

SINGAPORE

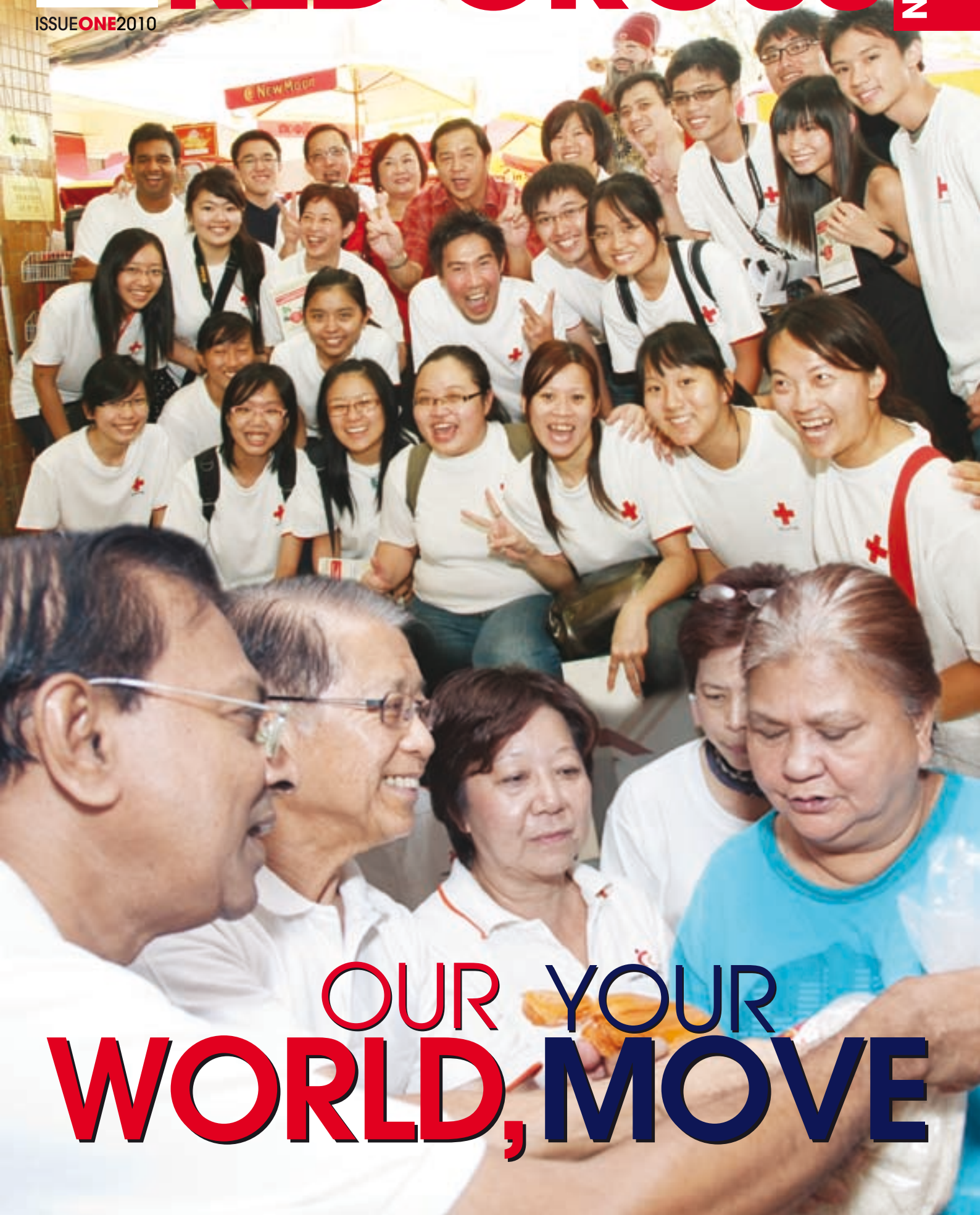
MICA (P) 212/12/2009



# RED CROSS

NEWS

ISSUE **ONE** 2010



OUR YOUR  
**WORLD, MOVE**



# EDITORIAL

The year of the tiger is upon us, so we take this opportunity to wish one and all a very Happy and Prosperous Lunar New Year.

To kick-start the New Year, the Singapore Red Cross held, for the second consecutive year, "Project R.I.C.E.". Volunteers of the Singapore Red Cross went door-to-door to collect over 100,000kg of rice from kind donors. Supermarket chain, Sheng Siong was one of the main sponsors of Project R.I.C.E and Singapore Red Cross celebrity ambassador, Edmund Chen was on-hand at one of their outlets to

encourage customers to buy rice vouchers and to donate the rice to beneficiaries.

Flag Day was held on 27 February 2010. Individuals and members from the different chapters of the Singapore Red Cross, from the Red Cross Youth to the Adult Volunteer Division, sold flags to members of the public in aid of local humanitarian services of the Singapore Red Cross.

This year also marks a very important year in the history of the Singapore Red Cross, as the Red Cross Home of

Disabled, currently located at Elizabeth Drive, will relocate to new premises at Family Link @ Lengkok Bahru in March. The present location will be missed as some of the residents have lived there since 1988.

We hope that 2010 will be a bright and promising year for everyone and as always, the Singapore Red Cross is there in times of need and urgency.

**Editorial Committee**  
*Singapore Red Cross News*

**publications committee**  
Assoc Prof Phua Kai Hong  
Saravanan Govindan  
Tang Chun Tuck

**editorial team**  
Carol Teo  
Jo-ann Huang  
Sheena Conceicao

a **SNAP!** creative  
MICA (P) 212/12/2009



4



8



12



16



6



10



13



17

## Across our shores

**3 RED CROSS YOUTHS VISIT JAPAN**  
The Red Cross Youth chapter makes a trip to Japan, the land of the rising sun

**4 HAITI EARTHQUAKE RELIEF** SRC lends a hand, and students from Bowen Secondary School start a fundraiser

**5 SRC IN MYANMAR** Life for the people of Myanmar after Typhoon Nargis

**6 PROJECT KASIH 2009** RCHN – NTU Chapter goes on a 10-day mission trip to Pulau Nias in Indonesia

## Cover story

**8 PROJECT R.I.C.E. 2010**  
SRC and the community provide low-income families and the elderly with Grains of Love

## Events

**10 MAGICAL CHRISTMAS 2009**  
SMU organises a blood donation drive to spread cheer during the festive season

## 12 YOUTH CHALLENGE CAMP

Youths from RCY put their heads together to learn leadership qualities and teamwork

## Feature story

**13 RED CROSS HOME FOR THE DISABLED** A staff recounts her experience with the residents at the home and shares her thoughts on the big move

## Special report

**14 5TH YOUTH DONOR CLUB TRAINING CAMP** with participation from 23 foreign delegates from Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar and Hong Kong

## SRC and the Movement

### 16 THE PHILANTHROPIC SPIRIT

### 17 ICRC – MEDIATOR & MESSENGER

Back to basics on the spirit of giving and the development of the ICRC throughout the years

**18 SINGAPORE RED CROSS VISITED OUR SCHOOL!** Bouquets from students of Australian International School of Singapore



# RCY visits Japan

By MS TAI WAI PENG, Senior Youth Officer, Red Cross Youth

**A**s an educator, I have always encouraged cadets to venture out and volunteer their services beyond their school unit level. This was why I volunteered to join the delegation for the bilateral exchange to Japan (Kinki District).

As it was an entirely new experience for me, I asked Ms Doreen Tan, the delegation leader, for more details on my job scope so that I can prepare myself further for the exchange programme.

Once we confirmed our group of delegation members, the team embarked on a whole series of meetings, discussions and rehearsals. Although I had been in charge of Overseas Immersion Programme in school, the experience in this Bilateral Exchange was rather different as I worked with cadets from different schools and main mode of communication was via e-mail or SMS. Meeting deadlines therefore became extremely crucial. If one deadline was delayed, the whole schedule would be

affected and that would be detrimental to the progress of our preparation.

In the month-long preparation, the delegates took the initiative to research the Singapore Red Cross' efforts in recent natural disasters and Singapore Red Cross Youth. They also set up a blog ([www.torndownwalls.blogspot.com](http://www.torndownwalls.blogspot.com)), recording their thoughts and experiences in this Bilateral Exchange journey.

In order to ensure that cadets know more about the country that they were travelling to, they were required to research Japan's heritage, culture and history. In addition, as the ambassadors of Singapore Red Cross Youth, the cadets also prepared performances such as a Fancy Drill routine, a short skit on the founding of Temasek and a cultural dance, which they performed to the Japanese audience on Cultural Night.

We were warmly welcomed by the Japanese Red Cross Staff from Hyogo Chapter and we visited many different organisations, such as the Japanese Red Cross Kobe Hospital, Hyogo Emergency Medical Centre and the Japanese Red Cross Himeji School of Nursing etc. In addition to all the visits to the different organisations, I was also very fortunate to have a short conversation with the Principal of Hyogo Prefecture International High School with a few of my fellow delegates. The conversation allowed me to gain more insights on how the Japanese Red Cross is run differently in schools in Japan and Singapore.

During recreational time, we toured the majestic Himeji Castle, and viewed the lights at Kobe Luminarie. We even went skiing at Mount Rokkosan!

Looking back at my experience with the delegation, I have no regrets volunteering for the trip. As they say "When one dreams, it is just a dream. When many dream along, it becomes a reality." I encourage more Youth Officers to step forward and participate in such a meaningful Bilateral Exchange.





# Haiti Earthquake Relief

By JO-ANN HUANG,  
*Corporate Communications*

**O**n 12 January 2010, the impoverished Caribbean island of Haiti was struck by a 7.3-magnitude earth-quake which claimed over 200,000 lives.

This came to the attention of the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC), which has since launched a worldwide appeal for the survivors of the earthquake.

The IFRC has sent almost 4,850 tonnes of aid to the survivors in Port-au-Prince, the capital

of Haiti and also the area most affected by the earthquake. The funds raised by the worldwide appeal will be used to assist about 300,000 survivors of the earthquake for the next three years.

The Singapore Red Cross (SRC) has responded by alerting the public to this worldwide appeal and by channeling donations from the public to the IFRC. We would like to thank members of the public and corporations for their generous contributions to the faraway island. As of March 2010, the SRC has received over S\$1.9 million in donations.



## Contributions from Bowenians

By VICTOR CHAN, *President, Bowen Service Club, Sec 4E5, Bowen Secondary School*

**W**hen we learnt the news that an earthquake had struck Haiti, our club, with the unstinting support of our school, took the initiative to raise funds for the survivors through the sale of Chinese New Year couplets, cupcakes, chocolate fondue, ice-cream, tidbits and soft toys. To publicise the campaign and create awareness, our service club leaders had an assembly talk to share about our initiative to raise funds for the victims at Haiti. We also organised a car-washing campaign as this would interest the teachers and parents to support us further.

Everyone in the school, teaching and non teaching staff and students, was very supportive towards this fundraising drive, which was held in school for three consecutive weeks. In addition, two classes collected money to donate to the Haiti victims. At the end of our fundraising drive for the Haiti Earthquake victims, we managed to raise \$2,652.30.

Through this entire process, we have learnt to appreciate what we have and not to take certain things for granted. This also helps us to be more aware of the daily events around the world and be concerned and responsible towards our fellow human beings. It was a good opportunity for the whole school to come together as a Bowenian family, to assist the less fortunate. Our hearts go out to those affected by this calamity and we hope for the best for all of them.





# Life after Cyclone Nargis

By SARAVANAN GOVINDAN, *Volunteer, Corporate Communications*

**R**elief operations from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) sprung into action almost immediately after the cyclone made landfall on 4 May 2008. IFRC together with national societies from Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore and other countries made relief distributions to over a quarter of a million households across 13 townships of the delta region. These distributions included basic items such as mosquito nets, jerry cans, shelter kits and blankets. A heart-warming dynamic on the ground was the Myanmar culture of sharing, which allowed relief to reach beyond the initially targeted households.

Relief operations made way for recovery programmes in November 2008. IFRC and various national societies helped rebuild roads, health facilities, water storage, sanitation structures and other public

infrastructure in Ayeyarwady. IFRC launched an innovative “cash-for-work” initiatives to allow those affected by the disaster to play a role in the recovery. Bernd-Schell, head of IFRC country office in Yangon, noted this was a way for “disaster-affected populations to take part in securing their own future well-being.” Since then, a new shelter programme has provided low-cost storm-resistant homes for over 8,000 households. More such homes are under construction.

In order to spur livelihoods, IFRC has also helped with delivering fertilisers for farming and new boats for fishing. In addition to such recovery programmes, training sessions on health and disaster preparedness have been conducted.

The SRC was also actively involved in the initial medical relief and recovery efforts of Myanmar. From being the first to send a Singapore medical relief team to launching

an appeal to raise funds for Myanmar, the Singapore spirit continued to extend beyond the emergency and recovery phase. Two years on, projects like the rebuilding of a new village at Auk Pyun Wa, homes for the displaced, clinics, schools, a cyclone shelter, and an orphanage in Thanlyin have been completed. Other projects including cyclone shelters in Twantay and Bogalay and Kungyangone, and schools are also on the way to completion.

The disaster of Cyclone Nargis has illustrated the destructive force of nature and at the same time, reminded us of the awesome power of humanity to persevere and progress. Normalcy has not yet fully returned to Ayeyarwady, but with continuous engagement, generous support from volunteers and donors and active involvement, the residents of the delta region will not be alone in their journey to recovery.



# Project Kasih

By Publicity Officers of Project Kasih 2009

## 2009



**P**roject Kasih 2009 was a 10-day mission trip to Pulau Nias, Indonesia, organised by Red Cross Humanitarian Network – NTU Chapter. The main focus of this project was to conduct educational and healthcare programmes, set up the mini-library in a local orphanage, The New Community Home (TNCH) and allow the team to participate and assist in various farming and construction activities in Livelihood Training Centre (LTC).

The mission was indeed a success with all objectives met. Both construction work and farming were new to the team and none of us have the required expertise. However, the team picked up the skills swiftly and completed the construction and farming activities within schedule.

In addition, the team members taught the orphans from TNCH Basic English and personal hygiene. To balance learning and having fun during lessons, the team introduced simple nursery rhymes in both English and Bahasa Indonesia to engage the orphans. The orphans were very active and participated well during the dancing and singing sessions.

The team showed the students the world beyond their village such as elements of both countries and their similarities with a view to expand the horizon of these children's minds and inspire them to try harder in life so that they can reach out and explore the world for themselves one day.



The Project also gave the team members the opportunity to understand the life of the Sumatra Earthquake survivors and their resilience against all odds. Short interviews were conducted with two families who had been through the earthquake a few years back.

Project Kasih was an eye-opener for most of the team members. The team was fortunate to be living in Singapore, where the occurrence of natural disasters is low, and electrical and water supplies are constant. In Pulau Nias, the team members had to



shower in cold water every night and hand-wash their clothes everyday. Living conditions in the team member's hometowns were considered luxurious to many Niasans.

The expedition provided a platform for the 16 NTU students to experience life in a less-fortunate neighbourhood. Farming and construction activities were not tasks that they face in their everyday lives and the team learnt the amount of hard work that was put in to sustain the comfort that we enjoy in our homes.





than a week. It was these intangibles that had made a greater impact to the orphans of The New Community Home.

The same can be said for the team, as many of them shed tears when the orphans performed an original song created by their caretaker at the end of the expedition. It was obvious that the team and the children have grown fond of each other.

The team also learnt the importance of teamwork and bonding. None could have achieved this much if tasked to work alone. During the trip, the team displayed good teamwork and this was commendable. The team cared for one another and happy moments brought fond memories to the expedition.

In conclusion, despite it being a relatively short trip, the expedition had been an enriching and fulfilling experience for all 16 members. The team hopes to further spread the message of humanitarian work to the people around them for the benefit of the global society. The team would like to thank RCHN – NTU Chapter, NTU Students' Affairs Office, Singapore Red Cross, and everyone who has contributed in one way or another to the success of the project.

The expedition could be summed up with three phrases – 'Smile, Share, Spread the Love' – indeed, the team has achieved all three.

Many participants also learnt not to take the simple things in life for granted. For example, the team saw how much the children in The New Community Home enjoyed and treasured what they have. The children were elated even though the gift given for a correct answer was just a small eraser.

With their diligence and willingness to learn, it was obvious that the children were perfectly capable of accomplishing great achievements in life. However, they were constrained by the lack of exposure to the

urban world and thus the development of their innate talents was confined by the living environment. The difference in opportunities for the children as compared to many team members made the latter thankful for what they have and also increased their passion to provide more for the children in order to bridge the gap.

The children loved interacting with these 'elder brothers and sisters' and bonds grew between the team and the children although they have only known each other for more





# Project R.I.C.E 2010 re

About 1,200 youth volunteers called at 75,000 HDB households in various parts of Singapore on 6 and 7 February to collect rice to benefit the less fortunate during the festive season. They were met at the doors by enthusiastic home dwellers, and had their bags filled up quickly with Grains of Love.

Coupled with the warm support of Sheng Siong Supermarket and other sponsors, the two-day event collected 100,000 kg of rice, in aid of 20,000 beneficiaries, doubling 2009's harvest of 40,000 kg of rice for 6,400 beneficiaries.

Recipients of the rice, such as the beneficiaries of Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centres and Food from the Heart, ushered in the Lunar New Year on an auspicious note, with bowls full of steaming white rice, in hope of a fulfilling (满) year.

## Heavyweight Partnership

For the first time this year, Project R.I.C.E saw the sale of rice vouchers at various Sheng Siong outlets. Each voucher represented a public donation of 5 kg of Num Rum Thai Fragrant Rice at a special cost







# aps a bountiful harvest

of \$9 (usual price \$11.30), subsidised by Sheng Siong Supermarket. Sheng Siong Supermarket went a step further to donate an additional 500g of rice for every kg of Nang Rum Thai Fragrant Rice purchased. 40,000 kg of rice was collected through this initiative.

"We are honoured to be invited to play a part in Project R.I.C.E 2010 and would like to thank all our valued customers for their strong support in this meaningful cause," said Mr Lim Hock Chee, Managing Director of Sheng Siong Supermarket.

## Star Power

Singapore Red Cross' celebrity ambassador Edmund Chen, accompanied by Ang Mo Kio Family Service Centres (AMKFSC) representatives, Iris Cheong and Zaleha Ahmad met supporters at Sheng Siong's New Upper Changi Road outlet, to help bolster the public's understanding of Project R.I.C.E 2010 and how important their contributions would be to the low income, elderly or disabled beneficiaries.

"Rice is a main part of the Singaporean diet. The rice will help those with financial burdens, such as if the breadwinner is compromised - in this case they are elderly and unable to work. This will ease their burden in obtaining this staple food," said Ms Ahmad.

AMKFSC held a 'Lunar New Year Rice Distribution' event on 7 February to distribute the collected rice to over 300 beneficiaries, alongside fun-filled activities and a buffet lunch to usher in the Chinese New Year.

## The brains behind the grains

Project R.I.C.E was initiated by the Red Cross Humanitarian Network (RCHN) - Singapore Management University (SMU) Chapter back in July 2008, with the aim of providing the elderly, low-income families and the disabled their necessary sustenance - rice, which may not be readily available to them. In addition, Project R.I.C.E is intended to instill the spirit of volunteerism and leadership among the youths.



Overwhelming response from the HDB heartlanders in previous collections motivated the RCHN to make this a nationwide project. This year, Project R.I.C.E involved students from more than 10 institutions other than SMU, such as Nanyang Technological University (NTU), National University of Singapore (NUS), Republic Polytechnic, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, Raffles Institution (Junior College), Anderson Junior College and Nanyang Junior College in its organising committee.

"Grains of Love," the theme for this year's Project R.I.C.E, symbolises the dedicated volunteers' wish to spread the message of love to the less privileged and to nurture the spirit of volunteerism in youths via their involvement in this project.

The organising committee extends its warmest gratitude to volunteers, donors and sponsors whose unwavering support contributed to the success of Project R.I.C.E 2010.



# A Truly Magical Christmas 2009

By ESTHER TAN HUI MIN,  
Marketing Director, A Truly Magical Christmas 2009  
RCHN - SIMU Magical Christmas Organising Committee



From December 18 to 20 last year, "A Truly Magical Christmas 2009" encouraged Singaporeans to bring some light to someone else in need. Bloodstocks dip during festive periods and with Christmas around the corner, the team set out to collect 750 packets of blood. The theme, "Chain of Giving," focused on encouraging members of the public to start or continue donating blood, as well as recipients of the blood to encourage their peers to donate blood. We hope that this would have a cumulative effect and eventually, this repeated cycle of helping someone will form a chain, gathering more people to join in this life-saving heroic act.

The team worked hard and collected 616 units of blood over three days. Even though we did not hit our target, we were happy to be able to meet more than 80% of it. The event would not be a success without the help of many supporting parties: ComfortDelGro Corporation Ltd; Singapore Red Cross and other sponsors.





This was our first time organising a public blood drive and it was definitely a meaningful Christmas for us, especially for our foreign volunteers who do not usually celebrate Christmas. Through this blood drive, we have also given patients in need of blood, a truly magical Christmas. All of us have worked extremely hard throughout the planning process of five months, starting from August 2009.

During the awareness drive, a week before the actual event, the whole team and I went out of the SMU campus to recruit pre-registered donors and to publicise our event. It was then that I realised that it was not easy to get potential donors, especially when members of the public are not willing to stop and listen to you. However, I did not feel dejected and we motivated each other in order to get more potential donors.

During the actual drive, the majority of donors who attended were individuals between the age of 18-40 years old. Our expected participants comprised mainly faculty members and students from SMU, companies within close proximity of the blood donation

drive, other tertiary institutions (through contact with various RCHN Chapters) and members of the general public, with the latter making up the majority of donors.

We also organised Sudoku games and puzzles, and had a caricature artist entertain blood donors and their families.

As the marketing director for the event, this year's blood donation drive proved to be both a challenge and a triumph for me. With two teams assigned to me, it was interesting to watch them develop and grow through the process of planning, liaising and execution. The sponsorship team also managed to secure a total of 12 sponsors for the event, ranging from F&B to retail.

Although the team's target fell short this year, everyone returned home encouraged by the positive turnout. At the end of the day, the brightest smiles came from the donors as they have given the gift of life. So, if you missed your chance last year, there is always this year to donate blood and to give the gift of life.



# Ready, Excite, Discover!

By MILISSA WONG and TAN QIU YU,  
Red Cross Youth



encompassed a diverse range of activities which were aimed at achieving many objectives, from leadership development to teamwork. Various activities such as Community Service and CPR demonstration were included to reinforce the work of Red Cross among the participants.

Throughout the course of the Race, Cadets worked together as one, each Division outshining the other as their potential and limits were stretched. The participants had to make prudent decisions, figure out the best plan, strategise and learn from one another.

They also had a chance to put what they have learnt in the Red Cross Youth to good use, including First Aid, CPR, Casualty Evacuation skills, Teamwork and Leadership. Each aspect of the race required a combination and balance of such expertise for any Team to be ahead of the Race!

One such instance was observed during the CPR demonstration at the East Coast Park, where qualities such as camaraderie, teamwork, mutual support and peer teaching were displayed when Cadets revised the methods of CPR with one another so that everyone will be able to successfully perform an effective CPR.

In another instance, leadership and sportsmanship came into play as Cadets encouraged and motivated one another to press on and persevere while overcoming challenges in the Outdoor Activities, as well as executing Casualty Evacuation skills in the natural habitat of the offshore island Pulau Ubin.

Two of the Community Service components in the programme were beach cleaning and distributing First Aid brochures to the public in East Coast Park. Through these activities, the Cadets were able to learn more about creating a better environment and understand the importance and usefulness of First Aid knowledge in times of emergencies.

After three days of intense races, The RED Race took a momentary halt for a Campfire on the third night of the Camp, bringing together all participants of the Race. The theme of the Campfire – "Reaching Every Distance", was apt as it brought out the spirit of unity, perseverance while reaching out to the less fortunate, the sick and the suffering.

The RED Race showcased individual qualities, celebrated synergy in diversity and forged ties among its participants. Completing the Race was a form of accomplishment as everyone emerged victorious, with his or her set of memories, newfound friendships and stories to tell. It was indeed a fantastic and gratifying adventure for everyone.

Red Cross Youth Challenge 2009 ended with a teary goodbye and a question in mind: "When is the next RED Race?"

The RED Race is set to return in December 2010. Are you Ready to Excite and Discover again?

**R**ed Cross Youth Challenge (RCYC) 2009 was a whole new experience for organisers and participants alike. In its third year running, RCYC 2009 adopted an entirely different concept from past years.

Dubbed as "The RED Race", the Challenge comprised a half-day Contact Session on 12 December 2009 and a camp from 17 to 20 December 2009 at the Red Cross Campsite.

Following the format of "The Amazing Race", the inaugural RED Race saw 100 Red Cross Youth Cadets completing in a series of races across several destinations in Singapore, such as West Coast Park, East Coast Park, the Central Business District and even Pulau Ubin. All the activities were decked with a string of fun-filled and exciting challenges and discoveries.

The spirit in The RED Race's slogan – "Ready, Excite, Discover!", was indeed brought out in the Cadet participants, as RCYC



# Home is where the heart is

By SITI HAILEEN, *Red Cross Home for the Disabled*

American president Woodrow Wilson once said that "there is no higher religion than human service. To work for the common good is the greatest creed." I cannot agree more. My experience working at the Red Cross Home for the Disabled has been nothing short of a miracle, as everyday is an adventure. The one thing that I find most meaningful about my work is how we serve not just with our heads, but with our hearts.

I remember the time I first stepped into the compound, lulled by the serenity and beautiful greenery. I was excited, but unsure if I was going to fit in, having had almost no experience being around the disabled. And

then I was greeted with a smile, and that is how it has been everyday since.

It's been almost six months since I first stepped into the Home and never once have I had the inclination to be absent from work. Amazing as it sounds, my experience working at the home has taught me that it does not matter where you come from, as everyone here is like family.

Here, the system is an intricate weave of love, care, compassion and laughter and everyday, I am humbled by my daily

experiences. I learn something new everyday. Like perseverance – when one witnesses how the residents are determined to make simple things like walking an accomplished feat, one would be ashamed to have ever thought of giving up.

As much as I love being nestled here in the lush greenery, I believe that it does not matter where we are located, so long as we can work together in harmony. At the end of the day, home is where my heart is, together with the nurses and residents.





# The 5<sup>th</sup> Youth Do

By LIM CHENG HONG, Volunteer, Blood Donor Recruitment Programme

The 5<sup>th</sup> Youth Donor Club (YDC) Training Workshop & Camp 2009 was held from 11 to 14 December 2009 at the Red Cross Training Campsite at Jalan Khairuddin. A group of 47 youths from different backgrounds, aged 16 to 25 years old, gathered to make a difference – in line with this year's theme "Youths can make a Difference!"

This is the second year a regional camp is held in Singapore. 23 foreign delegates from Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar and Hong Kong participated this year. Though there were much cultural differences, everyone interacted well with one another. Within the few days

together, the participants fostered close ties, regardless of nationality. The friendship was so strong that most of the local participants kept in touch with their newfound friends from the region after the event.

The camp participants learnt about the National Blood Donor Recruitment Programme and the importance of blood donation in saving lives. They also learnt more about YDC and its activities. A youth forum was conducted, debating the motion "Voluntary Non-Remunerated Blood Donation – For or against?" The participants showed much enthusiasm in putting forth their stand. Apart from those activities, the participants were brought on a tour of





# YDC Youth Development Club Training Camp

Bloodbank@HSA and played teambuilding games at VivoCity. There was a country-sharing too, which showcased the development of the youth programmes from the participating countries.

The participants also attended a talk by the Health Promotion Board. As it is important to live healthily in order to donate blood, this session was useful in explaining the relation between health promotion and blood donation. To end off the camp on a high, a Social Night was organised where everyone enjoyed entertaining performances, some of which were put up by the participants with their teammates.

On the whole, everyone had fond memories of the camp. The passion and sense of belonging brought everyone together like one big family. Since its first camp in 2005, YDC has been able to recruit new members by engaging the participants after each camp. With the current group of local participants from YDC Camp 2009, there is new blood in YDC. And in years to come, YDC will be able to engage a large network of youths.

YDC! We Can Do!





# The Philanthropic Spirit

By SHEENA CONCEICAO, *Corporate Communications*

**T**he history of volunteerism stems from the simple act of helping your fellow man.

This seemingly insignificant act has rippled through the hearts and minds of the world, introducing change and meaning into the lives of many.

The philanthropic spirit has been around as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, where people were involved in outreach work through various religious institutions and societies. The local churches ran a variety of relief programmes, helping the homeless and those victimised by unforeseen circumstances, where togetherness was vital for survival.

In places such as the US, the spirit of volunteerism has been with Americans

since the very first pioneers travelled west. It is believed that volunteerism first started when colonists had to form support systems in order to survive the many challenges such as farming the land and overcoming new illnesses. Another example would be during the revolutionary war, where many volunteers came together as one to raise funds for war efforts, displaying their philanthropic attitude and patriotism.

At this point, we must not forget the origins of Red Cross. It started with the local farming community in Italy, who gave themselves to helping the dying and wounded soldiers in the war at Solferino.

Henry Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross arrived at Solferino on June 24 1859, the same day the brutal battle took place. Shocked at the gruesome sight, Dunant immediately

took the initiative to organise the civilian population to provide assistance to the injured soldiers. This marked the beginning of an era which to date, has grown into a large community worldwide.

Here in Singapore, religious institutions, grassroots organisations and corporations have groups of volunteers who deliver rations to the less-fortunate, and of late, soup kitchens have started to serve free meals to migrant workers.

No matter what the circumstances are, volunteers play a big role. They can be life-savers, helping-hands, bringing food, water and medicine to the needy, never counting the risks to themselves. We are indeed thankful to all these selfless people who help make the world a better place.

# ICRC Mediator & messenger

By TANG CHUN TUCK,  
*Honorary Secretary, Red Cross Youth*

**I**n times of conflict, the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC) arrives at the scene, bringing with them personnel and aid to heal the hurt, the displaced and the detained.

Formed in 1949, the ICRC is private humanitarian organisation based in Geneva Switzerland. As part of the International Red

Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the ICRC serves as neutral intermediaries in armed conflict zones. It now has over 12,000 staff and is present in over 80 countries.

The ICRC protects refugees, civilians and prisoners of war, and assists to trace family members who have gone missing in the chaos. Training and education are also an important part of the ICRC – locals are informed about

detainees' rights, and the aid and support ICRC provides to victims of war.

Amongst other things, it offers or facilitates the access to basic health care services. It also provides urgently needed food, safe drinking water, sanitation and shelter.

This photo essay depicts the ICRC efforts in different continents around the world.



From February to May 2009, the ICRC evacuated almost 14,000 wounded and ill individuals and their families from conflict zones in Sri Lanka. The ICRC did this by boat and ferried these people from Puttamatallan to Trincomalee.



A woman in Yemen receives food aid from the ICRC after being displaced by fights in Khaiwan Medina village, Northern Yemen. The Sa'dah Insurgency is a civil war in Yemen which breaks out sporadically, despite numerous truces.



The Colombia Red Cross delivers a message to a woman from her brother, who has been given up for dead. The ICRC established a contact tracing system called Restoring Family Links, which helps to track missing family members in areas of conflict and disaster.



ICRC personnel in Chad educate security officers about the proper treatment of detainees. The ICRC implements international humanitarian laws (the Geneva Conventions and the Hague Conventions) to protect the detainees and prisoners of war, and ensure that they are given a fair trial.





## Singapore Red Cross visited our School!

On 23 February 2010, students from the Australian International School of Singapore (AISS) were extremely excited to learn about the many ways in which the Singapore Red Cross helps people, regionally or internationally in times of need. During the presentation conducted by Mr Tang Chun Tuck and Ms Sheena Conceicao, our students learnt a lot of facts about the work of the Singapore Red Cross and how the organisation functions with its various departments.

We learnt there are over 7,000 volunteers divided into different groups. There are the youth volunteers and the adult volunteers, but no matter which group these dedicated people represent, all of them believe in the same thing; service from the heart.

We also learnt during the presentation was that the Singapore Red Cross is the national blood donor recruiter. This got some of the students intrigued and wanting to know how to go about donating blood, but Mr Tang informed us all that we would have to be above 16 to do so.

Our classmates also discovered that the Singapore Red Cross provides services for the disabled and support to their families. Ms Sheena explained how the Society helps countries in the region, but is also ready to help countries around the globe in times of disaster; the earthquake that shook Haiti was an example. Mr Tang told us that the Red Cross was founded in Switzerland, which was why the Red Cross flag has reversed colours from the Swiss flag. Students were very impressed by Mr Tang who has been a volunteer with the Singapore Red Cross for over 40 years!

The students of AISS would like to thank Ms Sheena and Mr Tang for coming to see the year five primary students and for sharing with us how the Singapore Red Cross plays an important role during times of disasters when people need help, and giving us more information on how the departments in the Society work together as one to reach the same goal together.

**Lily Gobran & Caitlin Dragon**

Year Five Students

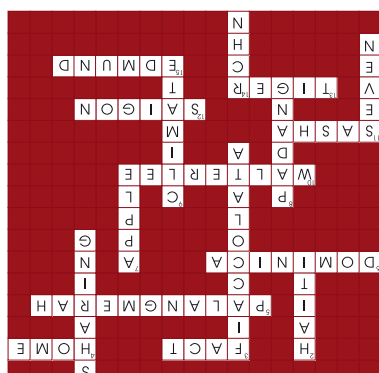
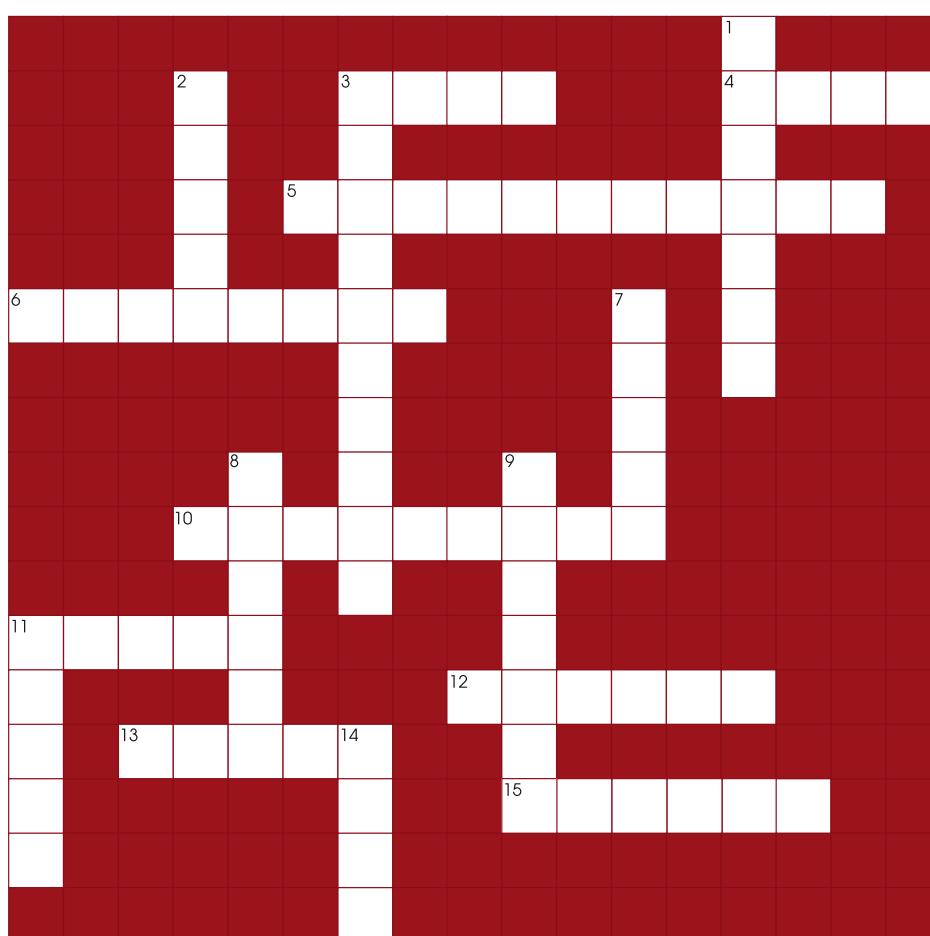
Australian International School of Singapore (AISS)



*Connect with us  
and be invited  
to our events!*



Facebook is a registered trademark of Facebook, Inc. The Twitter name, logo, Twitter T, Tweet, and Twitter blue bird are trademarks of Twitter, Inc.



### Across

3. IFRC "marines"
4. Elizabeth Drive
5. Our friends in Indonesia
6. Alvaro's home
10. Judge on former "First Aid Idol"
11. Our answer to Teddy
12. Before Ho Chi Minh City
13. Roaring year
15. Celebrity buddy

### Down

1. Burmese culture
2. Port-au-prince country
3. Light walk in Italy
7. How to keep the doctor away
8. Rumble in Sumantra
9. Copenhagen summit
11. #Fundamental Principles
14. University CCA



# What's On

## Calendar of events

### March

**27** Red Cross Home for the Disabled  
moves to Family Link @ Lengkok Bahru

### April

**3** Red Cross Youth Arts Festival

**16** Red Cross Youth Awards & Promotion Ceremony

**24** Red Cross Youth World Red Cross Day  
Celebration cum Enrolment Ceremony

**25** Shop@REDCROSS + Sunday Bazaar

### May

**8** World Red Cross Day

### June

**12** Champion Donor Recognition Ceremonies  
(World Blood Donor Day Celebration)

**14** World Blood Donor Day

# World Red Cross Day

Over the past 150 years, the Red Cross Red Crescent has grown into the world's largest humanitarian network, with tens of millions of well-trained volunteers responding to crises and developing local capacities across the globe. Yet, too often, the same people who respond to these crises are themselves the victims of war or disaster.

The origin of World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day dates back to the year 1922, at a time where the Czechoslovakian Red Cross National Society proclaimed a three-day truce at Easter to promote peace. The goal is to recognise one day every year to advocate

the relief of human suffering from disease, and the humanity of seeing a world free from suffering due to war. Hence, 8 May was chosen, as it is the birth date of Henry Dunant, the founder of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

This great day is an opportunity to reach out to all those dedicated people who do their very best to ensure the safety of others and also bring the balm of comfort during troubled times. All of us have a collective responsibility to make our world a safe and better place to live in. It's up to each of us, as individuals, to make a move and do something to help others. Young or old, we can all make a difference.



SINGAPORE