



## 5<sup>th</sup> NEGROS WEEK OF PEACE

“Building a Culture of Peace in Negros”  
November 27 to December 5, 2008



More and more individuals and organizations had celebrated and participated in the successful staging of the 2008 Negros Week of Peace celebration in the Province of Negros Occidental. Already on its 5<sup>th</sup> year, this landmark project which is dedicated to the youth has inspired different sectors of the community – private groups and institutions, non government organizations, people’s organizations, local government units and the provincial government to work together to support, launch and showcase various creative peace initiatives.

The Negros Occidental Provincial Government led by its Governor, Honorable Isidro P. Zayco through the Public Affairs Division (PAD) has once again served as the over-all Secretariat of the event. PAD worked hand in hand in collaboration with Pax Christi Pilipinas – Negros, the pioneering organization that launched the first Negros Week of Peace celebration. It has instrumental in convening and enlisting the support of different groups to initiate their own creative and special activities/projects for the weeklong celebration.

On its fifth year, the Negros Week of Peace stakeholders agreed to focus their activities on **PEACE EDUCATION**, highlighting the conduct of popular education (PopED) as the rallying campaign in organizing and implementing the different events. This was done basically to bring peace education to the attention of the Negrenses of various ages and stature in the community. These are the following:

- A **Basic Peace Orientation** for the children and youth of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines – Negros Occidental Chapter during their weeklong 2<sup>nd</sup> Provincial Peace Camp was handled by the Pax Christi Negros Youth Group and some students of the Pax Christi Institute’s Masters in Conflict and Reconciliation Studies.
- A number of mothers in Bago City participated in a functional literacy workshop on Solid Waste Management Program (RA 9003) and Building Families of Better Readers during the **Peaceful Homes, Peaceful Living event** of the Department of Education – Division of Bago City and Vannessa Jeruta Foundation.
- The students from various high schools of the Occidental and Oriental Negros had their share in mainstreaming to the Negrenses the advocacy to actively care for the Environment through the **2<sup>nd</sup> Negros Island Wildlife Quiz Bowl** headed by the Provincial Environment Management Office of the Negros Occidental Provincial Government.
- The Association of Barangay Captains of the province likewise undergone a **Transformation Mediation Seminar - Workshop** sponsored by Pax Christi Pilipinas – Negros and Public Affairs Division – Office of the Governor.
- A number of public high school students, teachers and school librarians were treated to a **Storytelling Session** featuring the multi-awarded books: Tight Time and Papa’s House,

Mama's House of the acclaimed Negrense writer, Jean Lee Patindol. The KalayLah Glocal Network, Niall O'Brien Center, the Provincial Library and Public Affairs Division of the Office of the Governor sponsored the event.

Promoting Peace through various fields of the arts and media inspired the holding of the following activities:

- The demonstration and talk on **AIKIDO – The Martial Arts for Peace** the Boy Scouts and their masters has been a favorite since the participants were able to know what this art is all about. They were also inspired to try some techniques together with the convener, Warriors for Peace.
- Some poets, literature lovers and friends gathered to bond and discuss over the select poems which the group of the Voices of the Underground and Office of Councilor Jocelle Sigue prepared for the event entitled **Peace and Poetry**.
- The stand and views of the youth about peace was also aired through Aksyon Radio, a local radio program hosted by Bacolod City Councilor, Atty. Jocelle Batapa-Sigue. Tagged as **Youth for Peace on Air**, the program paved the way for some youth leaders to campaign for Peace and invite more youth to take active roles and encouraged all other sectors in the community to join, support and give Peace a chance in the community.
- The Negros Occidental High School (NOHS) and Pax Christi Negros Youth Group (PCNYG) organized a **Mural painting for PEACE**. The students enjoyed discussing how to go about the painting and their personal views on Peace. Guided by their mentors and the PCNYG, they had uniquely and creatively painted the walls of their schools with peace messages. The mural includes the Week of Peace details such as the logo which will serve as a permanent advertisement for the annual event.
- The Maskara Theater Ensemble of the University of St. La Salle and the Teatro Guindegan of Lasalle Ozamiz partnered in holding a **University Theater Forum** and a Theater Exchange Project named as **Lakbay Tanghal** (back-to-back performance). Many artists, students and theater enthusiasts witnessed the events.
- The local TV program, She Factor of Sunshine Channel helped the Negros Week Secretariat to share the updates and weeklong events to its viewers. Dubbed as **The Negros Week of Peace On TV**, the Secretariat was able to orient the Bacoleños – Negrenses about the important details of the celebration, commended the growing number of groups and institutions who launched various creative events and encouraged all the sectors and interested individuals to take active roles not just during the observance of the Week of Peace but in all ways they can.
- The Negros Occidental Provincial Government and the Performance Laboratory jointly brought **GODO: A PLAY FOR PEACE ON TOUR** to the Provincial Jail. **GODO at the Provincial Jail** gave the inmates and the jailers the chance to take part in the Week of Peace through this Hiligaynon (local dialect) play for peace right there at their place.

The inmates and jail personnel enjoyed the comical performances and gamely shared their personal views during the interaction after the play. Through this activity, the inmates were encouraged to deeply understand and share what is peace for them. The similarities and differences of views opened a special bond to the whole crowd. The various thoughts shared spoke about something like...*Peace is like something we all look forward and always look for, but it is also the very thing that we often overlook for we just wait and let others do it all for us...we shall do something, too.* The session positively ended with much inspiration to all present. One moral lesson of the play that was identified by the inmates was that all must know, grow and share peace in every way possible. Despite the difficulties and for all the “waiting times” in life, it is important to take every bit of learning, enjoy opportunity to change and accept maturity.

Traditionally, the Secretariat takes charge of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies on top of all other events they handled. This year, the Opening Ceremony was extra meaningful because a permanent marker was finally installed to the Peace Pole in the Provincial Lagoon and Park.

The Peace Pole was first unveiled to the public in 2006 and installed in the Provincial Park in 2007. Last November 27, 2008, a dedication plaque was installed at the foot of the Peace Pole in celebration of the 5<sup>th</sup> Negros Week of Peace Opening Ceremony. The messages from Board Member Patrick Lacson, Mr. Cesar H. Villanueva and Governor Isidro P. Zayco plus the songs and dances from the Negrense talents were witnessed by almost five hundred Negrenses from various schools, private groups and institutions, government agencies, non government groups and organizations who attended the event.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Negros Week of Peace Culminated with a Peace Concert. Select songs matched to the six paths to peace were performed by the young talents of the Colegio San Agustin Brass and Pop Band. The Concert was attended by the various conveners and their members.

These are just but among the many activities organized for the week. Some groups held meetings and inter-group dialogues, all designed at promoting peace and order.

It is heartwarming to note that the advocacy to increase awareness and participation of the Negrenses is rapidly taking its place through the support of the Local Government Units – the Cities, Municipalities and Barangays of Negros Occidental.

Prepared by:

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