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ISSUE **THREE** 2013

SINGAPORE

MICA (P) 136/03/2013

RED CROSS

NEWS



THE RED CROSS
CONNECTION

EDITORIAL

From the vibrant cover, you'd guess this issue of Red Cross News is about PEOPLE.

Indeed, we've had the opportunity to meet some very special ones in the past months. Some made us cry, some made us cheer, and the others made us feel so proud. We are glad to present their stories in this newsletter.

We spoke with a superhero grandma who is singlehandedly caring for her grandchildren (Page 4), a couple of passionate (and athletic) fundraisers (Page 6), a young mum who is alive

today thanks to your gift of blood (Page 14), and a Red Cross Youth turned Campus Superstar (Page 15).

We pay a special tribute to the nursing aides at Red Cross Home of the Disabled on the occasion of Nurses Day (Page 12), salute the winners of the RCY Current Affairs Competition 2013 (Page 11).

Our volunteer first aiders at the recent National Day Parade share their experiences on Page 10.

Our volunteers kept busy with overseas humanitarian projects that included art therapy (Page

16) and gave free medical treatment to villagers in Pulau Sembur, Indonesia (Page 19). We opened the Isobe Community Centre in Japan (Page 17) for 2,000 residents, and supported the Cow Bank Project in Vietnam (Page 18) by giving cows to disadvantaged households.

Lastly, special thanks to our youth blood donors (see page 6) and volunteer photographer Kelvin J. Lim for the amazing cover photo.

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a SNAP! creative

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PS: Know of people in your midst whom we could speak to? Let us know! Email sondra.foo@redcross.org.sg



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18 PLOUGHING THE WAY TO A SUSTAINABLE INCOME Vietnamese villagers now have cows to sustain their incomes.

19 VOLUNTARY DOCTORS AND DENTISTS TO THE RESCUE For villagers in Pulau Sembur, getting affordable dental and medical treatments are a challenge. Thankfully, they got theirs for free!

On page 19 of the last issue, 'First Aid Practice Made Perfect', Ms Doreen Tan was quoted as saying, "I then checked the casualty, response, airway, breathing and Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)". That is incorrect. It should be "I then checked the casualty for response, airway and breathing. Cardio pulmonary resuscitation was not required as the casualty was conscious and sobbing in pain."

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2013

A

t this year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 20 May at Red Cross House, Singapore Red Cross shared the achievements of 2012 and its future direction. There were also some changes in the Council. Two members, Mr N Sreenivasan and Mr Paul Ho have stepped down from the Council. Dr Mark Hon and Dr Chan Soon Keng were welcomed into the Council.

OFISIAL

Get-Together



On 20 June, 33 volunteers turned up for 'Ofisial' Red Cross Volunteer Get-Together at Red Cross House. Ms Cecilia Tan, Singapore Red Cross (SRC) Deputy Secretary General, Operations, shared with them about the services and future direction of the society and the areas they can volunteer in. They learnt how volunteering with SRC could be both fulfilling and fun!



Besides that, the volunteers also engaged in interactive activities like photo-taking at the photo booth with their new-found friends of SRC. They also signed up for basic training and SRC membership.

The volunteers also went on a heritage tour to learn about the role that SRC played in serving the vulnerable in our community and beyond over the past 64 years.

A Grandmother's Dream

By DOMINIC LEONG, *Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross*
Photos by CHRISTABEL HENG, *Community Services*
and JESSICA ONG, *Red Cross Home for the Disabled*



“Sometimes I feel like giving up,” said the elderly lady as tears welled up in her eyes, her voice on the edge of breaking.

For 78-year-old Madam Tan (not her real name), almost every day is a struggle. At an age when most of her peers are enjoying their golden years and playing with their grandchildren, the septuagenarian has to constantly find ways to make ends meet for herself and a 12-year-old grandson, Gerald (not his real name).

Despite only earning a paltry sum a month as a part-time kitchen-helper, Madam Tan does not wish to apply for government assistance and gets by on her minimal wages and occasional allowances from her married daughter. Another grandson, Mr George Han (not his real name), recently dropped out of school to work as an odd-job worker to help provide for the family.

“We survive by eating mainly instant noodles. Sometimes when Gerald wants a treat like a chicken wing, I skip a meal to buy it for him. He’s a good boy and offers to share, but I always tell him I just ate and I’m full so that he can enjoy it himself”

Madam Tan (not her real name)

This is a situation that not many Singaporeans encounter, let alone contend with themselves.

Unfortunately, for people like Madam Tan and her grandchildren, it is an everyday reality.

She has to care for her grandchildren due to an increasingly common phenomenon of the skipped generation, whereby children are left in the care of their grandparents as their parents are absent – either through death, illness, abandonment or incarceration. After his mother abandoned him and his father was incarcerated, Madam Tan has been taking care of Gerald since he was just 10 days’ old. Mr George Han came into her care in his teens after his father walked out on him.

The Singapore Red Cross has recently started Meals with Love, a programme under the FoodAid service, to help families like Madam Tan’s. It focuses on supporting those who may have fallen through the cracks of other welfare schemes, targeting those with per capita income of S\$400 or less and belong to either skipped generation families, single-parent families or the working poor.

Aside from S\$250 worth of food each month, Meals with Love also encourages volunteers to form bonds with the families and provide them with supplementary support. For example, this can come in the form of tutoring young children or helping the seniors with household chores.

Another aspect of Meals with Love that sets it apart from other food ration programmes is that there is an emphasis on giving the beneficiaries nutritious food, as this is of great importance to the target families – growing children need to eat well to help them realise their full potential, and the



Another grateful beneficiary of our FoodAid service



grandparents and the working poor need to eat proper food so as to remain healthy.

The programme is only possible with the strong support of sponsors and dedicated volunteers – both are just as integral; Meals with Love would simply not work without either element.

Several organisations have stepped forward to support the programme. Amongst them are Sabana Real Estate Investment Management Pte Ltd and NTUC FairPrice Foundation.

"Meals with Love extends a helping hand to the less fortunate in our society with the provision of food and daily essentials. This objective is aligned with NTUC FairPrice Foundation's thrust in reaching out to the poor and needy by providing relief through making basic necessities available and the provision of assistance," said Ms Angeline Kwong, Manager (Sponsorship), NTUC FairPrice Foundation.

"Also, the programme provides not just any type of meals, but healthy and wholesome meals that have been recommended by nutritionists. As these beneficiaries are not receiving adequate financial assistance, the help extended is even more targeted and reaches out to those who may have fallen through the safety net of our social system. Together, FairPrice Foundation hopes that we can all contribute to making a better life for the community," added Ms Kwong.

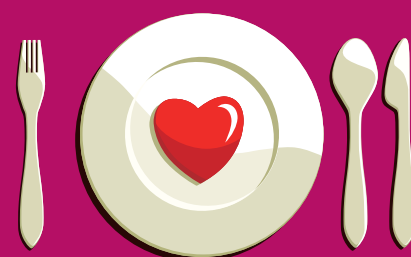
Volunteers are also heavily involved in the programme, as they have to form relationships with not just the caregivers but also the grandchildren.

Ms Laura Lye, a volunteer who works with another family where the grandmother looks after seven grandchildren all under the age of 14, related her experience visiting. "At one point of time, granny got slightly emotional as she thanked us, expressing her tiredness from taking care of the seven grandchildren, with slightly watery eyes," she said.

"It was a timely reminder to myself that we really do have many people in our midst living below the poverty line. The next time you see a group of children playing at the void deck, or an aged granny at the market, do remember that each of them may have a story to tell," said Ms Lye.

For Madam Tan, the story is simple. "I don't ask for much. The only thing I want out of life is to see Gerald grow up, and for George to get married," said Mdm Tan.

It is not an unreasonable thing to ask by any stretch of the imagination, but difficult for some to achieve given their circumstances. However, with our FoodAid service, SRC hopes to change that and make it possible for our beneficiaries' everyday dreams to come true.



Want to make a difference in someone's life? Donate to or volunteer with the Singapore Red Cross today so that we can help to strengthen programmes such as

Meals with Love!

If you are keen to make a difference, let us know how you wish to help by emailing enquiry@redcross.org.sg with your details today. Every cent and every effort counts.

A cartoon illustration of a pink piggy bank with a gold coin on its back. The piggy bank has a smiling face with large eyes and a small pink nose. The background is a solid light blue.

On behalf of our beneficiaries, hearty thanks and hugs!

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 (b) You are entitled to reject the BO's debit instruction if my/our account does not have sufficient funds and charge me/us a fee for this. You may also at your discretion allow the debit even if this results in an overdraft on the account and impose charges accordingly.
 (c) This authorisation will remain in force until terminated by your written notice sent to my/our address last known to you or upon receipt of my/our written revocation through the BO.

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Name of Approving Officer

Authorised Signature

Date _____

**** For thumbprints, please go to the branch with your identification**

* Please delete where inapplicable

Name (Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms/Mdm*): _____
(Please use BLOCK LETTERS and underline your surname)

NRIC/FIN No:

Address: _____

Office No: _____

H/P No: _____

Home No: _____

Please put \$ _____ in my e-piggy bank every month, for the Singapore Red Cross to Serve Humanity and Save Lives!

Alvin Ee, Goh Minhui, Isebel Ang, Cho Kit Eng and Wong Jun Sheng have two things in common.

1. They give blood regularly.
2. They are connected on connect.redcross.sg

Join the network of lifesavers on Facebook and start receiving Red Cross alerts in your news feed. Donate, share with friends and be a hero.

A single donation can save three lives, your connections
can help so many more.

Blood Connection



From Canada with love

By SONDRA FOO, *Corporate Communications and Marketing*
Photos by MR MICHAEL REDENBACH



Mr Michael Redenbach (center) was cycling with his cousin and ex-colleague

Ever been chased by a ferocious dog on a cycling trip? Or ever been scared that your wife may deliver your baby while you are thousands of miles from the hospital?

Mr Michael Redenbach, a former Trade Commissioner with the High Commission of Canada, 2009 – 2012, experienced all these. To keep in touch with friends he had in Singapore, Mr Redenbach organised a 14-day, 1,400 km Capital-2-Capital Cycling Fundraiser from Ottawa to Washington D.C. to raise funds for Singapore Red Cross' Red Cross Home Disabled, TransportAid and FoodAid services.

On 29 June, Mr Redenbach embarked on the trip with his cousin, Chris and a former colleague, Mr Brian Dobie (who was cycling the first leg with them). The trio cycled 300 km over three days through eastern Ontario, Monteregion Ouest in Quebec and northern New York state. They then took a ferry across to Burlington on 2 July.

The next leg of the journey was a test of endurance and physical strength as Mr Redenbach and his cousin weathered through the mountainous region of Vermont, Great Barrington, Massachusetts, New Milford and Connecticut. Just as he was on the brink of collapse, he learnt there were only two more miles to go. "It felt like a big kick in the shin. I got back on the bike, geared down, slowly and painfully made my way up to the summit," he shared.

When they got to the coast, they hopped onto a ferry to Long Island and then into New York City. Their welcome respite came when they had great food, drinks and a breathtaking view. They cycled the length of the New Jersey Shore, took a quick ferry across the Delaware Bay, headed west across Delaware, Maryland and into D.C.

Just when they thought they would have an easier time cycling along the 30 km New Jersey Shore, it gave way to tacky boardwalks, lots of construction and bad roads. After 250 km, long detours, terrible motels, they hopped onto a ferry and left the Garden State.

11 July was an unforgettable day for the cousins. They cycled through the rain from Milton, Delaware to Grasonville continuously wringing their jackets and wearing them again. Later, he had a scare when Ottawa General Hospital called. Fortunately, the call was not about the delivery of his baby, it was just to complete the admission paperwork for his eight months' pregnant wife. That afternoon, he narrowly escaped from a ferocious dog while cycling.

On 12 July, their final, victory lap from Grasonville to Washington D.C. was thrown into disarray as the torrential downpour brought floods that jeopardised their safety. "It was with a heavy heart that we decided to take a shuttle into the city. After riding well over 1,200 km, it was such a letdown to have it end this way," he shared.

While he wished that this ended on a better note, he has no regrets. After all, the fundraiser was done for a good cause.

Though the target was initially set at S\$1,000, the fundraiser raised S\$1,500 at press time.

Running 2,013km in 2013

An avid runner, Ms Charis Chan, Executive of International Services, Singapore Red Cross has pledged to run 2,013km in 2013. to raise S\$20,130.00 for the Singapore Red Cross.



Scan this QR code to pledge any amount to this laudable effort.



At Simply Giving (www.simplygiving.com), with the simple click of the mouse, you can

- Raise funds via a personal challenge
- Create and share your special page
- Support an organised event that raises funds for the local humanitarian services of the Singapore Red Cross, just like the ones in this feature.

Opening Ceremony

27 June
Guest-of-honour
Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong

Connecting Singaporeans to Asia and the World

"I hope that stories of the good work done by the I²Hub will inspire more Singaporeans – young and old – to want to do more to help others. When we all reach out to help others, we are building a better and more compassionate society."

Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong

Singapore Red Cross launches the International Involvement Hub with three other home-grown non-profit organisations.

The International Involvement Hub (I²Hub) was established to provide a space where Singaporeans can participate in an international exchange of ideas, access information on overseas giving, in social, relief and community development, and where the non-profit sector can share expertise and collaborate.

The first of its kind in Singapore, the 2,000 square metres' space at The Atrium@Orchard, houses four home-grown non-profit organisations (NPOs) engaged in building international understanding, capacity-building and development work as well as disaster relief: Singapore Red Cross (SRC), Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA), the Singapore International Foundation (SIF) and Temasek Foundation, Singapore (TF).

The I²Hub was opened by Emeritus Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong, on 27 June 2013.



"The Singapore Red Cross Academy@Atrium will train and develop Singaporean volunteers in first aid and disaster management, to strengthen their resilience and to equip them with the know-how for overseas humanitarian projects. The space also allows us to promote and disseminate knowledge of our rich heritage of humanitarian service, so as to inspire current and future generations."

Secretary General of the Singapore Red Cross, Benjamin William



MAKING A DIFFERENCE

By EMMA GATEHOUSE, *Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross*

Photos by KARTINI SAAT, *Corporate Communications and Marketing*

As part of the opening of the International Involvement Hub (I²Hub), a series of talks, forums and workshops were held at the 'Making a Difference' festival in June. Singapore Red Cross (SRC) organised a forum on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and a 'Lifesaving' first aid workshop at the festival.

IHL Forum

The IHL forum covered the importance and impact of IHL on the global community, people protected by IHL and its current implementation challenges. The forum received an overwhelming response, with more than 70 participants attending it. Mr Jeremy England, Head of Regional Delegation of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, addressed the participants for over two hours.

Participants were motivated to attend the talk for many different reasons. Some participants were considering IHL as a career. Others were keen to gain an insight on how we, as an international community, can ensure the safety and dignity of people caught in conflict situations.

The participants also found the workshop insightful as it gave them a greater

understanding and appreciation of the IHL framework and practice. They could relate to the working examples cited by the speaker.

"Learning IHL is very important because through this, I get to learn what is really happening in other countries. It is applicable in our society because we learn to appreciate what we have. We used to think that it is imperative that we are harmonious with each other," said Ms Sathiaraj s/o Krishnamoorthy, one of the participants at the IHL workshop.

'Lifesaving' First Aid Workshop



Learning CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) and AED (Automated External Defibrillator) is the foundation of basic lifesaving skills and is crucial in

nurturing a community that is well equipped to help save lives.

More than 1,500 people in Singapore suffer from out-of-hospital cardiac arrests each year. The survival rate for this is 2.7 percent. For every minute that defibrillation is delayed, the chance of survival decreases by 10 percent.

The 'Lifesaving' workshop equipped participants with the basic skills to apply timely CPR. This could raise the victim's chance of survival in emergencies. The workshop also addressed the importance of CPR, demonstrated the use of an AED machine in helping someone in cardiac arrest and reviewed the most advanced technology in coping with sudden cardiac arrests.

Ms Lorena Wan, 18, a second year junior college student attended the first aid workshop as part of her project work. "It is important to learn first aid, so that we do not panic when we see someone collapse", she shared.

"We can apply this knowledge learnt and save more lives... Isn't that great? More workshops should be organised to raise awareness, don't you agree?" quipped Ms Wan.

Serving Our Nation Through First Aid

By TRACY LAM, Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross
Photos by WILSON BOEY, Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross

Amongst the 27,000 spectators at the Float@Marina Bay who were jubilantly celebrating Singapore's 48th National Day Parade 2013 (NDP) on 9 August was Natalie Tan, a first aider from the Singapore Red Cross (SRC). This was Natalie's first time volunteering as a first aider at the NDP.

"During the duty, I felt an unexpected sense of responsibility. I was part of a team taking care of 27,000 spectators. Despite my muscle aches, I felt very proud standing for five hours representing SRC and serving the nation in my small way," said Natalie who is a student of Singapore Chinese Girls School.



Natalie Tan

Unlike Natalie, Mr Wilson Boey is the longest-serving SRC volunteer first aider at the NDP. Mr Boey had been through NDPs at the Kallang Stadium, Padang and now at the Float@Marina Bay. While he started out as a volunteer first aider, he was the supervising officer overseeing more than 40 cadets at this year's NDP.

Both Natalie and Mr Boey, along with other volunteer first aiders who were part of the NDP 2013 First Aid Duty (NDPFAD) team, provided first aid treatments on the spot to spectators who had minor cuts or sprains. For more severe cases for example, heart attacks, illnesses or bad injuries, the casualty would be evacuated to the SAF medical post where the SAF medical corps would then attend to them.

To prepare the volunteer first aiders for any casualty on the ground, training sessions and simulated exercises were conducted.

The volunteer first aiders spent at least five weekends practising for the NDP dress rehearsals prior to the actual day. Mr Boey did not mind sacrificing his weekends and getting up as early as 6am and staying till as late as 11pm even after the spectators had left the stand. "Despite the grueling hours being on the alert and on our feet, it gave me the greatest satisfaction when the audience enjoyed the parade in the knowledge and confidence knowing whom they may turn to should they feel unwell," opined Mr Boey.

Echoing Mr Boey's sentiments, Natalie said, "The first aid duty at NDP had ignited my passion. I hope to devote more time in serving the community and our nation." She is better able to appreciate those who made sacrifices for the people around them through her stint.

"We provided first aid to the public and gave the audience a sense of security so they were able to enjoy the show and have a great National Day Celebration!" quipped Tracy



Mr Wilson Boey

Koh, an Aide-de-camp to the Duty-In-Charge, Alvin Ee and Ambrose Lee.

The challenge for Singapore Red Cross' first aiders would likely be in 2014 when the NDP returns to Kallang Stadium which has the capacity for 60,000 spectators. The massive number of individuals will present new challenges to Mr Boey and the rest of the volunteers.

As Natalie put it, "I feel it is one's attitude that determines whether one's experience is good or bad. If you make the best out of your time at the NDP, people will notice it and appreciate it." And the Singapore Red Cross' volunteers are more than ready. That is the spirit!

Besides providing first aid coverage at the NDP, our volunteers were also part of the emergency response standby and the Red Cross Youth marching contingent.

Creativity with a heart



Hundreds of Red Cross Youth (RCY) Cadets and Links pit their minds together to produce creative and persuasive advertisements, put up inspiring performances and conceive meaningful programmes aimed at addressing needs in our society at the RCY Current Affairs Competition 2013 held on 20 July at Nan Chiau High School.

Themed 'Get Social. Get Aware. Get Moving', the competition was aimed at creating awareness of blood donation and engaging the Links and Cadets in community service.

In this article, we share the judges' comments on the winning entries and some thoughts from the winning teams.

Movement for Awareness

Design a print advertisement to raise public awareness of Blood Donation

Overall Champion of Category One:
River Valley Primary School

The team designed a print advertisement with a hero theme. "We brainstormed and tried to think about things related to the words 'save', 'lives' and 'people'. We came up with the idea that everyone who is a blood donor is equivalent to a superhero," shared Joey Chia, a team member.

Judges' Verdict: Good use of slogan and play of illustration to associate blood donors as heroes, proving that anyone can be a hero.

Plugged In

Perform a TV or YouTube advertisement to raise awareness on blood donation

Overall Champion of Category Three:
Cedar Girls' Secondary School

"As we were thinking of ideas, we came across a video game where three lives were lost. That was how we came up with the concept that one bag of blood can save three lives. We are happy that we won," said Foo Jing Ting, 15, RCY Cadet of Cedar Girls' Secondary School.

Judges' Verdict: It was a creative performance with a good concept conveying the idea of saving three lives. Quality props were also used.

Pledging for Action

A creative performance that recognised the dignity of the disabled in our society and pledged action

Overall Champion of Category Two:
Fairfield Methodist School (Primary)

"We brought across the message that persons with disabilities can be talented too in their own way and they can lead very meaningful lives. We are very happy, excited and very satisfied that we have emerged the champion for this category," said Ms Tan Siok Ching, Teacher-in-Charge of RCY in Fairfield Methodist School (Primary).

Judges' Verdict: It was a confident performance. They had a clear and summarised content presented with clear enunciation.

Action-Reaction

Current Affairs Shield Challenge
Programme aimed at promoting sustainable volunteerism in helping people with disabilities and improving their lives

Overall Champion of Category Four:
Serangoon Garden Secondary School

Their proposal incorporated coordination, balance and stability exercise sessions for residents with stroke. The team also planned a bean-bag passing game and song sessions for residents with cerebral palsy.

"When I was in Primary 6, my dad suffered from stroke. It was unbearable seeing his painful road to recovery. It inspired us to 'Serve One Another' in society. We researched on the conditions and the activities that do not overstrain the disabled. We have to be more sensitive and positive-minded as they need our moral and physical support," said Nuraishah Bte Muhammed Ibrahim, a team member.

Judges' Verdict: It is an interesting and well planned proposal with good points on volunteer management.



Fairfield Methodist School (Primary)



Cedar Girls' Secondary School



Nursing aide Mara Yvonne
Pornobi Relloque

Nurses Day 2013

A Tribute to our Nurses

By VINAY KUMAR, *Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross*
Photos by KARTINI SAAT, *Corporate Communications and Marketing*

August is an important month in Singapore. We celebrate the nation's birthday, and we also celebrate Nurses Day – a day on which we pay a sincere tribute to our nurses as well as their noble contributions to society.

In most countries, Nurses Day is celebrated on 12 May, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, who is widely regarded as the founder of modern nursing. In Singapore, however, we celebrate Nurses Day on 1 August as the date commemorates the birth of modern nursing here.

Nurses play an essential role at the Red Cross Home for the Disabled (RCHD). The RCHD, which was founded in 1952, is the only residential home for the severely disabled in Singapore. Today, the RCHD houses about 100 residents of all ages.

Caring for Our Residents

A significant number of these residents at the RCHD are both mentally and physically disabled. The work of the nurses requires extraordinary degrees of commitment and compassion. In collaboration with other healthcare professionals, these nurses strive to develop the cognitive, social and motor skills of the residents and improve the quality of their lives.

Given the nature and severity of some of the residents' disabilities, they are often unable to communicate their thoughts and emotions. At times, this may lead to life-threatening situations. For instance, what appears to be an innocent cough could really be a resident choking on his food or even his own saliva. It takes a special skill and intuition on the part of the nurses to be able to respond appropriately. Often nurses have to engage in non-verbal modes of communication with the residents, watching out for the slightest changes in facial expressions and body language.

Staff Nurse Thong Swee Kam, 71, a Singaporean who has worked at RCHD for 11 years, described some of the challenges that the nurses face in their daily work, "Most residents are wheelchair bound, not communicative and can't express their needs. Due to medical conditions, they have functional deterioration in their physical, cognitive abilities, their mobility is affected, contractures, they have difficulty in swallowing."

The residents at RCHD are some of the most vulnerable in society and are highly dependent on their caregivers. The nurses have to handle routine tasks such as bathing and feeding for the residents. In order to accomplish these tasks effectively, they need to build a rapport with the residents and become familiar with their personal preferences. The nurses take the appropriate measures to ensure that a high level of care is given to each patient. The level of consistency, attention to detail and

vigilance shown by the nurses is nothing short of inspiring.

Overcoming Challenges

Some nurses, especially those who originate from other countries, have to navigate other challenges as well. Apart from having to deal with their own homesickness and longing for their loved ones, they also have to cope with any language barrier they might face.

Ms Carl Joanne B. Jara, a nursing aide who hails from the Philippines, explained, "Communication was a challenge. I didn't know what they wanted to tell me. I learnt through their actions and sign language. I also learnt some Chinese words and dialect."

Finding Fulfillment

In spite of the challenging nature of their job, the nurses at the RCHD find their work deeply meaningful and immensely rewarding. They are incredibly passionate and often report emotionally satisfying and heartwarming interactions with the residents.

"Being there and attending to the needs of the residents gives me great fulfillment. But at the end of the day, to see them smile despite their discomfort gives me the greatest satisfaction in my job. It is the highlight of my job," affirmed Ms Jara.

Ms Mara Yvonne Pornobi Relloque, a 22 year-old nursing aide, who is also from the Philippines expressed, "I realise that when

the residents say a simple 'Thank you' or 'I love you', it will touch everyone's heart. The simple smiles of the residents motivate me to go to work each day. The residents will laugh with us. Some of them will give us a hug. Some will tell us, 'you are the greatest one'. They provide us with the greatest strength, every step of the way."

Staff Nurse Thong explained that she finds meaning in her work as she can contribute and make a difference in the lives of the residents.

When asked where she draws her motivation from, she simply replied, "Nursing is my passion. It is challenging and it can be stressful at times. I feel that I am needed by the nurses here. The residents need me too."

"The greatest satisfaction is when I see the smiles on the faces of the residents. It touches my heart when those who can verbalise, say 'Thank you' and 'I like you'," said Staff Nurse Thong.

Nurses are indeed a special group of people. Their contributions to the residents of RCHD and to the society at large should not be underestimated or taken for granted. Nurses epitomise all that is good about human race; in their daily lives, they exemplify kindness, compassion, care and love. On August 1, let us take this opportunity to say a big thank you and extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the nurses in our midst.

Nursing aide
Carl Joanne
B. Jara

“The greatest satisfaction is when I see the smiles on the faces of the residents. It touches my heart when those who can verbalise, say ‘Thank you’ and ‘I like you’”

Staff Nurse Thong Swee Kam



Staff Nurse Thong Swee Kam

“Thank you! for saving my life”

By SONDRA FOO, Corporate Communications and Marketing
Photos by KARTINI SAAT, Corporate Communications and Marketing

Delivering a child is a joyful yet painful process. It can also be a difficult and scary time for their partners too. This was definitely the case for Jeremy Nguee, whose wife, Shumin had a close brush with death after developing complications following the delivery of their baby son, Shane.

Like all new parents, Jeremy and Shumin were overwhelmed with joy and emotion at the sight of Baby Shane. Unfortunately, just as the baby was handed over to the pediatrician, Shumin turned breathless and lost her sight. She could see white spots initially but plunged into total darkness later. Shumin was still conscious but was moaning of back aches and neck pains. Dr Beh had summoned the anesthetist Dr Loo to assist and they quickly moved her to the operating theatre. Jeremy learnt that Shumin had lost a lot of blood and needed a blood transfusion.

An hour later, the doctor informed Jeremy that Shumin had Amniotic Fluid Embolism, a rare complication where the mother's blood is contaminated with amniotic fluid. The condition messes up normal body functions and prevents the blood from coagulating. It is a complication seen once in ten years and only one in ten mothers survive. The doctors would need to compress her womb or remove it completely to save her life. Jeremy was advised to keep his fingers crossed and hope for the best.

“I was terrified. I can live without kids but I definitely cannot live without my wife. I was certainly not prepared for the hair tie she dropped in the delivery

suite (now fastened to my bracelet) to be my last reminder of her. I was confused and angry. Why did this have to happen?” shared Jeremy.

“Just as I was praying for a miracle, I was informed that Dr Beh and the team of doctors and nurses had successfully compressed her womb and stitched up the episiotomy. However, Shumin was still bleeding profusely and the danger was not over as yet. Like a bucket with a hole, you can pour as much blood in but it will still flow out,” explained Jeremy.

After five hours, Shumin was eventually moved out of the operating theatre into intensive care. Thirty-seven bags of blood saved Shumin's life.

“I am really thankful to all the blood donors who came forth. Without you, I wouldn't be here today. I have lots to thank you for,” acknowledged Shumin.



Shumin with baby Shane at our World Blood Donor Day celebration on 8 June at Downtown East

“We owe the blood donors a huge debt. Had it not been for your generosity, effort and diligence in setting aside time to donate blood, we wouldn't be sitting here together as a happy and complete family. I wouldn't have my wife. I wouldn't know how to carry on. Thanks to your kindness and your time, Shane still has a mother and I still have a wife.”

Jeremy Nguee



Scan this QR Code for the video in which they related their experience!



Cadet Superstar

By SONDRA FOO,
Corporate Communications and Marketing

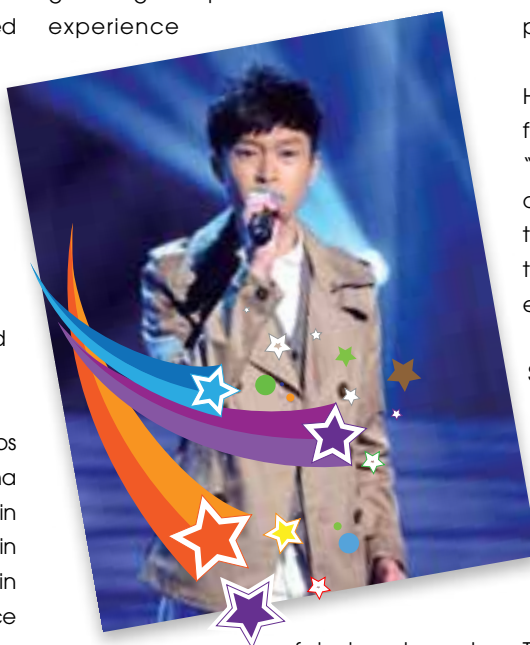
People who perceive Red Cross Youth (RCY) cadets to be prudish and conservative may need to think again. Former RCY Cadet, Leonard Lim Kian Hui, 18, recently emerged as one of the top four contestants of Campus Superstar 2013.

"I believe that is the wrong perception of RCY cadets. Many are talented in their own way. During the Arts Fest, they participated in drama, dancing and singing," pointed out Kian Hui.

Turning to his own passion for singing, Kian Hui started singing at a young age. "When I was three, my mum bought me Zhang Hui Mei (A-Mei)'s CD. I started singing because of Zhang Hui Mei. Her powerful, high-pitched and unique voice inspired me," he shared.

With that, Kian Hui followed in the footsteps of his mother, a former singer, Ms Sophiana Tan. When he was still studying in Malaysia in Primary 4, he emerged the first runner-up in a school competition and the champion in another competition. The former RCY Vice Chairperson of Yio Chu Kang Secondary School has been singing at various events, from birthday celebrations to weddings, since then. He shows how versatile he is by singing songs in various languages or dialects - Chinese, English, Malay, Hokkien, Cantonese, Korean and Thai.

Though he has been singing at events over the years, the thought of entering a competition again did not cross his mind till his secondary school friend urged him to join Campus Superstar 2013. There were about eight rounds of auditioning and competitions to go through. Despite his extensive experience



of singing at events, one of the rounds unnerved him. "Usually, I would listen to Y.E.S 93.3FM. When I had to go on air on Y.E.S 93.3FM for one of the rounds, I changed from being a listener to being a singer. It was the first time I was on air, live," he revealed.

That said, he tried to assuage his fears, "I tried not to think too much, to just do my best and feel the song," said Kian Hui.

Out of the many participants who joined, Kian Hui made it to the top four. "I feel very happy that my voice is recognised by people," he acknowledged.

He attributes his success to what he learnt from his Red Cross days - perseverance. "Since I joined the competition, I can't just quit halfway. Even when I was stressed with the expectations people had of me, I just had to do it. I did my best and persevered till the end," shared Kian Hui.

So what does Kian Hui, now a student of St Andrews Junior College, have to say to people who are pursuing their dreams? "You can't predict what will happen next. You should seize the opportunity, give it a try and do your best. Don't give up," he affirmed.

That said, he wishes not to be a singer, but a doctor. "There is greater stability in the job and I can save people," said Kian Hui.

We are proud of you, Kian Hui.

Healing through the Arts

By EMMA GATEHOUSE, Volunteer, Singapore Red Cross



Overseas Humanitarian Projects (OHPs) take on a new dimension

Singapore Red Cross' (SRC) OHPs have made a foray into art therapy through a collaboration with The Red Pencil International (RPI) to use art therapy to heal people. In May this year, 14 art therapists - some from countries abroad, including Taiwan, Australia and Sri Lanka - received psychosocial support training to prepare them for emergency and non-emergency missions in the region.

On 6 June, two art therapists from The Red Pencil International joined the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) on an eight-day, humanitarian trip to a welfare home for the disabled in Malin Village, Tongji Town, Pengzhou, in the northwest of Chengdu City in China. The home had 60 disabled and mentally ill adults and children.

The volunteers engaged the residents and children in art therapy through simple interactive games and art activities, as well as teaching the children English, preparing meals, cleaning the kitchen, painting the walls of the residents' home and harvesting potatoes and garlic.

Through these activities, the residents regained a modicum of control over an uncontrollable situation. "The most rewarding aspect of this trip was to see the pride and joy on the faces of the children when they were engaged with

the therapeutic art activities. They enjoyed themselves very much. Many came forward to thank us for bringing back some of their happier childhood memories that they had forgotten," acknowledged Ms Krystle Teo, a second year therapist trainee at LaSalle College of the Arts who went on the trip to China.

"For me, this trip was an amazing opportunity to witness how the benefits of art therapy can be extended in a humanitarian setting. This trip spurred me on to be more involved in humanitarian projects so that I can offer art therapy as an outreach service, particularly to people caught in overwhelming situations or crisis in the region."

Ms Krystle Teo

Not only did the volunteers touch the lives of the residents, they also shared their knowledge on basic health care, hygiene, nursing skills, staff management and rotation with the local staff, many of whom are volunteers themselves. Many of the local staff and volunteers,

though compassionate, have little or no professional training to care for the residents effectively. "We shared our knowledge so that the staff can effectively look after themselves and the residents and not get burnt out or give up what they have been working on," pointed out Ms Yesmin Chan, an art therapist at The Red Pencil International in Singapore, and President of the Art Therapist Association who also went on the trip.

The trip was a revelation for the art therapists who went there. "I was humbled by the resilience of the residents. They do not have the material comforts that we are accustomed to. But they hold steadfast to important values such as commitment to their home and family and being responsible in their work," affirmed Ms Teo.



The Rejuvenation of Soma City

Mr Hidekiyo Tachiya
Soma City Mayor

Photos by HSU NAN-TING, Corporate Communications and Marketing

The Singapore Red Cross (SRC) opened the \$2.1 million Isobe Community Centre in Japan on 13 July 2013, three months ahead of schedule. It was one of SRC's four major rebuilding projects for the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, funded by the donations from the people of Singapore.

“The people of Japan and of Soma City have responded to the disasters with unity and fortitude. There are countless stories of Japanese people selflessly helping one another to overcome the numerous challenges they faced. I would like to offer my congratulations on the completion and opening of the community centre, which is a milestone in the rejuvenation and renewal of Soma City.”

Mr Chin Siat Yoon, Ambassador
of the Republic of Singapore to Japan

Built to replace the destroyed community centre, the new Isobe Community Centre will serve as a gathering point for shared activities in the community, a disaster prevention centre and emergency holding area for the 2,000-resident city. It is adjacent to Isobe Junior School, which can double up as a helipad for evacuation purposes during future emergencies. The new community centre, rebuilt on higher ground, is equipped with a main meeting room, a meeting room with a library, a Japanese-style room, an office room that doubles as Soma City's branch office, storage space for emergency food and bedding, and an electric generator.

SRC's Deputy Secretary General, (Operations), Ms Cecilia Tan joined His Excellency, Mr Chin Siat Yoon, Ambassador of the Republic of Singapore to Japan, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Soma City officials at the opening of the new Isobe Community Centre.

“Singapore's friendship has provided hope to the people of Soma City. Soma City is determined to respond to Singapore's kindness by realising the reconstruction of the City.”

Mr Hidekiyo Tachiya, Soma City Mayor

Mr Benjamin William, SRC Secretary General said, “We are keenly aware our contribution constitutes a small part of the massive recovery and rebuilding efforts, given the scale of the devastation two years ago. Nevertheless, the new Isobe Community Centre stands today, testimony of the enduring friendship and solidarity between the peoples of Japan and Singapore.”

Ploughing the way to a sustainable \$income

By SONDRA FOO, *Corporate Communications and Marketing*
Photo by CHIA SWEE KIM, *International Services*



For Vietnamese villagers, cows provide the means to eradicate hunger, reduce poverty, eke a living out of agriculture and produce dairy products that provide their families with a sustainable source of food and income.

In recognition of the instrumental role that cows play in the lives of Vietnamese villagers, Singapore Red Cross (SRC) contributed US\$91,316 (S\$115,240) to the Cow Bank project in July. In this project, each household in Dien Bien province is given a cow to sustain their livelihoods. SRC's contribution to the Cow Bank project was drawn from the donations of the people of Singapore to the Southeast Asian floods.

An innovative and effective way to enable people affected by disasters to return to lives of normalcy, the Cow Bank project gives the Vietnamese a sense of hope and sustainability. In this project, more than 10,000 breeding cows will be donated to thousands of needy farmers in 28 districts in 2013-2014. The project was first initiated by Vietnam Red Cross, Vietnam Television and the Border Guards High Command back in 2010. As of 14 July 2013, the Cow Bank project has handed over nearly 7,100 cows to poor households in 111 districts. So far, the cows have produced 1,285 calves which have also been donated to other disadvantaged households.

Deputy Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Vũ Văn Ninh also pointed out that more border communes would provide extra resources to support their local farmers, which helps to safeguard the country's border areas.

"The cow bank is symbolic as it represents a bank that is socially known and supports the disadvantaged," he added.

"We are very thankful to Singapore Red Cross for sending members to help out in this very meaningful Cow Bank project," said Do Cong Long, President of Dien Bien Province Red Cross Chapter.

This is not the first time that SRC and Vietnam Red Cross (VNRC) have worked together. As neighbouring countries, the ties between Singapore and Vietnam have strengthened over the years.

In 2009, Typhoon Ketsana swept through the Philippines, China and Vietnam. SRC distributed 50 tons of rice and 400 units of plastic water containers to the Vietnamese survivors. SRC also contributed about S\$139,498 (S\$188,982) to purchase 370 cows in four provinces, Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Lao Cai and Cao Bang. In 2010, SRC distributed 50 tons of rice to the Vietnamese following a tropical storm.

SRC has also supported other projects initiated by the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to mitigate the loss due to floods and typhoons and to fight against Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) in Vietnam in the past few years.

"The programme will help many households reduce poverty and attain a higher standard of living in a more sustainable manner. Reducing poverty sustainably and building new rural models were a strategic goal and priority during the country's socio-economic development. I hope that the programme would become popular across the country and help disadvantaged people in the border and up-land areas."

Deputy Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Vũ Văn Ninh



Voluntary Doctors and Dentists TO THE RESCUE

Photos by CHIA SWEE KIM, *International Services*

For many villagers in Pulau Sembur, healthcare is out of reach. The nearest medical or dental clinic is an island away in Batam and is unaffordable for most.

To provide free medical and dental consultations to these villagers, a team consisting of two Singapore Red Cross (SRC) volunteers, two medical doctors, four nurses, seven dental surgeons and three dental specialists went on a humanitarian mission to Pulau Sembur on 14-16 June. They treated more than 300 patients over the weekend.

These free medical and dental consultations and treatments were part of the community health project, Operasi Bhakti. First rolled out in 1995, the Operasi Bhakti series provides



free medical consultations in communities in Indonesia, namely Batam, Bintan and Sumatra.

A joint collaboration between SRC and the national headquarters of Palang Merah Indonesia (PMI), Operasi Bhakti strengthens bilateral ties with Indonesia and provides SRC volunteers with field experience that will

enable them to better appreciate the work of SRC and improve lives.

Ibu Galang, 55, a grandmother of 11 grandchildren and eight children, wanted six of her teeth extracted from her lower jaw by Dr Tan Qing Zhen, as she was not sure when the next opportunity would arise for her to do so. Dr Tan extracted only two of her teeth in order that she can continue eating.

Mr Sapri, 49, a fisherman, was another villager who benefited from the free dental and medical consultation and treatment provided in Pulau Sembur in June. "I am happy that the dental surgeons came to Pulau Sembur. Had it not been for them, I would have had to go to Batam or Bintan to see a dental surgeon, which could be very expensive," said Mr Sapri, through an interpreter.

What's On

Find us on
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September

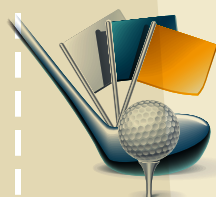
14 Eldercare First Aid for Caregivers

Singapore Red Cross Academy will run its first caregivers course on Eldercare First Aid; seats are limited so do sign up today! The course is available at S\$10 per pax and will be held from 9am to 4pm at the Singapore Red Cross Academy @ Atrium, International Involvement Hub, 60A Orchard Road, Tower 1, Level 4M-02, The Atrium @ Orchard, Singapore 238890. Register with the Academy by calling 6664 0562 or emailing rctc.atrium@redcross.org.sg.

September | *October*
28-29 | **12-13**

Weekend Sale

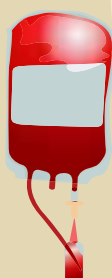
Check out our Weekend Sale from 10am to 3pm for clothes, accessories, toys and electronic devices at bargain prices! See you at Shop@RedCross at 62 Jalan Khairuddin Singapore 457524! Proceeds will be channelled to our local humanitarian services!



October

16 Red Cross Charity Golf 2013

Join us at the Red Cross Charity Golf 2013 at Singapore Island Country Club – New Course to raise funds for the local humanitarian services of Singapore Red Cross! To participate as a golfer or to volunteer at the event, email Ms Lim Pei Shan at Peishan.Lim@redcross.org.sg or call her at 66640548.



October

27 Emergency Blood Exercise

Support the National Blood Programme by donating blood at its Emergency Blood Exercise at the following venues:

- **Bloodbank@HSA** (near Outram MRT)
- **Bloodbank@Woodlands** (Woodlands Civic Centre)
- **Bloodbank@Dhoby Ghaut** (at Dhoby Xchange)
- **Bedok Community Centre** (near Bedok MRT)

November

30 Launch of the World Disaster Report 2013

Check out www.ifrc.org/wdr2013 for related information, interactive quizzes, debates and discussions that you can participate in!

Ongoing

Fundraise for Singapore Red Cross with just a simple click of the mouse at Simply Giving (www.simplygiving.com)! You can raise funds via a personal challenge, create your own special page, share with your friends, families or colleagues and support an organised event that raises funds for the Singapore Red Cross.



SINGAPORE