

KAYANG KAYAK

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lots of aquatic and riparian wildlife. Since that cold dunk in January, I've convinced two of my friends to buy their own kayaks, paddled through downtown Portland (Willamette River), downtown Seattle (Lake Union and Lake Washington), and up in the mountains (Trillium Lake near Mt Hood, Mayfield Lake near Morton WA, Haag Lake just outside Portland). And never again have I cap-sized. I've learned to keep my balance; an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Paddling at night is an experience all its own. I once joined a few people on a trip down a rural stretch of the Willamette River. It was scheduled during the full moon, which gave us a chance to be in a setting that many will never get to experience. As the river meandered gently through its course, the glorious round moon gave off enough light to reflect off the water and soak either bank in a soft, surreal glow, and the stars seemed to float just above the surface of the water. I paddled in a slow rhythm, and with every glide launched myself into outer space, yet with every subsequent stroke of the paddle brought myself back down to Earth.

Kayaking is something I'd recommend to anyone who is not completely afraid of water. It's a good way to get in touch with nature again, and makes for great exercise, too. It's safe and easy to learn and, if you're renting a kayak for an afternoon or a day, quite affordable. So the next time you find yourself looking for something to do after eating too much lunch at a summer picnic by the lake, see if there are any kayaks or canoes for rent. Don't worry, just keep your balance and it's *kayang kayak*. LL



Maligayang Pasko!

-- from Jimboy, Justin, and MaryAnn Laico.

SMART MONEY

WE'RE PROUD OF NICOLE TANTOCO, 12 YEARS OLD, WHO WON \$12,001 AT JUNIOR JEOPARDY LAST AUGUST. She lagged in the beginning while a bespectacled nerdy-looking guy aced most of the questions. But Nicole caught up when she answered the double jeopardy questions and the math and literature questions. She stayed calm and focused throughout the show.

Nicole is the granddaughter of Coty Tantoco of the Bolinas clan. Nicole's great-grandmother, Lola Nene (Irene) Bolinas, was Lola Luz's sister. Nicole is in 8th grade at Iron Horse Middle School in San Ramon, CA.

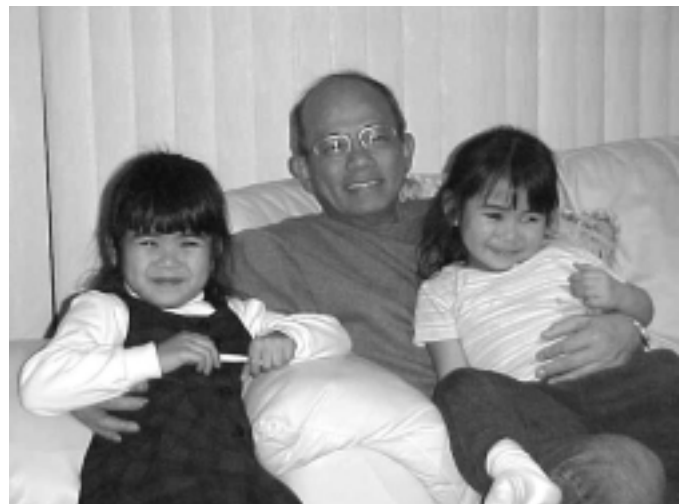
Nicole felt compelled to get the answer to the first question, about religion, because her mother teaches CCD. Then there was a computer question, and she told herself "I need to get this one or I will never hear the end of it from Papa," because her father, Quitin, works for a software company. Nicole's mother is Marilou Vicente, whose family owned a famous religious statue shop in Malate. Nicole has a sister, Isabelle, who is 4.

According to Quitin, the family has always watched Jeopardy, even when Nicole was in the womb! When she fretted as an infant, she would suddenly pacify when the Jeopardy theme played. At age of three, she got her first correct Jeopardy question--a video double, the category was "Chip" and the picture was a chair. Nicole blurted out "Chip and Dale" referring to the cartoon and that was the right answer. From that time on, they knew she would make it on the show one day.

Right: Nicole with Jeopardy host Alex Trebec.



LL



...at Manigong Bagong Taon!

-- from Isabelle, Lolo Chicho, and Kathleen