

redcross+

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A newsletter by the Singapore Red Cross

Stepping
up to
**SAVE
LIVES**

“It feels
awesome
knowing I
can help
save lives.”

“Blood is a
gift that we
all have.”

“It's a sense of
responsibility.”



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in common?
They have given a pack of blood for
each year they lived.

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sec gen's note



For the last 65 years, the Singapore Red Cross has been working quietly in the community - easing the lives of those with multiple disabilities, transporting low-income patients to critical healthcare appointments, providing first aid to those in need, and mobilising blood donors to meet the national transfusion needs.

But it has been an evolving story, constantly adjusting and re-positioning to best meet the needs of the society. We have come a long way since we were first established as a branch of the British Red Cross on 30 September 1949.

In the 60s, we were there providing our services in the aftermath of the Bukit Ho Swee fire, the Potong Pasir floods and Hotel New World collapse. Later we would reach an agreement with the Health Sciences Authority to be the national Blood Donor recruiter. We would also grow our capacity to mobilise resources and conduct relief efforts for disasters in the region, which continues to the present.

Today, besides our national duties as the blood donor recruiter, and a provider and advocate of first aid, we also provide humanitarian services for the vulnerable, in particular the elderly and the disabled. The Red Cross Home for the Disabled offers residential, respite and day care services to adults and children. We have a fleet of transporters providing patients with TransportAid to their healthcare treatments and rehabilitation therapy. Our volunteers and staff conduct regular home visits to all FoodAid beneficiaries, bringing them much needed provisions. Our Academy offers training in various aspects of humanitarian response beyond first aid - psychosocial support, water and sanitation and international humanitarian law. And we have proactively taken first aid coverage to the national park, literally, with First Aider on Wheels. Soon we will start a programme in the community (starting with Tampines West) focusing on building resilience amongst the elderly.

All this is only possible with the support of our volunteers, donors and supporters. You have been most generous - volunteering your skills and time, donating to our local and overseas causes, and inspiring us to do more, do better.

Society evolves and grows more affluent, but vulnerabilities and the vulnerable always remain.

We constantly review our humanitarian services; reinvent ourselves from time to time, to serve the community better. One thing remains constant - our commitment to the most vulnerable in the communities we serve. With your continued membership, we can expand our outreach to those in need.

We hope that each and everyone of you will choose to be a member of the Singapore Red Cross. You can be a Life Member of the Singapore Red Cross at S\$300 or a Subscribing Member at S\$50 (5-year renewal).

As a Red Cross Member, you belong to a worldwide network of over 13 million members in 189 countries. Each making a lasting difference through their regular voluntary service and monetary support.

Members also have the responsibility to and can help ensure a well functioning national society; serving on the SRC Council (governing board), oversight and operational committees and/or advisory panels. You can share your views and make critical decisions regarding the leadership of the SRC by attending and participating in the Annual General Meeting (typically in June every year).

It is a privilege to serve. It is my sincere wish that you would commemorate our 65th Anniversary milestone with this privileged membership. And if you are already a Member with us, I wish to thank you and urge you to share your Red Cross journey at our heritage site (myredcross.sg) once it is launched in October.

Highlights in this issue of Red Cross News:

- A tribute to blood donors on World Blood Donor Day (Page 8 & 9) as well as nursing and healthcare aides at RCHD on Nurses' Day (Page 22).
- Red Cross Youth - Change of Command (Pages 14/15), RCY-NTU Chapter's 20th Anniversary (Page 7) and Launch of RCY Commemorative Book (Page 4). First Overseas Humanitarian Project mounted by Red Cross Youth cadets from secondary schools to Leyte, Philippines to aid Typhoon Haiyan survivors (Page 10 & 11).
- Volunteer power at FoodAid (Page 17) and Red Cross thrift shop (Page 18/19).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Benjamin William'.

BENJAMIN WILLIAM
Secretary General & CEO

happy national day

We celebrated Singapore's 49th birthday with more than 50 volunteers as first aiders on emergency response standby, and 42 Red Cross Youth cadets from different schools forming the Red Cross Youth marching contingent at this year's National Day Parade (NDP 2014).



annual general meeting 2014



Held on 30 June at Red Cross House, the 40th Annual General Meeting shared the achievements of 2013 and the future direction of the Singapore Red Cross. There were also some changes in the Council. Four members, namely Ms Lim Choon Noi, Mr Tan Kai Hoe, Dr Lim Ghee Lian and Mrs Susan Chan, have stepped down from the Council. We welcome Mr Edwin Seah, Ms Emily Tan, Mr Eric Low and Mr Laurence Goh to the Council.

launch of the Red Cross Youth commemorative book



Featuring the rich heritage of Red Cross Youth (RCY) since 1952, "Celebrating the Red Cross Spirit" was launched on 18 July to encourage current members to continue their good work, inspire new members to join our service to humanity and raise awareness of RCY's contribution in our community.

The book was written by volunteers, Mrs Annie Gay, Ms Doreen Tan and Mr Tang Chun Tuck.

Scan the QR code to read the e-Book! (redcross.sg/landing/red-cross-youth)



humanitarian response



Singapore Red Cross (SRC) launched a fundraising appeal from 20 July to 16 September to provide immediate relief supplies to help people affected by the conflicts in the Middle East. This follows SRC's initial commitment of humanitarian aid worth US\$30,000 (S\$37,500) in support of humanitarian operations in the Gaza strip, Iraq and Syria (US\$10,000 each).

On a separate note, SRC also committed US\$50,000 in humanitarian aid, to be delivered by the Red Cross Society of China (RCSC), for survivors of the Yunnan Earthquake.

RCY linkamania



Held from 31 May to 1 June, the two-day-one-night camp provided opportunities for our Links to learn new skills through play. This year's theme was Mission Minions. Links, as minions were tasked to rescue Lucy, thus developing the compassion for service to the vulnerable and enhancing their sense of belonging to the Red Cross family.

RCY unit leaders programme 2014



Themed 'Take Flight', the initiation ceremony of the Unit Leaders Programme 2014 welcomed 110 new Unit Leaders. Held at Red Cross Campsite on 8 June, it equipped the leaders of Red Cross Youth units with the skills and knowledge to lead their units. They learnt to run training courses, teach and mentor their cadets, lead their committee members, assist their teachers in running events and achieve the unit's Excellent Unit Award.

the Body Shop at the Red Cross Home for the Disabled



Twenty employees from The Body Shop spent a meaningful morning on 24 July engaging the residents of the Red Cross Home for the Disabled in art therapy. “We at The Body Shop are very passionate about making a positive difference with the way we do our business and giving back to the community. All the volunteers had a very soul-enriching day at the Red Cross Home for the Disabled, making new friends through meaningful activities like an art therapy session. We’re already planning the next volunteering event and can’t wait to come back and spend more time with our new friends,” said Ms Kristina Strunz, APAC Brand & Values Director of The Body Shop.

exercise blue dolphin



On 11 July, 12 staff and six volunteers participated in the civil emergency exercise alongside other government health authorities. They put to good use their emergency response skills in the large-scale simulated civil emergency exercise organised by the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA), at the Marina Waterfront.

blood ties



Youth Donor Club leveraged the concept of sharing and living one’s passions through uploading selfies onto social media platforms to encourage blood donations amongst youths. The blood donation drive, ‘Blood Ties’ was held at *Scape on 12 and 13 July. On a separate note, Red Cross Youth—NTU Chapter organised Vibrant Blood on 7 and 8 August at Fountain Square at City Square Mall.

workshop on ‘Covering Disasters & Natural Hazards’



It takes more than talent and passion to be a good journalist covering disasters and natural hazards. One needs to be sensitive to the nuances of different cultures, lifestyles, language and religion of the survivors, ask the right questions to elicit good responses and be mentally prepared that electricity, water and food may be scarce and looting may be prevalent in disaster-stricken areas. More than 40 SRC volunteers and staff learnt some of these techniques at a masterclass ‘Covering Disasters and Natural Hazards’, conducted by Mr Augustine Anthuvan, Editor at Channel NewsAsia’s Current Affairs team on 14 August.

bridging our past, present and future

By **Kan Jiamin**, Red Cross Youth - NTU Chapter Alumni
Photo by **Fidel Chandran**, RCY - NTU Chapter Alumni



Dr Chan Soon Keng, Chapter's teacher advisor for 20 years giving her farewell speech.

RCY-NTU Chapter celebrates 20 years of humanitarian service

Founded in 1994, Red Cross Youth - NTU Chapter¹ (previously known as Red Cross Humanitarian Network - NTU Chapter) has been actively serving the local and international communities through organising successful blood donation drives, visits to Red Cross Home for the Disabled, fund raising, first aid duties and overseas humanitarian projects. For 20 years, the Chapter cultivated the spirit of volunteering among chapter members, moulding young adults into passionate volunteer leaders.

In conjunction with the Chapter's 20th anniversary, a celebration was organised on 10 May 2014 at Haw Par Memorial Hall, Red Cross House. The event was a milestone for the Chapter as it was the first time when Chapter alumni from the past committees and current members got together to network and interact.

The event kick-started with a speech by Dr Chan Soon Keng, who has been the Chapter's teacher advisor for these 20 years. As Dr Chan was handing over the reins as the Chapter's advisor to Mr Andri Pradana, the event was also a farewell party for Dr Chan. In her speech, she gave a background of the founding of Red Cross Youth - NTU Chapter, how the Chapter transformed over time and her thoughts about stepping down as advisor. It was an emotional speech. By the end of Dr Chan's speech, there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

Deputy Secretary General (Administration) of Singapore Red Cross, Mr Lim Theam Poh also shared his thoughts on the achievements of the Chapter and encouraged us to continue contributing back to the society.

We had ice-breaking games to lighten up the mood before a delicious buffet dinner. Dinner was also accompanied by performances and videos, where the alumni members reminisced about their time spent together in the Chapter when they were students in NTU. The event culminated with the cake-cutting session to mark our 20-year milestone.

The alumni presented a video and photo book to Dr Chan to express our heartfelt gratitude for her guidance and support, when we were in the Chapter. She always went above and beyond to mentor the Chapter members in discovering their potentials and leadership. Before the end of the event, some of the attendees also shared their thoughts on the time spent with Dr Chan and in the Chapter. Many of the attendees felt that the event had achieved its aim of bridging the past and present, which would certainly help to shape the future of the Chapter.

¹ It is the first & largest RCY Chapter in Singapore. Today, it has a membership of 270.

honouring the givers who save lives

By **Tracy Lam**, Volunteer

Photos by **Mohamed Ali, Kang Shi Zheng, Vo Tai Thanh and Allan Gomez**, Volunteers



This year's World Blood Donor Day was set against the white, sandy Palawan beach of Port of Lost Wonder (POLW), Sentosa Island, on 7 June 2014. Beautiful white tents dotted the carnival area, shimmering in the intensity of the sun. With the turquoise water and the sky merging into a clear sheet of azure blue, it was not hard to see why the response was overwhelming.

The National Blood Donor Recruiter Programme honoured 1,610 individuals and 32 corporate and community Bloodmobile Organisers (BMOs) at the Champion Blood Donor Recognition Ceremony. Two ceremonies were held to recognise individuals and corporations which had helped to save lives through blood donation and donation drives. Minister of Health, Mr Gan Kim Yong and Member of Parliament for Marine Parade GRC and Government Parliamentary Committee for Health, Home affairs and Law, Ms Tin Pei Ling graced the event as Guests-of-Honour in the morning and afternoon session respectively.

In his speech, Mr Gan Kim Yong said it was home-coming for him for two reasons. One was because he had previously worked with Mr Tee Tua Ba, Chairman of the Singapore Red Cross. Secondly, he was a former Red Cross Youth cadet. The champion donors cheered when he said that he was not the Guest-of-Honour, the blood donors were. Mr Axel Chan, SRC Vice Chairman, who addressed the blood donors at the second ceremony, was conferred the Medal for Life award earlier for having donated blood 207 times.

Tzu Chi Foundation was one of the few organisations which

were presented with the Gold award. The Foundation organises monthly and quarterly blood drives at various centers. The organisation started organising blood drives 11 years ago. Their volunteers have been the driving force behind the Foundation, which actively raised awareness of the importance of blood donations. This ongoing effort has also been encouraged by Tzu Chi Foundation's Dharma Master.

Mr Zakir bin Isahak, a Diamond award recipient, had been donating blood since his army days, beginning in 1988. What had motivated him to continue donating blood is the knowledge that his blood will help save lives. "It is an easy way to help others. We just have to keep ourselves healthy. There is nothing to worry about when we donate blood," Mr Isahak quipped cheerfully.

Ms Lola Ng, a Gold award recipient, was delighted at being recognised for her effort. She has come a long way since her first blood donation. She recalled being apprehensive during her first blood donation as she had always been afraid of needles. When asked how she overcame her fear of needles and pressed on with her dedication, Ms Ng laughed and explained, "I always put on my MP3 player and listen to the music when I donate blood. This distracts me from looking at the needle!" Lola advised potential and first time blood donors to keep themselves healthy and drink loads of water and Milo before and after each blood donation. She added, "I will keep going as long as I can with the blood donations!"

The World Blood Donor Day this year not only celebrated the continued effort and support of these blood donors and



organisations but also raised awareness on blood donations. The carnival at the Port of Lost Wonder had drawn many families to the event.

For Mr Lee and his family, it was the second time they attended the event. They had attended the World Blood Donor Day held at the zoo. Mr Lee felt that the activities were engaging for his kids. "The event is very well-organised and my kids are enjoying themselves," he said.

In the morning, the loud shrieks of the children and humming chatter of the crowd demonstrated the excitement of the people, notwithstanding the sweltering heat. In the afternoon, the rain came as a welcome respite to cool the heat of the hot day.

The carnival offered a variety of fun to the visitors, with more than thirty booths set up. There was also a steady, long line formed at the Lucky Dip stall where visitors could try their luck and walk away with a small souvenir. There was also a treasure hunt 'Hero Hunt' held at four intervals that day. It was a fun-filled event for families and everyone who attended. The music and constant buzz created a spirited, lively atmosphere and a joyous note to mark World Blood Donor Day.



**"Thank you, you saved my life."
Scan to watch a video from
blood recipients.**

engaging the youth

To meet the increasing demands of blood, the Singapore Red Cross (SRC) and the Health Sciences Authority aim to collect 129,700 units of blood – 116,200 units of whole blood and 13,500 units of apheresis¹ in 2014. This translates to an average of at least 400 units of blood needed daily.

More than half of the first-time blood donors in 2013 were youths aged between 16 and 25 years old. This year, Singapore Red Cross aims to bring the percentage of youth blood donors to 35 percent of the total blood donor population, from 31 percent in 2013.

This year's World Blood Donor Day saw a record number of winners who are the youngest in their respective Champion Blood Donor categories. Raymond Chong, 34, is the youngest ever Champion of Champions. He made 153 donations.

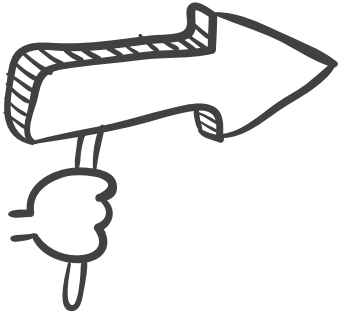
The SRC will continue engaging and encouraging more youths to become regular blood donors. One of the ways SRC does that is by recognising the efforts of youths who increase blood donations through creative means. Republic Polytechnic students managed to increase blood donations by 24 percent by engaging their peers on social media platforms and developing an animated website as part of a creative donor recruitment programme.

Besides that, a contest was held to design the eighth and final hero, Cobalt as part of the Release the Hero Within You campaign. Ms Youn SoEun, 24, a recent graduate, was Cobalt's designer.



¹ Donation of blood platelets or plasma. A donor can make an apheresis donation every month, up to 12 times a year.

changing lives, one at a time... starting with me



Diary of **Surya Varma Selvakumar**, Cadet, Red Cross Youth—Raffles Institution
Photos by **Chia Swee Kim**, International Services

They say that Rome was not built in a day: It took the collective effort of each Roman citizen to build their magnum opus from scratch, relying only on each other. Similarly, the world cannot be changed within a short period of time. Humans, as a race, have to come together, help each other and be the change they want to see being implemented in the world. So why not start small? Why not change someone's world?

A group of 12 members from the various RCY units in Singapore came together to organise a post-Haiyan humanitarian relief programme in the Philippines, more specifically, in the town of Albueria. Though the 12 of us came from different schools, we all had one common goal - to help the people of the Philippines.

Prior to the Overseas Humanitarian Programme (OHP), we were divided into three groups. One group was to construct a handwashing facility in San Pedro Elementary School, another group to teach basic hygiene habits to the students and the last group to teach basic First Aid and to devise a fire evacuation plan for the school. We met up many times prior to the trip, to discuss, refine and finalise our lesson plans for the students.

On 13 June, we boarded the plane headed for Cebu Airport. After a four-hour flight, we landed at Cebu. We had a quick lunch before boarding the ferry for a two-hour ride to Ormoc. At 7pm, we arrived at Ormoc Ferry Terminal. We then headed to Hotel Don Felipe, a stone's throw away from the terminal. We had our first debrief there, followed by a good night's sleep after a long and tiring journey.

On the second day, we went to San Pedro and Calingatnan Elementary Schools to conduct field studies and further refine our lesson plans accordingly. The school compounds were simplistic and fragmented in the design. It dawned upon us how fortunate we are to be studying in schools that are built with good facilities. The visit was enriching as it opened new possibilities for alternative venues for larger-scale activities. Once again, after all the planning was done, we had our debrief sessions. This was followed by dinner and bedtime.

On the third day of the trip, we had a Friendship Day (planned by the Construction Group) to get to know our counterparts from REACT (a youth organisation in the Philippines that provides crisis relief), who were partnering us in our OHP throughout the trip. Initially, it was awkward given the huge age gap between the RCY volunteers and the REACT





volunteers. However, the enjoyable and interactive activities forged a bond between us. It gave us motivation and spirit to help the people of the Philippines.

From the fourth day to the ninth day, we taught the students basic first aid with plasters, proper hygiene habits and also how to evacuate from their classrooms if a fire were to break out. We taught the children songs and cheers to capture their attention and interest. Even the teachers were keen to engage the class with our cheers during lessons. We were happy that something as simple as cheering created such an impact on the students.

Besides that, we also helped out at the school's annual dental check-up. Our slew of tasks included apportioning medicines for the children, comforting children, helping them line up and keeping them entertained. The courage of the children of the Philippines left an impression on us. Though some of them started crying, many of them controlled themselves and remained calm while undergoing the tooth extraction. It was definitely a painful experience for them, but they pulled through it, much like they did when Typhoon Haiyan struck. It was really commendable of them to remain brave in the face of adversity (at such tender ages no less), and we developed a newfound respect for the students.

The construction team was involved in the building, cementing and painting of a new handwashing facility for the school, after their previous facility was destroyed in the typhoon. We helped out whenever we could. It was gruelling. However, with the help of the REACT volunteers and fellow RCY cadets, the construction team was able to see the fruits of their labour on the second-last day that we were at San Pedro.

Our last day with the REACT volunteers came on the ninth day of our trip. We interacted with the volunteers, exchanged contact information and played many rounds of the 'Friendship Dance'. When the time finally came to leave them, sadness and emptiness filled our hearts. The only thing we could hear on the bus ride to San Pedro was the refrain of the song they sang: "Farewell to you my friends, we'll see each other again. Don't worry 'cause it's not the end of everything..."

On the final day in San Pedro, one of the VIs, Ng Hui Ling, taught the teachers of San Pedro some basic First Aid which included slings and wound management. Though many were struggling at first, they eventually got the hang of it. It was particularly fulfilling for us, because we felt that the teachers would be able to spread this knowledge with the students of San Pedro. We sadly bade our final farewells to the cheeky students who turned up that day (despite it being Saturday, a non-school day) whom we developed a bond with.

During the day's reflection session, we were asked about turning points in our lives. Though some of us cried while revealing our turning points, we felt that a burden has been lifted off our shoulders. It was an eye-opener for many of us as we learnt not to judge a book by its cover.

As we were scheduled to leave for Cebu the next day, we packed up and had a good night's rest after dinner, knowing that we helped the people of the Philippines in one way or another.

The next morning, after breakfast, we headed for the ferry terminal and boarded the ferry departing for Cebu. At Cebu, we visited the Fort San Pedro, a historical Spanish fort which was part of a colonial history of the Philippines, went to souvenir shops, one that sold dried mango varieties and visited the Lapu-Lapu Memorial which was dedicated to the memory of Lapu-Lapu, regarded as the first National Hero. After that, we left for the airport and boarded our plane bound for Singapore.

It was a four-hour flight to Singapore, but it felt like an eternity to many of us. We couldn't help but think about the jokes we made together, the times we had instant-noodle parties in our rooms, the trouble we had with washing our clothes, and most importantly, the camaraderie that we fostered working towards the common goal of bettering the lives of the people of the Philippines. Indeed, the experiences we had, friends we made and good we did, were some of the things we cherish and hold close to our hearts. Those were the things that made this our OHP. And we were more than proud of it.

Serve One Another, indeed.



a cultural exchange to remember

By **Ms Chow Yin**, Youth Officer of Chongfu Primary School & Assistant Director, Schools (Links)
Photo by **Wan Chye Keong**, Red Cross Youth

From 23 to 25 May 2014, four members of Singapore Red Cross attended the National Youth Festival 2014 organised by the Malaysian Red Crescent Society in Putrajaya, Kuala Lumpur. The festival was a three-day, two-night camp. It saw 1,200 host-participants from Chapters all over Malaysia, and 23 foreign delegates from Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, Philippines and Singapore.

The scale of the camp was mind-boggling. We attended the camp with great eagerness and anticipation, hoping to learn more from our sister National Society in Malaysia and to glean new ideas on how we could conduct our own activities for the Links and Cadets back in Singapore. It was an eye-opening and humbling experience for us as we gained invaluable lessons from this trip.

We were warmly welcomed by our local hosts when we arrived on Friday night. The local participants put up a cultural performance. It was interesting to note that culture and the performing arts were included as part of the activities during the camp itself. It was also heartening to see the enthusiasm of the participants even during the late hour. Participants learnt the skills of setting up simple dome tents on the first day of the camp. They immediately put their acquired skills to use by setting up their own sleeping areas. This was definitely something that we could emulate by putting what the Links and Cadets had learnt in theory for practical use.

Due to the large number of participants, the tents were set up everywhere; on the grass, by the roadside, on top of the raised terrains and even on the pavements. It was warm and stuffy inside the tent and the ground was soggy and muddy from the rain. Yet, there were no complaints or unhappy faces. While the resilience of the participants showed through clearly, many of us were counting our blessings that we are, indeed, fortunate to live in Singapore.

It was a new learning experience for me. Though I was used to going to camps, I was shocked the next morning, when we had to shower around tubs in the open, wearing only our sarongs! I borrowed a sarong from another local participant, as I was not expecting to bathe in such a scenario. That said, it was surprisingly an enjoyable experience.

On the last day, participants put the skills acquired over the past few days to good use at the first aid and evacuation exercises. At the closing ceremony, the Malaysian Red Crescent Society worked together with the emergency response teams at an exercise simulating a mass casualty incident.

All too soon, it was the end of the festival. As we changed into our uniforms for the closing ceremony, we were filled with a sense of pride for being part of the Singapore Red Cross, and indirectly, part of the bigger Red Cross Movement, with so many like-minded counterparts from various countries. This camp is certainly an experience that would always remain etched in our memories.



Singapore Red Cross Youth representatives (in white, from left Wan Chye Keong, Farhan Ismail, Ms Doreen Tan, Ms Chow Yin) with their Malaysian Red Crescent Society counterparts.

IHL gains traction amongst youth

By Chia Jen Yang, Volunteer and Jacqueline Fernandez, ICRC
Photos by Jana Zilcayova Jr, Volunteer

On 19 and 20 July, the Singapore Red Cross (SRC), in collaboration with the Debate Association (Singapore), hosted the annual International Humanitarian Law debates. Held at Anglo-Chinese Junior College, the SRC played hosts to a wide range of enthusiastic and well-prepared students from schools all over Singapore. Sixteen teams from tertiary institutions participated in the Senior Division and 12 secondary school teams participated in the Junior Division. The debates were held in 14 classrooms with 64 adjudicators from the Debating Association (Singapore).



The SRC has actively been promoting the understanding of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) within the local community. Since 2011, a learning module 'Exploring Humanitarian Law' was incorporated in the curriculum of Red Cross Youth cadets. For many years, SRC has co-organised the Inter-School debates for post-secondary school students and supported tertiary teams in overseas debates on IHL.

Yet, it was the first time that the inter-school debate has been extended to upper secondary school students to give them early exposure to IHL. Ms Faiszah A. Hamid, Head of the Singapore Red Cross Academy explained, "The participation rate from the secondary schools proves that more young people see the need and relevance of IHL and are interested in learning it, especially when conflicts have been raging in the Middle East recently."

The speeches delivered by the Guests of Honour, Mr N. Sreenivasan Senior Consultant of Supreme Court Singapore and Managing Director for Straits Law (Senior Division) and Ms Caroline Brassard, SRC Council member (Junior Division) underscored that the younger generations should be aware of the wider issues that plague many parts of the world today, including the conflicts in the Middle East. Through such debates, they hoped to inculcate the core values of service, volunteerism and impartiality into the hearts and minds of the youth.

After the speech delivery, the debates commenced. With the wide range of talented debaters at the event, the audience were treated to a stunning spectacle of often dramatic verbal tussles from the country's finest young debaters.

The competition was intense even as the students from Secondary 3 and 4 (15 & 16 year olds) debated the first round motion "This house would allow the use of chemical weapons." Dedication to the art of debating was obvious, some teams even had their own timekeeper! Team dynamics were interesting – some teams were quiet and contemplative whilst other teams were explosive, loud and passionate.

But all teams were armed with well-researched arguments and concrete analyses, and put forward their cases ferociously. Speeches were delivered with passion, conviction. The adrenalin was almost contagious. Reasoned arguments were accompanied by carefully choreographed hand gestures.

Eventually, the team from Anglo Chinese School (Independent) emerged the winner of the Senior Category whilst Hwa Chong Institution triumphed in the Junior Category. Organisers and observers agreed that the passion for debating and depth of research undertaken were impressive in all the teams that participated.

Ms Faiszah summed it up best when she said "It is very heartening to hear the students debating on topics such as the use of chemical weapons and on humanitarian issues. At the end of the debate, it doesn't matter who argued better. What is important, everyone learnt something and IHL has received the attention it deserves."



from one great leader to another

By **Sondra Foo**, Corporate Communications and Marketing
Photo by **Carlo Heathcote**, International Services and **RCY Uni Channel**

Leadership transition for Red Cross Youth

Mr Ling Khoon Chow has many fond memories of the time he served as Director of Red Cross Youth (RCY) from 2008 to April 2014 and it is not hard to see why.

“It always warms my heart to see our RCY members engaged in various activities, whether they are Links at nine or 10 years old, the older cadets in secondary school or even the Volunteer Instructors. Many of them gain satisfaction by participating in RCY activities because they know that there is a deeper meaning behind what we do, be it organising activities, re-designing the curriculum or taking part in planning sessions at headquarters,” said Mr Ling.

After serving as the RCY Director for six years, Mr Ling handed over the reins of RCY to Mr Sahari Ani, concurrently the Director of Services at the Singapore Red Cross (SRC), at a symbolic Change-of-Command Parade on 28 May. This is the second time in Singapore Red Cross’ history that a Change-of-Command Parade was held to symbolise the changing of guards at RCY.

Under his leadership, Mr Ling added six new units, promoted international friendship through exchange programmes with sister National Societies and provided our youth with broad international exposure and invaluable experience as they represented Singapore in regional and international youth events.

Mr Ling also spearheaded the integration of the former Red Cross Humanitarian Network, comprising members in post-secondary institutions, with Red Cross Youth. This counts as one of his greatest satisfactions in his tenure as RCY Director. "The integration of Red Cross Youth enables the seamless transition in the volunteering experience of our Links as they progress to secondary schools, post-secondary institutions and adult volunteers. It is good that we see older members serving as mentors and leaders who guide and inspire our younger members," he explained.

Under Mr Ling's charge, RCY was also more involved in the local humanitarian causes of the Singapore Red Cross. The Youth Ambassador programme was introduced in schools, leading to an increase in the number of blood drives. Exploring Humanitarian Law was integrated into the RCY curriculum so cadets could get acquainted with International Humanitarian Law from a young age. Today, the RCY curriculum has greater emphasis on character development, leadership and management skills to stand the youths in good stead.

"I am glad that we have reviewed the various aspects of RCY from the curriculum to the leaders training programmes. I believe we have a robust programme that will benefit many of our members. Our activities and training are also more in line with the Society's activities and focus areas," affirmed Mr Ling.

Even as Mr Ling relinquishes the role as RCY director, he shares some pearls of wisdom with all the RCY members, "Always do your best in whatever you do. Know that there is a larger mission behind what we do in the RCY - to serve one another," he advised.

To the graduating members, Mr Ling hopes they will continue to serve in the Singapore Red Cross (SRC), whether as a volunteer or SRC or a volunteer instructor with the RCY. "I hope that they have learnt some skills in RCY that will help them in future, in their working or personal life," he said.

A humanitarian leader

Mr Sahari Ani could be said to be a man with the drive and the passion to wear many hats.

A nurse by training, Mr Sahari is a disaster management practitioner and a developmental work specialist all rolled into one. The experiences and exposure he has is nothing short of impressive. His career had taken him from Pakistan to Laos, from Japan to China and even Afghanistan. He previously received the Courage Star Award for contributing to the nation's response during the SARS Outbreak in 2003. More recently, he led the Singapore Red Cross' relief teams to the Philippines following Typhoon Haiyan. Today, he oversees SRC's Community Services which aids the vulnerable, namely TransportAid, FoodAid and Community FirstAid.

Though he has many things on his plate, when the opportunity came for him to undertake the role of RCY Director, he seized it immediately. "The youth have the tremendous potential to effect positive change in our community with their zestful energy, enthusiasm, youthful vigor and passion," he explained.

He is excited about serving as the new RCY director. "Mr Ling has done an excellent job as the Director of RCY. When I step into his position, I have big shoes to fill," said Mr Sahari.



That said, with the support of everyone in RCY, he feels confident in steering the RCY to new heights. "My interaction with the RCY members reaffirmed my conviction that I have made the right decision. Though the responsibility will be considerable, I am confident that with the energy, passion and commitment of our Red Cross Youth Links, Cadets, Chapter members, Volunteer Instructors, teachers, youth officers, alumni and other youth members, we will continue to do our part to serve the community and humanity," underscored Mr Sahari.

Indeed, as Mr Sahari takes over the helm as Director of RCY, it heralds the beginning of a new chapter in RCY's history. Going forward, youth will be more involved in SRC's humanitarian services, both locally and abroad. Given Mr Sahari's extensive experience and purview of the SRC's local services, he is well-positioned to take this further.

"We will continue to cement our commitment and strengthen our contribution to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity, spreading the spirit of volunteerism and integrating the values and principles of the Red Cross in our daily lives. We firmly believe that this will broaden the perspectives of our youths, imbue in them a sense of responsibility, build their character and nurture the youth and leaders to become global citizens of tomorrow," he affirmed.

To all the RCY members, you have the potential to touch the lives of the vulnerable and inspire others - serve one another indeed!



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a law firm's FoodAid experience: the appeal in volunteering

By Jacklin Kwan, Volunteer
Photo by Chloe Tan, Corporate Communications & Marketing

Lee & Lee adopts FoodAid family

For 49 years, the island located due south of the Malaysian peninsula has been transforming rapidly into a world-class bustling hub for both local and foreign businesses. However,



during this impressive metamorphosis, many have been displaced into the lower stratas of society, leaving Singaporeans to face the dilemma of creating a solution that is both sincere and sustainable.

"We wanted to do something meaningful as a firm to give back to the community so we started looking for pro bono initiatives. FoodAid came up during our research and we thought it was suitable for us considering our schedules."

Ms Rebecca Lee and Ms Michelle Tan are just two in a group of four lawyers from Lee & Lee's who volunteer with the Singapore Red Cross' FoodAid service. They feel that the measure of a strong society is in how it cares for its most vulnerable, leading their firm to adopt a family to support. Ms Tan was first involved with the Singapore Red Cross when she spotted a Straits Times article concerning FoodAid, one of the initiatives Red Cross undertakes to provide assistance to struggling households.

Volunteers of FoodAid have the opportunity to help families with chores, fundraise or even tutor and guide the younger children in the household. Being a parent herself, it moved Ms Tan to see the elderly taking care of their many grandchildren. Understanding that raising children requires not only strength and patience but also exorbitant amounts of energy, she looked to provide some respite to the grandparents. Ms Tan took it upon herself to assist with grocery shopping for her beneficiary family. It struck her that what may be the most monotonous and domesticated tasks for us might be extremely challenging for others. She finds "knowing that this little effort makes a difference and having a face to put to your endeavours makes volunteering all the more easy and much more worthwhile."

Meanwhile, Ms Rebecca Lee feels that philanthropy should be part of everyday life, especially when considering what one can take away from the experience of helping others. Ms Lee finds volunteering in FoodAid "very heartening and encouraging." Her volunteering experience lends her strength when she sees that the family she works with "doesn't really have much but are still positive and ready to take on whatever hardships come their way."

The genuine moments both Ms Lee and Ms Tan shared with the beneficiary family were their most memorable. "It meant so much when the family shared their life with us. It enabled us to get a glimpse into their lives. It was meaningful to be a part of their lives."

"We wanted to do something sustainable." Ms Tan and her colleagues contemplated their service seriously, creating a system in which four of them take turns to grocery shop and visit their adopted family so that their service is kept consistent over time. Both women have demonstrated that the currents of change do not move fast enough for us to ignore those having trouble staying afloat. As Ms Lee has said after nine months of enlisting in the FoodAid service, "Volunteering doesn't take much time. It's just a matter of balancing it with work. Though it may be challenging at times, it's very doable."



how to be a thrifting wiz

By **Chloe Tan**, Corporate Communications and Marketing
Photo by **Chloe Tan**, Corporate Communications & Marketing

Thrift shopping can be an enjoyable experience - searching through cluttered racks and shelves, deriving the thrill of bargain hunting and the satisfaction of scoring affordable yet stylish deals. But thrift shopping is actually more than browsing, choosing and paying.

Dedicated volunteers of Shop@RedCross share some tips on how to get the most out of your thrift shopping experience.

Take your time

Allocate adequate time for a fun thrift shop treasure hunt to browse through the items on display! You may chance upon a good deal which you may otherwise overlook if you are in a rush.

Bring a measuring tool

Bring a measuring tape to make an informed decision and be 100 percent sure that whatever you are buying will fit in your house or fit your loved ones.

Keep an open mind

Keep an open mind and adjust plans while thrift shopping. With the diverse range of items offered, you will never know what great bargains you may unravel this time!

Don't be shy to ask or befriend

If you are looking for anything in particular, ask the thrift shop volunteers to save time. The thrift shop is always a good place to meet friends and like-minded groups, so do say 'hi!' the next time you drop by.

Bring a shopping bag

Never underestimate the number of items you might go away with. Bring along a big bag that is lightweight and easy to carry around. The thrift shop is all about 'Going Green'!

Join the mailing list

Sign up for the mailing list to be the first to know about Singapore Red Cross' (SRC) thrift shops weekend events such as the Sunday Bazaar and Weekend Sales.

Shop or Contribute for a Good Cause

By shopping at the Shop@RedCross, you are contributing to SRC's local humanitarian services such as the Red Cross Home for the Disabled, FoodAid and TransportAid. You can also donate your preloved items to us!

Check back often

Visit our Shop@RedCross often to avoid missing out on incredible finds. You never know when someone has recently donated something you have been yearning for all along!



The helping hands behind Shop@RedCross at Red Cross House

Think outside the box

See the potential of items and don't abandon something just because it doesn't fit you right off the bat. A skirt purchased at S\$5 can be tailored or customised to your size and the vintage suitcase can be used as a coffee table.

Go with cash

Most thrift stores only accept cash for payment. The same goes for Red Cross thrift shops @ Jalan Khairuddin and Red Cross House.



Mrs Mary Narayanan

A passionate volunteer, Mrs Narayanan roped in her friends and ex-colleagues to join the team of volunteers to run the Shop@RedCross at Red Cross House as a means to give back to society when one is still healthy.



Ms Emily Ong

Retired teacher, Ms Ong volunteered to remain relevant in society. The joy of volunteering outweighs the tedious aspects of sorting and packing items at the thrift shop.



Mrs Jennifer Ng

Community service has always been a big part of Mrs Jennifer Ng's life as she believes in giving back to society as long as she is able to.



Mrs Alice Navaratnarajah

Besides helping out at Shop@RedCross at Red Cross House twice a week, Mrs Navaratnarajah also sources for in-kind donations from wholesalers to add on to the store's collection.



Ms Paula Martinho Costa

A full-time homemaker, Ms Costa finds it worthwhile volunteering to do something meaningful though it can be physically straining at times.



Ms Ebenazer William

Retired teacher, Ms Ebenazer William volunteered in order to reach out to the less privileged. The fellowship of the volunteers and interesting things people donate drive her on.

Shop@RedCross - Jalan Khairuddin

Address: 62 Jalan Khairuddin Singapore 457524
Open: Every Friday from 10.30am to 3.30pm

Shop@RedCross - Red Cross House

Address: 15 Penang Lane Singapore 238486
Open: Every Wednesday from 11am to 4pm

Mrs Vemala Nair

A retired banker who was formerly a Red Cross Youth cadet during her secondary school years, Mrs Nair volunteers to make a difference in someone's life.

Mr Eddie Chee

The only male volunteer at Shop@RedCross at Red Cross House, Mr Chee feels it is challenging to carry bulky items at his age. But this is nothing compared to the satisfaction derived from helping out at the shop.

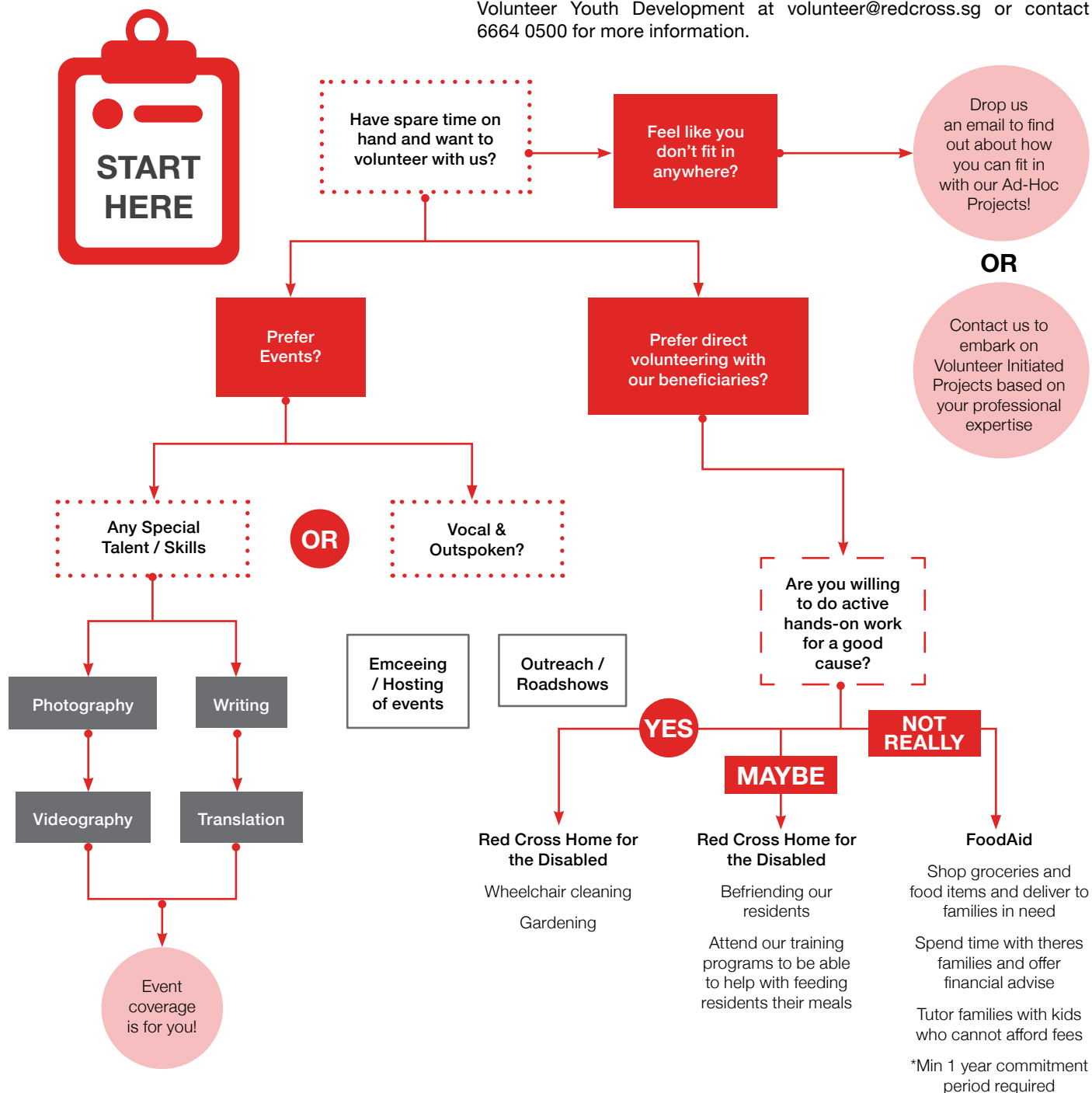
which volunteer are you?

We all have different personal skills and interests. Check out the options below to maximise your volunteering experience.

By **Volunteer and Youth Development** and
Corporate Communications and Marketing

We all have different personalities, talents, strengths, capabilities, skills and interests. Check out this mindmap to find out how you could maximise your volunteering experience with the Singapore Red Cross in areas where volunteering opportunities are currently available, based on your personal traits.

Keen to volunteer in other areas at other times? Please contact the Volunteer Youth Development at volunteer@redcross.sg or contact 6664 0500 for more information.



* All volunteers would need to go through Basic Training (BT) prior to their deployment.

the drive to serve

By **Sondra Foo**, Corporate Communications and Marketing
Photo by **Kartini Saat**, Corporate Communications and Marketing

It is not uncommon to feel hunger pangs in the course of the day, especially if one is fasting during Ramadan.

But not for Mr Mohammad Kamal Bin Mohd, a Singapore Red Cross' TransportAid responder (left in photo).

On a typical day during Ramadan, Mr Kamal wakes up as early as 5am for his meal. His next meal would be at 7.20pm, more than 14 hours later.

"When we are busy, we don't feel hungry or think about food. We just focus on working," he said.

This can be attributed to his passion for his job. As a TransportAid responder, Mr Kamal ferries beneficiaries to and from their healthcare facilities such as hospitals, rehabilitation centres or Day Activity Centres. Some cases may be more challenging than others, especially if they involve carrying bed-ridden beneficiaries via the stairs. Yet, he looks forward to every interaction with his charges.

"Our beneficiaries are my friends. We build rapport by providing a listening ear, sharing jokes and laughter with them. The beneficiaries share their childhood stories about staying at the kampung, life stories and problems with us. They also share traditional remedies. We will occasionally buy food for them or treat them to kopi (coffee). Some of them feel that we are closer to them than their children as their children seldom visit them due to work and family commitments. They treat us like their own children," shared Mr Kamal.

Very often, beneficiaries find joy chatting with our TransportAid responders as they alleviate the loneliness they sometimes feel when their family members are working. "They are just like us; they need support, encouragement, motivation and friendship. They look forward to interacting with us because we chat with them and provide psychosocial support. They appreciate our efforts and would say, 'Thank you brother!' That makes all our efforts worthwhile," he quipped.

Mr Kamal goes the extra mile to help beneficiaries attain cost savings with practical advice on subsidies and claims they can make at their Community Development Councils. Wherever possible, he would support the little businesses owned by



beneficiaries. "One of our beneficiaries loves to cook. So, we would order home-made spices from her. This gives her some measure of financial independence and confidence, as she relies on her own capabilities to earn some money. Some beneficiaries have certain talents and capabilities that they leverage to earn some income," Mr Kamal explained.

Mr Kamal finds joy and satisfaction carving a career in the social service sector. "I am blessed to be healthy. By working in the humanitarian field, I can do something meaningful to touch the lives of the less privileged. I am happy to be able to reduce their burden. Sometimes, I feel enriched in the process, when I learn from their life experiences," he affirmed.



Seeking a career
with the Singapore
Red Cross?

Scan the QR code for
current openings!

serving with a heart

By **Lu Jiaquan**, Volunteer
Photos by **Kartini Saat**, Corporate Communications & Marketing

Red Cross News speaks to nursing and healthcare aides at the Red Cross Home for the Disabled on the occasion of Nurses' Day

Their daily work entails specialised and professional care for the residents of the Red Cross Home for the Disabled (RCHD); comfort, feeding, toileting and attending to every need.

Standing on their feet all day, being alert and sensitive to every gesture, sound or eye movement, they perceive their charges as family, and their interactions as opportunities to shower love to someone in greater need.

It is physically and at times psychologically demanding to serve as a nurse or a nursing aide. Nevertheless, many consider it a calling and would not trade their uniforms for anything else in the world.

As our nursing professionals, therapy and healthcare aides can attest, 'nursing' at a disabled home is certainly more than just a profession, considering their charges have multiple disabilities and high needs.

Besides professional 'technical' skills, our nurses have inherent 'soft' skills to care for the severely disabled residents.

"I have to observe my residents' behaviour and temperament constantly, since many are unable to vocalise their needs. It is very important to be empathetic toward their feelings," explained nursing aide Ms Mi That Mar Thaung, who regards RCHD as her second home, and the residents, her family members.

"Though communicating with the residents can be challenging at times, I make

it a point to understand each resident's needs," said Mr Thet Oo, a healthcare aide team leader who treats each resident like a family member.

Yet, despite the challenges of balancing the needs of the residents and their family members, it is the intrinsic interactions with residents that drive our nurses.

Ms Relloque Mara Yvonne Pornobi, a Filipino nursing aide team-leader noted, "It is very rewarding to see smiles from the residents and receive encouragement from their family."

Similarly, Ms Sandaleka Udayangani, a Sri Lankan healthcare aide with more than seven years' experience said, "These residents need care and love from us. Working with my senior colleagues, we can better understand our residents and we work hard to make them feel comfortable."

She has also developed a better understanding of the residents' needs and become more appreciative of her blessings in life.

One of two Staff Nurses at RCHD, Mdm Lee Kwee Luang, has worked past the retirement age. She shared, "It is an honour for my colleagues and I to serve with pride, taking care of the less fortunate. I am privileged to be given the opportunity to contribute back to society. I impart my nursing knowledge and experience, mentor and motivate our fellow nurses."

RCHD provides residential, respite services and a Day Activity Centre for the severely disabled. Nurses form the backbone of the Home as they provide quality care that enhances the mental and social well-being of more than 100 residents and clients, thereby bringing a peace of mind to their family members.

Every year on 1 August, Singapore celebrates Nurses' Day. Here at the Singapore Red Cross, we honoured our Florence Nightingales at a special celebration on 19 August for their unwavering dedication to enhancing the lives of residents and clients at the Red Cross Home for the Disabled.

Notwithstanding the latest medical technological advancement, nurses are simply irreplaceable. They form the pillars of the Red Cross Home for the Disabled; their loving care touch not only the residents but their families as well.



From Left - Thet Oo, Mara, Sandaleka and That Mar



Staff Nurse Lee

a new life thanks to the Red Cross

By **Sondra Foo**, Corporate Communications and Marketing
Photos by **Kartini Saat**, Corporate Communications & Marketing



It is every parent's wish that their child is healthy. However, this isn't always the case. Sometimes, the inevitable happens, and a child is born with or develops physical or mental incapacities. In such cases, the love and resilience of the parent is brought to the test.

This was the case for the late Mr Koh Nai Tee and his wife, Mrs Florence Koh.

At two, their son Peter suddenly developed a high fever and was diagnosed by the doctor to be suffering from encephalitis. For 42 years, they cared for Peter's every need - from feeding, grooming, bathing to toileting.

For many, caring for a baby could get overwhelming as they adjust to the lifestyle of feeding, bathing, showering and grooming their child. For Mr and Mrs Koh, those times extended over four decades. Life is definitely not easy for the Koh family. In addition to earning a living the parents have to sacrifice their personal time to care for Peter. Compounding the problem was that the fact that the medical fees quickly depleted their savings.

Yet, their love for Peter spurred them to accept their fate and overcome their challenges together. Mr and Mrs Koh told themselves that as long as they are still able, they will care for Peter. Yet, age caught up with them and they are no longer able to care for Peter on their own. Mrs Koh shared, "When my husband was in his 70s and I was in my late 60s, we realised that we could no longer care for Peter on our own. We enrolled Peter in the Red Cross Home for the Disabled."

At the Red Cross Home for the Disabled, Peter is provided with accommodation, food, round-the-clock professional care and therapy sessions that enhance his physical, mobile and social skills. Peter has also made friends with the nursing aides and volunteers. "I am glad Peter could receive all the care he needed at the Red Cross Home for the Disabled," affirmed Mrs Koh.

Mr Koh passed away a few years ago. With Peter at the Home, Mrs Koh's life has transformed in ways she could never have imagined. "This has given me more time to do my household chores and marketing. I am also able to visit Peter regularly," said Mrs Koh with a smile.

Indeed, the Red Cross Home for the Disabled does more than caring for the disabled. It gives family members the peace of mind to go about their daily activities in the knowledge that their loved ones are well-cared for.



Fundraise Now

Consider organising a charity auction, fun fair or performance within your company or school to raise funds for our local humanitarian services:
Contact 6664 0520 or fundraising@redcross.sg

like & share



Singapore Red Cross celebrates 65th Anniversary



Look out for our roving exhibition (museum-in-truck) that engages the community in SRC's humanitarian services and a heritage microsite where you can share your Red Cross memories.

Red Cross Connection app



Locate the nearest Bloodbank and bloodmobile drives, get updates on blood stocks, track your blood donations, learn about the donation process, eligibility and share alerts on your social network! The Red Cross Connection app bagged Best Use of Mobile and Best Use of Direct Marketing at the recent Marketing Magazine's Loyalty Awards.

Singapore Red Cross Impact Report 2013



Scan the QR code to check out our achievements in 2013, as we served humanity and saved lives!



what's on...



Charity Concert

Be inspired by a heartwarming Chinese music and dance performance, 'Love on Stage' that not only depicts a story of love, hope and volunteerism, but also offers a new perspective of life. Led by show producer, Ms Terene Seow, the performance will be supported by SAF Music & Drama Co. and Dance Ensemble Singapore.

Date: 18 October 2014, Saturday

Time: 7.30 pm

Venue: Singapore Conference Hall

Tickets: S\$50, S\$100, S\$200 (available at Red Cross House)

Email charity.concert@redcross.sg to purchase the tickets.



Red Cross Youth Book

Red Cross Youth has a rich heritage since it was established in 1952. Scan the QR code to find out its evolution over the 62 years!



Randomised Coffee Table Trials

Sign up for Randomised Coffee Trials organised by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to connect with someone from the Movement with whom you can discuss volunteerism.



Donate Now

Inspired by what you read on the beneficiaries? You can make a difference by committing to regular donations to sustain our local humanitarian efforts. Scan the QR code to donate.



Red Cross Home for the Disabled, 8 Lengkok Bahru, Family Link @ Lengkok Bahru, #04-01 Singapore 159052

Blood Collection Centres

Bloodbank @ HSA - Health Sciences Authority (opposite Outram Park MRT Station)
11 Outram Road, Singapore 169078

Bloodbank @ Dhoby Ghaut - Dhoby Xchange
11 Orchard Road, #B1-05 to 09, Singapore 238826

Bloodbank @ Woodlands - Woodlands Civic Centre (opposite Causeway Point)
900 South Woodlands Drive, #05-07, Singapore 730900

Shop@RedCross Thrift Shops

Shop@Red Cross - Red Cross Training Campsite
62 Jalan Khairuddin, Singapore 457524
Open on Fridays from 10.30am to 3.30pm.

Shop@Red Cross - Red Cross House
15 Penang Lane, Singapore 238486
Open on Wednesdays from 11am to 4pm.

Singapore Red Cross Academy @ Red Cross House

15 Penang Lane, Level 3 (Near Park Mall/ Dhoby Ghaut Mrt, Exit B)
Singapore 238486

Singapore Red Cross Academy @ Atrium

International Involvement Hub (I2Hub)
60A Orchard Road, Level 4M Tower 1
#04-02 (near Plaza Singapura, Dhoby Ghaut MRT, Exit F)
Singapore 238890

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