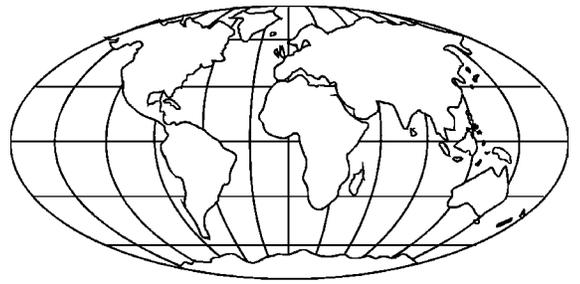


EL CHISME

de Neighbors Abroad



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SISTER CITY PROGRAM ■ PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA U.S.A.

January-February 2014

THE UP PAHINUNGOD DISASTER RELIEF MISSION TO PALO, LEYTE

UP Pahinungod is a NGO on the UP (University of the Philippines) Manila campus that prepares volunteers to provide leadership in undertaking and implementing community-oriented programs, including disaster management programs. Phi Kappa Mu International is a 501c3 organization of UP graduates in health science and medicine now living and working in the U.S. that supports projects in the Philippines. The following is an account reprinted from the website (Phi-international.org) of one of the early relief efforts financed by the City of Palo Alto and Neighbors Abroad contributions to typhoon relief through Phi International.

Palo, Leyte, a third class municipality with a population of 62,727 (2010 census), was hard hit by typhoon Haiyan. By day 2, there were 33 confirmed mortalities due to the violent wind and storm surge. Palo is the site of the University of the Philippines School of Health Sciences, one of the top midwifery schools in the country that train socially conscious community health workers. Some of them eventually become nurses and doctors who stay in the rural areas to serve the needy.



A land trip was planned. Complicating the trip were the long wait for the ferry from Matnog, Sorsogon (southern tip of Luzon) to Allen Samar and the security problems (communist activity and banditry) on the road along Samar, particularly just before the San Juanico Bridge (connects southern tip of Samar island to Leyte).

Repacking of “family relief packs” and “hygiene kits” were done by various volunteers from University of the Philippines Manila and non-governmental organizations who trooped to the Pahinungod office and nearby Nurses’ Home in the Philippine General

Hospital campus. The following were prepared and eventually distributed:

1500 family relief packs (2 kg. rice, canned goods, instant noodles, instant coffee, candles, matches, biscuits, candies/chocolates, 1 liter bottled water, and water purification tabs, all in an eco-friendly bag)

993 hygiene kits – (bath soap, toothpaste, cotton balls/buds, face towel, toothbrushes, toilet paper, sanitary napkin, diapers, alcohol, and betadine, all in a small handy bag).

400 sleeping mats

400 mosquito nets

120 coloring books, 120 packs of crayons, and 120 toys (colored rubber balls)

continued on page 7



Presidents' Report

On the Monday after typhoon Haiyan ravaged our sister city of Palo, Leyte, the Philippines, Ruth Carleton of Neighbors Abroad made a moving speech before the Palo Alto City Council telling of the tremendous destruction and Palo's desperate needs.

Council members then voted an emergency gift of money to Neighbors Abroad for disaster relief and Mayor Scharff called upon other Palo Altans to contribute also.



In the immediate aftermath of the disaster in Palo, a number of members of the local Filipino community came to our November board meeting, eager to see

some action taken. The visitors to the board were anxious that direct relief be sent to organizations that could quickly operate on the ground in the Philippines. At their recommendation we sent one-half of the city's contribution to Feed the Hungry, Philippines, and the other to the medical relief group Phi Kappa Mu International, a service organization founded by University of the Philippines MD's. Michel Campmas, Neighbors Abroad Webmaster, has been updating the website: www.neighborsabroad.org with photos showing the relief work being carried on by those groups.

Neighbors Abroad members have responded generously to the appeals letter sent by Vice presidents for Palo, Ruth Carleton and Chris Torres and ourselves, and the total that has been donated is now over \$25,000 including the gift from the City of Palo Alto.

Katy Obringer, who was instrumental in the organizing of the children's library that NA supports in Palo, was the first to get word from Pabbles Dolina, former president of the Palo service club, the GIANTS. He said that a number of members of that group had lost their homes and some were taking shelter in the library, a building that was also damaged but was still sturdy enough to be useful. He also told her that his own rice crop had been destroyed, and we have heard that fishermen whose boats were destroyed by the storm were also without livelihood.

Because the library building should be repaired to protect the remaining structure from wind and rain, and because so many of our counterparts there are without their usual way of earning money, it makes sense to send money to the GIANTS organization to do the work of repair, at the same time providing some income to the community. This form of relief will directly benefit citizens of our sister city.

In the mid to long term we will be asking the Neighbors Abroad community to help raise additional funds for the rebuilding of Palo. Some fund-raising ideas have already been suggested: members of the Filipino community have spoken about putting on a big event of music and dancing with participation from a number of groups. We will announce any events here in El Chisme; in the meantime watch the website: www.neighborsabroad.org for updates on the situation in Palo.

Barbara and Joe Evans

Remembering Paul Cardoza

It is with much sadness that we inform the membership of Neighbors Abroad of the passing of Paul Cardoza. Paul was very active in Neighbors Abroad almost since its beginnings in the 1960's.



He worked hard to assure the success of Neighbors Abroad's many projects for our Sister Cities and was a master at conducting tours to the various cities.

Paul especially loved Oaxaca. A few weeks before his death he wrote in a letter accompanying a contribution:

"My relationship with Oaxaca, which started as a result of the Neighbors Abroad program, has been a great highlight in my life and my close friendship with Josefina Hamilton and the many others involved in the Sister City program there has been very meaningful. The Albergue (orphanage) is so special in my mind for the wonderful programs that they have for the young residents. I will always remember with happiness doing magic at the orphanage for the children during my visits."

Paul's family tells us that if anyone wishes to remember him, Paul hoped that they would do so by making a donation to the Albergue Infantil Josefino in his memory.



Paul performing magic at the orphanage in Oaxaca



PALO

Mabuhay! Thank you!

Many thanks to

Nancy Hardesty and John Parker for another wonderful Holiday party. Thanks also to Heidi Berndt for her great organizing skills, and the devoted volunteers who provided delicious food.



Typhoon Haiyan (Yolanda)

Our hearts ache for the incredible destruction of our beloved sister city Palo. Here are a few first hand reports from Palo:

News from Pabbles Dolina, former head of the GIANTS Club:

"This is my first time on a computer since that monster typhoon Yolanda [Haiyan]. In moving to Allen (town on Samar), we passed by the Children's Library and noticed that a small part of its roof above the center was blown off and the glass sliding door and roofing on the extended area was also blown off.

Two days after the typhoon GIANT Wennie Yee came to see me and asked if his family could temporarily take shelter at the library. His house was totally destroyed. I said 'Why not?' Perhaps more GIANTS members will come too." (sent to Katy Obringer).

Pabbles and family lost four houses.

We anxiously await news of our two librarians--Rebecca Maglinte and Sheilane Cabbag.

Word from a native son of Palo--Adlai Noel O. Velasco:

"It was not the homecoming I looked forward to after initial reports of the destruction came in. I felt a strong compulsion to go home. The typhoon destroyed all power and communication lines and completely isolated the province [Visayas] from the rest of the country and the world.

"There was no available public transport from Tacloban to Palo--the only alternative was a six-hour walk. When I finally reached Palo, the sight of what Yolanda had wrought simply overwhelmed me. It looked like a nuclear bomb had been dropped on my home town. Except for the Palo Metropolitan Cathedral and the Municipal Hall I could hardly find a structure that was recognizable. The sheer force of the typhoon, the world's strongest on record, had altered the landscape and transformed Palo into a vast wasteland.

"For residents of Palo, their horrifying ordeal was just another test of their endurance and resilience. They vowed to rise again from the catastrophe."

The Cathedral

Although its roof was blown off, the cathedral has served as a morgue where priests have helped co-ordinate aid while offering spiritual comfort. (*Wall Street Journal*—Nov. 20).



Good News

The City of Palo Alto has sent \$10,000 for immediate relief in Palo. The Teen Advisory Council has raised close to \$1000 at its two hour "Glow" for Palo. How inspiring to see such dedicated, enthusiastic young folks! Meanwhile donations from so many of you are coming in.

For the shorter term immediate aid has been directed to Phi Kappa Mu, a medical mission in Palo and the group "Feed the Hungry".

In the long term we will look forward to re-building and re-stocking our wonderful Children's Library. This will require additional help from all of us.

Mabuhay!

Chris Torres and Ruth Carleton



Damage to the MacArthur Memorial in Palo.



ENSCHEDA

Hallo Vrienden:

While I was in Enschede this past summer I was apprised that Jim Keene (PA's city manager) and Gregg Scharff (PA's mayor) were planning to visit Enschede in October 2013. The visit did occur (as mentioned in the last El Chisme) so I decided to follow-up with Mr. Keene.

On October 23, 2013 I met with Palo Alto's city manager James Keene to find out what he thought about his visit to Enschede from October 10-13, 2013. Mr. Keene graciously met me in his office in city hall.

Jim said he was familiar with Enschede because he had worked with Enschede's city manager. He said the Economic Alliance Agreement between Palo Alto and Enschede was similar to a smart city concept and that "there is a connection between Enschede and Palo Alto. We should have a smart city relationship with Enschede."

This was the first time Jim Keene had been to Enschede. He said he found Enschede to be a lively city with an active city government which "takes action." He said he "feels close to Enschede" and that this visit "opened my eyes" to Enschede, "I was surprised at its modernity." He stated the visit was successful. He commented that he told his wife it was a city they might want to consider visiting. It seems Mr. Keene was keen about Enschede.

Jim indicated the Enschede Mayor (Peter den Oudsten) will be sending "summaries" of the meetings and "what we talked about." Jim indicated that he wants to "work together with Enschede." He said the "meetings and meals" were very good. Jim suggested Enschede fit into the smart city category and he "would like to go through with this idea." He said the Palo Alto city council would have to authorize such a move.

I asked Jim about his visit to the nanotechnology lab at the University of Twente and he said he and Mayor Gregg Scharff were taken on a tour of the clean room at the lab. I mentioned that Dave Blank is the director of the nanotechnology lab and an accomplished abstract artist, that Dave has an art gallery in Enschede and is the coordinator of the well-known "Art in the Park Festival" in Enschede. Dave Blank spoke at the lunch meeting on October 11th: the topic was about the integration of art and science.

Jim said he would like to see Palo Alto build a relationship "city government to city government" with Enschede in tandem with a "social/cultural" sister city concept.

As the interview came to a close Mayor Gregg Scharff

came into the office and said he agreed that "we should do a smart city" with Enschede. He said he also felt the visit was successful.

In the same vein, I received an email from Paul Bijleveld on December 1 in which he wrote:

"The cities of Palo Alto and Enschede have agreed to have a joint internship for a Saxion student. For a period of 5 months the student will first work in Enschede and then in Palo Alto, to elaborate the ideas for further co-operation."

This is rather exciting news and I emailed Palo Alto's city manager Jim Keene and this is his reply: "I am copying Tom so that he may routinely update you. We have been in regular contact with Enschede on partnering opportunities. I am asking Tom to add any more reportable details on our conversations. We are excited about our deepening relationship!" (Tom is Tommy Fehrenbach, PA's Manager of Economic Development.)

I received a phone call from Tommy the afternoon of December 9, 2013. Tommy said he has been in contact with Dayenne Smolder and Paul Bijleveld regarding various ideas/projects which would further connect our two cities; although nothing is formalized at this point he indicated he is pleased with the interest on both sides. Tommy indicated the city of Palo Alto is committed to working with, and in ensuring the sustainability of, Neighbors Abroad and that he looks forward to working with Neighbors Abroad in these efforts.

One dead as worst storm in 13 years batters the Netherlands

The most severe gales to hit the Netherlands since 1990 killed one woman in Amsterdam on Monday and severely disrupted public transport throughout the country. One woman was killed while out walking on the city's Herengracht after she was hit by a tree. A man was taken to hospital with serious injuries. Train services to and from Amsterdam were disrupted because of storm damage and the city's tram services were shut down because of damage to the overhead cables.

DutchNews.nl (10.28.13)

The storm in the Twente region has caused a lot of trouble. Trees blew down and lying branches lie on the road. There was no train service. Traffic jams were caused by the fallen trees. Police and fire report that Monday afternoon about 265 reports of damage and disturbance. The number is increasing.

Twente Tubentia (10.28.13)

Groeten and tot ziens,

Joni Reid



ALBI

Celebrating the Holiday Season in France

In contrast to the July-August period when French people are all in their cars on the road trying to go on vacation at the same time, December is the time for all the families to get together and celebrate. As in many places in the world, this consists of two back-to-back events: Christmas and New Years. However, each has some special French flavor that I would like to share with you.

Christmas in France similar to what Thanksgiving is in the US: an important time for all the families to be together, and a time where children are the little kings and queens of the universe. All the young children have made sure to write a letter to *Père Noël* (the French version of Santa Claus) where they explain how good they have been during the year and what presents they would like to receive in return. *Père Noël* is then expected to bring the presents during the night, climbing down the chimney (a challenge in most modern houses) and putting presents under the Christmas tree (there are no stockings in France for that purpose) when the kids have been particularly good during the year.

On Christmas Eve, a very important activity for families who are Roman Catholic is to go together as a family to the *Messe de Minuit* (Midnight Mass). This is worth noting, as in France few people regularly go to church during the rest of the year. Not so for Christmas as this is an age-old tradition no one would dare miss.

The next morning, Christmas Day, the children discover and open their presents hidden under the tree and the adults prepare for what the French are well-known for: enjoying themselves with gourmet cuisine. This translates into spending many hours around a large family table enjoying each other's company and feasting on many delicacies. These vary from region to region, but typically would include champagne, raw oysters from Normandy or Brittany and snails from Bourgogne in the center of France. Now you can understand why most, if not all French, crave these small creatures after years and years of training!

New Year's is the second year-end holiday celebration, and is more of an adult event nowadays. People will typically find a babysitter (or grandparents) to take care of the children and go out to fancy restaurants or private parties, treating themselves to good food (that may again include champagne, oysters and snails) while they discreetly check their watch to go kiss everyone in sight



TSUCHIURA

Konnichiwa!

I have received a letter of invitation from Mayor Nakagawa of Tsuchiura regarding their 24th Kasumigaura International Marathon. The Marathon will be held on April 20, 2014 in Tsuchiura City, Japan. One marathon runner from Palo Alto is invited to Tsuchiura to compete from April 17-April 22, 2014, and the invitation includes round trip airfare and six days' accommodations. The letter was delivered to Mayor Scharff's Office and we are looking for a runner to represent Palo Alto. If you know anyone who is interested, call the Mayor's Office.

Japanese exchange students are coming on March 15, 2014. 10 girls and 6 boys are coming and 15 host families from JLS and Jordan Middle Schools are set to welcome them. However, we are still looking for one more host family for a female student. We need a host family with a female middle school student at JLS, Jordan or Terman. Let me know if you know someone who is interested in hosting.

Arigato,
Keiko Nakajima

The city of Tsuchiura has once again invited a marathon runner to compete in their annual marathon.

See the article above.



Albi continued

(on both cheeks, the French way) at exactly midnight and share wishes for the year to come.

Another tradition which I find is different between the U.S. and France is the timing of Holiday cards, letters or emails that people send to each other. In the US, you would typically send and receive them before Christmas. In France people are professional procrastinators in this matter and you are lucky to receive them before end of the year. End of January is the unwritten acceptable deadline!

À bientôt,
Michel Campmas



OAXACA

STUDENT EXCHANGE 2014 TO OAXACA—

Time to get your applications in NOW! We had a Family Information Meeting in mid-November, but if you missed it, get an application packet from a high school Spanish teacher or call or email me at (650)493-3798 or marionb@sonic.net.

Applications are due the week of January 6. Please tell your children, grandchildren, neighbor's children, etc. about this great opportunity.

Thank you to all of you who have replied to our once-a-year appeal for funds for the children's projects. If you haven't sent in your donation yet, do it NOW.

I have received an email from the Albergue that two more young ladies are being launched into careers, and will graduate from University in January, thanks to the Education Fund which NA supports through our dedicated endowment. The graduates are Maribel in Business Administration and Benita in Computer Science. Both have been residents of the Albergue from a very young age. Way to Go!!

Trip plans are proceeding, (albeit slowly)! You really will hear news from us soon!

Hope you had a great Holiday Season—any holiday you choose...

¡Hasta Luego!

Marion Mandell



LINKÖPING

There has been no official activity with Linköping in the past two months. I did get a message from Lars Drougge (now out of the system) that Birgita had died. Years ago she was a very nice lady, but recently she had very advanced Alzheimer's disease, so her passing was a release for her and her family.

Barbara and Joe Evans are trying to contact some cyclists in Linköping to arrange an exchange similar to the one with Albi, France. Several people from Western Wheelers have already shown interest in such an exchange.

Bruce Wilner

Map of the Philippines showing the location of Palo and Tacloban and the locations mentioned in the account on the cover and page 7 of the complicated journey to deliver supplies and medical assistance to Palo, Leyte.journey on the cover and page 7.

- Manila
- Matnog, Sorsogon
- Allen, Samar
- San Juanico Bridge
- Tacloban City
- Palo



Palo Relief Effort *(continued from cover)*

The all-volunteer team, led by Pahinungod Director, trauma surgeon and PHI Brod, Dr. Eric Talens, was composed of:

11 doctors, 1 dentist, 2 EMT's and Information officer from Manila

2 volunteers at the site who were typhoon victims themselves

5 mountaineers who brought their own supplies and provided housekeeping chores for the whole team (cooking, cleaning, and setting camp)



The team was prepared to be self-sufficient with their own food and water for the entire trip.

The 8-vehicle caravan included a truck to transport the relief goods and medical supplies and a bus to bring the personnel. A separate team of 15 personnel in 6 vehicles joined en route, to provide security as the team traversed the danger areas. This group was self-sufficient in terms of food and water. All Pahinungod volunteers are insured. They fill out personal data sheets for beneficiaries just before each mission. The safety of the volunteer is paramount in any mission.

The Team left Philippine General Hospital at 11 p.m. of Nov. 17, 2013. The long queue for the ferry boats measured at least 12 kilometers. The caravan was allowed to bypass this through previous special arrangements. In spite of this, there was a 7-hour wait at the port due to the heavy vehicular and passenger traffic in the ferries. Provided with additional security (1 vehicle from Armed Forces of the Philippines) from Allen port in Samar, the team convoy headed for Leyte and arrived at Palo after a 29-hour journey.

Palo, like Tacloban, was virtually a ghost town. Many inhabitants, with resources and relatives in other areas had already evacuated. The lack of food, water and electrical power, had shut down most of the operations in the municipality including the barely functioning Local government units.

The medical mission and relief distribution were conducted at the grounds of the Sacred Heart Seminary in Palo, coordinated with the mayor's office. The mission started at about 2:30 p.m. in the afternoon and continued only until sundown, since there was no electricity. Approximately 500 patients were treated.

Relief distribution, was carried out until 7 p.m. at night when all relief items were distributed. All volunteers, including bus and truck drivers as well as local volunteers were involved in the distribution.

The whole mission crew and security teams billeted for the night in the Iglesia ni Kristo grounds in Palo, Leyte. where they were allowed to park the vehicles, set-up camp, cook and eat their evening meal and breakfast, as well as use the toilet and bath facilities.

The team left early the next morning to deliver the residual medications to Eastern Visayas Medical Center in Tacloban. The hospital staff there was short on food since their supplies were taken by looters. The team left all the remaining food and water with the hospital staff when they left Tacloban.

The trip back to Manila took less than 24 hours and was uneventful, except for difficulty in docking back at Matnog port due to the rough

sea. The team was back in Manila at 2 p.m., Nov. 21, 2013.





Neighbors Abroad Plus Community Events Calendar

January 2014

Monday, 6th

Oaxaca High School Student Exchange Application
Deadline. See Oaxaca column

Wednesday, 8th, 7:00 p.m.

Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting; Cubberley Comm.
Center 4000 Middlefield Rd. Rm. A6, Palo Alto

Wednesday, 15th, 7:00 p.m.

Neighbors Abroad members and guests are
invited to attend a free public lecture sponsored
by the Peninsula Chapter of the World Affairs
Council on Wednesday, January 15th on
"Sweden and the Case for Liberal Conservatism"

with Goran Montan, Member of the Swedish
Parliament. Refreshments: 7:00 pm; Program:
7:30 - 9:00 pm. Site: Los Altos Youth Center, 1
South San Antonio Rd., Los Altos."

February 2014

Wednesday, 12th, 7:00 p.m.

Neighbors Abroad Board Meeting; Cubberley Comm.
Center 4000 Middlefield Rd. Rm. A6, Palo Alto

Next El Chisme Deadline—February 15, 2014

- Send your articles to Mary Ashley
- E-mail: meashley@pacbell.net
- 3114 Cowper St., Palo Alto, CA 94306

EL CHISME de Neighbors Abroad



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NEIGHBORS ABROAD is a volunteer organization which maintains and carries out the activities of the City of Palo Alto's officially recognized Sister City Program with Palo in the province of Leyte in the Philippines, Oaxaca in Mexico, Enschede in the Netherlands, Linköping in Sweden, Albi in France, and Tsuchiura in Japan. Its activities have served and continue to serve the community interests of international and intercultural understanding.

Barbara & Joe Evans, Co-Presidents	856-0618
Jim Newton, Treasurer	854-4360
Mary Ashley, Newsletter	494-1829

<http://neighborsabroad.org>