



EDITORIAL

Golden era for infrastructures

Amidst negative reports on killings as a result of the war against illegal drugs, corruption and controversies, reports that the government of President Rodrigo Duterte has come up with ambitious infrastructures program with an unprecedented tab of P8 to P9 trillion from 2017 to 2022 is a welcome respite. The program was unveiled by the economic managers of the Duterte administration during what they organized as Duterte-nomics forum in Pasay City

Based on initial reports, the program involves the construction of the country's first ever subway transport system that will link the traffic-congested cities of Metro Manila from Quezon City to the emerging financial center called Bonifacio Global City and eventually the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. The subway system, similar to that of New York City, will reduce travel from Quezon City to Taguig City of one to two hours to merely 15 to 20 minutes as it will avoid the monstrous traffic along EDSA and major thoroughfares. Once completed by the second quarter of 2024, the first phase of the subway system, which will have 13 stops, is expected to cater to 350,000 passengers daily. The 25-kilometer subway's proposed stops are Mindanao Avenue, North Avenue, Quezon Avenue, East Avenue, Anonas, Katipunan, Ortigas North, Ortigas South, Kalayaan, Bonifacio Global City, Cayetano Boulevard, Food Terminal Inc. and the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. The project reportedly will be financed with government funds plus development funds from the Japanese government.

Other big ticket projects are expressways, bridges, railways, airports and seaports that will link Luzon to the Visayas and Mindanao. The rail systems involve the construction of the 2,000-kilometer Mindanao rail whose first phase is from Tagum to Davao and Digos cities, the 100-kilometer Philippine National Railways (PNR) North Rail that would connect Tutuban in Manila with Clark in Pampanga and the South Rail from Manila to Bicol. Once completed in 2021, the PNR North Rail will cater to around 350,000 passengers daily, who can reach Clark from Tutuban in 55 minutes. Another project of the Duterte administration is Luzon Spine Expressway that would cut travel time between La Union and Bicol to under 12 hours.

While the projects may take long to build, the people certainly welcome the good news as they will in the long run will benefit from them through faster movement of people and goods that eventually would mean opening up more opportunities and economic improvement.

United in teaching good

Healthier families and safer communities drive ALLICE Alliance for Community Empowerment to stage twice yearly events free and open to the public and purely on donation.

Every spring, the nonprofit all-volunteer team focuses on families in partnership with faith-based organizations. This year, the Kumares & Kumpares, as they call themselves, are collaborating with Grace United Methodist Church in San Francisco to educate the congregation on ways of enhancing family dynamics.

"We look at this event as a service that should not be missed," Rev. Alex Cambe, Grace United Methodist Church pastor shared his elation at hosting the 11th Our Family, Our Future 1-3:30 p.m., Saturday, May 13, at the church on 2540 Taraval Street in San Francisco.

"Being a faith community we set examples not just by saying out loud in the pulpit but more importantly by practicing it as followers of Christ," Cambe explained. "As the Holy Scripture teaches, it is requiring us to seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God (Micah 6:8). This is who we are as a United Methodist Church particularly here at Grace. We have not perfected yet but we are trying to be better. And practice makes it so. For such cause, our church will be more than happy to host this especially for future 'ministry' together."

The event marks ALLICE's widening outreach. Twice, the organization has partnered with Holy Child & St. Martin Episcopal Church on Southgate Avenue in Daly City. Touched by the volunteer educators' passion, HCSM pastor Rev. Leonard Oakes embraced the group and its mission, opting to be a full-fledged, duly-sworn Kumpare. He joins Rev. V. Mark Reburiano, pastor of St. Isabella Catholic Church in Novato, as the team's faith leaders.

Rev. Oakes, in fact, led ALLICE to Rev. Cambe, whose desire to broaden his church's alliance with humanitarian groups is well known.

"We're thrilled to present our dramatization of healthy interaction with community-based resource providers present to consult about their free programs and services at the beautiful and welcoming church led by Reverend Cambe," said Jennifer Jimenez Wong, 2017 ALLICE president and a licensed marriage and family therapist.

The team is dedicating this coming event to their departed pioneer Kumares Alice Bulos and Erlinda Galeon, who passed away last year. They were committed to bring enlightenment and healing to couples and families, to their last days.

For many the Philippine Consulate General is an important lifeline. To troubled families unfamiliar with area support systems, the consulate has been a bridge to service agencies.

This is why the Consulate has been a founding sponsor of ALLICE, joined today by Seton Medical Center – Part of Verity Health System, Union Bank and Pilipino Bayanihan Resource Center.

General Henry S. Bensurto Jr. will deliver the keynote address. Retired KTVU Channel 2 News Founding partners South Bay bureau chief and journalism professor Lloyd LaCuesta and and KGO TV news reporter Frances Dinglasan will once again co-host the program.

San Mateo Behavioral Health & Recovery Services, Philippine News, Philippines Today, Positively Filipino, GMA News Online, Rappler.com, The Filipino Channel, Lucky Chances, Moonstar, Noah's Bagels and Chalet Ticino are this event's donors.

Some 15 service providers led HICAP of San Mateo and HICAP of San Francisco will attend. Kaiser Permanente Filipino Association will provide free health screenings. Refreshments will be served. Raffle prizes will be drawn.

For more information, call Philippine Consulate General 415-433-6666, Grace United Methodist Church 415-731-3050, or Pilipino Bayanihan Resource Cen- (Continued on page 26)



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PG&E Urges Customers to Call 811 before Replacing Trees or Repairing Property Damaged by Storms in Bay Area

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. — After a series of late-season storms that toppled trees and damaged homes throughout the Bay Area, Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) reminds customers to call 811 before replacing trees or starting any repair project that involves digging.

“Whether you are planning to do it yourself or hire a professional, you should always call 811 before each job to have underground utility lines marked,” said Don Hall, senior manager of PG&E’s San Jose and De Anza divisions. “It’s a free and easy service that protects public safety and helps avoid damage to utility lines, service interruptions and fines.”

Last year, there were more than 1,735 strikes on PG&E’s underground infrastructure. Of those dig-ins, more than 55 percent had not called ahead to have underground utility lines properly marked. In 2016, the average cost to those who damaged PG&E’s underground utility lines, including fines and repairs, amounted to \$7,500.

Customers, excavators and contractors can also get a free safe-digging ticket using the new and convenient tool: 811express.com. Contractors are required by law to contact 811 at least two working days prior to excavation. Failing to contact 811 may result in costly fines and project delays.

The top four cities for dig-ins to utility lines in Bay Area without a call to 811 this year are:

1. San Francisco: 21
2. Oakland: 16
3. San Jose: 13
4. Berkeley: 9

More than 181 dig-ins have occurred year to date in PG&E’s service area because a call to 811 wasn’t made.

Electric Infrastructure Damaged by Vegetation during 2017 Storms

Since the beginning of 2017, the Bay Area has experienced more than 1,450 power outages caused by vegetation – impacting a total of 545,125 customers. The vast ma-

jority of outages were caused by tree root failure often associated with saturated soil. Douglas firs, redwoods and Monterey pines were the primary species involved, with limb failure being the second most-common cause of outages.

Breakdown of vegetation-caused outages in the Bay Area this year:

Area	Outages	Customers Affected
North Bay	688	205,017
Peninsula	273	94,892
South Bay	268	110,872
East Bay	204	126,674
San Francisco	17	7,670
TOTAL	1,450	545,125

In 2016, the Bay Area experienced 1,074 outages caused by vegetation – affecting 297,590 customers. In just a little more than 3 months, PG&E has already experienced approximately 1.5 times as many vegetation-caused outages as it did in 2016.

To help crews locate and remove vegetation that toppled on or near electric infrastructure this year, PG&E brought in additional resources from its Yosemite division. Approximately 200 tree contractors will continue scouring the Bay Area until Friday, April 21, when vegetation work is expected to be completed.

About PG&E

Pacific Gas and Electric Company, a subsidiary of PG&E Corporation (NYSE:P-CG), is one of the largest combined natural gas and electric energy companies in the United States. Based in San Francisco, with more than 20,000 employees, the company delivers some of the nation’s cleanest energy to nearly 16 million people in Northern and Central California. For more information, visit www.pge.com/ and pge.com/news.

Upside

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ter 650-992-9110. See the psa elsewhere in this issue or visit www.allicekumare.com.

Cherie M. Querol Moreno is an award-winning journalist, community educator and founder-executive director of ALLICE.



Rev. Alex Cambe (center), pastor of Grace United Methodist Church, welcomes ALLICE Kumares & Kumpares, from left: Bettina Santos Yap, Joanne del Rosario, Allen Capalla, Jennifer Jimenez Wong, Elsa Agasid and Rev. Leonard Oakes.

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883 Sneath Lane
Suite 227 San Bruno, CA 94066
Tel. 650.872.3200
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