Education enhancement, Disaster preparedness and Sports development – that make up the acronym SEEDS.

Betan SEEDS was registered with the SEC on December 19, 2016. Later, the National Assembly, during its 2017 National Convention in Palayan City, recognized it as one of its support groups.

Two medical missions, seven operation “libreng tuli” participated in by alumni and resident members in the medical field, mostly from FEUNRMF Chapter; eleven free osteoporosis screening and five operation big brother; 14 tree planting, 10 mangrove tree planting and 6 coastal cleanup; 2 basketball games, volleyball clinic, 4 campus tours, among others - these are among the 81 projects that the Betan SEEDS has accomplished since its formation in 2015.

Several of these projects were attended by guest participants or co-sponsors – 241 Beta Sigmans, 26 alumnae of the Sigma Beta Sorority and 14 members of the Ladies Corps from 55 different school chapters in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao and some Betan Elite Society alumni members.

The Betan Elite Society co-sponsored the tree planting project in Atimonan Protected Landscape in 2017. The Beta Sigma Alumni Association of Alberta, Canada sponsored a mangrove tree planting at Bgy. Binahaan, Pagbilao, Quezon, also in 2017.

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The Betan SEEDS by Nathan Abaño '77A

In 2019, the New York Beta Sigma Fraternity, Batangas Assembly and the Betan SEEDS, collaborated in a two-day medical mission in San Antonio, Quezon.

The Betan SEEDS also invited junior and senior high school students as volunteers in these projects to engage them in volunteerism and at the same time expose them to what the Beta Sigma is all about. Four of these volunteers joined the brotherhood in 2019.

In 2019, the Betan SEEDS sponsored a block showing of the movie Avengers Endgame at SM Lucena to raise funds for its activities. This was supported by some UPLB alumni brods.

Ongoing projects to date are “Light a street post” in coordination with Meralco; assistance to distressed OFWs in partnership with Center for Migrant Advocacy and free medical consultation handled by its members in the medical field. Preparations are ongoing for the upcoming free cardio-vascular referral service for less fortunate families in collaboration with several specialists at the Philippine Heart Center.

Amidst the current pandemic, the Betan SEEDS continues to aspire to do more for the community and for Mother Nature.



ILOILO TREE PLANTING by Domans Dayrit '66



Beta Sigma Fraternity Iloilo Assembly celebrates the fraternity's 75th anniversary. Founded in the University of the Philippines Dilliman on July 14, 1946, fraternity chapters through the years were also established throughout the country. There are five Beta Sigma Assemblies in the Visayas, namely Beta Sigma Iloilo, Aklan, Bacolod, Central Visayas, Eastern Visayas.

Catchie Evidente '85A CPU and President of Beta Sigma Alumni Iloilo Assembly coordinated with Armando Dayrit UPLB Beta Sigma '66, who is currently the Executive Assistant on Environment of the Iloilo City LGU, to conduct a tree planting activity for the fraternity's anniversary and also in support of the tree planting program of Hon. Mayor Jerry Trenas. Forty Beta Sigma alumni and resident members supported the tree planting both in terms of moral support and in the actual planting of the seedlings.

The tree planting activity was conducted on July 10, 2021 on Miyawaki technique. It involved planting two to four trees per square meter. Miyawaki forests grow in two to three years and are self-sustaining. They help lower temperatures, reduce air and noise pollution, attract local birds and insects, and create carbon sinks.

Miyawaki is a technique pioneered by Japanese botanist Akira Miyawaki that helps build dense, native forests. The approach is supposed to ensure that plant growth is 10 times faster and the resulting plantation is 30 times denser than usual. It involves planting dozens of native species in the same area, and becomes maintenance-free after the first three years.

Tree species planted include banasi tree, putat tree, pine tree, golden shower tree, golden rain tree, ugayan tree, duguan tree, bahay tree, dwarf golden rain tree, Thailand shower, giant bamboo, rain tree, yellow bell tree, butterfly tree, sakura tree, cabalero, narra tree, Palawan cheery tree, bomay tree, cinnamon tree, fire tree.



DUAL MEET OF THE 70's

by Vee de Vera '67

A dual meet was imminent from the long history of Dilliman-Los Baños interconnections adding to the proximity of the two campuses. As Dilliman Brods were showcasing martial arts in the campus, Los Baños Brods were casting down Brahmans in the Animal Husbandry corral. These two distinct campus activities were what Betans were seriously engaged in at that time.

So during Rodeo time, Dilliman Brods would drive down to UPLB to see and cheer for the frat's team, The Tumbleweeds, and in December, Los Baños Brods would go to Dilliman to join the Annual Lantern Parade.

The strong camaraderies paved the way for the two chapters to stage a sports dual meet. So in '74, Los Baños hosted a two-day dual meet. The GP of Los Baños at that time was Efren "Klinks" Alvarez and Diliman GP was Gamaliel "Gammy" Manikan.

It was a huge undertaking as LB Brods had to accommodate Dilliman Brods with a place to sleep and drink. Nonetheless it was a huge success.

There was basketball (Dil won)

There was baseball (LB won)

There was martial arts competition (Dil won)

There was tug-of war (LB won)

There was swimming (LB won)

There was billiard (LB won)

There was chess (Dil won)

Then there was Jug a Lug where everyone won !

What made the dual meet successful was the closeness of the resident leadership and the presence of alumni during the whole affair. Early birds came Friday and the whole stretch of Chapel Dr. was already full of Brods. The "Beehive" became the center of gatherings. Booze and smokes overflowed. For two days, the Brods were all over the campus. In the baseball field, we could see the rivals stuck in their windows watching a really big group of Betans from Dilliman and Los Baños and the Ladies Dorm had all their curtains pulled open to watch.



Dual meet was great.

Even today, you can meet an old contemporary telling about the fun times in the dual meet of the 70's.

TAMBAYAN

by Jim Gonzalvo, Protest '70B

To *tambay* or not to *tambay*? That is the question. For generations of UPLB Betans, the *tambayan* has been part of their college lives. As a Greek society, the *tambayan* is something akin to the ancient Greeks' *agora* – a public open space for assemblies. It is our Acropolis located at the Cooperative store (Coop as we refer to it) in the heart of UP Los Baños. Being a product of the 1970's, I'm not sure when it came into existence, but there were stories referring to the *tambayan* as early as the 1960s.

Per recollections of Brod Vee de Vera and as confirmed by Brods Angie Angliongto and Popoy Castañeda during one of our Viber group virtual chats, the *tambayan* actually started in the basement of the old library (pre-SEARCA), now the Humanities building. This is the building right across the present Coop today. Down in the basement was a printing press, DZLB radio station (yes, UPLB had a radio station in the olden days!!!) and a cafeteria. This cafeteria served as a hangout for the brods of early '50s and '60s. Brod Angie Angliongto recalled that in 1957, when he entered the fraternity, they were made to report at the cafeteria and made to crawl under each table as part of their initiation. Betans frequented the basement of the old library to visit the radio station and have snacks at the cafeteria. Also, according to Brod Vee, the concessionaire of the cafeteria was Tita Fely, his mom's cousin, who was very fond of Beta Sigmans. So, when the new Coop was built, the cafeteria moved to the new location, as well as the *tambayan*.



During my UPLB days in the '70s, one can find a corner in the back of the canteen where our bulletin board hung, pretty much reserved for Beta Sigmans. For students who were not members of the Beta Sigma fraternity or Sigma Beta sorority, "sit at your own risk" was the unwritten rule. It wasn't unusual to find 3



or 4 tables of Betans occupying that corner at any given time during the school days. Also outside, in front of the old barber shop, stood the yellow *kampanilya* tree (*Thevetia peruviana*) where one can usually find a group of Betans

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gathered under its shade. And this being the '70s, the *tambayan* was also the place where some brods found nirvana even in the middle of the day. Ask Brods Leo Balagot or Sflod Revilleza and if he were still living, my co-batch Tony Pusag.



Consistent with the Betan alias/nickname baptismal tradition, the tree was better known to us Betans as the “Bastos” tree. What was not clear was, how it got its name? Did it get the name

because of its fruit resembling the male genitalia or is it because of the usual crass conversations among the brods gathered under the tree?

Through the years, this “Bastos” tree had seen a lot of Betans come and go. It had borne witness to many fraternity activities and had heard a lot of stories, some of them being retold over and over but never got old. Instead, they got funnier every time depending on who’s telling them. Unfortunately, the tree is no longer around today. It has joined our dearly departed brothers and providing them a dwelling to rest and hang. It had also been rumored that some female students took the long way around in front of the old library building to avoid passing by the *tambayan* to escape the Betan’s leering eyes.

Susan Serrano, one of our fraternity sweethearts of the '70s, summarized her view of the *tambayan* very well. She said, “*My first few days as the sweetheart was the most unstable, critical and difficult one. It’s because I hardly know ten out of 96 Betans. Oh boy, how could I possibly be the sweetheart of someone I don’t even know? So, I managed to do something about it by making “tambay” at the Coop. Knowing your names is not enough, knowing your personality would be better..... Knowing you is just like knowing a bunch of souls with changing moods, different attitudes and personalities bound together by love and the spirit of brotherhood. I discovered the good and the bad of you.*” As an outsider, she realized early on that the group of young men she had the privilege of working with consisted of varied and diverse personalities just by hanging out at the *tambayan*.

The *tambayan* is the place where we gather in between classes, a sort of respite from all the academic challenges. It is where we laugh, tell stories (real or made up), banter with each

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other, argue, nurse a hangover from the night before, girl watch, daydream or philosophize much like the ancient Greek philosophers. And to borrow from Dr. Rizal's *Noli Me Tangere*, we have quite a few "pilosopong Tasyo" in our *tambayan*. Time spent at the *tambayan* is training to be street smart. It is the place where we develop quick wit and think on our feet or else the quick-witted ones will be all over you. Anything goes in the *tambayan*, henceforth, it is not a place for the faint of heart. "No holds barred" and "walang pikon" are the rules of engagement. If you can dish it out, you better be able to take it in, as well. No subject is taboo.



The *tambayan* plays a significant role in our fraternity history, specifically in the handing down of stories or anecdotes that could have been lost in the passage of time. It is where stories of the past

and names of legendary brothers who have left the campus continue to live on. Brothers whose names have been memorialized because of the *tambayan*.

Today, the bastos tree is gone, but the *tambayan* still stands and is vibrant as ever. Even the coming of COVID 19 did not stop a number of brods to find ways to interact with each other. With the advent of technology, now we have the Tumbleweeds viber group, the Betan Newsletter and of course, the virtual *tambayan*. Brods across the globe in different time zones gather around the virtual *bastos* tree. I, with several brods mainly from the '60s and '70s, have been participating in this virtual *tambayan* Saturday night (US Eastern time). It's like we've never missed a beat.

If you have not participated in one of our Viber group *tambayan* chats, I invite you to join in and witness the UPLB Betan spirit at work. It's a good opportunity to reconnect with brods, reminisce, see the faces of brods we've not seen for a long time, or better yet, see the faces of brods whose names we've only heard. It would be great if we can have a cross-generational participation in our *tambayan* chat so we can start bridging the generation gap. Last time I checked, there are over a hundred names in our Tumbleweeds viber group. Let's continue the saga of the Betan *tambayan* and keep the flames burning for generations of Betans to come.

UP NORTH CELEBRATES BETA SIGMA 75th, INDUCTS OFFICERS 2021-2022

by Nestor "Rotsen" Lawas '66
Grand Princep, UP NORTH '21-'22



As California announced its re-opening last June 15, 2021, UP North decided it was time to celebrate! - not only because of California's return to normalcy, but to commemorate the founding of UP Beta Sigma Fraternity 75 years ago!.

And celebrate, UP North did last July 10, 2021 at the Manteca home of Brod Gene Samson UPD '66 and Geny Cademas- despite an outside temperature of 109F(42C). The heat though did not deter the excitement of all fully vaccinated twenty one (21) Brods and their lifetime partners. Four Brods from the Roaring Fifties - Cecilio Felix UPD '52. Dave Villegas UPD '55, Boy Ramos UPD '57 and Louie Ruiz UPD '59 - attended the affair, UP North's first social event after more than a year of lockdown due to Covid 19.

Highlight of the event was the induction of Officers for 2021-2022. Inducted by Brod Cecilio Felix were:

Nestor "Rotsen" Lawas UPLB '66 - Grand Princep

Dutch Aragonas UPLB '78B - Vice Grand Princep

Ric Velasco UPLB '67B - Master of the Rolls

Gene Samson UPD '66 - Guardian of the Coeffers

Kiko Delmendo UPD '72C - Herald

Gabby Moraleda UPD '68B - Chamberlain

Val Palattao UPLB '72A - Guardian of the Chattels

Vee DeVera UPLB '67B - Wielder of the Sword

In a short meeting after, the chapter decided to move on and celebrate the traditional Halloween party in October (to be hosted by Brod Kiko Delmendo in Vallejo, CA) and Christmas party



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UP NORTH CELEBRATES by Rotsen Lawas '66

in December (venue to be decided). Also, plans were started for UP North's 39th anniversary in 2022.

July birthday celebrants were also feted with lots of food, booze, kuwentuhan and kantahan!

Masaya ang lahat kahit mainit and excited sa muling pagsasama!



PART 3 - The Process of Becoming a UPLB Beta Sigman



It was a sunny Monday morning, the last week of May and it rained that night so the morning was cool. At around 7:30 AM Oca “Chop-chop” Siasoco came with his jeep to take us to College. With him was John “Sonny” Mendoza Batch ‘54 from Puerto Princesa, Palawan. Oca met him the previous day at the airport. With them was Conrado “Ado” Batch ‘55. Ado is a very quiet unassuming elderly person of 38. He is a diehard Betan, very good with carpentry tools and firearms. He is an

omnipresent Betan in all our activities from painting a stage set, decorating a dance hall for the frat ball or just getting brods safely home from a jug-a-lug bout, or cooking the big fruitbats shot at the big Kapok tree at the Economic Garden or the ducks or other domestic birds liberated from the Poultry department. With them to my surprise was Frankie H. Colanta. The last time I talked to him, he was assisting Richard Jacaria on the editorial office of Aggie Green and Gold, the College newspaper. Frankie like us were what you call the soldiers of the brotherhood, Frankie as a Betan epitomizes Loyalty to the Fraternity. Similar to Ado he helps and assists in all Fraternity activities. Be it editorial or janitorial work, he is there silently helping in all the fraternity work and you notice him only because he is not there. Oca this time had recruited him to help Ado purchase materials for placards for the enrollment this semester.

I boarded the jeep and soon on the way at the Zapote junction Oca told us he is also picking up Angel Mendoza. We picked up Angel waiting in front of the Sarao Jeep Shop. Angel “Anggie” Mendoza Batch ‘55 is imposing, a body builder and a good boxer. (Anggie is currently a Nurse at Seattle, Washington State, USA).

With the art materials I saw 3 rolls of 1 inch wide yellow ribbon and Oca told me that it was for us. During that period when initiation was done in the open, Neophytes, as the Betan Slaves were formally called, wore a yellow ribbon badge to designate them from the general student population. The UPSILON slaves

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used the bottle caps of the PEPSI COLA soft drinks. The trip back to College was very pleasant with Oca cracking jokes and talking about the girls of Lipa since the Bungalow Betans were invited to a dance in Lipa by brod Theodoro "Teddy" Katigbak earlier that year. Soon we were in College by 9 AM and went directly to Brod Badong Locsin's at the Gonzales dorm (Salvador Locsin is the colorful Band Major of the UP ROTC regiment Band) to deposit the art materials for the posters. Dave Canet was there and he gave us details on the preparation of the posters and he singled me and Angel out to prepare the yellow ribbons and later told us to prepare for the final screening the next night at Bungalow 4. Oca also revealed to us the real reason he made sure we were at College by that Monday for the screening. We then took Frankie and Ado to crossing to buy lumber for the poster frame to be used for the enrollment next week. The Fraternity then was traditionally officially assisting the Administration on the enrollment every semester so much so that the fraternity was entrusted with the flow of enrollment from department to department including the reproduction of instructions of the flow of enrollees' traffic and even the physical arrangements of chairs and tables in each department. During enrollments Betans even assist the faculty and instructors in the distribution of classcards. Elderly brods even help enrollees in preparing their course and class schedules and the Fraternity employs the current crop of slaves for cleaning classrooms (Batch '54 cleaned the new library building now the Humanities).

Oca then treated us to lunch at Cely Kalaw 's eatery at the Grove, after which we returned to Badong Locsin's dorm where I was left with Badong to work on printing posters. I worked on several posters and later in the afternoon Pop Amador came and inspected our work on the Slave Ribbons. During that span of time a lot of Betans came to report, work and consult with the GP (then called president). By supper time Badong took me to the Grove for supper and later we took a jeepney to the Bungalows. There he conferred with another elderly Betan Ricarte Abejuela Batch '53. The following morning Ado and Frankie came to help me finish lettering the ribbons which was finished by lunchtime. We were told to have an early supper at the Molawin mess hall.

As instructed we had an early supper and Angel, Frankie, Ado and I stayed at Bungalow 5 where Angel was billeted with

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Richard Jacaria. There Oca gave us instructions to stay unless called. Soon we saw the applicants arriving accompanied by Betans. Later we heard loud voices and in another part of the Bungalow some singing where applicants were being auditioned presumably by Juan "Johnny" Florin Batch '53, Perfecto "Perfing" Palacio Batch '53, and Leopoldo "Pol" Elago III Batch '54.

Later in the evening we were called to Bungalow 4 and there were only Betans remaining and we were told that we were on the short list for final screening next week after the enrollment and we were told that we were to help clear some brushes at the cow pastures at the back of the bungalows the following Saturday after lunch. We were told to wear disposable old clothes and 2 handkerchiefs. The appointed Saturday came and I had a late breakfast at Mommy Bautista.

Jun was waiting for me and when I was eating he told me that we might be starting our initiation. Mommy Bautista said she was preparing an early lunch for every one (she had sensed that an event of the fraternity involving us was taking place that day.) Thus we came back at 10:45 AM for an early lunch which we had with Tony eating with us. Barely had we finished when Angel, Frankie, and Ado came with Badong and Dave Canet. When we started for the Bungalows there was too big a crowd since the Betans of Aspiras, Gapuds and Catalan Dorms gathered in front of Mommy Bautista's and Boy Doneza told us to separate into smaller walking groups of 3 or 4 so as not to attract attention. By that time I saw other Sophomores that I suspected before to be fellow applicants. I noticed Salvador Dolar, Romy Dilag, Romy Dizon, Angel Espinosa, the basketball player Eddie Nabong, an elderly person older looking than Ado or Pop Amador, Abiricio "POP" Pasco, and there was the big fellow our platoon sergeant at ROTC Ismael Ala.

Stationed at the Pathway to the Bungalows just before Bungalow 1 are Chop-Chop Siasoco, Rodolfo "Boy" Maslog and Pol Elago, checking the people going through. They gave us applicants our Yellow Ribbons with the Beta Sigma Neophytes letters on one ribbon and the other ribbon blank for you to put your slave name. Just a few steps past the 3 Betan sentries, I saw the other applicants lined up but before we could join them Boy Doneza called me up to Bungalow 4 and there inside our room I was given the Baptism of Fire by Joseph

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Madamba, Boy Doneza, Pol Elago and my sponsor Steve Castillo. The baptism was administered with the Fraternity Paddle of Joseph after which I was ordered to join the other neophytes that have been formed into a single file. After a short while we were herded like prisoners and led to the animal husbandry pasture whose entrance was at the south end of the Bungalows past Bungalow 7. There at the interior of the pasture behind a grove of trees on a flat grassy area, the fraternity was waiting. They formed into a 2 line column file and very noticeably quiet. Our file stopped momentarily and we were blindfolded. Then suddenly shouts of threats and various expletives suddenly erupted and before I knew it I was pushed or propelled thru the gauntlet composed of all the resident members and guest brothers from Forestry and Diliman. I was pushed by Steve and Chop-Chop and all I can remember were the numbing blows on my thighs and arms and the shouts of discouragement. I fell several times and after seemingly a long time was picked up at the end of the gauntlet. After resting for a few seconds we were made to squat while waiting for some slaves to be revived. That night Angel and I were given the works by all the resident Betans residing at the Bungalows.

Thus begun our slavery, the procedure likened to the process of tempering steel where the hardest steel are tempered thru the hottest flames. Since the time I encountered the Betans thru the person of Pablo Burgos Jr. Batch '53 when I went with him to enroll at the College of Agriculture, I had decided to join the Brotherhood of the Beta Sigma Fraternity. I have seen the Fraternity thru the different persons of the brothers. I witnessed the core of their brotherhood and the qualities of the brothers. They have ties not acquired by being born from the same womb but rather passing thru the same process I am now subjected to. I have seen the physical aspect of their initiation rites surreptitiously at the Bungalow 4 and this made my resolve to enter the brotherhood stronger. When Boy Doneza knew I was aspiring to join the Fraternity he told me stories of the founder of the Los Baños chapter Rudy Ylarde, who was an occupant of Bungalow 4 where his wooden locker is currently being used by Boy. Pasted on the front panel is a typewritten copy of the Betan Credo by Prospero Crescini and a hand written one of the poem the "Betan Spirit". Boy Doneza made me read it often and during the initiation period made me recite the Betan Credo while being subjected to physical pressures and stresses. At that time it was common knowledge that the Beta Sigma's

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initiation rites were the hardest and toughest in the campus. This was a challenge for me and I promised myself I would endure and survive. It was Joseph Madamba who gave me the advice that to endure and survive initiation day to day, don't count the days past and the days yet to come; just endure and survive the day. We were not allowed to keep diaries, all we are allowed was a small notebook for missions and assignments, and receipts of accomplished missions signed by the Master.

Allow me to give you an insight on the initiation process or the various things we slaves were subjected to. As slaves, all Betans are our masters and are to be addressed as such. When being spoken to by a master, you as slaves look down. Never look directly at a master or you will be reminded physically. Always wear your identity ribbons which identifies you as a neophyte of the Beta Sigma Fraternity. On it is also your slave name. (During the initiation period we slaves of the Beta Sigma Fraternity were looked up to and admired by in the campus).

At that time when initiation was in the open, slaves were required to perform tasks like: sing at the Coop or dance the Hula, or bark like a dog on a given signal, propose to a girl at the mess hall or any comical or silly task. Prevalent at that time was the mock shooting. When a master shoots you, you have to fall down as if dead, whether you are eating, riding a jeep or biking. At the mess hall during your meal you can be ordered by a master to do anything, eat on the floor like a dog or taste the Betan Cocktail or eat your meal backwards (start with, pick your teeth, then belch a drink of water next eat your dessert, etc). Brod Igan Leones Batch '57, goes around with a bag of wild chili and a cardboard showing the different varieties of chilis asking the slave to choose the correct answer and regardless of the choice would be given 6 or 7 of the hot chilis to chew on and later whistle. There was the mission to steal panties from the clothesline at the Girls dorm, or any slave would be asked to give a Piggy back ride to a master from Animal Husbandry to the Plant Pathology department or give a piggy back ride from IRRI to the nearest jeep stop. The most popular mission was the delivery of flowers or chocolates to girls not just in LB Campus but also in Diliman and the nurses home at PGH or to San Pablo. I was assigned to deliver flowers to the home of the current sweetheart of the Fraternity Lina Marfori at Liliw. Later during the initiation period we slaves pooled our resources and we bought or rather got the ground orchids in bloom at that time for free (they are when you gather or pick them at the Horticulture

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Nursery at night). We organized deliveries. Those going to the Girls dorm was delivered by Romy Dilag Batch '55 who is cute but small in stature and looks like a high school kid and not likely to be kidnapped. Our eldest slave Abiricio Pasco who was elderly looking beyond his age delivered to other dorms, especially the private ones outside the campus. The flowers were mounted on a card, Vic Momoñgan wrote the dedications and I hand lettered the dedications and even forged the acknowledgment notes and signatures. This was all the brainchild of Ado Nora and done at his boarding house at the Grove. This eased up on the pressures once in a while where a normal day for a slave is 5 AM to 12 MN. Some of us even volunteered to take the place of fellow slaves on reporting and was awarded double dosage of the physical rites when eventually they were checked and verified by the fraternity. Ado also bought medicine to keep down swellings of our body parts which were black and blue specially the buttocks and the thighs. His dorm was a private home, a safe house for us slaves where slaves can recuperate between physical rites.

Masters were supposed to write on your appointment booklet when they ask you to report for physical sessions. However, you can be kidnapped by non-resident members or even resident Betans for a quick physical session (the slave is supposed to report this). Physical sessions are done in groups, most often at the Gonzales Dorm Annex where Badong and Pop Amador were, at Aspiras Dorm and most often at Bungalow 4. There is supposed to be a curfew to allow slaves to rest after 12 midnight, but anything slaves do for their masters is strictly voluntary. I always volunteered to hold Steve's, who is my roommate and sponsor, mosquito net and fan him on a hot night till he sleeps (it helps when I share with him the content of a flask of Tanduay rum before going to bed).

Thus life goes, endure and survive each day as they come and go. Sometimes I go and visit Ponciano "Ning" dela Paz then a freshman staying at Bungalow 1 who always had an open bottle of pale Tanduay. I even lost count of the Sundays when Sonny Mendoza would take me with him to mass.

That Thursday morning we were told by Dave Canet that there would be a meeting of all neophytes to be presided by the President Pop Amador. We were to assemble at the gate of the Agronomy Department at 1 PM. The following Saturday we

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were told to dress up rugged because we might be cleaning up the nursery supposedly to appease Kiko Hilario who was in charge of the Horticulture nursery and was supposed to be suspicious of the Betan Neophytes for the depletion of the flowers at the nursery (Kiko Hilario is Upsilon who was very close to the Betans, more so than to his Brods).

That Saturday came and we were told that there will be no missions. However, Tony Bautista came for me and took me to their home there. Tony took me to his room and ordered me to rest. I soon fell asleep despite my misgivings about Tony's generosity since there might be a catch to it. At about 11:00 AM, he woke me up to eat lunch at the kitchen after which we proceeded hurriedly to our meeting site at the gate of Agronomy department. There was already a lot of Betans and amuyongs at the Agronomy Dept gate with the amuyongs grouped conspicuously under the hot sun. I was ordered to join the group and there Ado whispered that maybe this is our finals. Meanwhile, Betans are steadily trickling in and I caught a glimpse of the Fraternity Counselor Andy Goseco and several Diliman Betans who were with Teddy Katigbak. Soon Pop Amador and his command group arrived and after talking to the Brothers, he with Ric Abejuela, Joe Solis and Badong Locsin herded us to the adjacent Farm machinery building where our individual sponsors were waiting. In a short while the body of the Fraternity came and they immediately formed the dreaded gauntlet line, the first of several that afternoon (the nice thing about the gauntlet is that it is never a dull experience). After each gauntlet the individual members were allowed to initiate each and every one of us amuyongs. At that time there were more than a hundred resident members plus the brods from Forestry, alumni brods and the Diliman Visitors. There were 30 of us when we started and at that moment we were only 27 who answered the rollcall. My limbs and forearms were already numb and I could no longer feel the blows given to me at the succeeding gauntlets. I can see there were already casualties for I could hear the call for stretchers and medical aid, then we were again formed into a line and I caught glimpse of a fellow amuyong being helped, then suddenly we were there once again in the gauntlet. Everybody was quiet at the start of each gauntlet and suddenly the shouting began and we were again propelled into the dreaded gauntlet. I was pushed and this time I could hear shouts of "be a good Betan," don't quit, kaya mo iyan. I fell down twice, was helped up by Sonny who was crying, then I fell again. This time

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Chop-Chop helped me up and he was also crying, then we were through the gauntlet where I was blindfolded. I could feel Sonny and Steve helping me and suddenly I broke into tears crying and Oca came to calm me. Then I could hear Pop Amador speaking, then Andy Goseco asked us individually. I answered “yes we do” to several questions, then I was given a lighted candle and I heard someone other than Pop Amador asking us to repeat after him. Then the members started singing the Betan hymn and there was again sobs and muffled sounds of crying from the members and the blindfolded slaves. I tried controlling my emotions, then Chop-chop behind me embraced me and started crying, and so I cried. Then suddenly he yanked my blindfold and there, at that moment, was the strongest and most significant moment for a Betan. I cannot forget the sight of Ignacio Amador with tears streaming down his face but smiling. Thus my journey to the Brotherhood of the Beta Sigma Fraternity was over and my Journey with my brothers began.



Editor's Note:

Watch Part 4 of this journey in the forthcoming issue of this newsletter.



Night Heron ... Artwork by Brod Popoy Castañeda

I. Cash Less Society

Mario C. Montenegro, "Mayok" 74C Liberated, was my neighbor then, he at Gapuds and me at Gascons' residence, both at Dr. Ilag's compound.



Both of us are always cash Less on the last week of each month. It has been normal for both of us to borrow from each other. And it's been like that for many years, that we know the look of the one in need thru forecasting, calendar and body language.

One afternoon I was told that brod Mayok is looking for me. Sitting at the coop bench I saw him walking briskly from Phy Sci Bldg. towards Coop.

He was grinning as if with a plan, so I left at once to escape. I darted at the left side of the humanities building.

But as I turned to the corner, I was startled, he was already there waiting for me. And he shouted, "Huli Kaaaa!"

We both laughed as I groped for my wallet in my backpocket

II. Final score : Beta Sigma 65 - Apolabay 52

In 1980, the brods clobbered Apolabay 65-52 in the inter-frat basketball tournament. It is the highlight of the tournament as it's well known we are bitter rivals. After the ensuing game, the sore losers hung sako tarps at the Men's Dorm written 'Kubeta Sigma'. The brods at the Gapuds Dorm hung in reply 'Beta Sigma tinaihan ang Apolabay'.

The tournament was won by Espa.

III. THE INCREDIYOB V

Yob V is a hulking, badzilla at 5ft 11inches. He was accusing the brods of shouting him names and invectives everytime he passed by the Coop daw. He was my teacher the previous semester.

One night in 1979 I am at Agrix Disco with brods Tito Estrada and Cirlo Nuyles. We were sitting on a table near the entrance. The strobe lights flickered here and there in diff colors, breaking darkness. Keeping our moods upbeat is salsa music, the tune of those times. Disco music then is fading.

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When suddenly from the back, IncrediYob appeared in front of me and tried to put a fist on my face, but I moved sideways fast and it caught my left ear. I fell on the floor and went into a fetal posture as he gave me some kicking. Big man as he was, I wasn't hurt.

I was able to stand and grope for bottles to slew him. But I picked up an aluminum ashtray holder and threw it to his face. Tito and Cirlo were about to strangle him when people in the crowd restrained them. The rest is an administrative story.

Brod Edgar 'Egay' Ejercito would not let this pass without a vengeance. So we started casing his house at Silangan Road, in a compound near the St Therese Chapel.

We were watching him in the kitchen and waiting for him to come out or us to come in. We were unmindful that he was alert and maybe he's seen us.

When brod Egay was about to open the door, suddenly the lights went out, and the door flew open as Big Yob rushed out with a long thing in his hand.

We thought it was a bolo and literally, we picked up our slippers and run for our lives.

Yob was cursing and shouting in madness after us and by the time we reached Catalan Compound he stopped and turned back.. As he cried "Kilala ko kayo, mga p..... I.. Nyo!"

We watched him go back and what he carried was not a bolo, but a walis tambo. Edgar and I tried to catch our breath under the Rambutan tree at the Saguigits and almost died laughing at our mischief .

IV. BRAVEHEART

Brod Edgar Ejercito and I were playing chess one night at GMs Dorm around 8 pm, in 1980. It was a sicilian game, Edgar playing black and I, white on a relentless attack.

Silent footsteps are coming and at the door was brod Jojo Alejar, a new brod then. He went to us telling that he was slandered and maligned, and given the dirty finger by some members of Gamma Kappa Rho while he was waiting for a jeepney in front of IH/Auditorium. I at once rose and said Tara. Edgar remained glued to the chessboard. I asked brod Jojo, Ilan sila brod? "Mga Lima, anim".

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While walking downstairs, my mind is fast thinking. Bat sa akin nagpunta si Jojo? Di naman ako kilalang astig!? Baka ako malapit? Talking to myself, hindi pwedeng magpakita ng takot, dyahi sabi ko. Baka malagay ako sa history na duwag. Pag kukuwentuhan ito mahirap, I told myself.

So we went to this dorm near Santos Dorm. The f.. k, they are waiting for us. We can see their silhouettes from the lights of passing jeepneys. Heads come and go, and now they are many. We picked up stones as we approached them and stopped at 30 meters away from them.

My heart is pounding fast, I don't want Jojo to feel any nervousness. But I'm ready to do or die, just to brag to this Gamma Kappal Muks what stuff brods are made of. Kahiyaan man or ano pa, don't mess with us!

So, hinamon namin sila ni Jojo. "Lumapit kayo dito sigaw namin, as we're blinded by the glitter of knives, mga p...ng I..anyo! Matapang lang kayo dahil marami kayo!" We threw some stones and we saw them move their ass.

It was a waiting game and after 10 minutes we left them, me telling Brod Jojo, "tara na brod baka lusubin tayo, dami nila".

V. MY ROOMMATE

My new roommate at Cendañas Dorm is my batchmate Doooods, Nathan Salvador Abaño

Dodie and I both use the brand, Gee, your hair smells terrific shampoo, very popular in the 70's. He buys the pink bottle and I, the blue bottle, color code, for ownership.

Dodie buys the 1 litter size and I buy the 60 ml size. Ha ha ha! When I'm about to consume mine, I pour a little from his bottle to mine and I replace what I "stole" by adding water to his. This went on and on.

I just confessed this to him lately, and we just laughed it over. I quote him "walandyo Ka! Kaya pala Di Ka bumibili Ng shampoo!!."

Now brod Dodie Abaño is deemed the hero of Mount Banahaw, looking after sustaining trees and mangroves, preserving nature for the next gen, thru his talk of the town NGO, the Betan SEEDS.

