

yw Link



"The name of the LORD is a strong tower; the righteous run to it and are safe." Proverbs 18:10

Jul - Sep 2011

A quarterly newsletter of the YWCA—Young Women's Christian Association of Singapore

www.ywca.org.sg

Highlights



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Editor's Note

Food for the Body & Spirit

The YWCA has a heritage in food and cooking (and baking) and this is continued in the work of the Cookbook Committee, which has been changed to a national committee and re-named "Y-Cook". Y-Cook Committee's objective is to consolidate the many activities related to food and cooking and also take charge of all food publications and to organise food related activities to attract and retain members. Balanced food nourishes the body, mind and spirit and contributes to our overall health and wellbeing.

It is never too young to learn about food and nutrition, and to have hands on experience in preparing food! Read what our young children in the CDC in Bukit Gombak experienced learning about food and nutrition.

In this issue, we introduced a guest writer, Elizabeth Wu, who is enthusiastic about food and cooking (and baking!). Elizabeth has contributed a review of an interesting place to visit and eat which our readers can check out when you are down under in Western Australia.

Whilst on the topic of food, I encourage readers to patronise the Coffee House at Fort Canning Lodge as new dishes have been introduced to the lunch buffet by our new Executive Chef, Anne Loh.

If you noticed, the YW Link does not only promote food for the body, but also food for the spirit in the form of a regular column entitled "Christian Living" which

started in the last issue. In this issue, we thank our Chaplain, Rev Melvin Huang, from Wesley Methodist Church, for giving us spiritual food.

Whilst enthusing about food, let's not forget our numerous volunteers who agreed to sit on the various committees to carry out the work of the Association. We are grateful to these volunteers for their time and talents. Details of the volunteers and committees are set out in this issue.

Our regular Spotlight column features Ms Foo Chek Chiang, a long time volunteer, in this issue. The YW was also in the spotlight recently when our Ingot Pre-School Project, which has been generously donated by The Lien Foundation, was launched to the media and reported in the major local newspapers.

I urge you to read all the articles in this issue and regularly check our website at www.ywca.org.sg which will have updates on the many upcoming events, including our Flag Day on 3 September 2011. Please give generously as the donations are to fund our community and outreach programmes.

"so whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God".
1 Corinthians 10:31

Tan Kee Leng
Editor

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Upcoming Events

13 AUGUST – 24 SEPTEMBER
(SATURDAY)

Ukulele Class

Venue : YWCA Outram Centre,
Dance Studio (Level 2),
254 Outram Road,
Singapore 169051

Time : 10.00 am – 11.00 am

Fee : \$74 for 6 lessons
(YWCA Member);
\$96 for 6 lessons
(Non YWCA Member)

13 AUGUST (SATURDAY)

Thai Cuisine Cooking Class

Venue : YWCA Fort Canning Lodge,
Sophia Cooke Ballroom (Level 2),
6 Fort Canning Road,
Singapore 179494

Time : 2.30 pm – 5.30 pm

Fee : \$15 (YWCA Member)
\$25 (Non YWCA Member)

03 SEPTEMBER (SATURDAY)

YWCA Flag Day 2011

Venue : Island wide
Time : 9.30 am - 1.30 pm;
1.00 pm - 5.00 pm

01 OCTOBER (SATURDAY)

Cook-Out

Venue : YWCA Outram Centre,
254 Outram Road,
Singapore 169051

Time : to be confirmed

OCTOBER

Senior Citizens' Lunch

Venue : To be confirmed

Time : To be confirmed

Fee : To be confirmed

28 OCTOBER (FRIDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum Concert 2011

(Outram CDC, Marine Drive CDC & West Coast CDC)

Venue : YWCA Fort Canning Lodge,
Sophia Cooke Ballroom (Level 2),
6 Fort Canning Road,
Singapore 179494

Time : 5.30 pm – 8.30 pm

04 NOVEMBER (FRIDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum Concert 2011

(Ang Mo Kio CDC)

Venue : Grassroots Club
@ Yio Chu Kang

Time : 7.00 pm – 9.00 pm

05 NOVEMBER (SATURDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum Concert 2011

(Jurong East CDC)

Venue : HOMETEAMS

Time : 9.00 am – 2.00 pm

13 – 19 NOVEMBER

(SUNDAY - SATURDAY)

World Week of Prayer

Venue : to be confirmed

Time : to be confirmed

18 NOVEMBER (FRIDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum Concert 2011

(Bishan CDC, McNair CDC

& Outram Kindergarten)

Venue : YWCA Fort Canning Lodge,
Sophia Cooke Ballroom (Level 2),
6 Fort Canning Road,
Singapore 179494

Time : 6.00 pm – 9.00 pm

19 NOVEMBER (SATURDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum Concert 2011

(Bedok CDC)

Venue : Tampines East Community Club

Time : 2.00 pm – 6.00 pm

01 DECEMBER (THURSDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum Concert 2011

(Pasir Ris CDC)

Venue : Tampines East Community Club

Time : 5.00 pm (Refreshments are
served from 4.00 pm – 4.45 pm)

10 DECEMBER (SATURDAY)

Christmas Bazaar

Venue : YWCA Fort Canning Lodge,
Sophia Cooke Ballroom (Level 2),
6 Fort Canning Road,
Singapore 179494

Time : 10.00 am – 6.00 pm

17 DECEMBER (SATURDAY)

K2 Graduation Ceremony cum Concert 2011

(Bukit Gombak CDC)

Venue : Grassroots Club

@ Yio Chu Kang

Time : 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm

For more information, please visit our
website at www.ywca.org.sg.

YWCA Annual General Meeting 2011



Long Service Award Recipients

The Annual General Meeting of the YWCA was held on Thursday, 28 April 2011, at the Sophia Cooke Ballroom of the Fort Canning Lodge. The event started with a time of praise and worship led by the staff, followed by the Long Service Awards Ceremony, which saw 23 staff being recognised for their years of loyal service to the Association. There was also an Awards Presentation Ceremony for the outstanding achievements and performances by our Kindergarten and Child Development Centres. A total of five centres received awards in recognition of their efforts.

This year, the Most Improved Centre Award was awarded to McNair CDC. Ang Mo Kio CDC, Bukit Gombak CDC and Jurong East CDC all received the Consistent Performance Award while Marine Drive CDC was crowned the Best Performing Centre. Congratulations and keep up the good work! Just before the

refreshment break, a birthday celebration was held for the YWCA, which turned 136 years old this year. Our President, Mrs Ma Kheng Min, and Vice-President, Ms Janet Tan, shared the honour of blowing out the candles and cutting the cake.

After a scrumptious buffet spread, the Annual General Meeting was called to order. Mrs Ma delivered a report on the activities and the achievements of the YWCA for the year 2010 - 2011, which highlighted yet another eventful year for the Association. Mrs Ma also thanked the volunteers and the staff for their dedication and support to the Association and having contributed to the success of the YWCA in one way or another. It was also emphasised that there was a need to grow a stronger and younger member and volunteer base, which is essential for the rejuvenation of the Association; as well as the renewal



Ms Janet Tan (left) and Mrs Ma Kheng Min (right) cutting the birthday cake

of leadership and succession planning to ensure the success and continuity of the YWCA.

As there were no contests for any of the available positions, the election was declared a walkover and the new Board of Management for the year 2011 - 2012 was announced. Pastor Daniel Tan from Wesley Methodist Church delivered a short meditation before dedicating the members of the Board to the Lord as they renewed their commitments to serve in the Association and the community.

Glory be to God for blessing the YWCA abundantly over the years! May the Lord grant the Board of Management with wisdom and strength as it provides the leadership and direction for the organisation. We look forward to yet another fruitful year for the YWCA!

Board of Management and Committees 2011 – 2012

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

President

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

Vice Presidents

Ms Mavis Tsoi

Ms Janet Tan

Honorary Secretary

Mrs Dancy Thong

Honorary Treasurer

Ms Celine Wang

Members

Ms Foo Chek Chiang

Mrs Gan Soh Huan

Mrs Jennifer Ng

Mrs Maureen Nguee

Ms Tan Kee Leng

Ms Pearl Tan

Mrs Dorothy Tessensohn

Ms Dorene Yeo

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

Members

Ms Mavis Tsoi

Ms Janet Tan

Mrs Dancy Thong

Ms Celine Wang

Mrs Gan Soh Huan

Ms Tan Kee Leng

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Ms Mavis Tsoi

Members

Ms Kam Rhu Min

Ms Dorene Yeo

APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

Members

Ms Mavis Tsoi

Ms Janet Tan

Mrs Dancy Thong

Ms Celine Wang

AUDIT COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Mrs Maureen Nguee

Vice Chairperson

Ms Evelyn Yeo

Members

Ms Kam Rhu Min

Ms Janet Tan

Ms Dorene Yeo

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

BUILDINGS COMMITTEE

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Ms Mavis Tsoi

Vice Chairperson

Mrs Gan Soh Huan

Members

Mrs Loh-Chiam Shock Yuen

Ms Tan Kee Leng

Mr Ng Jit Chin

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

NATIONAL COMMITTEES

CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME COMMITTEE

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Ms Foo Chek Chiang

Vice Chairperson

Ms Pearl Tan

Members

Mrs Evelyn Chey

Ms Chin Phaik Sue

Ms Vivien Lai

Mrs Dorothy Tessensohn

Ms Dorene Yeo

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

COMMUNITY OUTREACH & FUND RAISING COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Mrs Dancy Thong

Vice Chairperson

Ms Foo Chek Chiang

Members

Mrs Ho Lay Hong

Mrs Jennifer Ho

Mrs Jennifer Liaw

Mrs Jennifer Ng

Mrs Maureen Nguée

Mrs Ow Ay Giok

Mrs Angeline Tan

Ms Janet Tan

Mrs Wee Kung Ling

Mrs Janet Yee

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

FINANCE & INVESTMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Ms Celine Wang

Vice Chairperson

Ms Pearl Tan

Members

Ms Vivien Lai

Mrs Loh-Chiam Shock Yuen

Mrs Jennifer Ng

Ms Elsie Ong

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

FORT CANNING LODGE COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Ms Tan Kee Leng

Vice Chairperson

Mrs Gan Soh Huan

Members

Mrs Loh-Chiam Shock Yuen

Mrs Maureen Nguée

Mrs Jennifer Ng

Ms Janet Tan

Ms Mavis Tsoi

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

HUMAN RESOURCE & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Ms Janet Tan

Vice Chairperson

Ms Mavis Tsoi

Members

Ms Helen Miao

Mrs Maureen Nguée

Ms Elsie Ong

Ms Tan Kee Leng

Mrs Dorothy Tessensohn

Mrs Dancy Thong

Resource Consultant

Mr Paul Misir

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

MEMBERSHIP & PROGRAMMES COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Mrs Maureen Nguée

Vice Chairperson

Ms Dorene Yeo

Members

Mrs Jennifer Ho

Mrs Jennifer Liaw

Mrs Jennifer Ng

Ms Janet Tan

Mrs Dancy Thong

Ms Evelyn Yeo

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

PROJECTS COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Ms Janet Tan

Vice Chairperson

Ms Tan Kee Leng

Members

Mrs Dancy Thong

Ms Dorene Yeo

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

PUBLICITY & PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

Members

Ms Sharmaine Look

Ms Tan Kee Leng (Editor – YWLink)

Ms Janet Tan

Y-COOK COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Ms Tan Kee Leng

Vice Chairperson

Mrs Dancy Thong

Members

Ms Liang Shu-min

Mrs Jennifer Ng

Mr Jeremy Nguée

Mrs Maureen Nguée

Ms Janet Tan

Mrs Dorothy Tessensohn

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

SUB-COMMITTEES

BAZAARS SUB-COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Mrs Dancy Thong

Members

Mrs Amal A. Coad

Mrs Ho Lay Hong

Mrs Jennifer Liaw

Mrs Jennifer Ng

Mrs Maureen Nguée

Ms Janet Tan

Mrs Dorothy Tessensohn

CHRISTIAN GROWTH SUB-COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Mrs Jennifer Ng

Members

Mrs Heng-Lim Gaik Kee

Mrs Ho Lay Hong

Mrs Maureen Nguée

Ms Janet Tan

Mrs Dancy Thong

FLAG DAY SUB-COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Mrs Maureen Nguée

Members

Mrs Ho Lay Hong

Mrs Dancy Thong

Mrs Angeline Tan

Mrs Jennifer Ng

KINDERGARTEN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Ms Foo Chek Chiang

Vice Chairperson

Ms Pearl Tan

Members

Mrs Evelyn Chey

Ms Chin Phaik Sue

Ms Vivien Lai

Mrs Dorothy Tessensohn

Ms Dorene Yeo

Ex-Officio

Mrs Ma Kheng Min

YOUNG ADULTS SUB-COMMITTEE

Chairperson

Ms Evelyn Yeo

Ex-Officio

Mrs Maureen Nguée

OTHER COMMITTEES

GOLDEN Y CIRCLE

Chairperson

Mrs Catherine Chan

Vice Chairperson

Mdm Wendy Lye

Treasurer

Mdm Mona Soh

Assistant Treasurer

Mdm Maureen Chan

Members

Mrs Heng-Lim Gaik Kee

Mrs Ho Lay Hong

Mrs Magdalene Lee

Mdm Susan Lye

Mrs Jennifer Ng

Mrs Christina Ong

Mdm Ivy Song

Ms Lily Tan

Mrs Ivy Wong

Mrs Yap-Liao Siew Keam

NOTEBOOK COMMITTEE

Members

Ms Vivian Lau

Ms Cheryl Riya

Ms Deborah Yap

Ms Esther Yeap

YWCA Flag Day 2011

This year, the YWCA Flag Day falls on Saturday, 03 September 2011. Proceeds raised from the Flag Day event will be used to fund the YWCA's wide range of community services and projects, which are made available to all, regardless of race, gender, belief or religion. The YWCA's community work include the following:

HUNGRY NO MORE (MEALS-ON-WHEELS FOR ELDERLY), a programme that distributes free nutritious lunches to needy, frail and homebound elderly on a daily basis from Mondays to Fridays.

HUNGRY NO MORE (MEALS-ON-WHEELS FOR CHILDREN), a programme which provides free nutritious dinners to children from low-income families on a weekly basis from Mondays to Fridays.

HUNGRY NO MORE (SUSTENANCE FOR FAMILIES), a programme which distributes dry rations on a monthly basis to needy families living in designated areas such as Redhill, Bukit Merah, Bendemeer Road and Indus Road, and who are not receiving any form of assistance from Senior Activity Centres and/or Family Service Centres.



"YES U CAN... BE INCLUDED!" an integration programme for pre-school children with mild special needs – an early intervention programme that aims to provide mainstream pre-school education for children with mild special needs in a normal child care environment with the purpose of integrating them into normal schools.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME to help needy children attending our Child Development Centres who are unable to pay the full fees.

BURSARY SCHEME for children who are on the Hungry No More (Meals-On-Wheels for Children) Programme. This scheme seeks to motivate them to improve their studies and affirm their talents in other areas like sports and art.

YWCA KIDS' CLUB, a programme that aims to help the beneficiaries of the Hungry No More (Meals-On-Wheels for Children) Programme to realise their potential through social, emotional, moral and academic support.



You can play an active role in helping us continue our efforts to reach out to the less privileged in our society. Together, we can reach out to more needy individuals and families and change their lives for the better!

If you would like to support us financially, you can do so through the following methods:

1. Cash donation – please come down personally to the YWCA National Office located at 254 Outram Road, Singapore 169051
2. Cheque donation – please make cheque(s) payable to "YWCA" and write your name and NRIC No. at the back of the cheque(s). Please mail your cheque(s) back to the YWCA National Office
3. Credit card – please provide us with your details, credit card number and the expiry date, together with the amount deductible
4. Donate generously to our street collectors located island wide on the actual Flag Day event

Only donations of \$50 and above are eligible for double tax exemption. Please indicate 'YWCA Flag Day 2011' for your donation.

Alternatively, you can also support us by volunteering your time to sell flags on 03 September, either from 9.30 am – 1.30 pm or 1.00 pm – 5.00 pm.

For more information, please contact Ms Evangeline Gan @ tel: 6223 1227 or email: evangelinegan@ywca.org.sg or visit our website at www.ywca.org.sg.

Media Launch of IngoT Preschool Project



Welcome performance



Handbells performance



Using the iPad



interactive whiteboard demo



Interview session with parents



Press session

On Wednesday, 20 April 2011, the media launch of the IngoT Preschool Project was held at the Digital Learning Labs at the YWCA Outram Centre. The event was attended by the CEO and the Programme Manager of Lien Foundation, Mr Lee Poh Wah and Mr Gabriel Lim respectively; Managing Director of Pulesync Pte Ltd, Mr Ken Tan; Executive Director and Principal of YWCA Bukit Gombak Child Development Centre, Mrs Leung Yee Ping and Ms Grace Chan respectively; as well as members of the Press from The Straits Times, My Paper and Motherhood Magazine.

IngoT Preschool is an initiative conceived and sponsored by Lien

Foundation to enhance early childhood education through the greater use of Information Technology (IT) and it aims to: 1) increase the quality of teaching and teachers' productivity, 2) improve the children's learning experience and environment, 3) strengthen the teacher-parent relationship and communication and 4) boost organisational efficiency by strengthening operations. The features of the project include the Childcare and Kindergarten Management System (CKMS), Digital Learning Labs @ Outram, Resource Labs @ the Child Development Centres and Kindergarten, Financial, Donor Management & Dashboard System as well as iPhones/iPads for teachers.

After the press session, there was a guided tour around the labs where there were interactive demonstrations on the use of the webcam, iPhone, iPad and the interactive whiteboard in the classroom.

The YWCA would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the principal of the YWCA Bukit Gombak Child Development Centre, teachers, children and parents who were involved in the media launch in one way or another.

Published Articles:

The Straits Times 21 April 2011

My Paper 23 May 2011 (Chinese Edition)

Motherhood Magazine (June Issue)

Report by The Straits Times on 21 April 2011

IT Upgrading Project gives YWCA pupils an early Start

By AMELIA TAN

PLAYING games on a Wii console, using digital worksheets on laptops and even recording music in a studio.

These are some of the activities now available to pupils of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) group of preschools after an \$800,000 IT upgrading project.

All 100 teachers in the group have been given iPhones that have an application to record information such as the children's attendance, temperament and progress in their studies.

The project involving 10 YWCA childcare centres and one kindergarten was funded by the Lien Foundation, a charity. Its chief executive Lee Poh Wah said yesterday that he and his team had worked with the preschools on other projects, and saw a need to improve on their technology.

Up till about two years ago, only a few teachers had their own work e-mail accounts, and all staff had to share just a few computers, he told reporters at a press conference at the YWCA headquarters in Outram Road.

So the foundation asked local tech company PulseSync to upgrade the IT facilities and systems at the centres.

Now all 11 centres, which cater to 850 children aged from 18 months to six years old, have facilities such as interactive whiteboards and touchscreen computers. Special needs children can use iPads, and plans have been made to buy more equipment for other children. The pupils are also based once a month to the YWCA's HQ to use facilities such as a recording studio and Wii consoles.

Teachers said adapting to the new technology had been a challenge.

Ms Lim See Hoon, 35, who works at the YWCA childcare centre in Bukit



YWCA pupils Pang Jun Wei (left) and John How, both five, playing a virtual bowling game on a Wii console at the YWCA Kindergarten. PHOTO: JOSEPH NAIR FOR STRAITS TIMES

Gombak, said: "It was daunting when we were told that we will have to use technology, as we were doing most things by pen and paper. But after a while, we got used to it and the workshops to train us helped a lot."

Parents welcomed the changes.

Sales coordinator Ho Nyuk Yin, 36, whose son Jaden, three, goes to the centre in Bukit Gombak, said: "The primary schools are using a lot of technology in their lessons. I think exposing him to technology now will help him to prepare for classes in the future."

Source: The Straits Times © Singapore Press Holdings Ltd. Permission required for reproduction.

Food Review

Providore Garden Café

A review by Elizabeth Wu

The moment I stepped into Providore, I knew I absolutely had to stay for lunch and definitely buy a jar or two of their lovely gourmet produce!

Providore was one of our most lovely finds during our weekend away to beautiful Margaret River, the wine region of Western Australia. Blessed with wonderful Mediterranean weather, and gentle four seasons weather during the year, you know you are always going to be able to relax, recharge and eat fantastic fresh food in Margaret River.

A relatively small but cosy gourmet shop, Providore serves high quality food, and sell a load of delicious gourmet goodies. They have their own vegetable and herb garden.



As you walk into the shop, you see long tables of pretty jars of beautiful jams, sauces and curds (my favourite is their passionfruit and lemon curd. Oh my goodness! It is simply divine!).

Providore's range of jams, relishes and chutneys are all made in their kitchen by hand in small batches. They also make their own verjuice, vino cotto, tapenade, dessert sauces, salad dressings and preserved fruits. They harvest and press their own estate grown olive oil (even vanilla infused olive oil!) and make their own wine. Wow!!!



I have to let you in on a little secret now. I think we have found a tiny glimpse of our own south of France here in Providore. I could not help but drink in the beautiful greenery

from the vineyard and the wonderfully manicured lawn. Being out in fresh air is simply energizing. Honestly, it was such a delight! It takes you completely away from the reality of life, plunks you into a safe haven, and for now, all you see is nature and its beauty. Beautiful weather, food and wine, what more could you ask for?



Margaret River is known for its wine, beautiful restaurants and food. Providore's café did not disappoint! Okay, I have to admit I'm always a little nervous or skeptical about ordering duck at a western place! I like my Asian Roast Duck! However, this Crispy Duck was an absolute delight! Crispy and tasty on the outside and moist and tender on the inside. It was so delicious you could easily have eaten another piece of the duck! Perhaps we were in South of France after all - don't the French like their ducks?!!!



The local Whiting was perfectly cooked. This was SO yummy! It had a light tempura crumb, allowing the fish to be the star of the dish. The warm potato salad was delicious! Perhaps the best potato salad dressing I have ever tasted! It had mayonnaise, parsley and some herbs that were picked from the garden. The side salad was refreshing with the mandarin segments. It was so good, I could have eaten another plate!

Providore is worth a visit the next time you're in Margaret River!

Providore Garden Café

448 Tom Cullity Drive
Wilyabrup 6280
Western Australia

Ms Foo Chek Chiang

Interviewed by Karen Chay



For Ms Foo Chek Chiang, the idea of volunteering is nothing new to her as she has been actively volunteering for various social causes since her schooling days. Helping the poor and the needy is a subject close to her heart and being able to do her part for society and contribute to the community gives her a sense of joy and fulfilment.

Married with 3 daughters aged 10, 14 and 20, Ms Foo juggles between her role as a full-time mother and as a volunteer with the YWCA. Having joined the Association 7 years ago, Ms Foo has taken a very active role in the YWCA, serving as part of a dynamic board of women who provide the leadership and direction for the Association. There is no turning back for her now as she continues to devote time and energy to the work of the YWCA. Being able to serve alongside other likeminded women makes this volunteering journey even more meaningful and enjoyable for Ms Foo.

Tell us something interesting about yourself.

I am an architect by training. However, after practising as an architect for 2 years, I joined the Urban Redevelopment Authority as a Conservation Planner and served in the Authority for over 10 years. I was involved in the conservation of Singapore's heritage buildings. Those were interesting days as my colleagues and I had to identify buildings worthy of conservation and then recommend them to the Minister for National Development to be officially gazetted for conservation.

I am pleased to have played a small part in helping Singapore retain its built heritage.

What did you do after you stopped working?

I spent time with my three daughters and I count myself fortunate to be able to be at home and see to their needs. As they are at different stages in their lives, their needs are very different. Hence, I make it a point to make time for them, not only as a group but also individually, so that I can better understand their needs and wants.

Do you have any hobbies, sports or favorite games?

My family and I enjoy travelling together. In recent years, we have been to Australia, the Middle East, Egypt and Europe. We normally travel free-and-easy rather than take conducted tours. This gives us flexibility in planning our itinerary and allows us to go off the beaten track, giving us greater insights into how the locals live. So far our experiences have been very pleasant and we look forward to more of such trips together.

What is most important to you?

Definitely family and friends. Other than my immediate family, I am close to my siblings and also have many good friends. My parents have done a wonderful job in terms of nurturing strong family ties. My siblings and I meet up whenever we can to catch up. I also meet up with my friends once in a while. I have been fortunate in having made good friends at every stage in my life. I am still in touch with a number of them and we make an effort to meet up despite being busy with work and family.

What were the best years of your life?

So far, every stage has been good. When I look back over the years, of course there were times when things could have been better. But I do believe that things happen for a reason and life has a way of coming full circle. Many of my wishes were granted albeit some indirectly. To me, what's most important is to be contented and to have peace of mind, without which one is never truly satisfied and happy.

What are you most proud of?

On the family-front, I am very proud of my children who are well-adjusted and caring individuals. My husband and I enjoy watching them grow and seeing how they change and develop over the years. Career-wise, I am pleased that I was able to help in conserving some of Singapore's historic buildings as conservation plays an important part in helping Singaporeans have a sense of rootedness and belonging.

How long have you been volunteering with the YWCA? What made you decide to do volunteer work?

I have been a volunteer with the YWCA for 7 years now. Community service has always been a part of my life. When I was in school, I would help the nuns hand out rations to poor families living in the vicinity of the Convent. In University, I visited the Singapore Boys' Home on a regular basis as part of a Hostel Community Service Committee, and when I first started working, I volunteered as a reader at the Singapore Association for the Blind. So, volunteering at the YWCA is a natural extension of what I have been doing over the years.

What do you enjoy most about volunteering with the YWCA?

It is very rewarding to know that our efforts have truly helped others. When I see the smiles on the faces of the children in our CDCs and Kindergarten, and those who are in the Kids' Club, it makes all our efforts worthwhile. Similarly with the elderly who receive meals through our MOW programme. I also enjoy the company of the other YWCA volunteers who serve with me on the various Committees. It is fun to be with women who share the same passion and commitment in serving the needs of the Community.

In His Majesty's Sacred (Secret) Service

By Reverend Melvin Huang, Wesley Methodist Church



Reverend Melvin Huang is the pastor-in-charge of Wesley Methodist Church and the Chaplain of YWCA.

“so that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you” – Matt 6:4 (NRSV)

“But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you” – Matt 6:6 (NRSV)

“so your fasting may be seen not by others but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you” - Matt 6:18 (NRSV)

Jesus used these words in reference to 3 things - almsgiving, prayer and fasting. The passages on prayer and fasting also include the words “your Father who is in secret.

So God is one who is and sees in secret. What does this mean and how does it impact our discipleship?

In the original language of the New Testament the word translated “secret” is the root for the words (in English) “crypt” and “cryptic” and means “something hidden” (literally).

Further Matthew warns those who do not understand this “secret” about God (vs 2, 5 and 16); these ominous words of Jesus “Truly (Amen) I tell you, they have received their reward”.

Of course the key to all of this is Matt 6:1. Again the words of Jesus, “Beware, be careful that you do not do your righteousness in front of men so as to be seen by them. Or else you will NOT have the reward (from) your heavenly Father”.

So, what does all this mean?

Followers of Jesus need to be careful and understand that certain acts of obedience and discipleship are to be done privately, anonymously and without attracting attention of others. Or else their virtue is lost (“they have their reward”)

In other words in these specific areas (helping the poor, prayer and fasting) the less commendation or attention we receive the better. Or else we not only lose our heavenly reward, we are counted among the “hypocrites”.

A dire warning indeed.

How may we guard ourselves against such negative consequences?

The classic devotional “My Utmost For His Highest” by Oswald Chambers provides two helpful suggestions:

First – Acknowledge our spiritual poverty

Chambers writes “On the bravery of God in trusting us! Do you say, “but He has been unwise to choose me, because there is nothing good in me... That is exactly why He chose you... it is not a matter of our equipment but a matter of our poverty; not of what we bring with us, but of what God puts into us... God’s friendship is with people who know their poverty.”

Second – The Test of Drudgery

Chambers again “Drudgery is one of the finest tests to determine the genuineness of our character. Drudgery is work that is far removed from anything we think is ideal work. It is the utterly hard, menial, tiresome and dirty work. And when we experience it, our spirituality is instantly tested and we will know whether or not we are spiritually genuine.”

The YWCA is involved in many areas of such sacred (secret) service. It is not easy to heed and follow the teachings of Jesus in Matthew 6. But it is vital that we do.

Then the Father who is in secret and sees in secret will reward you.

May God grant us His mercy and grace to do this.

Announcements

Welcome On Board

The YWCA is pleased to welcome new staff joining the team. We welcome Yim Ah Noi (Cook cum Cleaner) at Bedok CDC; Yu Ting Ting (Language Teacher) at Bedok CDC; Soh Lay Choo (Teacher) at Bukit Gombak CDC; Liu Wei (Language Teacher) at Bishan CDC; Yvonne Koo (Teacher) at Bishan CDC; Chan Wan Seong and Lucy Png (Teachers) at Marine Drive CDC; Kirsten Ang (Childcare Manager) at NOF; Grace Fong (Teacher) at Outram CDC; Ng Poh Choo (Teacher Aide) at Outram CDC; Leong Lai Leng (Attendant) at Outram CDC; Sivalingam Shamaladev, Wong Siaw Yin and Wang Sio Kiak (Assistant Teachers) at West Coast CDC; and Julianah Bte Jais (Teacher) at West Coast CDC.

At Fort Canning Lodge, we welcome Saravana Rao (F&B Waiter); Muhd Daniel (Duty Manager); Khoo Eng Chai, Ting Tieh Chew and Loo Kah Kit (Leading Cooks); Daniel Heng (Technician); William Wong (Linen/Uniform cum Floor Supervisor); Morna Voon (Reservations Executive); Alvin Leong (Assistant Operations Manager); Sura Anak Asan and Santhi a/p Pachamalay (Room Attendants); Anne Loh (Executive Chef); Tiboleng Martin (Chef De Partie); Teresa Lee (Executive Housekeeper); Pathmanathan a/l Mahanderan (Housekeeping Supervisor); and Kim Tay (Operations & Projects Manager).

Suggestion Box

We welcome your views and feedback! If you have any comments or suggestions on how we can improve on our programmes and services or if you have any creative ideas for fund raising activities or community service projects, we would love to hear from you! Drop us an email at admin@ywca.org.sg.

Lifetime of Memories

We are looking for past YWCA mementoes and collectible items such as old newsletters, newspaper articles, souvenirs, etc. as part of our efforts to preserve the YWCA's heritage. If you have any old mementoes which you would like to contribute towards this cause, we would love to hear from you!

For more information, please contact Ms Karen Chay at tel: 6223 1227.

YWCA International Expeditions

Homeless Shelter @ Nepal

The YWCA is recruiting volunteers to reach out to the less privileged communities overseas. We are organising a Homeless Shelter Expedition to Nepal (Kathmandu) in December 2011. Volunteers will embark on a 7-day programme which includes teaching English, organising recreational activities or assisting in various tasks at the Orphanage such as painting, decorating or gardening.

Come and be transformed by this humbling experience. At the same time, immerse in the culture and experience the warmth of the host country! If you and your friends are interested to sign up together, we will be most happy to conduct a special briefing session for your group.

For more information, please call Ms Han Shin Hui at tel: 6223 1227 or email her at shinhui@ywca.org.sg.

YWCA Recipe Greeting Cards

As another fund raising initiative by the Y-Cook Committee in support of the underprivileged in our local community, the YWCA has recently launched a set of limited edition recipe greeting cards featuring six selected recipes from our popular 2010 Celebrations Diary such as Sugee Cookies, Roast Lamb Rack with Almond Crust, Cold Buckwheat Soba Salad, Tandoori Chicken, Beef Rendang and Tom Yam Mee Siam. The cards are blank on the inside so they are perfect for any and every occasion.

Make every occasion special for you and your loved ones as you send your love and thoughts to them using these lovely fundraiser cards. Each set of six cards are only priced at \$6.00 so get your cards now and help someone in need today! The cards are now available for sale at the YWCA National Office located at 254 Outram Road, Singapore 169051 and at the YWCA Fort Canning Lodge, Front Office, located at 6 Fort Canning Road, Singapore 179494.

For enquiries, please contact Ms Karen Chay @ tel: 6223 1227 or email: karenchay@ywca.org.sg.

Child Development Centres

Pasir Ris Child Development Centre

By Mdm Ho Mee Khuen, Principal, & Staff

In conjunction with Mothers' Day, our centre decided to organise a Mothers' Day Celebration on 05 May 2011. It has become a "tradition" to celebrate this event with our dearest mummies since the year 2010, after the event was well-received by parents and even the children.

Preparation for the event started way ahead. Principal, Madam Ho; and her entire team of teachers and aunties, had helped out in the preparation in one way or another. Weeks earlier, each class had started rehearsing a song/dance/rhyme recital. Every child also made a Mother's Day card and a special craft for their Mummy.

On the day of the event, the respective class teachers and children prepared a dish for the guests. We had "Jelly O Fruit" prepared by the Nursery 1s, "Phishballicious" by the Nursery 2s, "Canape with Olives & Cheese" by the Kindergarten 1s, and "Pizza Delight" by the Kindergarten 2s.

At 4.30pm, about 40 parents, all looking excited, were seated in the K2 classroom together with our children and the staff. The celebration kicked-off with a BLAST as all 11 mummies stepped on the bouncy balloons! It was followed by a fun-filled "Mum & Me Parade" (M&M) where participants had to perform a catwalk with their child as the music was being played. The audience was invited to vote for their "Favourite Catwalk Contestant" by placing a sticker on the mother's number tag. Our K2s counted the stickers and Mc Tim's mum emerged as the winner! A round of applause for the other contestants as well!



After the contest, the individual classes dedicated a special performance to all the mothers. What a heart-felt moment for the parents as they watched their own child showing appreciation to them through songs, dances and rhymes! The event ended with everyone enjoying some light refreshment prepared by our children, teachers and aunties. It was also a great opportunity for the parents to mingle with the teachers and engage in a meaningful time of sharing.

Despite the hard work, it was very encouraging to receive support from so many parents and also seeing how our children have learnt to show appreciation to their mummies through this event. Thank you all for making this event a success and above all, thank God for your blessings!

Child Development Centres

Bukit Gombak Child Development Centre

By Ms Grace Chan, Principal

Food is not only essential for fueling our bodies but it is also a hallmark of culture and a symbol of celebrations. 'Food and Nutrition' has always been a theme of interest to the children as it is closely related to them. The past three months (April - June) had been an adventurous and fulfilling time for the children in Bukit Gombak CDC. The theme provided plenty of opportunities for the children to have hands-on cooking experience. The children also learnt about appropriate table manners, the hygienic manner of handling food, the importance of healthy food for our bodies and the origins of food, etc. Children learn best when they are having fun. Hence in order to make learning more enjoyable and rewarding, the Centre incorporated the following hands-on activities into the programmes:-



Baking for Mother's Day

Mother's Day is a special occasion set aside to honour our mothers and celebrate the joys of motherhood. The children made cards and baked cookies for their mothers in appreciation of their love and care for them. The children kneaded the dough, cut it into various shapes using the cookie cutters and sprinkled chocolate chips on the cookies.



Barbecue Session

Learning is not only confined within the four walls of the classroom. The Centre had a barbecue session using portable barbecue pits placed along the corridors. Making food kebabs is a fun way for the children to learn about patterning as well as to encourage their creativity.

Rice Dumpling Festival

The Centre had a rice dumpling making session on 3 June, Friday, to celebrate the Rice Dumpling Festival and to mark a closure to the theme of 'Food and Nutrition'. The children learned about the legend of 'Qu Yuan' as well as made their own rice dumplings to bring home. The children had the experience of using bamboo leaves to wrap the fried glutinous rice with minced chicken and mushroom as fillings.

We believe that a curriculum is effective when the learning experience is directly related to the children's real-life experiences. It aims at building on what children know and what is readily observable in their immediate environment. The Centre will continue to plan and work on activities that the children enjoy and are closely related to their daily lives, further fostering their learning and development.

