

# The Red Feather News

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## From the Editor

Hi all,

Sometimes when I look into the papers, I can't help but feel how lucky we are living on this small island called Singapore. We don't have to worry about hurricanes and earthquakes. And when the tsunami wave came, we were safe because we are surrounded and protected by other islands and continents.

How transient are the things of this world, even life itself. One minute we have it all, the next minute all is gone. How does it feel to have everything taken away, one wonders and the heart aches to think of that. I looked at

all the things in my room. I could imagine myself, striped of all these things, staying in a bare room, living simply. But I wouldn't bear it if anything untoward happened to the people around me.

Then, there's this man who plunged 12 stories down to his own death, whose wife and two kids were found dead. It's a horrible revelation of what a human mind can or cannot tolerate. A man who loved his family would do them no harm. It's logic to me. Yet, this man, who would have loved his family, had come to the end of his logic. One small action leads to another. It

could begin with trying out his luck, or having some fun, at the gambling table.

Who's to say that a man, well educated on the vices of gambling will not travel down the same path. We're all easily tempted. Trouble comes and robs us not in one big tsunami wave strike but as little ripples started by one seemingly harmless action—a small step taken in the wrong direction.

We are safe from many natural disasters, but by having a casino in Singapore, will we be opening a Pandora's box?

## Reunion Celebration and a Lucky Draw

On the 20 Feb 05, Deputy Director, Public Affairs Corporate Development Dept of HDB, Mr. Tan Heng Huay and some friends organized a special event for residents of the Singapore Cheshire Home.

It was special because the guests were all former residents and volunteers of the Singapore Red Cross Home. You see, many of us were from Red Cross Home. It was like turning back the clock and feeling young again. We mingled and chatted. There was so much news to exchange. We were treated to a sumptuous buffet lunch catered for all residents, TIL clients, staff and guests.

After lunch, while we were enjoying some yu sheng (raw fish salad), a member of the group entertained us with a couple of Hokkien songs.

Straight from the entertainment and preliminary lucky draw, we gathered outside the hall to watch the highlight of the afternoon – a drum performance and a lion and dragon dance. The troop of 12 drummers put up a breathtaking show of drum percussion. It was something very different from the lion dances that we had seen. The organisation and precise timing were excellent. The troop kept us glued to our seats with their stunts and showmanship. I personally enjoyed the dragon dance.

After the show, we resumed the lucky draw. By then, all the residents were excited, because the top few prizes were MP3 players. The moment of truth arrived! Name after name were called out amidst the "Ooh"s and "Aah"s. In the end, it was Rona who won the first prize, a Creative MP3 player. Though some were disappointed at not winning the MP3 players, there were smiles on the faces of many who won CD players, table fans, etc. At the end of the event, we were also given an Ang Pow each.

It was an exhausting but enjoyable Sunday. We hope there'll be more of such gathering...and such lucky draws. For those who did not win any prize, better luck next time. ~Osland

## Hydroponics 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Our hydroponics farm, started on 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 94, marked its 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary last year.

The idea to start this farm came from some Management Committee Members. The objective was to introduce new soilless planting skills and to provide a form of activity for the residents. After viewing a set of slides presented by Oh Chin Huat Farm, a green house was set up with help from the farm on 4<sup>th</sup> Nov 94. The Tanah Merah Country Club funded the project.

Our team of modern farmers consists of 2 staff members, 7 residents and some volunteers. Mr. Ang was our pioneer volunteer for this, having joined us when our farm started. Some years later, his wife, Mrs. Ang and Mrs. Tan her friend, and a few other volunteers joined the team.

The volunteers were enthusiastic and diligent workers. After each harvest, they washed the entire system thoroughly. On a planting day, Mr. and Mrs. Ang would head for the farm to collect the seedlings and nutrients for us. Staff members and volunteers would help to fill the tanks with water mixed with nutrients. They also helped to initiate the system. Residents and staff do the planting and the harvesting of the crops.

The vegetables we usually grow are spinach, xiao bai chye, chye sin and kai lan. These vegetables are easy to manage and are more resistant to diseases and parasite. Fungus and spidermite are the common diseases of the vegetables. Presentable vegetables are sold to the Singapore Cold Storage. We consume only what could not be sold.

We would like to welcome more volunteers to join our modern farming team of farmers. Let the greenhouse be green forever.

~Sunny Sun

## Editorial Board

Editor: Miss Elizabeth Tan      Members: Mr. Stephen Sng, Mr. Michael Lim,      Layout: Mr. Neo Ah Her  
Mr. Loke Peng Mun, Mr. Chan Yu Leong

## DEEPARAYA

November is a very good month for the residents of Cheshire Home because it is the month that Deepavali and Hari Raya fall on.

Deepavali is the day where the Hindus celebrate their redemption from all evils. It is called the Festival of Lights. The Hindus light oil lamps to pray to their God for forgiveness and a long and happy life.

Hari Raya is the day where the Muslims celebrate their new year after a month of fasting. They will go to mosques to offer prayers and ask for forgiveness from Allah, their God. They will also seek forgiveness from their elders. After this is done, they don their new attire and celebrate with a great feast.

Then, they will go visiting their relatives and friends.

As Deepavali falls on 11th and Hari Raya on 14<sup>th</sup> of November last year, one resident's brother gathered some of his friends to celebrate both occasions for us. Thus, the name "DEEPARAYA". There was an Indian band to entertain us. They played Tamil music and songs most of us would not understand, but nevertheless we enjoyed a different music and culture. Then, there was a buffet dinner for the residents and the staff.

We expressed our sincere appreciation to our Maniam's brother and his friends for spending their precious time with us. May they be blessed richly and have long and happy lives.

~Michael Lim

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### My Art Competition

7<sup>th</sup> August 2004 was an exciting and happy day for me. A volunteer couple accompanied me to Suntec City to participate in the T-shirt Design Competition hosted by the gala affair: Charity Fiesta 2004. The event was held at the prominent Fountain of Wealth. The guest-of-honour was Dr Vivian Balakrishnan.

I was thrilled to be involved in this exciting event. I had to come up with an innovative design for the Charity Fiesta T-shirt. With the constant guidance of my art teacher, volunteer Helena Tan, I was confident I could excel in this contest.

My creative design was of an opened hand, depicting a giving gesture. I painted it in many colours. The colourful hand represented giving and sharing, no matter what skin colour you

are of.

When it was time for the results, I was apprehensive but I prayed hard and believed I had done my best. To my great delight, I received the second prize! It was a \$100 CK Tang voucher, a set of body lotion and a toy orange flower made of flannel. Along with the prize, I was given the honour to design a logo to represent the Fireworks display in Singapore.

It was a satisfying day. I had great fun and I made a remarkable achievement. I enjoyed myself and I look forward to more art competitions in the future.

~Katherine Han

[Katherine wrote this article with the help of volunteer Miss Vermillion Goh. -Editor]

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### Newsflash!

09/10/04-- ASHRAM community project in conjunction with the Yellow Ribbon project. We were treated to a magic show, songs and music entertainment and a dinner prepared by ASHRAM.

21/10/04-- International Chef's Day. We were given lunch specially prepared by the chefs from the Singapore Chefs Association.

21/11/04-- 5 residents attended the True Hearts Charity Show, a Community Chest Event.

25/11/04-- A visit by staff and residents of Japanese Cheshire Homes.

12/12/04-- A dinner treat at Whitebait and kale given by Mr. Keith Loh and his family.

22/12/04-- IDA (Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore) adopted the Home for 2 years. 20 residents attended the adoption ceremony at their head office at Suntec City.

26/12/04-- 4 residents were given tickets to the European Fly ing Circles by NTUC club.

07/01/05-- A Charity POP Concert "Pure Music Memories". 10 residents were invited by Assisi Home Hospice.

29/01/05-- Shopping at Causeway Point and dinner at Thai Restaurant organised by SCH volunteers.

04/02/05-- Chinese new year celebration, fun and entertainment given by ASS/AETI (Air Force School / Air Engineering & Technical Institute).

13/02/05-- A chinese new year party given by Jeffrey and friends from the Stock Exchange at the Singapore Teachers' Union.

23/02/05-- A trip to River Hong Bao organised by IDA.

24/02/05-- Police officers from the Serangoon Police Centre visit and provide entertainment.

22/05/05-- Vesak Great Joy Party given by Meritus Mandarin Singapore.

#### **Staff — The comings and goings**

We bid farewell to our driver Mr. Ng Weng San on 07/12/04. Mr. Gary Wong and Mr. Chow Kum Wah are our new drivers. They came on 26/07/04 and 26/01/05 respectively.

T.A. Mr. Delmar returned to Philippines on 15/01/05. C.A.s Mr. N. Priyankara and Mr. Deepthi Sudasham returned home to Sri Lanka on 07/03/05 and 11/03/05.

C.A. Ms Roheni will be leaving us on 17/05/05 when her contract ends.

We welcome several new staff.

From the Philippines: T.A.s Mr. Cesar, Ms Carolyn, Ms Simona and Ms Elenita joined the workforce in May last year.

C.A.s Mr. Julie and Mr. Eduardo joined us this year on 18/02/05, and T.A. Ms Katherina came on 04/03/05.

From Sri Lanka, C.A. Mr. Anthany came in July last year.

We also have a Singaporean, C.A. Mr. Tay Hai Hua joined us on 14/01/05, and a T.A. from Myanmar, Mr. Salai Ye Htut joined us on 07/02/05.

We also bid farewell to our Social Service Coordinator, Ms Stella Tang who left us on 24/03/05. She will be replaced by a Programme Coordinator, Mr. Nigel Choo Eng Kok who will start work on 28/04/05.

Social Worker, Ms Ang Seow Ping will leave us on 01/04/05. She will be replaced by Mrs. Agnes Yu-Lee Ming Chyi who will start work on 18/04/05.

\*T.A.-Therapy Aide C.A.-Care Attendent