**HIGLIGHTS OF THE HISTORY OF THE FILIPINO-AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF IOWA (FAAI)**

**1975.** The early beginnings of the FAAI is traced back from meetings organized by Alita Siasoco at the East side library. The first set of elected officers were Bob Del Rosario as President; Dr Jose Guadiz, Vice President; Amy Mendoza, Secretary; Gelly Zavalla, Treasurer; & Bobby Barongan, Sgt. At Arms. The Fil-Am Folk Dance Troupe was organized a year ahead of the organization under the leadership of Bobby and Ginny Del Rosario.

**1976.** The original name of the Association was “The Filipino-American Club.” The club participated in a cultural float which paraded in downtown Des Moines and participated in the annual International Food Fairs wherein they showcased native Filipino foods, songs and dances.

**1979.** The Fil-Am Dance Troupe participated in the Two Rivers Festival.

**1984**. LAHI, the official newsletter was initiated by Amado Siasoco Jr. & Ramon Legaspi. The organization’s Constitution & By-Laws were formalized. The first Christmas caroling under the direction of Benny & Nelia Aguirre and family performed at the Governor’s Mansion. Architect Ching Artiaga designed the Fil-Am emblem or logo. Jeana Hensley and Diane Barongan launched the Filipino or Tagalog language instruction to Fil-Am children. Also, Diane & Bobby Barongan led the karate demonstration.

**1985**. A cultural grant was obtained by the club’s President David Baratta and used to promote culture & tourism in the State of Iowa. The first Valentine King & Queen, Celi & Nobby Gnade were voted at the 1st Valentine’s Ball with the theme. “Pandango ’85: an Evening of Philippe Love Songs & Dance” held at the Hotel Savery in Des Moines.

**1986.** “Pandango’86”, a dinner-dance with a “Rigodon de Honor” choreographed by Dr. Ruby Cureg, held at the Hotel Savery, Des Moines.

**1991.** “Pista sa Nayon” a fundraising dinner dance and program and performance by Fil-Am Dance Troupe under the direction Bobby & Ginny Del Rosario was held at Saint Mary’s Parish Hall.

**1994**. The University of the Philippines Concert Chorus performed on September 23rd at the Faith Baptist College Auditorium, and at various locations in Iowa such as Saint Joseph School, Drake University Auditorium, and at the State Capitol. Event chairpersons were Alita Siasoco, Roel Campos, & President George Cabildo. Several fundraising events were held such as the *Polynesian Night*, Rocking the Fifties, Casino Night, and *the Picnic & Hayrack Ride* at the Heggens.

**1995**. The 20th Anniversary Celebration., a dinner dance gala catered by Christiani’s was held at Saint Theresa’s School Community Center. A cultural presentation of Filipino native songs and dances which was highlighted by a historical multi-media documentary of the organization’s history , its mission, members , and activities from the past produced by Roel & Malou Campos. A Scholarship Program was launched and chaired by Alita Siasoco, Connie Schnoebelen , Celi Ives & Deni Meek. Other members were Dr. Ramon Gubuan, Mrs. Linda Colorado, & Caridad Naanep.

**1996**. The 50’s Dance, a “members only” event was that emphasized on dance & music attire of that era. The Christmas Caroling Choir under the directorship of Roberto Vida, Jr. Performances were held in private homes and in nearby nursing homes.

**1997.** “Tayo’y Magsama-Sama” (Let’s Get Together) , an acquaintance party aimed to get better acquainted with one another, to meet friends from different regions and different dialects. This event was chaired by Vicky Guadiz, Malou Campos, & Alma Reed. The first *Fil-am Open* golf tournament was spearheaded by Bobby Vida & Enrico Elizan and was held at the Terrace Hills Golf Course. The Constitution was revived and amended.

**1998**. The Centennial Celebration of Philippine Independence , “Kalayaan, Kayamanan ng Bayan” was held on June 13th at the Des Moines Botanical Garden Center, a full day event of cultural presentations in the form of costumes, songs, folk dances, art exhibits, Philippine cuisine, martial arts, etc. World War II veterans, missionaries, and former peace corps stationed in the Philippines were invited to share their experiences. Fil-Am participated in the Latinos Unidos Festival held in September. A scholarship program was implemented for college bound students. FAAI website was created by Roel Campos.

**1999**. The Philippine Independence Day celebration was held on June 12th. At the Botanical Center showcasing Philippine history and culture. Fil-Am Dance Troupe participated in the Principal Financial Corporation’s “Asian Cultural Program” . Philippine Ambassador to the U.S., Ernesto Maceda toured Iowa and met with the different Fil-Am groups in the State.

**2000**. “Paligsahan”, a sportsfest competition spearheaded by President Amado Siasoco Jr. was held at the Campbell Park in Clive, IA.

**2002**. Charter membership to the Iowa Asian Alliance was facilitated by President Belen Naanep & Dr. Ismael Naanep. The FAAI logo was improved by Architect Jesus Artiaga.

**2003**. FAAI was a major organizer/participant in the planning committee of the First Asian Heritage Festival by Iowa Asian Alliance held in May at the Grays Lake Park. The event was participated by 11 Asian villages.

**2004.** FAAI participated in the 2nd Asian heritage Festival was held in May at the Water Works Park in Fleur Drive, Des Moines. Conversational Pilipino classes were organized by Alita Siasoco as project director, and Connie Schnoebelen & Dr. Rosa Reyes as co-teachers.

**2008**. Filipino Language Class was re-launched and coordinated by Alita Siasoco and chaired by Aireen Snyder. This was under the presidency of Alma Reed.

**2013.** Through the leadership of Al Snyder, FAAI President**,** “Help for the Philippines” charity event for the victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines was held at St. Francis of Assisi Church in West Des Moines. Performers were the Kumbaya Choir, Marisz Emery, Randy Collins, Abby Smith, The Vida Sisters, Raelyn Lund, Ras Badjao, Jason Kopischke, & Larry Berenguel.