



FRIENDS

an E-newsletter for Friends of SGH volunteers



Singapore
General Hospital
SingHealth

Dear Friends of SGH,

Thank you for your comments on the first E-newsletter, FRIENDS. As promised, this issue is packed with events, which took place from July to September. What is even more gratifying is the number of volunteers who have come forward to contribute articles for the issue. Keep the stories coming.

Being a FOSGH is not all work and no play. In this issue, you will read about the fun things we do together during the school holidays. And Don't forget to mark your calendar for the forthcoming FOSGH Volunteer Appreciation Party on 26 Nov 04. Read about it on Page 5. □

...from the editorial team

ARTS FOR HEALTH



Old classical hits for patients with NUS orchestra

On 26 July 04, Arts for Health was held at the SGH Quad under the star-lit evening sky and beautiful weather. The National University of Singapore took centre stage this month with its Harmonica Band and Erhu Section of the Chinese Orchestra performing various medleys of old time favorites in both cannon as well as in solo, much to our patients' delight. Favorites such as 'The Moon represents my heart' and 'La Cumparsita' drew even the patients who remained in the wards and watched the programme from the windows.

A member of the Erhu section remarked that it was exciting preparing to perform in an open-air environment in a hospital for patients, because they have always been working on projects that required concert halls and auditoriums. This was a fulfilling and new experience for them, and they would be delighted to come back anytime soon. □

Precocious children dazzle patients with their slick moves

8 - 11 years old children from Wellington Primary School dazzle SGH patients with their slick Broadway moves as they performed a variety of songs and dance to entertain patients at the Arts for Health event on 30 Jul 04. The children dressed in the national costume to symbolize the four races also performed a medley of popular songs to commemorate the national day.

Our young performers had some of our volunteers and patients clapping to the rhythm with their pitch perfect choir singing. Not to be outdone, the Chinese orchestra performed old classical hits to the surprise of our older patients. So impressed were we by the prodigal talents that we have invited them back to perform again in July next year. □

By Jessica Quah

Do you like to sing, dance or play a musical instrument? The FOSGH welcomes you to be part of the Arts for Health programme. The monthly concert aims to bring joy and enliven patients' stay in the hospital. The 45-minute performance is held every last Friday of the month in SGH. We are looking for performers to fill the slots for next year's Arts for Health. So hurry now and register your interest. Email us at gclmmn@sgh.com.sg.

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Arts therapy – a boon for stroke patients



Ben, a volunteer from Pioneer JC showing off the handiworks of his new found friend

The FOSGH Art & Craft programme was officially launched on 21 February 2004. Since then, more than 35 volunteers from the Church of Praise and Pioneer Junior College have participated in the programme involving 169 patients and their families. The programme is conducted every Saturday afternoon from 3pm - 5pm at Ward 64 (Rehabilitation Medicine patients).

Patients in the programme suffer from myriad conditions such as strokes, amputations, spinal injuries and other conditions. Many require encouragement as they suffer from paralysis and loss of bodily function, which require rehabilitation, and changes in their lifestyle. They are often depressed, grieved and many have low self-esteem and confidence. They struggle to



Volunteers enjoying themselves at a training workshop



A volunteer assisting a patient in the painting of pasta for decorating a picture frame

cope with their loss of physical independence and financial difficulties.

The environment we face every Saturday may seem bleak but as volunteers we feel privileged to play a part in the patients' healing process. We saw how the art and craft activities have lifted up patients' spirits and given them a sense of confidence and hope. These sessions are therapeutic and the patients are happy to prepare the cards, flowers, dolls and other crafts. Patients would also proudly display the masterpieces either at their bedsides or present them to nurses and family members. The patients' enthusiastic responses have rubbed on. We have now extended the programme beyond Ward 64 to patients and caregivers from other wards.

The weekly arts and craft sessions has given us volunteers an opportunity to meet the social needs of the community. "We are able to demonstrate care, concern and compassion besides love and generosity. These sessions have helped us to view life in a different perspective and we are more grateful for what we have and not to take health for granted. As we make time to interact with the patients, it has certainly lifted our spirits and we are grateful that we can help patients on their road to recovery. The smiles of recognition that greet us are heart warming indeed" said Ms Evangeline Boo, one of the regular volunteer.

"Their perseverance and cheerfulness in carrying out the activities in spite of injuries is uplifting and a source of inspiration to all of us" said Team leader Jennie Tan.

Although, the time spent each Saturday is short, she hopes that their small contributions have helped to make a difference and contribute to the well being of members of the community. □

By Pang Yang Gek

WATCH OUR FOR OUR FEATURE ON ANOTHER NEW FOSGH PROGRAMME - MUSIC THERAPY IN THE THIRD ISSUE OF FRIENDS!

Volunteers Needed for Art & Craft Programme

If you have a flair for arts and crafts, and are keen to interact with patients on a one-to-one basis, we welcome you to join our art and craft programme. Training will be provided.

Time:
Every Saturday,
3pm to 4pm

Commitment :
At least twice a month for a minimum of 3 months

Please contact
yanggek@churchofpraise.org.sg
for more information.



A volunteer assisting patient in making carnation flowers from tissue paper.



A patient working on a picture frame

Fund raising for **Presidents' Challenge**



The rain did not dampen the spirit of San San, Michael and Mr Koh who raised more than \$450 from the sale of goods at the annual Nurses Day Bazaar on 27 Jul 04. This is the second time that FOSGH has taken part in the Nurses Day Bazaar and the Assistant Director, Nursing (Mdm Kaldip Kaur) has invited us back to participate in next year's programme.

More than 60 Scrumpee bears were sold at the FOSGH retail cart, raising a further \$900 for the 54 beneficiaries under this year's President's Challenge. □

FOSGH Retail Cart goes "Global"



We took FOSGH Retail Cart to the heartland on 8 Aug 04. SGH was invited by community partner, Henderson CC to participate in its National Day Carnival. FOSGH, comprising of Junji, Leah, Lai Keng, Mr Koh and Wei Fern set up a stall to raise funds for the poor residents of Henderson CC. Although, we did not manage to sell many items to contribute to the Henderson Welfare fund, it was a good exposure for the FOSGH. We had lots of fun mingling with the residents and singing along with them the familiar national songs. It was indeed a meaningful and fun way of celebrating our nation's birthday. □



Farewell Juni

Juni Kumari Gurung, one of FOSGH veteran is leaving Singapore for UK to do a degree in Engineering. FOSGH hosted a farewell dinner and asked for her thoughts on FOSGH. "Working as a FOSGH for the last 4 years has been a fulfilling experience for me. I made so many friends here and learnt a lot about organising and running programmes. Ultimately, the smile on the patients face is enough reward. I hope after my studies I'll be able to rejoin the programme and continue from where I stopped".

Thanks Junji for volunteering with SGH. We wish you well as you pursue your studies and we hope to welcome you back to the family. We will certainly miss you!



HAVE - A - BREAK

Our first overseas outing to **Kukop**



It's not all work and no play for FOSGH. Eighteen volunteers and friends embarked on our first overseas outing to Kukop Island off Johore Bahru on 26 June 2004. After stocking up on traditional tidbits from a cottage factory, we proceeded to the jetty-cum-restaurant for a sumptuous seafood lunch. The ensuing tour of a floating fish farm was unique indeed, and the delicious 'keropok' we lugged back a most satisfying souvenir.



Our next stop was an extremely fruitful one. Besides viewing an assortment of trees at the orchard, we also stuffed ourselves on platters of tropical fruits - including pineapples, jumbo fruits, as well as some of the sweetest jackfruit ever to cross our palate.

The bargains available at Giant Hypermart in Johore Bahru (our next destination) were the highlight of the day for many, if the sudden profusion of shopping bags in the coach was anything to go by! Finally, we ended the trip on a delectable note with another seafood dinner and an amiable drive back home. Watch out for the next outing with our FOSGH! □

By Teresa Wong

Just Keep Walking!

Nothing beats the therapeutic value of nature as ten Friends of SGH and their families found out on Saturday, 12 June 04.

The ten had taken their usual cushy Saturday afternoon off to soak up the golden rays of the sweltering afternoon sun and to take in the sights and sounds of nature as Ms Tan Hwee Ping, Manager of Carelink, SGH brought them round Bukit Timah Nature Reserve on a hike.

"I haven't exercised in over six months and my muscles are going to ache tomorrow," remarked Ms Priscilla Lim, one of the participants, as she trudged over varicose vein-like roots and half-a-metre high steps on a path leading through Singapore's oldest forest.



Well ache or not, uneven terrain and mischievous monkeys certainly did not deter any of the participants from reaching the summit in this outing open to all wearing the green vest. All ten participants made new friends with everyone else who attended the two-hour hike filled with mysterious caves, Sereya trees, squirrels and other flora and fauna.

At the end of the entire activity, some of the participants were asking for suggestions on where to hike on the next outing.

We certainly can't wait! □

By Leonard Ng Wei Tat



November is Volunteer Appreciation month and what better way to say "thank you" to all volunteers than to throw a big party on 26 Nov 04. The year-end party is back and this time it is bigger and better. Get ready to be thrilled by the Egyptian belly dancers and a band from Music for Good to rock the night away.

Attractive door gifts for all volunteers and scrumptious food await all volunteers so mark the date 26 Nov 04 on your calendar and look out for our E-invitation. Because you deserve it! □

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