

Issue No. 2 (August 2008)

samudra

A Bi-Monthly Publication of the Singapore Organisation of Seamen and Seacare Co-operative Limited

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PM Lee's *Special Appearance* At Seacare

seAcAre

Issue No. 2 (August 2008)

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PM VISIT TO SEACARE BRINGS CHEER

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong hosted a lunch for about 80 grassroots leaders from his Teck Ghee Constituency on 7 June 2008. The venue – at Seacare Building’s very own Club@52.

On his arrival, PM Lee met key officials of SOS and Seacare. He also took the opportunity to visit the Tripartite Alliance for Fair Employment Practices (TAFEP) which is housed at the first floor of the Seacare Building.

TAFEP is formed to leverage on the strong tripartism in Singapore to move towards a society that practices fair employment through the changing of mindsets of employees, employers and the general public.

At the lunch, PM Lee thanked the grassroots leaders for their support and contribution towards making the constituency a vibrant and caring place to live in.



NATIONAL DAY 2008 – TIDE THROUGH THE TOUGH TIMES WITH THE SINGAPORE SPIRIT

The nation's big 43 was celebrated in full Singapore Spirit as contingents marched in, performers danced in perfectly coordinated moves and national songs sung together as one united people. The national pledge was recited in full patriotism, a sign of our commitment and honour to the country.

Aerobic performances filled the air while fireworks lit up the night, bringing in the climax for the whole parade. The euphoria was still apparent amidst the current state of economy – high inflation resulting in higher cost of living, as well as rising unemployment rate in the second quarter.

Nevertheless, Singaporeans are encouraged to remain positive and work together to bumper the effects of inflation. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong touched on these issues in this year's National Day Message, highlighting the impact of the US economy on countries globally. However, Singapore's economy has been good, with an expected growth of 4.5% - 5% for the later half of this year. As many as 144,000 jobs were created and the unemployment rate remains low at 2.3%. These are signs that the Singapore economy is coping well against the global economy.

With many uncertainties hovering around, to work together and build a better

times like this calls for unity, the collective effort of all Singaporeans Singapore.

PM Lee's message to Singaporeans together and continue to build an General Lim Swee Say credits the help the nation grow stronger and the economic situation compared tripartism.

– take pride in our achievements, tackle challenges even better and vibrant Singapore. NTUC Secretary-tripartite relations as a source of strength that can better. Singapore stands a better chance of tackling to other countries due to this unique brand of





SG Lim also highlighted the help of the Government and unions; through the assistance package and NTUC's social enterprises like the NTUC Fairprice which have extended discount periods to help more workers stretch their dollars.

And through these measures, employers, the Government and the unions will work hand-in-hand to support one another, in tiding through the slowing economic growth, in true Singapore Spirit.

Tackling Inflation

“We cannot prevent these prices from going up, when prices are rising worldwide, and we import all our energy and food. But we are lightening the burden on Singaporeans, through the Growth Dividends, U-Save, Workfare, Medifund and ComCare. These measures are aimed especially at the poor, the elderly, and the sick, but middle-income Singaporeans are getting something too, to help tide over this period.”

Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong

“Global inflation takes some time to escalate, and it will take some time to come down. The worst that can happen to our people is to lose their jobs and end up being unemployed at a time of high inflation. The best way forward for all of us is to stay competitive and responsive. We cannot stop energy costs from going up, but we can learn to be more energy-efficient. We cannot stop operating costs from going up, but we can strive to be more skilled, productive and innovative.”

NTUC Secretary-General Mr Lim Swee Say

IBF SPOTLIGHTS ON SEAFARERS' PROBLEMS

Issues that would have a major impact for the seafarers covered by International Bargaining Forum (IBF) crew contracts came under the spotlight at the recent IBF meeting. The forum, which was attended by Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) Executive Secretary, Mr Kam Soon Huat and Industrial Relations Manager, Mr Daniel Tan, involved leaders of international maritime employers and unions. They met in Hong Kong on 16-17 July 2008.

Among the issues tabled for discussions were issues affecting seafarers including the criteria for designating war-like operations areas, for which crew members are provided with bonus payments, the rules under which IBF wage increases are applied and the way in which the IBF agreements can be maintained as the premier international crew contracts for Joint Negotiating Group (JNG) members. Other issues covered were outstanding ones from the last round of pay negotiations at the IBF meeting in September 2007 and rules covering the disbursement of funds to promote the employment of ratings from developed economy countries that were agreed in the last IBF negotiations.

Mr Brian Orrell, Chairman of ITF Steering Committee was also satisfied with the developments: "This was a very successful meeting at which we dealt with issues that will have a major impact for the seafarers that are covered by IBF crew contracts. We have asked the employers to create a mechanism that will identify the high risk areas for maritime transport more effectively and in these and other areas, we have received positive recognition that the problems of seafarers are understood and will be responded to within the IBF system that we have helped to create."

The outcome of the meeting will be reviewed and agreed at another meeting scheduled for 17 November 2008, also in Hong Kong. The agreement expires in December 2009 with a new round of negotiations between the parties planned for next year.

SOS STEPS IN TO HELP RESOLVE BOSUN'S DILEMMA

SOS Industrial Relations (IR) officers are ever ready to step in and extend help to build a harmonious labour management relationship.

And that was what the union did when they received a call from ITF to look into an issue that arose from a misunderstanding between a captain and the bosun working on board the MSC Santhya.

SOS IROs Mr Daniel Tan and Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar went on board the vessel, on 27 June 2008, to meet up with the captain, Mr Ostapenko Oleg and the bosun. It appeared that the bosun, Mr Melnik Vyacheslav, was asked to leave the vessel due to a disagreement between the two. Helpless and confused, Mr Vyacheslav highlighted that he had just signed on a month back and that the company has some outstanding payments.

After hearing from both parties, the SOS IROs spoke to representatives from MSC in Cyprus to get an in-depth analysis of the situation. After a few dialogues, the company offered to have the bosun transferred to their sister vessel, the MSC Atlantic.

Mr Vyacheslav chose the latter option. SOS IROs witnessed the necessary transportation and accommodation arrangements for the bosun. He was to depart for Hong Kong on 1 July 2008, to start work on board the MSC Atlantic.

In an amicable manner, the misunderstanding was resolved, The SOS IROs felt good about the outcome.

"We noted that the company was very cooperative and thus the matter has been settled," said Mr Tan.

The bosun was grateful that in times of need, SOS was there to see him through.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MEN AT SEA



6 different nations
5 shipping companies
27 vessels
280 crew members



Ship visits are not so much about visiting the ships but about meeting the seamen. Those who work tirelessly and sacrificially, often for long periods of time at sea, away from home and family. For these seamen, SOS wishes to acknowledge their hard labour.



While some may not think much about ship visits, since there are so many ships that pass through Singapore, SOS Industrial Relations Officer Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar will be quick to highlight that the simple act of personally dropping by to say hello mean a lot to crew members.

In the months of June and July, more than **280 crew members** of **6 different nations** onboard **27 vessels** from **5 shipping companies** received that personal touch from SOS.

No matter how often it has been done, Mr Mohamad takes the time to touch base with the seamen, to update them with home front news and union matters, check on their welfare and always bringing greetings and many gifts from the union.



SEA DELEGATES COME TOGETHER TO DISCUSS WELFARE ISSUE AT THE ICSW MEETING



The inaugural South East Asia (SEA) International Committee on Seafarers' Welfare (ICSW) Meeting took place on 19 June and 20 June 2008 at the Seacare Building during which, SOS Vice President Mr Mohamed Idris Bin Mohamed Ibrahim was involved as the appointed SEA Regional Coordinator of ICSW. Also in attendance were Mr Roy Paul from International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) and Mr Andrew Elliot from ICSW.

Various parties from Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines and Taiwan were present at the meeting where they discussed on welfare issues such as the adoption and ratification of Convention 163 and Recommendation 173.

The main aim of the ICSW Meeting is to tighten regional cooperation, provide platform for networking, promote training, maintenance of facilities and services, highlight on the benefits of seafaring as a profession as well as to improve on communication tools, advocacy and lobbying.

The meeting, which is under the South East Asia Regional Welfare Programme, is part of a four-year plan which draws up a programme of welfare work which will be revised and organised twice a year.

The meeting signals yet another milestone for all parties involved in the areas pertaining to seafarers' welfare as they came together to share objectives, goals, strategies and plans to further improve and develop the welfare framework for all seafarers who drop by the various ports.

The next ICSW Meeting is tentatively scheduled to be held in Taiwan from 21 October to 25 October 2008.



SOS UNION LEADERS WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

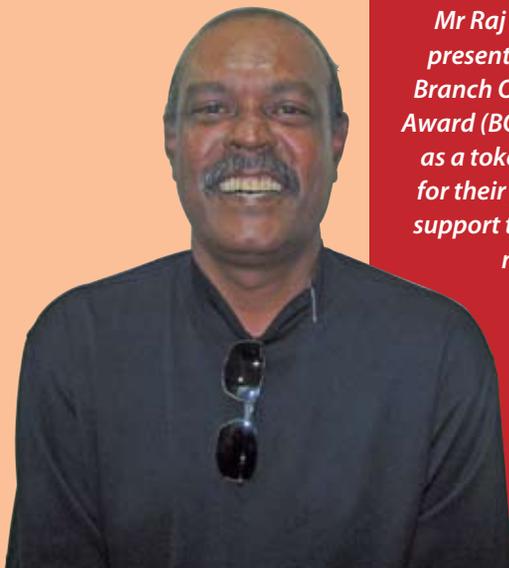
Raj Moham and Loh Suan Hin are names familiar to many SOS members. They are both Executive Committee Members of SOS and have been actively contributing towards the union's various initiatives throughout the years. Their dedication and support towards SOS are indicative of their true unionist's spirit. And that is why both Mr Raj and Mr Loh were presented with the NTUC Branch Official Recognition Award (BORA) on 9 July 2008, as a token of appreciation for their years of effort and support towards the labour movement.

Mr Raj has been a member of SOS for 23 years. Through the years, he has put in his heart and soul in SOS programmes and activities that are targeted at the members and their families. Mr Loh, who has been with SOS for 27 years, is also actively involved in various members-centric programmes that are in line with the vision and aims of the labour movement. Both Mr Raj and Mr Loh received their due recognition from Deputy Secretary-General and Director Heng Chee How, Leadership Development Department, NTUC at

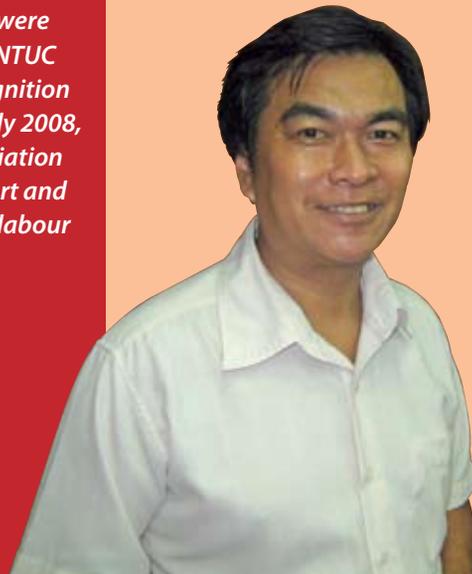
the Scarlet City, Ang Mo Kio Hub. They are among the 73 branch officials who received their awards that night. Also in attendance were Guest-of-Honour NTUC Secretary-General Lim Swee Say, NTUC President John De Payva and fellow unionists.

As part of the BORA, union branch officials would go for a study trip to Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, to study the inflation situation there and the effects higher prices have on the people. The purpose of the study trip is to provide the leaders with exposure to different scenarios and learn from the Vietnamese on how they cope with their economic situation.

The BORA was introduced in 2001 to give recognition and to the value add of the union leaders. This year, SOS is proud to highlight the invaluable contributions of Mr Raj Moham and Mr Loh Suan Hin towards the movement. Certainly, the Union is proud to have them with us and look forward to promote more like-minded union leaders who have made a difference to SOS.



Mr Raj and Mr Loh were presented with the NTUC Branch Official Recognition Award (BORA) on 9 July 2008, as a token of appreciation for their years of effort and support towards the labour movement.



Mr Raj Moham's vast contributions in his 23-year-membership with SOS have been beneficial to the Union and labour movement.

Mr Loh Suan Hin was among the 73 branch officials who were on stage to receive their awards from NTUC SG Lim Swee Say.



MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

The Eye Mirrors Your Health Status

The eyes are the window to your soul. But did you know that they are also a mirror to the status of your health?

Now extended to members' spouse, the Comprehensive Eye Examination (CEE) at the New Optometry and Ocular Care Centre (NOOCC) provides extensive eye checks that could pick up signs of eye disorder as well as other illnesses that one may have, such as diabetes or high blood pressure.

SOS member Mr S Ramamoorthy and his wife, Mdm Gladys Orbe Nava were present at NOOCC for their eye checks. For Mdm Gladys, this was her first time at the centre. Samudra caught up with the couple who were keen to find out more about their health status through the eye checks.

The CEE took approximately 45 to 60 minutes, covering the entire process of visual acuity assessment to fundus photography and a comprehensive report. What makes NOOCC different from most optometry centres is the high level of professional attention and care given to each client.

"This is my first time here and I am very happy to learn a lot from just an eye check. I am surprised to know that from the examination and consultation, I can also find out more about my general health, whether my cholesterol level is high or if I am at risk of any other possible illnesses. It is really comprehensive," commented Mdm Gladys. "The best part is – it is free!"

SOS members are given two free comprehensive eye examinations per term of office which spans across four years, starting 1 April 2008 to 16 November 2011. One free benefit must be utilised from 1 April 2008 to 31 December 2009 and the other, from 1 January 2010 to 31 December 2011.

This time round, under the Seacare Medical Scheme (SMS), the benefits have been extended to the spouses, just like Mdm Gladys who had gained much from the eye check. Her husband, Mr Ramamoorthy, agrees that it is a good move by the Union to provide such benefits.

"My wife and I have visited other eye centres to have our eyes checked but the analysis is usually very short and not comprehensive like the ones we just had. I think it is good that SOS extends this free eye examination to the spouse and I hope that in future, even our children can tap on this benefit because it is a good way to detect any problem, especially when they are young." Mdm Gladys, who bought herself a pair of transition lenses using the 20% discount voucher, was a happy lady as she headed home with her husband, relieved that their eye examination summary report showed that they are in the pink of health.



Prevention is better than Cure

Mr Ramamoorthy is right. Prevention is better than cure. Executive Director of Program, Finance and Administration for NOOCC, Ms Cigi Chew, stressed on the importance of eye checks to detect and monitor the eyes.

"More awareness should be done to tell people that their eyes matter and it is important to have them checked before serious eye disorder such as glaucoma come their way when they grow older," said Ms Chew. That is why SOS is working together with the NOOCC to provide such service to our members and their spouse. Taking good care of your eyes begins with eye examination to ensure that you are free from unknown ailments.

The exclusive free SMS Comprehensive Eye Examination available at the NOOCC includes the following, accompanied with a summary report.

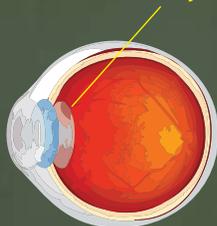
- **Visual acuity assessment:** A vision check in which you are asked to read out the alphabets from a short and far distance.
- **Binocular vision assessment:** A check to ensure the ability to maintain focus on a certain object using both eyes.
- **Pupil reflex evaluation:** To ensure that the eye alignment is correct.
- **Colour vision assessment:** To detect if there is any malfunction in the retina that can cause colour-blind.
- **Central visual field screening:** A test taken to determine the total area in which objects can be seen in the peripheral vision of the eye. Patients with Glaucoma lack this peripheral vision.
- **Keratometry:** This process measures the curvatures of the cornea to detect focussing power and if the patient has any eye disorder such as Astigmatism.
- **Intra-ocular pressure assessment:** Measures the balance of the eye's production and drainage of aqueous, which is the clear fluid in the eye.
- **Refractive status assessment:** To determine near or far-sightedness.
- **Slit-lamp biomicroscopy:** An examination of the cornea to detect any eye disease such as Cataract, Retinal Detachment or Macular Degeneration.
- **Ophthalmoscopy:** A check to ensure that the retina and vitreous are healthy.
- **Fundus photography:** A vision check that reveals the status of the eyes via an imaging device that captures the image of the back of the eyes.

NOOCC also offers other clinical services such as contact lens consultation, eyewear dispensary services, eye screening services and corneal topography at its in-house dispensary unit. Beneficiaries are entitled to discounted prices for the purchase of frames and lenses.

Booking of Appointment

Qualified local members can book appointment for themselves and spouses by calling the SOS Welfare Division at 6379 5670 or 6379 5671.

Eye Health



With so many different eye checks available right now, one wonders just what exactly goes into the process. This issue, Samudra highlights one common eye screening – the fundus photography.

Capturing Images of the back of your eye

You read it right. The optometrist will be taking photographs of the back of your eye. Before you start thinking about photo shoots and big, flashy cameras, the fundus photography is actually a highly specialized form of medical imaging that requires a customised camera that is connected to a microscope with lenses and mirrors. The photographer will then focus the light through the cornea, pupil and lens to get the image of the back of the eyes.

Why is Fundus Photography Essential to Overall Eye Health?

Back in the olden days, there are no state-of-the-art imaging devices to detect any eye disorder. As such, the idea of having images of the back of your eyes taken from an optometrist may seem a little weird, if not absurd. However, fundus photography is important because it helps to detect and document the health status of various nerves in the eye, such as the optic nerve, vitreous (the center of the eye), the retina (which is responsible for capturing light rays entering the eye) and the blood vessels. The photographs help to monitor the health of your eyes and diagnose any eye conditions, if any.

The Process

Fundus photography is a painless and fuss-free process. The patient will be asked to direct his / her focus on a fixed device so that the eyes remain still. He / She will see flashes of bright light when the images are taken. This causes absolutely no pain and is a fast process that usually spans across five to ten minutes.

Source: <http://www.stlukeseye.com/>

HOW SOS CAN BRIDGE GAPS FOR THE UNEMPLOYED THROUGH E2I

The visit to the Employment and Employability Institute Pte Ltd (e2i) opened up opportunities for SOS and Seacare to explore more ways to reach out to those having problems getting a job or staying employed.

On 1 August 2008, 22 SOS Exco members and Seacare senior managers visited e2i to check out what the institute does and how SOS and Seacare can work with the centre to bridge the gaps for the unemployed.

E2i is a joint project between the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), Workforce Development Agency (WDA) and the Singapore Labour Foundation (SLF).

This centre sees itself as a one-stop shop for skills upgrading, job placement and career consulting. The institute in Bukit Merah wants to reach out to retrenched workers, contract and casual workers, and housewives looking to rejoin the workforce.

Its objective is to train workers with better skills to keep up with the economic changes. The approach e2i does is a multi-faceted one involving 'employability camps' to help sharpen workers' interview skills and confidence-boosting techniques; assessment tests to match technical skills or qualifications to a specific job; and subsequently providing workers with industry-specific skills training, covering a total of 10 different sectors, ranging from healthcare to real estate and security through government and private training centres located across the island.





Since its launch on 1 February 2008, the institute has already trained more than 3,000 workers and has helped more than 230 unemployed workers find jobs. The institute aims to train over 10,000 workers and secure 2,000 job placements.

The visit to e2i opened opportunities where SOS could explore in reaching out to the unemployed. Presently, many workers who have gone through Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd, were able to find full and part-time placements in jobs ranging from marine related positions, to non-marine related ones such as administrative, technical and operation positions. Through its recruitment drives, Seacare Manpower has also provided job placements for individuals especially women seeking to return to the workforce and for those seeking part-time and flexible working arrangements.

Going a step further by linking these workers to e2i where their skills can be upgraded is certainly a boost not just in increasing skill level, but also confidence level and job fit as well. In this way, SOS can help bridge the gaps for the unemployed, help create better jobs and better lives for its workers.



PANORAMIC PENANG

CHOSEN DESTINATION FOR SOS MEMBERS' OV



At the Dialogue Session with SOS General Secretary Mr Leow Ching Chuan in March this year, members have voiced out keen interest in visiting Penang as their next overseas outing. The Union heard their call and hence, the trip was organised especially for them and their families.

The chirpy mood was clearly in the air, as some 127 SOS members and their families headed up north to Penang, Malaysia on 12 June 2008, for the annual SOS Overseas Family Outing. The 4 Days / 3 Nights trip was worth every moment as members soaked in the different cultures and history of the places of interest in Penang, while visiting the famous Mystic Snake Temple, the Siamese Temple, Kek Lok Si Temple and the Batik and pewter-ware show rooms.

The troupe then headed for some nature appreciation as they set foot on the colourful Botanical Garden before treating themselves to some scenic view at the Batu Ferringhi Beach. There, as they basked in the seaside beauty, members also tried out the foot reflexology service provided right at the beach – a picture perfect moment as they relaxed and enjoyed the sea



ERSEAS FAMILY OUTING



breeze while getting the much needed feet pampering within the sun, sand and sea setting.

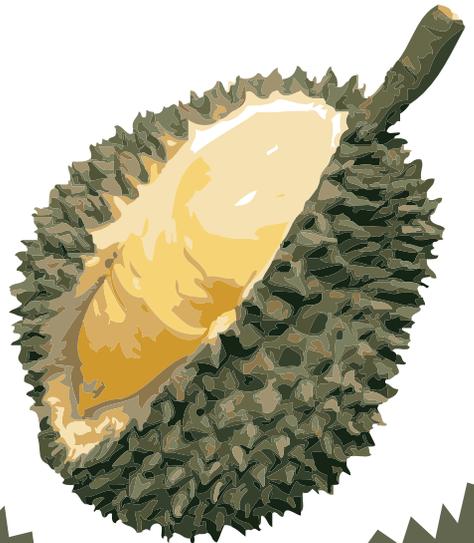
The SOS Welfare and Community Services Committee members, who are the main organisers for this event, did not miss out on details. Members tucked into the special meals such as the Mediterranean dishes and German specialties, from the decadent spread available at the restaurants and even the sidewalk bazaar. Penang Hill was also the troupe's favourite; its scenic and lush surroundings marvelled the members, who did not mind taking a one-hour tram ride uphill just to enjoy the view.

Any holiday will not be complete without the mandatory shopping session. The Penang troupe feasted their eyes on some wonderful bargains and good finds as they made their way to Gurney Drive Shopping Mall.

Another year, another time well spent and soon it was time to go home. Souvenirs were bought; food cravings satisfied. The fourth day came faster than it should and members headed back to Singapore with a bagful of memories to share.



SOS MEMBERS WENT ON A DURIAN HUNT



It's the king of all fruits and a favourite among many. Its distinctive smell can be detected miles away and the heavenly taste leaves a lingering after-effect – which are reasons enough for SOS members to travel all the way to Pagoh Muar Durian Farm in Johor Bahru, to indulge in this memorable durian-tasting experience.

Their hunt started as early as 7.30am on 19 July 2008, as they gathered to set off on their yummy expedition. A total of 200 members boarded the buses which stopped over at a coffee shop for a breakfast shortly after they

departed from the immigration custom. Another stopover was made at Yong Peng, a local product shop, where members snapped up some local crackers, biscuits and medical supplements.

Baskets of durians were waiting for the members at the Farm. A slight drizzle greeted the durian lovers when they reached Pagoh Muar. SOS took up about 8 to ten round tables, where members sat down and enjoyed the durian delights. A light buffet lunch of fried noodles and curry chicken was also served.

Despite the muddy shoes, SOS members were more than satisfied with their durian adventure. The durian lovers headed to Aeon Tebrau City shopping mall for a good 2-hour round of shopping. The trip ended with a wonderful seafood meal for dinner before they headed back to Singapore.



SOS EXTENDS HELP THROUGH NTUC GIFT



SOS extended our help to the family of the late Mr Tan Peng Tuan, SOS member since 1972. Under the NTUC Gift, Mr Tan's family is entitled to a sum of \$5,500 for his membership of more than 10 years.

Mr Tan's wife, Mdm Lee Poh Lian was at the union's office to receive the cheque. Mr Tan's membership with the union for 36 years is a true reflection of his dedication and commitment as an SOS member.

The NTUC Gift is a group insurance that covers death and permanent and total disability due to natural causes and accidents.

More About NTUC Gift

Q: Who can apply for the NTUC Gift?

A: NTUC GIFT is for members* of participating unions/associations affiliated to National Trades Union Congress (NTUC). Members must be 16 to 65 years of age with at least 6 months of continuous union/association membership and be physically and actively at work.

Q: What are the criteria that will determine the eligibility of the claim?

A: The policy covers eligible members and their spouses up to 65 years of age. Members must be actively and physically at work on the date of the claim.

Q: Do I have to pay any premium?

A: 79% of the premium is paid by NTUC while the rest is paid by your Union.

What are the benefits?

For members, the benefits are as follows:-

Description	NTUC GIFT	
	Less than 10 years of membership	10 or more years of membership
Death or PTD@ of member due to natural causes (24 hours) or accidents (during working hours)	\$4,500	\$5,500
Death or PTD of member due to accidents (outside working hours) Please refer to Table of Benefits#.	\$20,000	\$30,000
The aggregate of all payout per member shall not exceed	\$20,000	\$30,000
Death or PTD of member's spouse due to all causes	\$250	\$500

* Members refer to ordinary, general branch union members and members of taxi associations affiliated to NTUC.

Log on to http://www.ntuc.org.sg/ntuc_insurance/free_gift.htm for more information on the benefits members are entitled to under the "Death or Permanent & Total Disability resulting from accidents outside working hours" category.

@ PTD: Permanent and Total Disability

NTUC ELDERCARE SHARES SOME TIPS



Ms Lim Sia Hoe, GM of NTUC Eldercare Co-operative Ltd

SOS members picked up many useful tips on how to create a safer home for their elderly loved ones. Be it their parents, friends or neighbours, anyone who lives with an elderly should take a conscious effort at keeping their homes free from any hazards.

The talk, organised by the SOS Welfare Committee, was presented by Ms Karen Kan, Senior Executive, NTUC Eldercare. Held at Club@52 on 16 July 2008, the in-house talk covered various areas of home safety.

Entitled "Know a Little, Enjoy Better Living," the talk also included a demonstration of various tools and materials which are elderly-friendly. Safe to use utensils, such as a pill cutter, a bendable spoon and a bowl with defined edges that can aid in the scooping of food easily, were shown to the members.

During the three-hour talk, Ms Kan shared ideas and pointers on how to create a safer home and highlighted on various services offered by NTUC Eldercare that are catered specifically for the elderly. These include the different help lines and counselling services that are aimed at handling elderly-related matters.

The talk left SOS members with a better understanding on the various ways that they can contribute towards modifying their homes for the safety of their loved ones.



"My mother is much happier and livelier now..."



...She is more cheerful and energetic. She participates in exercises which help to strengthen her body, especially her legs. She used to be very pessimistic and always talked about the past. Now, she has a wider range of conversational topics through her interaction with her peers at the day care centre," said Mr So Sim Seah, youngest son of Mdm Quek Liang who moved in to stay with her son last year. Mr So now ferries her from their home in Sengkang to NTUC ElderCare's Silver Circle Day Care Centre.

If you are looking for a place for your elderly parent or relative for an interactive, holistic programme that caters to the Mind, Body & Soul, the day care programme provided by NTUC ElderCare may be what you are looking for.

(cut out this coupon)

NTUC ElderCare Co-operative Ltd offers quality and affordable care services such as social day care and care@home. For more information, please call any of the centres or 62138212/62138215 or visit www.ntuceldercare.com.org.sg

WELL, we're always here for 

Celebrating Opening of Silver Circle
(Punggol South)

Present coupon by 31 September 2008. Terms & Conditions apply.
Please call to make prior appointment and subject to availability.

**FREE One-Day
Social Day Care
TRIAL**

for One at any of the
social day care centres:

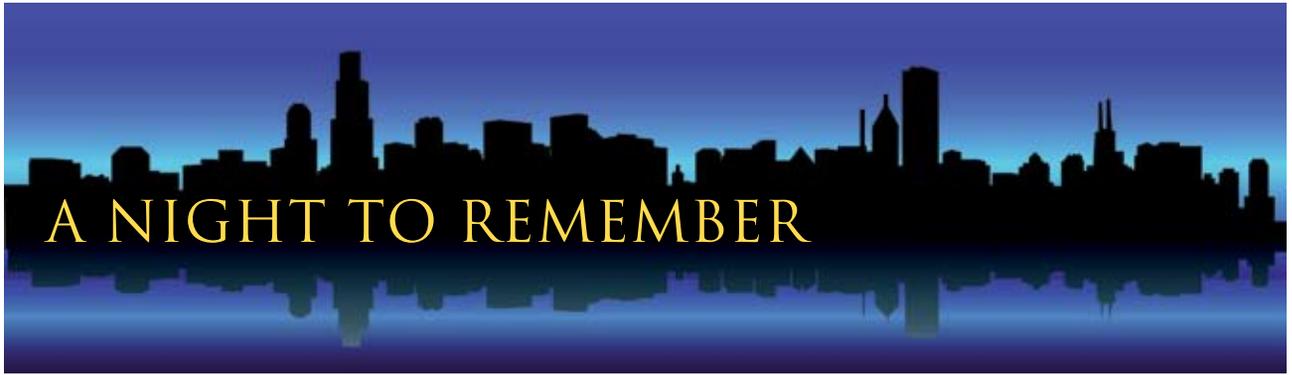
Marsiling
Blk 172 Woodlands Street 13 #01-303, Tel: 6368 2591

Taman Jurong
Blk 349 Corporation Drive #01-502, Tel: 6268 3108

Jurong Central
Blk 402 Jurong West Street 42 #01-525, Tel: 6561 4989

Pasir Ris
Blk 112 Pasir Ris Street 11 #01-657, Tel: 6581 6033

Punggol South
Blk 571 Hougang Street 51 #01-119, Tel: 6315 3566



A NIGHT TO REMEMBER



It was food galore back at Club@52. A long spread consisting various colourful dishes bombarded the tables; from the famous braised oxtail in brown sauce to local dishes such as Mee Rebus, Soto Ayam, Chicken Briyani and a whole lamb dish were placed at dinner time, specifically for SOS members.

Some 130 members attended the Members' Night on 28 June 2008, a clear sign of their active participation in the Union's activities as well as their commitment and dedication as members, to take the night off their daily chores to enjoy the presence and close bonds of everyone.

Members' Night will not be complete without the usual Lucky Draw session. Twenty winners were presented with NTUC FairPrice vouchers. The first and second places consist of a \$70 NTUC FairPrice Voucher and a \$50 NTUC Club Voucher.



UPCOMING EVENTS



SOS/SEACARE MEMBERS' NIGHT – 27 September

SOS CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATION – 5 October

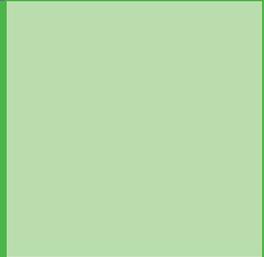


SOS HARI RAYA CELEBRATION – 10 October

SOS DEEPAVALI CELEBRATION – 14 November



Seacare Focus





SEACARE PROPERTIES

VENTURES INTO VIETNAM TO
OFFER FINE LIVING



Seacare Properties Pte Ltd is taking a stake in the thriving property market in Vietnam – after two successful overseas projects in Adelaide and Manila.

In its latest effort, Seacare Properties works hand in hand with three other companies to offer luxurious apartments for sale and lease in the Thao Dien Ward, Quoc Hong Road located in District 2 of Ho Chi Minh City.

The companies that are jointly working on the new project are CES-Vietnam Holdings Pte Ltd, Viet Investment Link Joint Stock Company, Hoa Binh House Corporation and Seacare Properties (Vietnam) Pte Ltd which is the wholly-owned subsidiary of Seacare Properties Pte Ltd.

The site for the housing development project is set to cover an approximate area of 7,1280.10 square metres. Excluding the basement and mezzanine floor, it is planned to boast 18 to 22 levels that can contain 418 units. Facilities such as barbeque area, swimming pool, library, fitness park, gym and health club were not ruled out. Detailing were made in the early stages to ensure the building and development of the project runs smoothly.



While this is the third overseas project clinched by Seacare Properties, the first two being in Adelaide and Manila, it is the first time that Seacare is venturing into Vietnam. Pulteney Centre in Adelaide, Australia, the first overseas property development project for Seacare, was a joint venture with CEL Development Pte Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Chip Eng Seng Corporation Ltd. For the Vietnam project, one of the three parties which is joining hands with Seacare is CES-Vietnam Holdings Pte Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of CEL Development Pte Ltd. This underscores both Seacare and CEL Development’s successful working relationship.



“The move is a timely one and we are glad to be partnering with three other companies for this project. This is the first time that Seacare Properties is venturing into Vietnam - the land of opportunities, and we are excited to have Seacare stamped there. The trusting relationship between Seacare and these companies aids in building up our confidence and also provides us with the support we need.”

Mr Leow Ching Chuan, Seacare Chairman





SEACARE PROPERTIES CHAIRMAN

Despite his heavy commitments as the Group CEO of Chip Eng Seng Corporation Limited, Mr Chia found time to generously share his experience and expertise in realty and related fields with the Management and staff of the Seacare Group

He is no stranger to the co-operative movement in Singapore and his many contributions to Seacare have not gone unnoticed. On 4 July 2008, Mr Raymond Chia, Chairman of Seacare Properties Pte Ltd, was presented with the Friend of Co-operatives Award by the Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF).

Mr Chia, who is also the Director of Seacare Holdings Pte Ltd, walked on stage to receive the award at the SNCF Honour Awards cum 27th Anniversary Dinner held at Marina Mandarin Hotel. Celebrating with him on that special day were Seacare directors, staff and friends who hold him with high regard.

The Honour Awards recognises the outstanding contributions and the impact individuals like Mr Chia make to mould and push the co-operative movement forward. Mr Chia's contributions towards the co-operatives are indeed inspiring.

Below we highlight Mr Raymond Chia's citation.

"Mr Raymond Chia was appointed as Director of Austate Private Limited on 31 October 2001. Austate Private Limited is a joint venture between Seacare Properties Private Limited and CEL Development Private Limited.

Mr Chia wears many hats. On 8 November 2001, he became the Director of Austate Properties Pty Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Austate Private Limited. Two years later, on 1 October 2003, he was named Chairman of Seacare Properties Private Limited. Thereafter, in 2006, he was appointed as Director of Seacare Holdings Private Limited, the wholly-owned subsidiary of Seacare Co-operative Limited.

RAYMOND CHIA IS FRIEND OF CO-OPERATIVES

Despite his heavy commitments as the Group Chief Executive Officer of Chip Eng Seng Corporation Limited, Mr Chia found time to generously share his experience and expertise in realty and related fields with the Management and staff of the Seacare Group. His contribution to the success of the Seacare Group of Companies was beyond measure.

As the Chairman of Seacare Properties Private Limited, Mr Chia has helped to oversee Seacare's investment locally and abroad, such as the ongoing effort to set up the Seacare Sailors' Home in the Philippines and the Seacare Hotel in Singapore. The Home is part of the Singapore Organisation of Seamen's (SOS) scheme to provide affordable accommodation for international seafarers as well as SOS members, some of whom are also members of the Seacare Co-operative Limited, when they are away from their home ports.

In recognition of his invaluable contributions, the Singapore National Co-operative Federation is pleased to present the Friend of the Co-operatives Award to Mr Raymond Chia Lee Meng."



SEACARE LANDSCAPE GETS NEW CHAIRMAN MR PETER BOO ANSWERS CALL TO COME ON BOARD

Seacare Landscape Pte Ltd now has a new addition to its growing family. Serving as an advisor and leader who will now bring in new directions for the company is Mr Peter Boo, Chairman of Seacare Landscape.

With a chairman now leading the way, Seacare Landscape is poised for newer, better and bigger challenges. And as it hammers in new projects and extends existing contracts, the future for Seacare Landscape is set to be a bright one.

Samudra chats with the new Chairman, who is a keen golfer and enjoys home gardening, to get some insights on what he thinks of his new role and vision for Landscape.

Why did you accept the invitation to chair this hugely potential company?

PB: Seacare is not new to me. I enjoy working with Mr Leow who is enterprising and decisive. I see a huge potential in the landscape business in Singapore especially with the national development's emphasis on green environment. Being a keen golfer, I always enjoy beautiful landscapes of golf courses. Helping to grow businesses is also my personal interest.

What do you bring to Seacare Landscape?

PB: I've been an entrepreneur all my life. Basically, my entrepreneurial experience, networking and connections I have over the years.

What sort of experience does Landscape want to offer to its clients?

PB: Effective and creative design with prompt delivery; competitive landscape projects and excellent services.

Any targets?

PB: This year, we aim to achieve sales turnover of more than \$1million and we will double it within the next three years.

What does it take to get there?

PB: We would need bigger nursery to achieve our aims. One way is to acquire existing landscape company with the necessary infrastructure. Currently, we have BCA Grade L1 which enables us to pitch for projects worth \$0.75million. We will strive to upgrade and get the L3 grading for us to tender for projects up to \$5million.

How would you rate the current management team?

PB: Currently, we have a capable team of people in project management and maintenance. We will increase our project staff team and provide training to strengthen the management skills to cope with our growth.

What would be your dream for Seacare Landscape?

PB: To see Seacare Landscape grows to become a leading landscape contractor and a leading brand in Singapore. Thus creating more jobs for members of SOS especially the older members and meeting the social objective of Seacare.





SEACARE LANDSCAPE REAPS WHAT IT SOWS

Duchess Crest shows confidence in Seacare Landscape through contract renewal

Good working relationship, attention to details and going all out to ensure the landscape design and maintenance remain in tip top conditions are some of the main reasons why two condominiums – Duchess Crest and The Marbella have credited the enviable visual appeal of their estates to Seacare Landscape.

The maintenance contract with Duchess Crest was extended for two more years instead of the usual yearly basis. Seeing is believing and that is what Condominium Manager Mr Michael Seaw, feels about Seacare Landscape's works. Mr Seaw, who describes the working relationship between Duchess Crest and Seacare Landscape as one that is based on mutual understanding, with an established flow of communication where follow-ups are done as soon as a feedback is given, is truly satisfied with the landscaping works at the estate.

"There are two main reasons for the renewal. The Council is happy with the people on the job. We have no objection with the renewal

contract of 2 years. This also promotes a longer term commitment for Seacare Landscape," said Mr Seaw.

Duchess Crest is the first condominium project that Seacare Landscape undertook. The ten-year-old estate still looks prim and proper, thanks to the green fingers of the station gardeners. The Landscape team is in charge of planting areas along footpaths, near the swimming pool, boundary walls as well as the estate entrance.

Mr Seaw also added that Seacare Landscape goes beyond what they are entitled to do in their contract. Where there are empty patches seen in between the shrubs, the Landscape representatives took it upon themselves to in-fill the areas with suitable plants. They not only took in the cost of acquiring the plants, but also the labor costs and time factor. This shows that Seacare Landscape provides the value add for their services and works passionately to create a clean and neat visual appeal that is uniquely Duchess Crest's.

The Marbella Wins Best Managed Estate Award

The Marbella, which is handled by Knight Frank Estate Management, has recently won the Best Managed Estate Award in a competition open to all estates managed by Knight Frank. One of the qualities that contributed to the success is the well-manicured landscape that surrounds the condominium. Described by its manager Ms Lian Ong as "luscious, healthy and neat", the greenery maintained by Seacare Landscape adds a warm and homey touch to the whole estate.

Being part of the condominium, the landscaping plays an important role of creating a mood, setting the atmosphere and identity of The Marbella and that is why Seacare Landscape was called in last year to maintain the estate.

But this beauty comes with challenges too. Ms Ong mentioned how Seacare General Manager Mr Firos Angullia and his team work together to ensure that challenges such as seepage of chemicals, groundwork foundation, water-logging and the maintenance of mature plants are not a hindrance to achieving award-winning landscape.

"We are happy in a way that it is a constant dialogue. Seacare Landscape will always take actions; whatever we feedback, they will answer," added Ms Ong.



SEACARE HOLDINGS CHAIRMAN SHARES ON WEATHERING THE ECONOMIC SLOWDOWN

It is important for the Management staff of the Seacare group of companies to study the impact on businesses and repercussions of economic changes such as inflation.

The dark clouds are looming and signs of an impending global economic slowdown are sighted. On 1 July 2008, the Management staff of SOS and Seacare group of companies received insightful viewpoints on ways to tackle the challenges in Singapore and region first hand from the Chairman of Seacare Holdings Pte Ltd, Mr Kong Mun Kwong.

Mr Kong's appointments in various companies in Singapore, Malaysia and China that span across many years are testament to his wealth of experience in the business sector. Indeed, he is the perfect fit to speak to staff and give advice on how to weather the slowdown.

At the Breakfast Talk held at Club@52 that was entitled "Managing Inflation, Recession or Both", Mr Kong touched on topics that are both close to home such as "Asia's Economic Outlook and Strategy – Fighting Risks of Stagflation" and "Asia Oil and Prices". With the rising cost of living in Singapore due to higher prices, the talk took place at the right time, providing staff with the outlook and perspectives which they can relate to.

Other topics - "The US Economy", "Vietnam Today" as well as "Global Economic Perspectives" offered insights into the international scenes that have been affected by the economic blues. While it is important for the Management staff of the Seacare group of companies to study the impact on businesses and repercussions of economic changes such as inflation, union officials also benefitted from the talk. Through the understanding of the effects of the changes, they



SEACARE EDUCATION STEPS UP ON PROVISION OF QUALITY EDUCATION WITH UNIVERSITY OF BOLTON

After almost a year-long discussion over the prospects of collaborating to conduct top-up degree programmes here in Singapore, Seacare Education Pte Ltd and the University of Bolton (UoB) met up from 21 July to 23 July 2008 to work on the finer details to move the project of building a “Bolton Unicentre” in Singapore to another level.

Representatives from the UoB – Dr Kasey Carver, Director of International Relations, Professor Stan Oliver, Head of Business Logistics and Information System, Mr Martyn Shaw and Head of Marketing, Business School, were greeted by Mr Goh Yeow Tin, Chief Executive Officer, Seacare Education, Mr Jimmy Lim, CEO, iHub Sinnet Education and Mr Max Lee, Asia Representative of UoB.

Their three-day meeting consisted of fine-tuning the agreed plans and validation process for Seacare to run UoB’s top up degrees in business and accounting locally. This includes finalisation of submission for certification and registration to the Ministry of Education in Singapore to run the courses as well as to formulate a Memorandum of Understanding between Seacare Education and UoB to move the project to the next stage.

While the collaboration provides an avenue for UoB to create its presence here within Asia, it also provides an opportunity for Seacare Education to promote and support quality education. The meeting ended on a high note with both parties moving forward into the next stage of validation as well as opening up the door to include more programmes for collaboration such as masters courses, supply chain management as well as to explore partnership in delivering courses in areas such as computer gaming, animation and retail management.



can then tackle issues that will affect their members, especially the lower-waged group, who will have to bear the brunt of higher costs.

Mr Kong’s informative talk also provided the opportunity for the Management staff of SOS and Seacare group of companies to get feedback from Mr Kong regarding his viewpoints on possible future economic scenarios and how best to prepare for them.



WISEC VISITS SEACARE



The potential tie-up between the Vietnam Institute of Small Enterprises and Co-operatives (VISEC) Co-operative Training College and Seacare Education Pte Ltd took another progressive step forward.

VISEC Director Dr Thang and representative, Ms Mai, met up with Mr Goh Yeow Tin, Chief Executive Officer, Seacare Education and Mr Jimmy Lim, General Manager, iHub-Sinnet Education Pte Ltd, which is an associate of Seacare Education, on 5 June 2008 at the Seacare Building. The last time they met were last September in Vietnam.

The meeting between Seacare Education and VISEC involved an exploration of ideas on the feasibility of conducting courses that span the areas of Facility Management and Financial Accounting in Hanoi, Vietnam and the possibility of collaboration between the two parties.

VISEC was founded in 1982 with an aim to provide training to non-state enterprises. This training is catered for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Chief Accountant of the co-operatives, trainers for various centres in other provinces as well as members of provincial co-operatives.

A PEEK INTO THE SOS TRAINING ROOM

SOS has a new place that aims to provide a conducive environment for keen learners.

The SOS Training Room, located at the 4th floor of the Seacare Building was opened for viewing on 31 July 2008. Doing the honour of declaring the Room open at the soft launch was Mr Goh Yeow Tin, Chief Executive Officer of Seacare Education Pte Ltd. The room will be used for activities by the SOS and the Seacare group of companies such as the Seacare Education Pte Ltd and Seacare Manpower Pte Ltd to conduct their in-house training.

With more focus placed in training and upgrading, the Training Room serves its purpose as the main area where members, staff and employees of SOS and Seacare can gather and adopt new skills and information through the various courses and workshops that will be held there.

Samudra looks forward to cover more training-based activities that will be conducted in the SOS Training Room.



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By:





BE IN THE GREEN SCENE

Seacare Landscape Infuses Design and Class into Nature....

Our main priority is to reinvigorate your gardens and lawns with customised planning and precision, according to your landscaping needs.

Let our design and build experts put their innovation and creative touches to your greens. We provide:

Landscape Architecture

- Landscapes Design & Build
- Mechanical & Engineering (M&E) and Hardscapes

Landscape Maintenance

- Horticulture Maintenance
- Turfing & Grass Cutting
- Tree Felling & Pruning
- Rental of Potted Plants



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