



2013 graduates hurdle licensure exams

The University is proud of its new agriculturists, nutrition-dietitians and agricultural engineers as the results of the national licensure exams were officially released.

The College of Home Economics and Technology maintains its hall of fame performance by listing a passing rate of 69.23% surpassing the national passing rate of 64% at the Nutritionist-Dietician's Licensure Exam. It is also the 4th performing school under the 50 and more examinees category.

Although the College of Agriculture is two points short of reaching the national passing rate of 35.21%, the college still takes pride from the 251 passers who listed the 32.67% school passing rate.

The College of Engineering and Applied Technology listed a passing rate of 31.71% on the Agricultural Engineers Licensure Examination held on August 25 and 26. There are 13 graduates who made it out of 41. Of 13 who passed, 10 are fresh graduates and first time takers while the remaining three are retakers. The national passing rate is 39.43%.

BSU's lustrous image floats anew in the Region

The University exhibits again its prowess in the field of instruction, research, and development when the research papers of its five faculty-researchers were adjudged BEST during the recently concluded annual event of the Highland Agriculture and Resources research and Development Consortium & Cordillera Industry and Energy Research and Development Consortium (HARRDEC & CIERDEC) 3rd Joint Regional Symposium on RDE Highlights in Agriculture, Forestry, Natural Resources, Industry, Socio-economics, and Education Sectors was held at the Agricultural Training Institute (ATI) BSU Campus last August 30, 2013. The details of these awards are as follows:

1st Best Paper Award

- AFNR Sector: "Simplified Key to Soil Series Identification: A Farmer's Guide Book on the Establishment of Sustainable Crops/ Agricultural Production Systems" by Carlito P. Laurean, Director of Cordillera Smart Agriculture Center (CSAC) and Rodrigo B. Badayos.
- Socio-Economic Sector: "Physical Environmental Dimensions of Wellness of BSU Employees" by Eduardo P. Laconsay, Director of

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PCW Chair eyes BSU as GAD Resource Center of CAR. Philippine Commission on Women (PCW) Chairperson, Remedios I. Rikken, was in the University on August 19, 2013 to discuss with University officials about the possibility of BSU being the GAD Resource Center for CAR. Rikken was accompanied by CHED-CAR Regional Director, Luisa S. Valencia, who also participated in the discussion. One reason BSU was eyed is the implementation of GAD sensitive University policies such as the BSU Policy on Breastfeeding Practices approved and implemented since July 2012. The photo shows Rikken, Valencia, BSU-GAD Unit Head Imelda Parcasio, and BSU VP for Business Affairs, Jones Feliciano.//JST

BSU VISION

A Premier University in Asia

MISSION

Development of people imbued with academic excellence, social conscience and productivity; and active in generating and promoting environment-friendly, useful technologies to improve the quality of life.

GOALS

1. Strengthen and sustain a working environment conducive for excellence;
2. Provide quality education that will produce globally competitive and well-rounded graduates;
3. Provide quality and client-responsive research and extension services;
4. Develop, strengthen, and enhance institutional capability in generating revenues towards self-reliance;
5. Develop and strengthen quality management systems towards economy; and
6. Strengthen and expand public-private partnerships.

-Admin Action No. 2142, s.2013



Shamag, an Ibaloi term that means news, is the official publication of Benguet State University. It functions as the University's mouthpiece for its accomplishments and is likewise a communication tool among BSU constituents. It started as the MSAC Newsletter in the 1970s to meet one of the requirements of then, the Department of Education, for a college to be elevated into a university. Hence, Shamag came out as the University newsletter in 1996.

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Contributions will be acknowledged. However, the editors reserve the right to determine articles to be published based on adherence to topic guideline, time, and space limitations. Anonymous contributions will not be considered.

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ADVENTURE notes



This corner welcome your adventure stories.

In this issue, Fely A. Gabito share the delights of hiking at Talinguroy after weeks of rain. Her story is in Filipino as a tribute to the Buwan ng Wika. Meanwhile, Marie Fe Wance lets us see Ilocos Norte through her own perceptions.

If you have adventure stories of your own, be it in the wilderness or in the city and you want to share them with the public, we will be more than happy to publish them.

Ang Pagtungo Sa Talinguroy

ni Fely A. Gabito

Pagkatapos ng ilang linggong pag-ulan dala ng bagyo at habagat, sa wakas ay gumanda ang panahon. Dahil dito, sinamantala naming umakyat pero sa malapit lang dito sa La Trinidad. Sa una pa lang ay mali na ang napuntahan namin dahil hindi matandaan ni James ang starting point. Dapat pala ay sasakay pa kami ng dyip. Sa una ay malamig pa at hindi masakit sa balat ang init pero sa aming paglalakad ay naramdaman namin ang medyo nakakapasong sikat ng araw.

Sa aming paglalakad sa Eadjangan, Tawang, nadaanan namin ang mga kabahayan na parang mga kabuteng nagsulputan sa pisngi ng kabundukan. Marami sa mga ito ay may mga poultries kaya ang mga anyong tubig sa tabi nila ay kapansin-pansin na hindi gaanong malinis. Naisip ko kung meron kayang batas para mapigilan ang pagdami ng mga tirahan doon. Ang malungkot ay napalitan na ang mga Pine Trees ng mga bahay. May nadaanan din kaming isang corral malapit sa bangin, kung saan ang mga kabayo ay masayang kumakain. Sa magkabilaang dako ay may mga taniman ng sayote. Ang mga daan ay maputik gawa ng matagal na pag-

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The other part of the North:
discovering Ilocos Norte

by Marie Fe B. Wance

Travelling is one way of easing burdens whatever they may be. It provides portals into different places where one can enjoy creations worth admiring. Northern Luzon is endowed with rich natural resources and Ilocos Norte is just one of the places that hold many wonders, natural and man-made.

Given the opportunity, five BSU employees namely Prof. Ruth S. Batani from ISRD, Prof. Mary Rose Catapang, Mr. Jude Tayaban both from the College of Nursing, Miss Christine Grace Sidchogan and I, both representing the BSU Research Journal attended the 7th Philippine National Health Research System Week last August 7-9, 2013 at the Plaza del Norte, Ilocos Norte.

The Conference

Themed "People at the Center of Health and Health Research", the participants came from the three main Islands of the Philippines. The conference served as a venue for individuals concerned with people's health to meet, discuss, and exchange ideas with regard to achieving the best solutions to health problems the country is currently experiencing.

On the first day, Miss Sidchogan, being the focal person of the BSU Research Journal attended the session on 'Training the Trainers Part II'. Here, the essential skill to learn was on how to critique research papers. I, on the other hand, joined the seminar about 'Ethics in Health Research' while the others

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University officials pay last tribute to former BOR Gabino Garoy

BSU officials paid tribute to former University Board of Regents member, Gabino Garoy on August 5 at the Anthurium Hall in a necrology service organized by the Office of the Board Secretary.

"Dean" Garoy, as the University officials addressed him, was a member of the BSU-BOR from 2005 to 2009. He was well-remembered for being unassuming of his high stature and the ideas he contributed and supported to advance the development of the University.

"I saw him in his desire to help in the further development of the University especially in his field of expertise, that is, on financial management. Other than being approachable and unassuming, he was open, sincere, and unselfish in speaking out his mind and sharing his ideas during board



BSU President, Dr. Ben D. Ladilad share his memories of former BOR member, Hon. Gabino L. Garoy during a necrology service held on August 5 at the Anthurium Hall.//

meetings," said Dr. Edna A. Chua, a former BSU-BOR member representing the faculty.

For his part, former BSU President, Dr. Rogelio D. Colting, shared that in his two terms of being a BOR member, Dean Garoy's ideas materialized into several University developments. Among these were the creation and designation of a University VP for Finance, the inventory of supplies and materials in coordination with the accounting office, the

incentives for IGP managers, integration of review sessions to the curriculum, and the free of charge assistance of the La Trinidad Water District to BSU's water problems.

Other University officials led by BSU President Ben D. Ladilad also joined this honoring feat for Dean Garoy.

In response to all these tributes, Dr. Joan Fianza, his daughter, remarked: "We are proud of what he has done. The family would like to thank you for giving him the opportunity to serve as member of the Board of Regents. Surely, he wanted to make BSU the best."//JST

GAD cites healthy mothers and babies in BSU

Four nursing mothers who participated in the "Most Healthy Mother and Baby Contest" were recognized by the BSU-Gender and Development Unit on August 19 during the regular Monday flag ceremony. The healthy mothers and with healthy babies are Mrs. Rosalie B. Calderon from the

President's Office and Mrs. Karen Gaerlan of the College of Veterinary Medicine, 1st Place; Mrs. Beverly Aguilar of the Records Office, 2nd Placer; and Mrs. Julie Buasen, College of Arts and Sciences, 3rd Placer. Along with the cash prizes, the winners received framed photos of their babies.

The contest was one of the activities lined up and led by the GAD Unit in commemorating the World Breastfeeding Week (August 1-7). The event was intended to motivate the BSU nursing mothers to care both for themselves and their babies. Evaluations were based on immunization status, weight,

frequency of illness, and physical examinations. These were undertaken with the assistance of the University Medical Clinic and the College of Nursing interns.

With the feedback coming from other employees, the GAD Unit expects more applicants to join the contest next year.// JST

Kapangan Barangay is moderately adaptive to climate change

Barangay Balakbak in Kapangan has been found to be moderately adaptive to climate change using the Vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity Assessment (VAST) Agro Tool. In an index of seven levels from “Extremely Vulnerable” as the lowest and “Extremely Adaptive” as the highest, Barangay Balakbak’s rating is on the 5th level.

The assessment of the barangay was based on the result of household surveys conducted among the farmer-residents and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) conducted on August 16 facilitated by Benguet State University researchers.

There were more than ten farmers who joined the FGD at the Balakbak Barangay Hall led by Brngy. Captain Alex Mencio. During the FGD, the sinking and landslide prone areas were first identified. Then the farmers enumerated their major and minor crops with the changes in their cropping seasons because of climate change. Afterwards, the farmers bared the ways they cope with monsoon rains, typhoons, and droughts.

Among others, the farmers cited landslides occurring on the highways during typhoons and monsoon rains that could completely isolate their barangay. Regarding disaster preparedness, the barangay is currently working on its Barangay Disaster Risk Management Plan. As a part of it, they have already identified their evacuation areas in case of disasters.



Landslides on provincial roads occurring as a result of typhoons and monsoon rains could 100% isolate Barangay Balakbak in Kapangan, Benguet. This becomes one of their climate change vulnerabilities. (Inset) Dr. Marissa R. Parao presenting the level of Brngy. Balakbak’s climate change vulnerability based on the VAST-Agro tool after a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) at the Barangay Balakbak Brngy. Hall on August 16.//JST

They also recognized the support coming from the LGU-Benguet, Government Line Agencies, and NGOs in times of disaster.

Among the farmers who participated in the FGD is Mr. Doming Bugsit who has been farming for about 15 years already. Currently, he grows pole beans but when continuous rains occur, his plants rot affecting his harvest. A greenhouse, he said, would help a lot in securing good harvest because the beans will be protected not only from too much rain but from the onslaught of pests. He explained that if his crops will be less exposed to pests, he can avoid using pesticides for the benefit of consumers and the environment. Together with the other farmers who participated in the FGD, Mr. Bugsit expressed his interest in learning and applying the principles of organic farming.

The VAST Agro Tool for Different Agroecosystems assesses and records baseline information on local climate and scenario, extreme weather events pattern, income sources and community resilience, cropping practices (consumption, market, management), crop requirements, behavior abnormalities and tolerance to weather extremes, and the adaptation practices of the community including its effectiveness, cost, and practicality. The tool was developed by Amparo M. Wagan, Jose Nestor M. Garcia, and Simplicio M. Medina from the Agricultural Systems Cluster of the University of the Philippines-Los Baños.

The assessment conducted in Balakbak is a

part of BSU’s research project: “Participatory and Community-Based Climate Change Adaptation Strategies in Benguet Province”.

The same study will be replicated in barangays representing different elevations in other municipalities of Benguet.

The research project is manned by a team led by BSU President Ben D. Ladilad with the following members: Maria Luz D. Fang-asan, Mursha D. Gapasin, Janet P. Pablo, Marissa R. Parao, Carlito P. Laurean, Jennyline Sabado-Tabangcura, Norren Joy A. Ancheta, Janthor Gideon W. Ambrosio, Jumar B. Yagongan, and Bryan C. Bangnan.//JST

Breastfeeding Week at BSU

In celebrating the World Breastfeeding Week, the Gender and Development Unit led several activities to promote and heighten breastfeeding practices and concerns in the University from August 1 to 7.

Themed “Breastfeeding Support: Close to Mothers, Highlights Breastfeeding Peer Counseling”, these activities include a healthy baby and mother contest, a showcase of nutritious foods for baby and mommy, distribution of flyers on breastfeeding, and a peer sharing activity on breastfeeding held on August 2 at the Library Audio Visual Room

The peer sharing activity was attended by University Physician, Dr. Maria Alice Pilit-Torres, who discussed and shared her experiences on breastfeeding.

“We have workplace breastfeeding support but there is lack of peer breastfeeding support,” she said of the University.

Dr. Pilit-Torres talked about breast pads, correct latching, breastfeeding positions, and proper breast milk storage with about ten BSU employees who are also lactating mothers.

Before joining the University Physician, Dr. Florence Poltic, Dr. Pilit-Torres used to be A-Doctor-To-The-Barrios in Ifugao for 15 years which she referred to as a very fulfilling experience.//JST

Orientation on fire, earthquake drills, and ICS conducted

The orientation on earthquake, fire drills, and Incident Command System (ICS) was held on July 31, 2013 at the CTE, Function Hall. There were 65 participants to the orientation from the different University sectors.

The purpose of the activity is to ensure the safety of parents, students, teachers, and staff during and after a damaging disaster. The resource speaker was Mr. Rex Manuel, the Founding President of Highland Emergency Action and Response Team of CAR (HEART-CAR). He lectured how to plan and organize an earthquake drill, what to do in times of fire, the classes of fire and why it is important to know them. He discussed how the ICS works and presented actual situations from his own experiences where ICS was used.

The participants had a short workshop on ICS after the lectures. They were divided into two groups and then given different scenarios where they should make a Disaster Management Plan.

“*Naragsakak ta naawatan yo ken dakayo pay ti nag request ditoy nga activity*” (I am happy that you understood the lecture and that the request for this activity even came from you.)” said Mr. Manuel.

The activity was co-organized by the Security Services Office, UPAO and the HRMO//Leny Mendoza



Participants led by University Security Chief, Pete Picpican during the workshop on ICS as part of the orientation on earthquake, fire drills, and Incident Command System held on July 31. Looking on (in striped shirt) is the resource person, Mr. Manuel. He was assisted by Dave and Jordan Montes, who are also members of the HEART-CAR.//JST



YOUNG AGENTS OF CHANGE. As catalysts for nation building who believe in the power of the pen, around 400 campus journalists and advisers of Benguet and Baguio joined the 6th Edition of Pintig at Pantig. This is the Mountain Collegian's literary and arts endeavour conducted at the CTE Function Hall on Aug. 17.//Rhe-Ann B. Ngayaan

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Institute of Physical Education and Sports (IPES)

2nd Best Paper Award

· Socio-economic Sector: Agrarian Reform Community Connectivity and Economic Support Services (ARCESS) Organization, Enterprise Needs Assessment, and Design Assessment (OE-NADA) in Agrarian Reform Areas of Benguet, Mt. Province, and Ifugao by Belinda A. Tad-Awan, Director of Higher Education Regional Research Center (HERRC), Carlito P. Laurean, Ruth S. Batani, Janet P. Pablo, Asuncion L. Nagpala, Constantino Sudaypan Sr., Valentine L. Macanes, Eulogio V. Cardona, Heather Ann B. Kiwang, Mursha D. Gapasin, Matyline A. Camfili, Jovita M. Sim and Jasmine Kiaso.

· Industry Sector: Sweetpotato Product Development: Yoghurt, Hopia, and Vinegar Modified Recipes by Ester T. Botangen, Science Research Specialist I, Joyce K. Mama-O, and Ines C. Gonzales.

3rd Best Poster Award

· AFNR: Life History and Control of Cutworm (*SpodopteralituraFabr*) Using *SpodopteralituraNucleo-Polyhedrovirus (SINPV)* on Cabbage in Benguet by Eulogio Cardona Jr., Director for Research Services

The symposium is an annual activity where research and extension project results in the form of technologies from completed works and significant information from on-going undertakings are presented for promotion, commercialization, adaption, and dissemination. The activity is a collaborative and synergized partnership among development agencies in the Region. It was participated in primarily by member organizations of the two consortia. They are technology generators, researchers, subject matter specialists, communicators, extension workers, policy makers, farmers, entrepreneurs, and representatives from the private sectors and non-government organizations.

Mr. Marciano A. Paroy, a development communicator from KASC introduced the audience by agency affiliation and who were warmly welcomed by Dr. Sonwright B. Maddul, Consortium Director of HARDDEC.

Dr. Serafin L. Nghayon, HARRDEC-RRDCC Chairperson and the University President of Ifugao State University (IFSU), in his message

inspired the participants by mentioning three things HARRDEC needs to pursue to remain relevant and continue to shine through:

· the good things it has been doing like the conduct of annual Agency-in-House Reviews and Planning;

· commercializing the technologies that HARDDEC has developed over the years of its meaningful existence; and

· persevering to struggle to triumph because "the survival of our Consortium lies right here in our hands and within our grasp".

For the CIERDEC counterpart message from its Chairperson, BSU President Ben D. Ladilad, he tasked his University Vice-President for R&E, Dr. Luciana Villanueva, to fill his part. As the always-prepared role-filler, Dr. Villanueva

posed a challenge to all her fellow researchers to take their responsibility as researchers for development seriously. She stressed that it is every researcher's look out to share the fruit of his/her R&D to the intended end-user. From a very recent personal communication, Dr. Villanueva shared her learning that many R&D results never get to reach farmers.

She admitted with humility that she herself felt guilty upon learning that there are farmers who do not know her important works on how to manage economically-important diseases of plants particularly vegetables. She truly felt humbled by such revelation. In this regard, she appealed to all to take responsibility in sharing the results of researches to stakeholders. // *Gilda B. Jacalan & Leny Mendoza*



Thai students enjoy BSU visit. Twenty faculty, staff and students of the Faculty of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Rajamangala University of Technology Tawan-Ok of Thailand led by their Vice-Dean, Dr. Sunlarp Sanguandekui visited the University on August 15, 2013. After meeting with BSU experts in vegetable production, the group toured BSU facilities. // Photo by Leny Mendoza



Si Fely Gabito at ang mga bundok sa likuran.

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ulan. May nadaanan din kaming isang ilog na malakas ang agos at magandang tingnan dahil sa katatapos na pag-ulan.

Ilang oras pa kaming naglakad at nakita ko ang mga pine trees sa malayo na natatakpan ng mga ulap. Nakahinga ako nang maayos sapagkat mas marami na ang mga puno na nakikita. Pag sapit namin sa nagsangang daan, ang gawing kanan ang aming pinili na kung saan sa may dakong ibaba tanaw ang mga tirahan ng isang pamayanan. Nakakapukaw pansin ang isang napakagandang bundok na makikita sa di kalayuan at naibulalas ko na mayroon palang ganung bundok sa La Trinidad. Sa pagpapatuloy ng aming paglalakad, nakakita kami ng isang marker ng CHARMP na may nakasulat na Banengbeng, Sablan. Hindi din matandaan ni James kung tama yung dinadaan namin pero patuloy pa rin kaming naglakad paakyat. Sa kalaunan ay nakakita kami ng dalawang lalaking naglalagay ng gulay sa isang trak. Tinanong namin sila kung kami nga ay nasa tamang lugar. Isang ngiti ang naging tugon ng isa sa kanila na mukhang naka tatanda. Ang kutob nya kami ay naliligaw sabay pabirong nag wika: "Akala ko tungkol sa 'pok barrel' ang pakay nyo!" Ako'y napailing na lang bagamat nagtanong pa rin kung pwede pa ring umakyat sa malapit na bundok pero nasabi ng kasama niya na masukal doon at baka mas lalo kaming maligaw.

Bumalik kami sa aming pinanggalingan. At sa pagkakataong ito, sa pagkakita kong muli sa marker, naniwala akong nakarating nga kami sa isang bahagi ng Sablan. Dun ko napagtanto na hindi pala sa La Trinidad ang napakagandang bundok na iyon. Pagdating namin muli sa nagsangang daan, may nakita kaming bahay na gawa sa mga kahoy. Dumungaw ang isang dalaga na tiyahin pala ng estudyante ko. Nakangiti siyang lumabas at buong giliw na nagbigay ng tubig na maiinom. Pagkatapos makapag pasalamat sa kabutihang loob na tinanggap, muli kaming nagpatuloy sa paglakad. Natuwa ako dahil sa wakas ay makakaapak na ako sa Talingguroy Trail. Kahit medyo napapagod ay kailangan naming ituloy kasi baka maabutan kami ng ulan sa daan na medyo peligrosong maging madulas dahil ito ay papataas at medyo nakakahingal. Doon ko naintindihan kung bakit gustong gusto ito ng mga bikers kahit pwedeng pwede din sa mga hikers. Habang papaakyat, lumalamig ang hangin at nakikita ko ang mga ulap na animo'y binabalutan ang mga ulo ng mga pine trees.

Katatapos lamang ng bagyong Maring at may paparating na isa pa. Pero meron naman kaming raingears kaya hindi din ako masyadong nag-alala. May mga ilan-ilang bahay kaming nadaanan pero ang ilan ay wala namang mga tao. Pero sa bawat madaanan naming mga residente doon ay iisa ang tanong: "Nagapuan yo? Papanan yo?" (Saan kayo

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attended the lecture on 'Health Research on Indigenous People'. Sensitive issues tackled concerned the welfare of the people. The question whether a health research procedure is ethical or not was mulled upon.

The situations of different IPs' in the Philippines were also disclosed. The interaction was knitted on the availability of medical doctors in rural areas, accessibility to PhilHealth privileges, and other issues and problems concerning general health. Here in the Cordillera, some far-flung barangays in the Province of Ifugao were specifically mentioned for having no medical doctors while some communities do not have PhilHealth cards.

The second day was for the competition for professionals and students, poster and oral paper presentations. Plenary discussions were also set. The evening as a cultural night was a regatta but fun-filled. The Mindanao landed first; Visayas, second; and both Central Luzon and NCR, third. As for North Luzon, we failed to prepare one for a number of reasons. Nonetheless, this incident fueled the competitive hearts of fellow Cordillerans with an unarticulated vow that next PNHRs Week; they would certainly showcase the culture of CAR.

Foods

On the side trips, we experienced something good, from something semi- exotic to something familiar. One pride of Ilocos is its delicacies. The first breakfast we indulged in at Plaza del Norte was pure Ilocano cuisines plus cups of aromatic brewed coffee.

Within the course of the conference, we were also served with the famous 'Bagnet' (pork belly boiled and deep fried until crispy), 'sapiin-sapiin' (layered rice cake), chicharon, pinakbet, dineng-deng, and sea foods, all to be a three-day feast for us!

Before travelling back home, my companions made sure to buy kilos of Ilocos 'longanisa', which the driver of the bus did not allow to be put in board, along with other 'must' pasalubongs such as bibingka, chichacorn, and chicharon.

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BSU employees participated in the Rice Taste Test for new rice varieties on August 15, 2013 at the AdCor. This is in part of the PhilRice research on determining the best variety among their new products.//Leny B. Mendoza

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galing? Saan kayo papunta?') Napapatigil ang mga bata sa paglalaro at marahil ay nagtataka kung bakit kami napadaan doon.

Nadaan namin ang isang garden at kahit malayo pa lamang ay naaamoy na ang mga pesticides. Hindi ko mapigilan ang manghinayang sa mga naputol na kahoy. Pero sa kabilang dako ay makikita ang mga kumpol na puno sa Talingguroy Forest. Parang isang magandang paradox.

Sa gitna ng hamog, nakaagaw ng pansin ang matitingkad na kahel na bulaklak ng everlasting. Noong tinatalakay sa amin ng aming punong guro ang bagong BSU Core values na naka sum up sa acronym EVERLASTING, nabanggit niya na wala na ang mga bulaklak na everlasting sa La Trinidad. Tuwang-tuwa ako nang makita ko ang everlasting farm na yaon sa taas ng bundok. Hindi pa pala tuluyang naglaho ang nasabing bulaklak.

Malapit na kami sa may kalsada nang makita ko ang panoramic view ng La Trinidad sa may kalayuan, na napapalibutan ng mga bundok. Maganda ding tingnan ang Puguis Forest Reserve na isa na marahil sa mga kakaunting natitirang kakahuyan. Sadyang nakakalungkot isipin na sa paglipas ng panahon ay unti-unting nawawala ang mga kakahuyan at napapalitan ng mga kabahayan. Umaasa na lang tayo na sana ay hindi tuluyang mawala ang mga puno natin sa La Trinidad. At Katulad ng natitirang bulaklak ng everlasting sa malayong kabundukan, ganoon din sana ang pag-asa para sa kapaligiran, na akala natin ay wala na pero sa kabutihang palad ay meron pa at inasahang mananatiling buhay.//

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One delight for the group was the opportunity to explore some of the tourist destinations of Ilocos. During the given time for tours, the group together with fellow Cordilleran's explored the Malacañang of the North where the late President Ferdinand E. Marcos and family lived. Remnants of the first family possessions decorated the place. Also, overlooking from the North verandah is the serene Paoay Lake that serves as the natural fortress of the mansion.

Another attraction in the area is the Paoay Church, one of the four Baroque Churches in the Philippines. Its facade made me ask how many lives were sacrificed to complete such an enormous construction.

Anyway, beside the church is a prayer sanctuary that is open for those who want to search, either themselves or their soul.

One more manmade attraction is in Bangui where 20 Windmills stand proud along the shorelines of Ilocos, all

succumbing to strong winds consequently generating electricity! Amazing nature that through the wind blows, man gets fuel! Equally attention-catching is the sea and the breeze so charming and breathtaking touching my very soul.

The Kapurpurawan rock formation, on the other hand, is a massive white stone shaped beautifully, though I cannot figure out the exact form it has taken. It seems to reflect how the waves carved their strength into this massive structure (this is just my personal perception how the rock formation came to be).

The last site we visited is the Light House that perpetually sending a gleam across the wave. I was not able to climb up the stairs so I stayed behind and just chatted with the vendors of souvenirs while taking in the panoramic view of one village situated below the road and is protected by a wall of rocks from the sea.

The Return Trip

Along the road on our way back to the hotel, I got amused at the stalls selling Ilocos vinegar, salt, and other assorted souvenirs lined up the road sides. One astonishing thing is the lush surrounding; it appears to be a virgin territory because of the thick vegetation (Prof. Catapang collected some samples of these). This scene made me question how Benguet is faring when it comes to environment preservation.

In a capsule, Ilocos is a place that shouldn't be missed. It is worth exploring and in return the satisfaction is much greater than the expectation. //



The Bangui windmills at Ilocos Norte //Photo by World Bank Philippines



The La Trinidad Valley as seen from Talinguroy.//Photo by Jen L. Sabado-Tabangcura