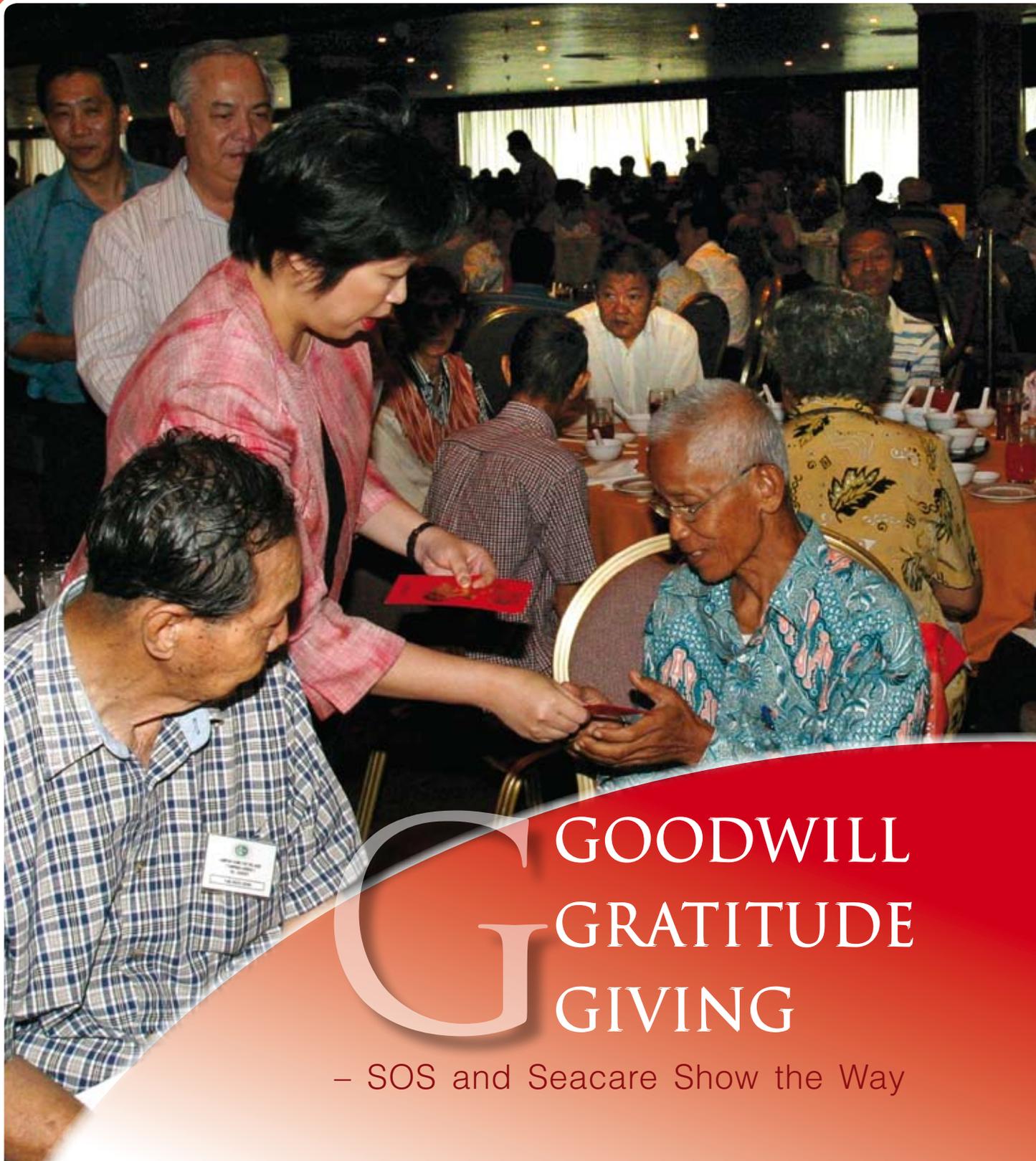


Feb + Mar 2006

samudra

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

Mica (P) No. 058/03/2006



GOODWILL
GRATITUDE
GIVING

– SOS and Seacare Show the Way

Feb + Mar 2006

samudra

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"In view of the good economic performance last year and the positive outlook, I have decided to share part of these surpluses with Singaporeans this year... This is a package for everyone, but it aims to achieve specific social objectives. It will benefit all Singaporeans, because everyone contributed to our economic restructuring efforts and should now share in the fruits of growth."

– Mr Lee Hsien Loong,
Prime Minister and
Minister for Finance,
Budget Statement 2006



WE HAVE PROGRESS(ED)!

This year, the Government is sharing its budget surpluses with all Singaporeans! Titled the Progress Package (**P**roviding **O**pportunities through **G**rowth, **R**emaking **S**ingapore for **S**uccess), this is a package for everyone, but it aims to achieve specific social objectives. Six core areas of the scheme have been unveiled and will benefit both the young and old alike. Below, we walk you through the various highlights:

Growth Dividends

All Singaporeans aged 21 years and above as of 31 December 2005 are eligible. Those who earn less or live in smaller homes will get more Growth Dividends.



	Annual Value of Home \$6,000 or less	Annual Value of Home more than \$6,000 and up to \$10,000	Annual Value of Home more than \$10,000
Annual Assessable Income \$24,000 or less	\$800	\$600	\$200
Annual Assessable Income of more than \$24,000	\$600	\$400	

* Annual Value of your home in 2005 as assessed by IRAS (based on NRIC address as of 31 December 2005)

* Assessable Income for the Year of Assessment 2005 (income earned in 2004 as assessed by IRAS)

For Our Elderly

Singaporeans aged 50 and above as of 31 December 2005 will receive top-ups to their CPF Special/Retirement and Medisave Accounts to help them meet their retirement and healthcare needs.

Age	Annual Value of Home \$6,000 or less	Annual Value of Home more than \$6,000 and up to \$10,000	Annual Value of Home more than \$10,000
50-59	\$600	\$400	\$100
60 & above	\$800	\$600	\$200

* Half of the amount will go into the CPF Special/Retirement Account, the other half will go into the CPF Medisave Account.

For Lower-Income Households – Helping with living expenses

Lower-income households will get Utilities-Save (U-Save) rebates ranging from \$60 to \$200, to help them cope with living expenses. Those living in smaller HDB flats will get more rebates. They will also continue to enjoy Service & Conservancy Charges (S&CC) of between half month to four months. Those living in one and two room flats will also be eligible for rental rebates of three months and one-half month respectively.



For Low-Wage Singaporean Workers – Rewarding regular and productive work

Low-wage Singaporeans aged 40 and above who live in homes with Annual Value up to \$10,000 can receive the Workfare Bonus if they are employees or self-employed persons engaged in regular work in 2005 and 2006.

The bonus will be paid in two portions of up to \$600 each. For having worked for at least six continuous months in 2005, you will receive the first portion on 1 May 2006. The second portion will be paid on 1 May 2007 to those who work for at least six continuous months in 2006. This means low wage workers can get up to \$1,200 in total!



Average Monthly Income	Portion of Bonus to be paid each year
\$400 and below	1.5 months salary, or \$75, whichever is higher
Above \$400 to \$900	\$600
Above \$900 to \$1,200	\$400
Above \$1,200 to \$1,500	\$200

*If you were not able to work for at least six continuous months in 2005, you can still qualify for the Workfare Bonus if your total employment period added up to at least six months in 2005.

* 90% of the bonus will be paid in cash. You can choose to be paid either by direct bank credit or by cheque when you sign up for the Progress Package. The remaining 10% of the bonus will be credited into your CPF Medisave account to help build up your savings to take care of your healthcare needs.

For Our National Servicemen

To mark 40 years of National Service (NS) and recognise the contributions of our national servicemen (NSmen), Singaporeans who are serving or have served their NS in the SAF, SPF and SCDF will get a one-off NS Bonus of \$100 or \$400 respectively.

For Our Young

– Investing in the next generation

Students from lower-income families will get more opportunities for enrichment and learning, such as purchase of computers and overseas study trips. Known as the Opportunity Funds, a total of \$50 million will be given to MOE schools, Junior Colleges/Centralised Institute, ITEs, Special Education schools and self-help groups (CDAC, MENDAKI, SINDA and the Eurasian Association).



By now, you would have received the letter from the CPF Board and signed up for your Progress Package. If you have forgotten about it, you still have a second chance.

You have until 31 May 2006 to sign up via ATMs (DBS/POSB/OCBC/UOB); and 31 December 2006 if you sign up through the website (www.progress.gov.sg). You can also submit hard copy forms at SingPost offices, CPF Service Centres, Community Centres/ Clubs and Community Development Councils.

If you have further questions on the Progress Package, please call the CPF Board at 1800-2222-888, or log on to www.progress.gov.sg.

Our Members Say...

I'm very happy with this timely "reward" from the government! I'm currently doing a course and the \$900 from the Progress Package will come in very handy for payment of my modules.

- Responding to the government's call to upgrade and gain better skills, 34-year-old Mr Abdul Aziz Mohamad is one model worker of whom the government would be proud of. The \$1 billion Workfare Package which the government has set up to help workers learn new skills, find meaningful jobs and thus earn better wages, is already reaping results!

It's wonderful that the government is sharing the good news with us, because it makes people want to work harder and do better. Me? I'm probably going to use the money to bring my children for a short trip...It makes me happy when they are happy.

- This doting father will have \$1,200 credited into his bank account come 1 May 2006. Mr Chua Ming Chai is 49 years old this year and drives a cab. He stays in a 4-room flat with his family of four.

I'm currently staying with my mother and nephew in a 3-room flat. I have no plans at the moment to do anything with the money, but I think I will be saving 50% of the money, and I probably will donate the other 50% to the charities.

- The government shares the good news with Singaporeans and a very selfless Mr Abdul Rahim Mohamad shares his wealth with the unfortunate. The 41-year old will be receiving \$1,000 amongst other rebates.

SOS COMMUNICATES WITH A PERSONAL TOUCH

“Initiating new and better benefits for our members is one thing. Communicating and helping them to be aware of these benefits is another. In SOS, we use multi-pronged approaches and different languages and dialects to get the message across. The members must know what to do to truly gain from the range of benefits,” said Mr Leow to Samudra.

SOS has orchestrated another good benefit to the local members by offering free comprehensive optometric eye examination under the Seacare Medical Scheme.

The Singapore Government too has good news. In view of the good economic performance last year and the positive outlook, surpluses will be channeled to Singaporeans via the Progress Package.

The challenge is how do we communicate these benefits to the ground so that no one is left out from reaping the merits to the fullest.

For SOS, we grab every opportunity to create awareness among our members.



On 21 March 2006, it was the personal face-to-face dialogue session with SOS General Secretary Mr Leow Ching Chuan that brought home the good tidings clearly.

“Initiating new and better benefits for our members is one thing. Communicating and helping them to be aware of these benefits is another. In SOS, we use multi-pronged approaches and different languages and dialects to get the message across. The members must know what to do to truly gain from the range of benefits,” said Mr Leow to Samudra.

At the dialogue session, Mr Leow spelled out simply the Seacare Medical Scheme’s latest benefit to the local paid up members and that is the free comprehensive optometric eye examination (CEE). “We must take care of our eyes. So go for your eye examination. It’s free because you are a paid up SOS local member,” the union leader urged.

One union member who went for the free eye test stood up to attest to the benefits of it. SOS member Mr Thomas Tan gave his step-by-step account of what took place at the examination and the advice he received from the professional eye care specialist.

Members who have unfounded fears of getting their eyes checked found Mr Tan’s testimony reassuring.

The members too had the chance to hear it from the professional. The Union invited an eye care specialist from the New Optometry & Ocular Care Centre (NOOCC) to explain, educate and enlighten in English and Mandarin the series of clinical tests covered by the CEE.

Like in all dialogue sessions with the General Secretary, the communication is always two-way. “Yes, voice your views. Tell us what other ways the Union can enhance your quality of life. We are listening,” Mr Leow assured.

SOS member Mr Thomas Tan shares his experience of the eye care examination with the participants at the dialogue session.



GOODWILL, GRATITUDE

– SOS AND SEACARE SHOW THE WAY

When it comes to goodwill, gratitude and giving, Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS) and Seacare Co-operative Limited show the way!

Enjoying the well wishes of the Union and Co-operative at the lunar new year celebration held in the Year of the Dog were 870 union members, guests, associates as well as retired seamen and residents of four welfare homes.

GOODWILL
GRATITUDE
GIVING



“The Lunar New Year,” said SOS President Tan Jing Bock, “is an occasion for family reunion as well as joyous celebration. SOS and Seacare have been jointly organising such Hong Bao Presentations and Lunar New Year Celebrations for several years. To date, the various sums of money disbursed annually by SOS and Seacare through such Hong Bao Presentations have added up to \$420,800.”



This year's celebration, which took place on 7 February at The Neptune, included the presence of guest-of-honour Mrs Lim Hwee Hua, Minister of State for Transport and Finance.

Mrs Lim joined SOS and Seacare leaders in presenting some \$32,750 worth of hongbao to 278 delighted retired seamen and 101 residents from Asian Women's Welfare Home, Ling Kwang

TITUDE AND GIVING



Home for Senior Citizens, Jamiyah Home for the Aged and Sree Narayana Mission Home for the Aged and Sick. The Minister also presented the 15 years Long Membership Award and the 30 years Long Membership Award during the joyous occasion.

At the special occasion, SOS and Seacare pledged to continue to “vigorously take care of the welfare needs of our local members with a comprehensive range of benefits and the foreign members and their dependents through implementation of initiatives such as the Seacare Medical Scheme”.

Cheers to a good year ahead!





YES TO CONSOLIDATED MARITIME CONVENTION!

Seafarer, government and shipowner representatives from more than 100 countries came together on 23 February 2006 to give a definite yes to the Consolidated Maritime Convention (Conmarcon).

The watershed 'superconvention', which is to be called the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC), will effectively provide seafarers with a bill of rights, setting out a framework for decent working conditions and covering areas such as health and safety, working hours and recruitment.

Describing the adoption as a historic result for the ILO, ITF General Secretary David Cockcroft said that the decision revealed that a global industry needs global regulations which will be enforced in practice at sea and in the world's ports.

Conmarcon, which brings together and updates over 65 other ILO maritime labour instruments, is expected to come into force within five years.

The Singapore team who attended the session of the ILO – ILC Maritime Session in Geneva was:

- MPA - Mr Chandru S R, Assistant Director/ Registry and Manning Department
- MOM - Mr Tan Jing Koon, Senior Deputy Director, Labour Relations Department and Mr Ng Poey Eng, Policy Analyst
- SMOU - Mr Thomas Tay, GS and Mr Larry Chan, Asst GS
- SOS - Mr Kam Soon Huat, Executive Secretary and Mr Daniel Tan, IR Executive
- SSA - Mr Goh Teik Poh, SVP, Global Operations and Network of APL.

ILO Minimum Basic Wage for AB Goes Up

The subcommittee on Wages of Seafarers of the Joint Maritime Commission, having met in Geneva from 24 to 25 February 2006 decides to update the current ILO minimum basic wage for an AB of US\$500 to US\$515 as of 1 January 2007 and US\$530 as of 1 January 2008 and US\$545 as of 31 December 2008. The subcommittee also agrees that the amount of US\$545 should be used as a basis for recalculation purposes.

Asian Seafarers' Pledge of Unity and Solidarity

Delegates at the 23rd Asian Seafarers' Summit Meeting (ASSM) held in Hong Kong on 6 March 2006 declared the importance of unity and solidarity when facing challenges associated with Asian seafarers.

Some 50 delegates, including SOS Vice President Mr Mohamed Idris, representing unions from more than 10 countries in Asia reaffirmed that Asian seafarers employed on national flagships must be paid a minimum of the ILO rate. The Unions also affirmed that there should not be any disparity between the IBF and TCC rates, as it could affect solidarity.

To increase the prospects and marketability of Asian seafarers, the Unions agreed to work closely with their respective countries' government and shipping companies to invest in training and upgrading of seafarers.

The Norwegian Asian Seafarers' Meeting (NASCO) was held a day after the ASSM.

KPI MEETING IN INDONESIA



SOS was invited to send a representative to attend the KPI (Kesatuan Pelaut Indonesia) meeting in Jakarta, Indonesia from 18 to 19 March 2006. Amongst those present at the meeting were Mr Mark Davis and Mr Shigeru Wada from the ITF and Mr Hideo Kon from the JSU. SOS Assistant Secretary Mr Mohamad Abu Bakar represented the Union as an observer at the meeting. We would like to thank the KPI for their kind hospitality.

CORRIGENDUM

In the article 'SOS GS Re-appointed to the MPA Board' which appeared in the Dec/Jan2006 issue of Samudra, we misspelled the MPA Board Member, Mr Choo Chiau Beng's name. We apologise for the error.

THANKS FOR CARING!

Life as a seafarer isn't easy, especially when you have to sail for days, weeks or even months sometimes, and the only people you see are those whom you work with everyday. It is not difficult to imagine the seafarers' elation whenever there are "visitors".

Crew members onboard APL Japan were all smiles when SOS Vice President Mr Mohamed Idris made a stopover onboard the vessel. It was home port for the local crew working onboard the NSSPL vessel, which had berthed in Singapore on 22 March 2006. They were in high spirits, longing to be home with their loved ones.

Mr Mohamed Idris was pleased to note that the crew's working conditions and standard of living was satisfactory and that there was prevailing harmony amongst the crew members, who were of mixed nationalities. The feedback from seafarers was positive.

They were also delighted when Mr Mohamed Idris presented them with SOS souvenirs as tokens of mementos. They expressed their appreciation to the union for their concern, knowing that they can count on SOS whenever they need help. They also thanked the SOS unionist for taking time off to visit them and asking after their welfare.



1.5 MONTHS BONUS FOR NSSPL RATINGS

Neptune Shipmanagement Services Pte Ltd (NSSPL) has, for two years in a row, been awarding a bonus of one and a half months' bonus to their staff including ratings for their loyalty and dedication.

The move to share profits in good times was applauded by SOS. The Union was indeed heartened that NSSPL walked the talk when it came to sharing the fruit of labour.

DOING OUR PART: BE A RESPONSIBLE MARITIME SEA-TIZEN

"Terrorism is a global threat with global effects...its consequences affect every aspect of the United Nations agenda from development to peace to human rights and the rule of law. By its very nature, terrorism is an assault on the fundamental principles of law, order, human rights, and the peaceful settlement of disputes upon which the United Nations (UN) is established. The UN has an indispensable role to play in providing the legal and organisational framework within which the international campaign against terrorism can unfold."

- Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General

7 October 1985

Achille Lauro, an Italian passenger ship seized by four Palestinians

12 October 2000

Suicide bombing attack on U.S. Destroyer, USS Cole in Aden Harbour, Yemen

11 October 2002

Attack on MV Lumburg; "Invade Iraq and We'll Sink Your Tanker Fleet!"

26 February 2004

Explosion onboard Super Ferry 14 shortly after leaving Manila Harbour with 899 passengers and crew

28 August 2005

Ferry bombing to sow terror in Philippines

The parallel relationship shared by these incidences is a strong indication of a threat that is very real in today's world – terrorism.

With trans-national terrorism infiltrating every nook and cranny, the maritime industry is not spared either. The shipping community may be faced with threats of terrorism looming at sea and at port facilities as they interface with ships from all over the world. The main concern is that ships in port will be used to export terrorism. To prevent the propagation of terrorism via ships and port facilities, the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code was created and enforced in 1 July 2004 to ward off possible threats posed by such terrorists.

Chapter V and XI-2 of the International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) 1974 were amended and the ISPS Code (Part A and B) was implemented at the same time. These provisions are applicable to ships engaged on international voyages and Port Facilities that serve such ships.

In view of the adoption of these requirements to enhance maritime safety by the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), SOS held a seminar on ISPS code to raise the understanding of its members on the SOLAS Amendments and ISPS



code, as well as the basic security measures implemented by ships. Maritime Security Initiatives employed by MPA were also highlighted.

The half-day seminar on 24 March 2006 was conducted by Mr Alex Heng, Manager of Maritime Security of ST Education & Training Pte Ltd. Held at the Multi-Purpose Hall of the Seacare Building, the presentation included video clips, role-play and discussions with the 37 attendees.

Said Mr Heng: "The implementation of the ISPS Code provides for the adoption of security measures after considering the risks and vulnerability of the potential threats that affects ships and port facilities. It is important and necessary that seafarers become aware of such security arrangements. The Ship Security Officer and crew must know the Security Plan to do their part in enhancing maritime safety and security."

What Our Members Say:

"Initially, I wasn't really sure what this new ISPS code or SOLAS amendments were about. I thought that I could just wait and depend on the Master to give instructions. But now I know that I can do more to help; such as looking out for anomalies or how security of the vessel and seafarers can be enhanced. Be it piracy or terrorism, we must never take things lightly."

Mohd Sani Mawi, NOL container ship, active seaman of 18 years

"Back when SOS informed us about the ISPS code and the SOLAS amendments, I had wondered what the "fuss" was all about. I'm glad I came for this seminar because a lot of my doubts are cleared, and I have a better understanding of the need for these implementations. More importantly, knowing what the procedures are and how to carry them out correctly can really make a difference."

Hussain Ahmad, NOL bulk carrier, active seaman of 10 years

"Everyone should take responsibility and stay updated about such amendments or implementations at all times. We take orders from the Master, but with a better understanding, we are better able to comprehend his decisions and thus, be more efficient and effective in carrying out his instructions."

Thomas Tan, SSC car carrier, active seaman of 20 years

DIALOGUE ON SEACARE MEDICAL SCHEME IN THE PHILIPPINES



Judging from the warm and positive response of manning agencies and SOS foreign members who attended the dialogue on the Seacare Medical Scheme (SMS) for SOS Filipino members, the SMS certainly scores very well.

Held at the office of Seacare International Phils. Inc. in Manila on 8 March 2006, the session was aimed at engaging and enlightening the 20 participants – made up of representatives from manning agencies and SOS Filipino members.

Kicking off the dialogue was Mr David Shoo, Manager of Seacare Thrift, who shared on the background of SOS and Seacare and the roles they play in the seafaring community and shipping industry.

The participants took notes and paid careful attention when the whys, hows and whats of the SMS were spelled out in detail. They learned that the Seacare Medical Scheme for SOS Filipino members was implemented on 1 March 2005 by the SOS as a special medical scheme. The scheme covers free medical consultation, basic medical examination and tooth extraction to qualified SOS Filipino members and their dependents at the affiliated clinics of the Seacare Maritime Medical Centre Pte Ltd (SMMC) in the Philippines.

Ms Aimee Sañosa, Manager of Seacare International Phils. Inc., walked through the step-by-step process and procedure of administrating the scheme. She clarified the eligibility criteria and provided the location and contact information of the Galenus Clinic Inc as well as the Micah Medical Clinic & Diagnostic

“Great scheme for the SOS Filipino members. The appointment of additional SMMC affiliated clinics would allow more members to enjoy the benefits of the Seacare Medical Scheme.”

- Capt Christopher L. Castro,
Crewing Manager,
Reinier Pacific International Shipping, INC



Laboratory – the two SMMC affiliated clinics.

The exciting news that more affiliated clinics around the region, with one in Cebu, was received with much appreciation and affirmation during the dialogue.

At the end of the dialogue sessions, some manning agents' representatives also took the opportunity to ask some questions on the Seafarers Provident Fund (SPF) scheme which were duly welcomed and answered accordingly.

A buffet lunch was served after the dialogue session which provided another opportunity to interact, exchange views and receive feedback.



“We are very happy with SMS as it covers our dependents. We are looking forward to the Scheme being further enhanced to cover a wider scope of medical benefits.”

- 2/Ck Mr Christian A. Catapang who signed on Maersk Princess and 2/Ck Mr Louie A. Falcasantos who signed on Emile Maersk. They were sharing their views on the SMS with Ms Shena Foo, SOS Senior Manager.





MEMBERS SET THEIR EYES ON SMS

When SOS announced that the popular Seacare Medical Scheme (SMS) also covers Comprehensive Optometric Eye Examination (CEE), the paid-up local members were all in favour. In fact, many members immediately made appointments to get their eyes checked for free.

Forty-nine year old Mr Seah Kiang Cheow and fifty-three year old Mr Selamat Kuntum turned up for their scheduled Comprehensive optometric Eye Examination (CEE) on 2 March 2006. Ms Cigi Chew, Executive Director of the New Optometry & Ocular Care Centre (NOOCC), gave a brief introduction on the various phases of the Comprehensive Optometric Eye Examination that our members will be undergoing. Samudra went onsite to get a clearer view of the benefit.

Stage One: History-Taking

Before we embark on the various tests, our optometrists will speak to the patient to gain a better understanding of his ocular and medical history.



Stage Two: Visual Acuity Assessment

The optometrist will begin by assessing how well you can see, with and without your current corrective eyewear.

Stage Three: Binocular Vision Screening

Testing the co-ordination of both of the eyes, the optometrist will be able to gauge and detect any problems that may require further assessment.

Stage Four: Colour Vision Screening

As the name suggests, you will be screen for colour vision defects, as is commonly known – “Colour Blindness”.

Stage Five: Tonometry

The pressure of the eyes will be measured to assess the possibilities of Glaucoma. Glaucoma is an eye disease where the fluid pressure within the eyeball is too high and damages the optic nerve, which carries visual impulses from the eye to the brain. This pressure build-up occurs because of an imbalance between the production and drainage of fluid within the eyeball.



Stage Six: Auto-Refraction and Keratometry

An objective estimation of your prescriptive power will be obtained through a computerised test first, and following that, the curvature of the cornea is measured to facilitate the prescription of contact lens.

Stage Seven: Refraction

The optometrist will obtain the actual prescriptive power of your eyes via two methods: Retinoscopy (objective) and Subjective Eye Refraction. Using specialised equipment, an oblong streak of light is projected into the patient’s eye. Astigmatic error can also be identified.

Stage Eight: Slit Lamp Biomicroscopy

The external surface of the eyes is examined with the help of a highly powered microscope. This examination may detect many diseases of the eye, including Cataracts, Macular Degeneration and Presbyopia.

Stage Nine: Ophthalmoscopy and Fundus Photography

The health of the back of the eyes is examined. This allows the optometrist to detect any eye disease, systemic disorders or neurological disorders. Photographs of the back of the eyes are then taken to provide a reference for comparison to assess for any significant changes between visits.



Stage Ten: Patient Discussion

With all the data collected, our clinical optometrist will discuss the findings with the patient and design a suitable ocular health management plan. An Ocular Health Summary Report will be provided.

Case Files

Name: Mr Seah Kiang Cheow

Age: 49 years old

Member since: September 1978

Optometrist reports: "Mr Seah should cut down on his smoking. Smoking is detrimental to health, and does affect a person's eyesight too."

Mr Seah says: "Initially I thought the deterioration of my vision is due to my age, but now I know that my smoking is also the culprit. The optometrist also advised me to wear my glasses to correct my Presbyopia condition."

Mr Seah's verdict: "Usually we wait till we need glasses then we visit the optician and even then, I thought going to the optician is sufficient. Such comprehensive analysis and service are rarely available at normal opticians, and many people, including myself, wouldn't have known that there are so many eye conditions and procedures involved. The optometrist's explanations are clear and concise; without their professional advice, I probably would have assumed everything is fine with my eyes."

This is indeed a very thoughtful scheme by SOS for the welfare of members, because whenever people go for "health" checkups, they are concerned about their bodies and not their eyes."

Following the optometrist's careful and detailed explanations, Mr Seah decided to proceed with the prescription and purchase of a new pair of glasses at NOOCC's in-house eyewear dispensary. Not only did he receive his new spectacles within the hour, as an SOS local member, he also enjoyed a 20% discount!



"Having an annual eye examination is a good way to keep abreast with the vision changes due to the natural ageing process, and to detect any early signs of eye diseases. This enables prompt treatment with better prognosis or control. Many do not know, but the CEE can also help detect other conditions that may affect the rest of the body, such as diabetes."

- Ms Cigi Chew,
Executive Director,
NOOCC

Name: Mr Selamat Kuntum

Age: 53 years old

Member since: August 1974

Optometrist reports: "Mr Selamat displays some symptoms of the Dry Eye Syndrome. He should protect his eyes with sunglasses if he spends long hours under the sun, because of the harmful UV rays. He should also use eye drops often to keep the eyes moist and comfortable for a longer period of time, to achieve optimal moisturising effects."

Mr Selamat says: "Prior to this examination, UV rays from the sun were the least of my concern. I thought the dryness of my eyes was normal, and I attributed it to my lack of rest. I shall follow the instructions of the optometrist to improve my eyes' condition, and follow-up with another consultation if the need arises."

Mr Selamat's verdict: "What I'm really pleased about this CEE is the professional analysis provided by the optometrists. They don't just test your eyesight and prescribe you spectacles when your eyesight is poor. The optometrists are very thorough in their explanations, and they also teach me the importance of good management of eye health. Thanks to SOS, I don't have to fork out a single cent for this very practical scheme. I intend to bring my son here, since he is short-sighted and needs glasses too."



About the Seacare Medical Scheme

The Seacare Medical Scheme (SMS) for SOS Local Members took effect from 1 May 2005, and offers SOS qualified local members a free health screening once every four years at the Seacare Maritime Medical Centre (SMMC).

The SMS was further enhanced in February 2006 to offer Comprehensive optometric Eye Examination (CEE) to all SOS paid-up local members. This is through a collaborative effort between SMMC and the NOOCC.

The SMS for SOS Filipino Members, which was implemented on 1 March 2005, offers SOS qualified Filipino members and their dependents free medical related services at overseas affiliated clinics of the SMMC.

Contact SOS Welfare Division at 6379 5670 or 6379 5671, or visit www.sosea.org.sg for more information.

Featured Course: **PRINCIPLES OF SHIPPING DOCUMENTATION**

& PRACTICES

SOS has worked with many training providers and this time, we are introducing a new course to the revised schedule and offering our members the opportunity to sign up for the “Principles of Shipping Documentation & Practices Course”. This course is offered by the Singapore Shipping Association (SSA).

Aimed at providing a basic introduction of the shipping agency documentation system from both conceptual and practical viewpoints, participants can also look forward to familiarising themselves with shipping terms, statutory and trade requirements in the transportation of goods from one port to another.

Apart from lectures, the course will be highly interactive and is particularly helpful because it will encompass practical experiences of the lecturers and course mates. Members will also have the opportunity to participate in group discussions, exercises, case studies and tests to access their understanding.

Course participants can be a junior or senior clerk, a supervisor, a management trainee, an executive from a shipping agency, freight forwarding and trading companies...or anyone who simply nurse an interest to improve their knowledge in this field.

Course Outline

- The modern trading system
- The shipping documentation system
- The nature, functions and types of bills of lading
- Common shipping and trading terms
- Principles and documentary practices relating to transshipment
- Principles and practical aspects of claims management
- Principles of freighting
- USA freighting Air cargo And sea-air operations
- Shipping fraud and malpractices

Next Course Date

1 August – 12 September

Duration

13 evenings (6.30pm to 9.00pm)

Fees

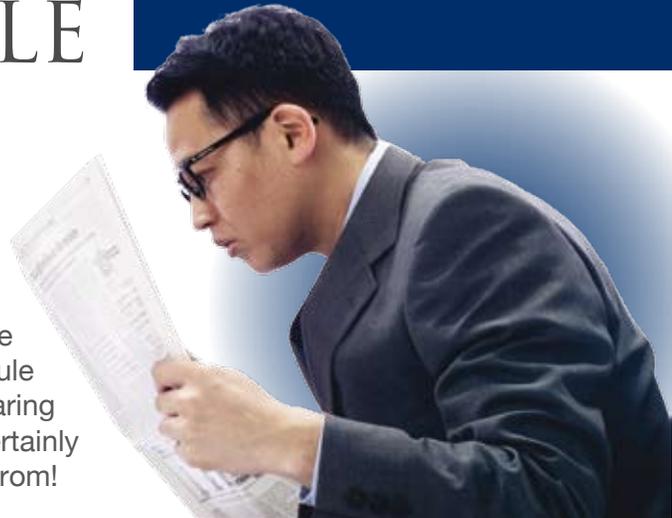
\$735.00

(Computed with 5% GST based on full course fees)

As SOS members, you are eligible for the SOS Training Grant Benefit. You may contact the Training Division at 6379 5671 to find out if you qualify for the grant. You can also get more information about the procedures for application and claim of the training grant. For more information on the course, you can either contact the Training Division, or get in touch with the Singapore Shipping Association at 59 Tras Street, Singapore 078998 or call 6222 5238, fax to 6222 5527, email to ssa.admin@ssa.org.sg

REVISED SCHEDULE

Once again, it's time to update and revise the courses available to our members to ensure the courses are relevant and in line with members' interest. Courses under Schedule 2 are seafaring-related while Schedule 3 encompasses non-seafaring related courses. Members certainly have a wide range to choose from!



Schedule 2

Seafaring-related Courses

- A) Deletion
 - None -
- B) Addition
 - 1. Principles of Shipping Documentation & Practices
 - Training Provider: Singapore Shipping Association (SSA)
 - Fee: \$735
 - Duration: 13 evenings (including practical lesson)

You can contact the Training Division at 6379 5671 to find out what other courses are offered under Schedule 2 and Schedule 3. Members can also log on to www.osea.org.sg to view these courses, which are supported under SOS Training Grant Benefit.

Schedule 3

Non-Seafaring-related Courses

- A) Deletion
 - 1. Dangerous Goods Safety Training
 - Fee: \$187.20
 - Duration: 1 day
 - 2. Dangerous Goods Safety Training (Refresher)
 - Fee: \$93.60
 - Duration: 1 day
- * Both courses are no longer conducted by PSA Institute
- B) Addition
 - None -

SOS WEBSITE REVAMPED



SOS Website has been given a new lease of life and a brand new facelift. Check out www.sosea.org.sg and you will see that the revamped site has more content, is more member-friendly and much easier to navigate.

SOS members, wherever they may be, can effortlessly find out all they need to know about the Union in the new member-centric site which features eight broad classifications.

ABOUT US

Ever wonder what is the rationale behind SOS distinct logo? In About Us, members can also find out who's who in the SOS Exco and the Standing Committees and appreciate the Union's History and Mission Statement.



INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Frequently Asked Questions regarding IR matters are featured here with concise answers. The Objectives, Collective Agreements, Services, Ship Visiting and IR updates are also sufficiently highlighted.

MEMBERSHIP

The site makes updating of members' particulars and application and reapplication for membership hassle-free. This category also highlights the different membership types.

NEWSROOM

Members can walk down memory lane while their children discover the issues, concerns and interests of SOS of yesteryears by reading the Union inhouse publication, Samudra, which goes as far back as 1980. Here, we can also put our finger on the pulse of the Union by reading what's in the News.



BENEFITS

Find out the complete list of SOS Benefit Schemes and the updated Social Calendar under the Benefit Category. Members can book Chalet and apply for different Benefits by visiting the page.

TRAINING

With the emphasis on training, members will be most grateful for this site. Here, the different Grant and Procedures and updated Schedules are clearly spelled out. There is also the Application Form where the member can download and apply to get themselves trained.

PROVIDENT FUND

The ins and outs of Seafarers Provident Fund, Nominations and Withdrawal are made known here. Members will learn how to track their account, where to go for assistance and more.

SMS

Members can learn more about the popular Seacare Medical Scheme, namely SMS Singapore and SMS Philippines such as eligibility, benefits, clinics information and procedures.

SOCIAL CALENDAR



April

Housewives' Gathering Session



May

NTUC May Day Outing for the Elderly Residents at Downtown East



June

5D4N Family Outing to Genting Highlands & Kuala Lumpur

July

Durian Trip to West Malaysia

August

Tombola Night



September

Study Grants Presentation

World Maritime Day Celebration



October

Children's Day Party
Deepavali Celebration



November

Hari Raya Celebration

SOS 35th/Seacare 12th Anniversary Dinner

December

Visit to Welfare Home

2006

January

In-House Talk



February

SOS/Seacare Hong Bao Presentation & Lunar New Year Celebration

March

Dialogue Session with General Secretary

2007



SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE...



Every SOS member knows when and where is the best place to devour great food, have fun and win prizes...at the Members' Nite of course!

Held at Club@52 on 25 March, 140 members had a magnificent time toasting one another and helping themselves to the sumptuous dinner. Others took part in the activities happening in various corners of the club or mingled around and chatted with old friends. Karaoke, definitely a hot favourite amongst the members, set the boisterous mood. Club@52 was transformed into one lively spot that night.



Before they bade farewell to the night, all the participants held on to their lucky draw tickets and waited eagerly for the "fortunate" numbers to be announced. Applauding the lucky ones who went home hugging their prizes, the rest were equally satisfied with the opportunity for the night of relaxation. It would be their turn to win the next time, they said.



CONDOLENCES

SOS conveys its deepest condolences to the family of Mr Foo Chee Juan who passed away on 22 March 2006.

HOUNDING FOR A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!



Tossing the good luck “Yu Sheng” (raw fish – a Chinese delicacy) high into the air, calls of prosperity, good health and well wishes rang loud and clear. So much so that the ruckus of the heavy downpour and the claps of thunder were drowned out!

Indeed, it was pouring, but the storm did little to dampen the spirits of the 120 senior citizens from the Jalan Kukoh RC Zone C who were invited to be our distinguished guests at the Seacare Lunar New Year Celebration. With the old folks turning up in droves, Seacare played host to a full house on 10 February 2006.

A long-standing practice with the residents of the Jalan Kukoh estate since 2002, Chairman of Seacare Co-operative Mr Leow Ching Chuan, had said then that he intended to make this kind of gathering the beginning of a new tradition. Four years later, this annual tradition is still going strong and showing no signs of abating.

Said Mr Leow: “Seacare fully subscribes to the social objective of caring for and sharing with Singaporeans who are in need of help. This is the opportunity to share the joy of celebrating the Lunar New Year with the senior citizens and spreading some cheer. Their past contributions to the Singapore community must be remembered.”

Seacare’s goodwill materialised in the form of “Hong Bao” and goodie bags containing food items sponsored by Seacare for each senior citizen. The guests also sat through a delectable eight-course lunch, and had the opportunity to not only “lo hei”, but chomped through delicacies such as shark’s fins, prawns, fish and more. Entertained and serenaded with popular hits and performances, the old folks clapped and sang along.



“Seacare fully subscribes to the social objective of caring for and sharing with Singaporeans who are in need of help. This is the opportunity to share the joy of celebrating the Lunar New Year with the senior citizens and spreading some cheer. Their past contributions to the Singapore community must be remembered.”

LEOW CHING CHUAN IN CENTRAL CO-OPERATIVE FUND COMMITTEE



Seacare Chairman Mr Leow Ching Chuan has been appointed by Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, as a member of the Central Co-operative Fund Committee.

The Committee, headed by Mr S Chandra Das, has been appointed for a period of three years with effect from 1 March 2006.

Central Co-operative Fund Committee

Chairman Dr S Chandra Das

Members Mr Seah Kian Peng
Mr William Yap
Mr Lee Chee Chiew
Mr Leow Ching Chuan



Beaming brightly, 75-year-old Mr Samson Low said, "It is very heartening to know of the respect that Seacare has towards old folks like me. Not only do they keep us in mind, they also try to bring cheer and liveliness through various measures. For that, I thank them."



The string of good news continued when 20 "auspicious" numbers were drawn and the lucky participants walked away with a \$50 NTUC Voucher each, which they received from Deputy Chairman of Seacare Co-operative, Mr Lee Van Chong.



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Sixty-five year old Madam Chew summed it up best with her words, "I specially took time off from work to join in the celebration because I don't want to miss out on any Seacare's parties!"

GOVERNING WITH ACCOUNTABILITY



Good corporate governance is not a one-step way, but a multi-pronged approach which can only be reliably implemented with the collective effort of all within the organisation.

At the fore-front, it involves having an effective Board to lead the management, and to control the works of the organisation. From the Chairman to independent directors, the organisation

must remain mindful of the needs of the staff to those of shareholders alike. And lessons from the past are the best teacher, reminded Mr Chan Tee Seng, General Manager of the Corporate Service Division of NTUC Income and Director of Seacare Holdings. Quoting the downfalls of big corporations like Enron and China Aviation Oil, he cautioned against applying bad practices.

Mr Chan was the guest speaker at the Corporate Governance Talk which was held on 1 March 06 at Seacare Multi-Purpose Hall. Attended by the Management Staff of SOS and Seacare, Mr Chan also led them through the dos and don'ts under the code of corporate governance. Rightly so, implementation of desirable remuneration policies and even necessary disclosure of remuneration schemes should be in place. A dependable audit committee is therefore vital. What remains as the key to accountability would be regular, effective and timely communication with the shareholders, said Mr Chan.

Through enhancing corporate performance and accountability whilst taking into account the interests of other stakeholders can certainly enhance long-term shareholder value too. After all, the goal is to have a positively flourishing organisation and to foster, not stifle, entrepreneurship.

THANKS, DAVID SHOO!



Everyone at SOS/Seacare would remember David Shoo as the cheerful and helpful individual who was ready to extend a helping hand whenever one asked for it.

David first joined SOS/Seacare in August 2000 and was the Manager for Seacare Thrift Pte Ltd. Apart from holding profiles such as the Admin Secretary of the SOS Membership & Organising Committee and the Member of the SOS Publication Committee, he also held the position of Manager for Seacare Foundation, administering the Seacare Medical Scheme which was launched in March 2005.

David's last day with SOS and Seacare was 31 March 2006 and SOS/Seacare organised an appreciation dinner for him on 29 March, which was hosted by Mr Leow Ching Chuan, Chairman of Seacare, Ordinary EXCO members and SOS staff. He was toasted to and presented with a thank you gift for his valuable contributions all these years.



Said David: "I have mixed feelings about leaving SOS/Seacare. Having spent close to six years here, I have long treated this place as my second home. I have gained much experience and learnt a lot during this period. I must say that I am a better person now than when I first joined this organisation.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the management team for their dynamic and quality leadership. I wish to specifically mention my gratitude to both Mr Leow and Mr Kam for giving me countless opportunities and guidance; and most importantly the trust they have in me to handle various tasks and responsibilities. At the same time, I would also like to thank all my friendly colleagues for extending their helping hands, co-operation and support all this while.

I wish both SOS and Seacare Group of Companies, together with its staff, all the best. May it continue to scale greater heights in their respective industries and achieve stronger growth."

We wish David all the best in his future endeavours.

"I have mixed feelings about leaving SOS/Seacare. Having spent close to six years here, I have long treated this place as my second home. I have gained much experience and learnt a lot during this period. I must say that I am a better person now than when I first joined this organisation."

DANIEL TAN

TAKES ON MORE RESPONSIBILITIES



Having joined the big family of SOS in October 2004, Daniel Tan, IR Executive, has been actively working with the rest of the SOS team on various industrial relations matters and going on ship visits.

With effect from March 2006, he was promoted to Assistant Manager for Industrial Relations and he is responsible for overseeing the Seafarers Provident Fund Scheme, Seacare Medical Scheme and SOS Membership matters. He was also appointed as the Admin Secretary for Membership & Organising Committee, and a member of the Publication & Corporate Development Committee with effect from 1 April 2006.

SEACARE MANPOWER WELL-POISED TO HELP NTUC MEETS TARGET OF 1 MILLION



A moment to be proud of: Mr Selvarajah receiving his trophy from the Guest-of-Honour, Mr Seng Han Thong.

It seemed hardly possible to recruit 1,000 new members by one's own effort, but 53 year old Mr V M Selvarajah has achieved the feat, and three times over at that! For the year 2005, he single-handedly roped in 3,019 members.

He was applauded and cheered on by the crowd at the annual Seacare/NTUC Union Membership Recruitment Award Presentation, which was organised by Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd to recognise the contribution of the recruiters. The event was held on 15 February 2006 at the Seacare Multi-Purpose Hall. Guest-of-Honour Mr Seng Han Thong, NTUC Assistant Secretary-General and MP for Ang Mo Kio GRC was pleased to hear of the performance of Seacare recruiters.

On Mr V M Selvarajah, Mr Seng praised: "If there are a hundred of you, NTUC will be able to accomplish the target of 1 million

members within five years!" He was referring to one of the six core priorities of 2006 recently unveiled under the NTUC Workplans. The NTUC Membership Department (MED) aims to hit the one million membership mark by 2015. In order to do so, an average of 55,000 members must be recruited every year. For the year 2005, Seacare Manpower recruiters signed up a total of 25,909 new members. Since October 2001, Seacare Manpower has begun actively recruiting members for NTUC. To date, some 110,354 individuals have become union members

because of this dedicated team of recruiters.

In his off-the-cuff speech, Mr Seng also thanked Seacare for building up a team of recruiters with the winning combination, are well-trained and sufficiently motivated. "Seacare Manpower has always worked closely with the NTUC Organising Department, be it producing new sales kit or training programmes. Seacare has been instrumental in helping NTUC to recruit new members and I thank you and your recruiters for the committed effort. I hope the sense of achievement and satisfaction will further spur you on."

In addition to coming in tops in membership recruitment, Mr Selvarajah also swept away the Best Progress Recruiter Award. In 2004, he recruited 863 members. Making a staggering 250% improvement, it is little wonder everybody wanted to know his "secret formula".

"The only "secret" is probably being lucky. For everything else, it is actually clear as the day. To me, having good communication skills is a prerequisite; knowing how to woo the potential member is a necessity; and firm product knowledge is a must. How can you convince someone else if you aren't convinced yourself?" Mr Selvarajah shared. He is able to speak three languages and various dialects such as Teochew and Hokkien, which he believes enables him to reach out to a wider mass. He counts on himself being able to "read" the mind of the other person.

"If there are a hundred of you, NTUC will be able to accomplish the target of 1 million members within five years."

Mr Seng Han Thong, NTUC Assistant Secretary-General and MP for Ang Mo Kio GRC





“You must be sharp to know what would be more applicable for him. Different individuals have different interests and needs, so accessing what makes him tick helps tremendously. For instance, a yuppie is likely to be more interested in the range of recreational activities available.”

Wise advice dished out by a well-deserving champion. For his feat, he was rewarded with a Crystal trophy and a Rado wrist-watch. For making the best progress, he walked away with another Crystal trophy. And this year, Mr Chandrasegaran and Ms Kanagamani tied at the second spot, pulling in 2,687 new members each. They were rewarded with a crystal trophy and a 22K gold necklace.

At the award presentation, Seacare Manpower also acknowledged the contribution of another important group – seven recruiters who are part of the team that has been faithfully recruiting for Seacare Manpower for two years. They are:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Mr Gan Yok Yan | 5. Mr Mohamad Darin Ibrahim |
| 2. Mr P T Palaniyandi | 6. Ms Dancy Koh Geok Wee |
| 3. Mdm Chan Khar Heok | 7. Ms Grace Ong Siew Moey |
| 4. Ms Sung Seoh Ing | |

Following the end of the presentation, everyone adjourned to a buffet dinner hosted at Club@52. A lucky draw was conducted where 30 recruiters got lucky and walked away with prizes ranging from home appliances like Hi-Fi systems, electric oven and more. The top prize was a 21” Flat-screen television.



I certainly have put in more effort last year, I sacrificed my family time, all because I really wanted to be in the top three line-up! Now that I have the opportunity to accept this trophy from the Minister, I feel really proud. I’m sure my family would be too! I will definitely set myself a higher target this year and hopefully break my own record!

- Forty-seven year old Mr Chandrasegaran M, who tied at the second spot with Ms Kanagamani. Dedicating his win to his family, the determined Mr Chandra resolved to try harder for the next awards!

“Being a recruiter for the past three years has taught me a lot. Last year, due to other commitments, I chose to work part-time instead. It’s comforting to know that I still roped in 2,687 members despite recruiting for only three days a week!”

First runner-up Ms Kanagamani jokes about how it could get too lonely at the top sometimes and not “defending” her championship anymore.



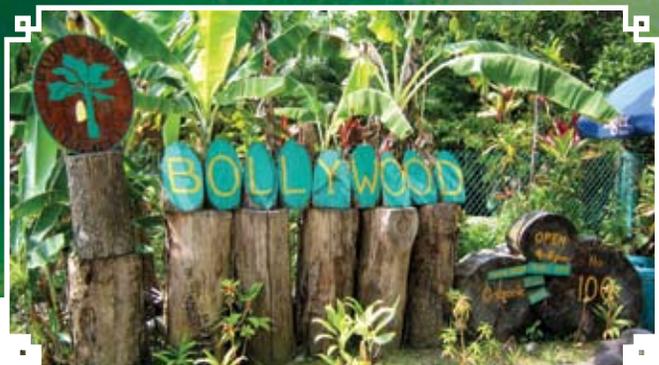
“Knowing what to sell to the member makes a lot of difference. Potential members are keen to find out more when they hear something that interest them, and that’s how I grab the opportunity!”

(Left) Ms Seah Yu Li speaks of the strategy she subscribes to.

“Recruiting new members can be rather competitive since we are all targeting almost the same pool, but having said that, the pool is still big enough. We just do our best and push on!”

(Right) Ms Dancy Koh shares some difficulties that she had faced.

TAS GO BACK TO SCHOOL... AND NATURE!



It was certainly not all fun and sightseeing. More importantly, this field trip created an excellent opportunity for TAs to learn hands-on what necessary details to look out for, and equipped them with the right know-how in assisting teachers to manage the students and logistics during excursions.

The field trip to the Kranji Countryside was the last of a five-day course organised by Seacare Manpower. Taking place over five Saturdays, the participants sat through topics such as techniques in classroom management to facilitate learning and assisting the teachers in group work activities, project work and field trip planning. The structure of the curriculum was specially commissioned by Seacare Manpower and reflects a tripartite brain-child of Seacare, Ministry of Education and the Teacher Assistants.

There's no better way to learn than to go back to the basics, or rather, go back to nature. This is what a group of Teacher Assistants or Teacher-Aides (TAs) who are recruited and trained by Seacare Manpower Services Pte Ltd found out.

Sixteen TAs set out for Kranji Countryside on a one-day field trip on 25 March 2006 as part of the educational process which certainly proved to be an eye-opening experience.

They made five stopovers, each site situated within the folds of Mother Nature and yet distinctively unique. They were at Hays Dairy Farm to learn about goat farming and milk production. They also went on to Khai Seng Fish Farm to learn about the variety of freshwater fish and marine seafood products in Singapore, and the Jurong Frog Farm which breeds different types of frogs.



“At Seacare Manpower, we are not just about recruiting TAs and matching them to schools. Whether it is acquiring knowledge or skills, we believe in empowering our TAs by training them to

be the best that they can be, so that they are effective and competent. We will review the curriculum whenever necessary to ensure that our Teacher Assistants stay ahead. That is how we add value.”

Said Mr Lee Van Chong
Managing Director, Seacare Manpower

Seacare Manpower had also made arrangements for the participants to find out more about how improvements in technology are incorporated into what some deemed as “traditional” agriculture. At Aerogreen Technology, the farm uses aeroponic technology to grow vegetables, while Bollywood Veggies cultivates organic delights such as organic plants for consumption. Along the way, the TAs asked multitudes of questions and were confident that their new-found knowledge would come in handy in the classroom.



XINNET EDUCATION HOSTS ONE WEEK EDUCATION AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE



Learning curves are usually steep, but the key thrusts would include tapping on others' experience and following that, adapting and adopting what would be suitable.

With that in mind, Xinnet Education Centre, which is a joint partnership between Seacare Education Pte Ltd and Sino-Sing Pte Ltd; and the China National Centre for Bilingual Learning Research (中国全国双语学习研究中心) made arrangements for a group of educators and students to come to Singapore for a week of education cum cultural exchange.

The group of 350 principals, teachers and students, hailing from six cities in China, was in Singapore from 7 February to 10 February 2006. In a collaborative effort with two secondary and four primary schools, the guests were shown great hospitality during their visit. Nan Chiau High School hosted the visitors from Beijing Foreign Language Experimental School (北京海淀外语实验学校); Christchurch Secondary School hosted the company from Dalian Kai Fa District Number Seven Secondary School (辽宁省大连市开发区第七中学); Jurong Primary School hosted the participants from Xi'an Gao Xin International School (陕西省西安市高新国际学校) and Bedok Green Primary School hosted those from Hubei Yu Cai Number Two Primary School (湖北省武汉市育才第二小学寄宿学校). They also visited the Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

Having witnessed the benefits of possessing dual languages and the growing influence of the English Language around the world, they were keen to learn more about the bilingual education system in Singapore. In particular, they were pleased to have the opportunity to interact with local teachers and students.

To make the guests feel at home, Nan Chiau High School organised a concert in their school hall on 8 February. In return, the guests thrilled Singaporeans when they put up a choir performance at the Singapore Lunar New Year River Hong Bao Show.

This collective effort between Xinnet and the China National Centre is a testament of the common vision shared by both organisations to not only introduce bilingualism to schools in China, but also to integrate bilingualism into their way of life. This co-operation and partnership has definitely heightened ties between both parties.



XINNET LAUNCHES

BILINGUAL PRESCHOOL TEACHER TRAINING CENTRE IN TIANJIN



To meet the increasing demand for bilingual teachers in China, Xinnet Education Centre got into action and met the need headon.

Xinnet tailor-made a training programme on “How to Teach English in Preschools” and together with the Tianjin Cathay Future Preschool Group, officially launched the Bilingual Preschool Teacher Training Centre in Tianjin on 11 March 2006.

The project is headed by Professor Ren Kai from the Tianjin Education, Science & Research Institute (天津教育科学研究院). The Secretary-General of Tianjin Huaxia Weilai Foundation (天津华夏未来基金会) was invited to grace the auspicious event which was also attended by principals and teachers from the Tianjin Cathay Future Preschool Group.

The response was encouraging as more than 50 trainees who had no prior knowledge or experience in preschool teaching signed up for the course.



PRESCHOOLERS LEARN AND SHINE IN SINGAPORE

In another collaboration between Xinnet Education and the Tianjin Cathay Future Preschool Group, 37 preschool children, led by seven teachers and principal from the Group arrived in Singapore on 25 March 2006 for a six-day education cum cultural exchange.

The objectives of the exchange were to introduce Singapore's multi-cultural society, provide exposure regarding Singapore's bilingual education system to our China visitors and at the same time, sow seeds of friendship amongst the children of both countries.

Preschoolers from the PCF Teck Ghee Education Centre played host and interacted with the visiting children. The exchange programme saw the young ones participating in a series of programmes such as Arts, Music, Chinese Language and Computer sessions and outdoor activities that encouraged teamwork.

Our young guests even performed to a packed hall of nearly 1,000 strong crowd in the Ikeda Auditorium at the Singapore Soka Association on 26 March. The concert, entitled Chinese Arts Bloom @ Soka provided the opportunity for the young visitors to showcase their talents. Calling themselves "The Little Lark Troupe", the preschoolers from the Tianjin Cathay Future Preschool Group rendered songs, mass dance, medley, solo dance and songs and even sang "Singapura", much to the amazement of the crowd. But the highlight was the grand finale. Children from the audience were invited to go on stage and together with our visitors, they sang and danced to the song "Love is in the World".

"The Little Lark Troupe" also had no qualms about performing at the Seacare Building for the PCF children and Seacare staff as a gesture of appreciation on 28 March.

Said Ms Chua Lay Mui, Xinnet Education's General Manager, "Peace and friendship are our common goals, and education and culture are a means towards peace. Through such education and cultural exchanges, we hope to foster friendship and thus establish firmer ties and better understanding."



During their stay in Singapore, the group put up at Downtown East, Pasir Ris. They dropped by various places of interest such as the National Orchid Garden where they got a glimpse of the heritage of Singapore. Their sightseeing tour also took them to the Singapore Botanic Garden, Singapore Zoo, Esplanade, Merlion Park and Sentosa.

After the conclusion of the fruitful trip, Xinnet Education and its partners will be exploring more avenues of cooperation and delving into other possible means of enriching their teachers and students alike.

“Peace and friendship are our common goals, and education and culture are a means towards peace. Through such education and cultural exchanges, we hope to foster friendship and thus establish firmer ties and better understanding.”

*Ms Chua Lay Mui,
General Manager,
Xinnet Education*



MEETING YOUR

PARTY NEEDS

From celebrations like Lunar New Year parties to private functions, Club@52 can be transformed to suit every event and function needs. Whether you are treating your special guests to a quiet formal dinner or having a loud birthday bash, the patron-centric Club can be converted to suit the occasion. Our experienced planners can help you in your preparation in logistics, food and beverages and entertainment.

We do the planning, You do the partying!

For enquiries and bookings,
please contact Mr David Sim at:
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Email: eplace@seacare.com.sg

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