



WHO remembers the Marlboro Man?

Many actors have posed and acted in the Marlboro advertisements, some of them real cowboys.

At least two have been confirmed by [snopes.com](http://snopes.com) to have succumbed to lung cancer.

They are Wayne MacLaren and David McLean.

In fact, according to his IMDB (Internet Movie Database) profile, upon learning he had lung cancer, David McLean asked the stockholders of Philip Morris, maker of Marlboro, to limit their advertising.

His campaign was so successful that the present generation no longer sees the cowboy ads anymore.

I myself used to smoke almost one and a half packs a day.

I picked up the habit in college.

When my wife Mira and I were in the U.S. in the early 80s visiting friends, we stayed with the Bague family where the husband and wife, both doctors, had a no smoking policy.

Fer Bague used to smoke, but his wife, Boot, a pathologist, exposed to him the dangers of what could happen to him should he continue.

Our first day there, I smoked outside the house, which I found cumbersome.

It was November in Milton, Massachusetts.

Still pretty cold for the average *Pinoy* to be staying outside.

And because I felt uneasy smoking around the house (albeit outside), I decided to quit right then and there.

In the 90s, I had a brief relapse.

I was running for an election and the campaign pressure somehow affected me.

Fortunately, right after my proclamation, I was able to kick the habit for the second time — and for good.

I can say that in terms of my health, I began to feel much better.

I agree with quitters that the desire to smoke is no longer there.

Successful ex-smokers can attest that once the habit is kicked even the smell of smoke is repugnant.

One can sense a heavy smoker five feet away.

Whenever people start to smoke around me, I politely tell them I have asthma. (I always asthma wife.)

At the Bangko Sentral, “Doc” Greg Suarez, with the full support of his boss Dr. Susan Sison, has made it a second career to stop fellow BSPers from smoking.

No Smoking has become a recurring theme in the BSP’s Kapihan sa Medical.

Lung cancer, notes Suarez, has been the top killer disease among BSPers, claiming two employees every year.

During the recent Kapihan sa Medical Anniversary, my fellow BSPers, Claire Mogol, and reigning Mutya ng BSP, Francesca Dilo, shared how their fathers' smoking, and eventual lung cancer affected their families.

Their fathers' deaths now compel them to discourage others to even try to smoke so as to prevent others the same agony of seeing their loved ones suffer and eventually die.

At least Chesca and her brother have successfully convinced their Mom to quit.

Atty. Glory Ann Simeon-Penaco, Fernando Misa and Marcelino Mañego also talked about successfully quitting and exhorted the audience to not even pick the habit up at all.

They had found their own reasons to quit (doctor's orders, family) and encouraged others to find one and to stick to it.

Even my fellow (and recently reappointed) Monetary Board Member Freddie Antonio shared extemporaneously how quitting has helped him get the full benefits of exercise and sports without feeling overly tired.

For extra motivation, Doc Suarez has put up an exhibit on smoking, its dangerous effects and the benefits upon quitting.

Specimens of cancerous lungs graphically show the damage done by smoking.

As Mar Mañego puts it, "*Ang sigarilyo ay walang katapusan sa pagkaupos pero ang taong palaging naninigarilyo , ay siguradong mauupos...tapos.*"

Never before have I been more thankful to be a quitter.

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