



Waiting game over; Hall 3 moves on

Students gave up waiting and moved into new hall first; proposed rates likely to be accepted

**Jamie Lee &
Justin Zhuang**

HALL 3 president, Lim Joo Tien, was in the midst of packing his bags when Chronicle spoke to him on Hari Raya Haji.

Like the other residents of Hall 3, he was finally joining the estimated 200 residents who have already moved over the new hall.

Hall 3 residents were slated to move to the new hall during last year's holiday, but many delayed their move after SAO announced that they would pay more than they expected.

Instead of the indicative rates at \$200 and \$180 for single and double rooms, residents were told that they would have to pay \$350 and \$240 for the new halls situated next to NIE.

Initially, most residents waited. In an email sent to his residents on 7 January, Lim wrote that the hall's JCRC was still discussing the rates with SAO, and told his residents to stay on in a united spirit while they tried to negotiate for a better rate.

In his proposal, Lim requested fees of \$200 and \$170 for a single and double room and asked for a staggered increase in hall fees after this academic year, starting at \$250 and \$200.

However, Lim said that more residents were slowly trickling over to the new hall, especially after SAO announced that for this semester, residents would be charged the concessionary rates of \$240 and \$180.

The Hall 3 JCRC also realised that there was little reason for the residents to continue waiting, since the decision was likely to come in only in February.

Miss Angela Shang, Senior Assistant Director (Student Accommodations) at SAO indicated that his proposed rates stood a good chance of being accepted by the University Council, which is considering the rates.

The JCRC knew that the Hall Office was having difficulty

maintaining both the old and new hall. At the same time, the managing committee did not want to hinder plans to demolish the building to make way for the new School of Physical & Mathematical Sciences.

However, when asked about how much their rooms are, residents simply shrugged.

Seth Teo, 22, was one resident who did not know how much he will eventually pay. He stayed to "tag along", and

moved when his friends did so. "No choice, even the president is moving," said the second-year Bioscience student.

The move appears to be a short-term appeasement. If the proposal is rejected, foreign and local students alike plan to move to other halls.

"If I've to pay more, then it's better move to another hall, where the price is more suitable (for me)," said Tan Kuang Ho, 23, a second-year MAE student.

The saga has attracted the attention of the national media and even a political party.

Dr. Chee Soon Juan, the

Secretary-General of the Singapore Democratic Party issued a media release supporting Hall 3 residents' "protest" against the new fee hike. He saluted the students on taking a principled stand and daring to "protest".

In response, Lim said he did not want the issue to be politicised: "Besides, we're not protesting, we're just waiting. We sent out the proposal and told SAO we will stay while waiting for the results so SAO knew that we're staying."

SAO agreed and were glad that Hall 3 residents had moved. Miss Shang said: "It's good that they are moving, so that things

can get moving." She also said there was no delay in the plans to demolish the old hall.

The whole episode had nevertheless dampened residents' initial enthusiasm for the new hall. Teo said: "There were too many things happening such that you become numb, there's no longer any excitement."

Still, Lim remained optimistic. He said: "It was a big headache, but the JCRC has been elected to voice out their concerns. If the residents feel that it is unfair, we should let the university know. I hope that we can come to a compromise, and everything can close nicely."

When a cat crossed the road on campus...



The Student Union van was badly damaged after it tumbled down the slopes of Yunnan Gardens on Wednesday. The student driver from CAC was hurt after swerving to avoid a stray cat that had dashed across the road. More details on page 2. PHOTO | YEOH KEAT WEI



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Student hurt in campus crash

Jamie Lee & Daniel Ong

AN ACT of kindness turned ugly for a student who tried to save an animal's life.

Last Wednesday, Ng Wee Kiat, 24, a Cultural Activities Club (CAC) member involved in the Nanyang Arts Festival, lost control of the Student Union van after he tried to avoid a stray cat that had dashed out onto the road.

Ng, the logistics officer of the Festival, had booked the van that day to prepare for the event.

He was on his way to pick up the project director of the festival, Dennis Chen, 20, from his hall when the accident occurred.

According to the President of CAC Lawrence Poh, the driver Ng was driving the van to Hall 4 when a cat suddenly dashed into his path.

Chen, a first-year Business student was the first contacted by Ng and first to arrive at the scene, saw Ng leaning against the van for support.

He said that Ng was visibly shaken. "Already on the phone, his voice was soft and shaky. He told me

the location but didn't tell me much," he said.

Ng was able to tell him that he was fine and his injuries were not serious.

However, Ng mostly kept silent as Poh and the campus security warden joined them later.

"He's a loud person, usually outspoken at CAC meetings. This time, he was just quiet," Chen said.

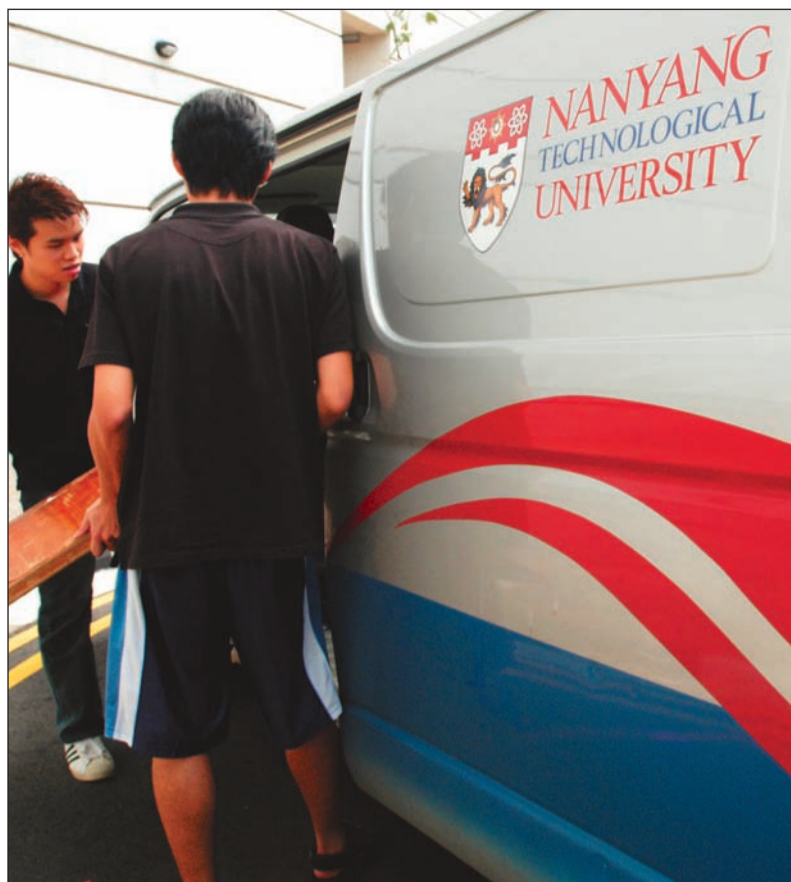
Ng declined to comment on the accident. According to Poh, he needed rest to recover from his "state of shock".

"The accident was serious, so it was a good thing that his injuries weren't."

Nanyang Arts Festival Director (CAC), Dennis Chen

Ng told Poh he was driving at the 40kph campus speed limit when he saw the cat.

To avoid it, the second-year Computer Engineering student instinctively swerved left just after the bend that turns into the Centre. The van mounted



Many school clubs used the van to transport bulky items. Now, the accident has put the service on hold. PHOTO | ADELINE ONG

onto the kerb and nearly hit the Innovation Centre's signboard.

Ng said he tried to turn right to avoid the signboard and return to the road. Unfortunately, he lost control of the van and the vehicle headed straight for the slopes of Yunnan Gardens opposite.

He tried to steer left to avoid hitting all trees and road signs as the vehicle rolled down the slope onto Yunnan Gardens.

As a result, the vehicle overturned and landed on the driver

side. Ng managed to call Chen after he got out of the vehicle. The latter quickly alerted the campus security and Poh.

Poh said that they took Ng to the medical centre to clean up his wounds, and then sent him home to rest.

Ng suffered minor cuts on his forearm and on the right side of his scalp.

Chen said that while the driver emerged largely unscathed, the van looked badly damaged.

"The accident was serious, so it was a good thing that his injuries weren't," he said.

Campus Security declined to comment on the accident.

Student Union said that SAO had sent the van to an Independent Damage Assessment Centre (IDAC) to determine and record the amount of damages. Eventually, IDAC will also contact a repair service and the insurance company on Student's Union behalf.

The van is insured by Aviva. The President of Student Union, Tan Sherwe, 23, said: "We're hoping that the bulk of the repair fee will be paid by the insurance company. However, in our agreement with the insurance company, we need to pay about \$500 to them."

Tan said that Ng would have to pay 20 per cent of the damages, while CAC would pay another 20 per cent. The remaining 60 per cent would be covered from the Amenities fees.

The full details and repairs are expected to take two to three weeks, said Tan. Meantime, rental services for the Student Union van are suspended until further notice.

Under normal circumstances, the van is rented out by the Student Union to clubs and societies to help with events. To hire the van, students need a valid driving licence.

Road mileage, inclusive of fuel, is charged at S\$0.20 per kilometre.

Individual bookings are not allowed and the van is only for use in Singapore.

News in a Flash

Overwhelming sell orders forced Tokyo's stock markets to suspend trading earlier last Thursday. Investors were responding to the arrest of Takafumi Horie, founder and chairman of the company **Livedoor**, who was suspected of breaking the law.

North Korean President Kim Jong Il is believed to be in Beijing to meet Chinese leaders. This signals a possible development in **nuclear talks** among Pyongyang and other major nations.

Iran's plans to develop its nuclear programme has attracted attention from world leaders. The US wants the United Nations to impose sanctions through the Security Council, but the United Kingdom and France would rather raise the issue through the International Atomic Energy Agency, a nuclear watchdog agency in the UN.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon suffered a second stroke. He underwent major surgery and remains unconscious. A complete recovery is unlikely due to the extent of the bleeding.

Brokeback Mountain, a film by **Lee Ang**, won four major awards in the **Golden Globes**, including Best Director and Best Screenplay.

A Singapore skydiver died in Perth after his reserve parachute failed to open. Investigations by Western Australian police will focus on Singapore, as the parachutes were packed here.

NS men will face harsher penalties if they skip NS drafting. The penalties include fines of up to \$10,000, double the current maximum, and a jail term. The announcement came after a Singaporean pianist received just a \$3,000 fine when he dodged NS.

Hall presidents oppose fee rise

Jamie Lee
News Editor

ALL Hall presidents, together with the SAO, have come up with a counter-proposal to the raise in hall rates.

Although the presidents declined to reveal the proposed figures, the spokesperson for the presidents, Klenn Chong, 24, President of Hall 15, said that the proposal suggests a staggered increase, rather than a sudden and substantial one-time raise as announced by SAO.

Previously, SAO said that hall rental rates for single rooms will rise to as much as \$260 from an average rate of \$175 in July.

Rates for double rooms in Hall 4, 5 and 6 will also rise from \$155 to \$180, while new halls 3 and 16 will cost \$240 and \$360 for double and single rooms respectively.

The proposal was sent to the University Council for approval two weeks ago. The Council, which is in-charge of this matter, will inform the students of the decision in middle of February at the earliest.

Chong said: "I believe the chances of approval stands at 70 per cent, since this is a proposal discussed between SAO and the hall presidents."

He added that SAO had provided feedback from the University Council on creating a more appropriate proposal.

Student Union supports

Also, a joint statement by the presidents dated 17 Dec was sent to SAO and all hall residents last week.

Inside, the presidents clarified that they did not agree to the increase in fees at the preliminary discussion with the school on 24 October. During that meeting, the presidents had disagreed with the rise, because SAO had not explained the reasons behind the increase.

SAO has since cited reasons such as future maintenance costs, but presidents still want the prices to be lowered.

In the statement, the presidents wrote that they were met with accusations that they had agreed to the arrangement.

Chong said they understood residents' disappointment, and this was why the joint statement was released to all residents to clear the misunderstanding.

"We want to raise awareness among the residents that we are voicing their disappointments for them, to show that we're caring for them," he added.

The Student Union has also pledged its support to the proposal, in particular to the proposed staggered increase.

Tan Sherwe, 23, President of the Student Union, said that the union is officially against the fee hike. He added that he had spoken to SAO during the Alumni Dinner, and relayed the feedback to the various JCRCs.

Chong said: "Presidents did approach the Union but Sherwe felt that it was more appropriate for the JCRCs to handle the situation, since he believed that JCRCs played a more important role in this issue."

"But the Student Union is definitely on our side and will help us. After all, it still is governing the whole student body."

Before the stroke of midnight



PHOTO | HAZE KANG TEXT | LEE KAI YING

LIKE Cinderella, Fam Lili, 21, held everyone's gaze as she made her ceremonial walk as NTU's new beauty queen.

The third-year business student was crowned the winner of Glass Slippers, the university's beauty pageant 2006.

She also walked away with the titles of Miss Photogenic and Miss Healthy Glow.

She was clearly the most popular contestant as she drew the loudest cheers from the audience during the introductory segment.

First runner-up was Miss Mikeller Ho, 21, a third-year Bioscience student.

Regine Tang, 21, a second-year Civil and Environmental engineering student came in third.

Ho was also named Miss Stylish while the latter, Miss Elegance and Miss Beautiful Skin.

The biggest ever NTU pageant took place on 12 January at the Nanyang Auditorium.

Bridging *ulu* NTU to a new haven

| Melissa Lee

YOU cannot bring NTU to town, but you can certainly bring the town to NTU. Come 2008, a new bridge will connect us to a shopping mall and a hip neighbourhood centre.

The University Activities Bridge begins near Hall 1, stretches over the PIE, and will lead to a 9,000 sq ft shopping mall in Jurong West, the Housing Development Board (HDB) said.

Another 10-minute walk from this mall would bring one to U-Haven, which is a neighbourhood centre with an area of 70,000 sq ft, roughly the size of a football field.

"U-Haven will be like a mini Holland Village. It'll have bookstores, eateries, tuition centres and a flea market," said HDB's Public Relations Officer Chen Hsin Yeow.

Most students the Nanyang Chronicle spoke to welcomed the changes, and some even felt that it would make NTU a less *ulu* place. *Ulu* means remote in Malay.

"I think this connects NTU to the outside world. It's good for me too so that I need not travel so far from my hall to eat or shop," said Foo Sze Ying, 20, a second-year Materials Science Engineering (MSE) student who is living in Hall 12.

First-year Accountancy student Teo Kok Kiong, 21, agreed it was a good idea, especially for people staying in hall.

"We often organise supper nights but we have to keep track of the time to catch the last bus. If the new place is easily accessible, we can stay out later as we can walk back," he said.

However, some think that with or without the new facilities, NTU remains *ulu*.

"I don't think it'll make a difference. It's the location that makes it *ulu*, not whether there's a mall," said Chris Kng, 23, a third-year Electrical and Electronic Engineering student.

The construction of the bridge should not inconvenience students because the bridge is outside the boundaries of NTU, said the Office of Planning Facilities and Management.

They added that the construction will not affect the existing bridge near Hall 5.

Even before construction works are beginning, students are already thinking of visiting the new mall and U-Haven instead of other malls and food centres in Jurong area.

"Jurong Point is small and I'm very bored of seeing the same stuff over and over again," said Hoon Jing Ling, 19, a first-year Biological Science student.

She added that the new mall would be a refreshing addition to NTU's vicinity.

While the new malls is good news to many students, but not to some retailers in Jurong West area.

On the other hand, Sim Eng Hua, 53, hawker of a noodle stall, felt the new mall and U-Haven would have a significant impact on his business.

"It definitely will affect business because there aren't many people around this area. But I'm not worried about that because my lease here ends in three years."

There are no specific plans for the shopping mall at present as the HDB has yet to call for a tender from the private sector. Students we spoke to, however, already know what they want to see in it.

"I'd like to see places I can relax at, where people can just sit and listen to music," said 20-year-old Zhou Shu Ying, a third-year MSE student.

Others like Hong Kong citizen Chan Wang Yip, 25, a final-year Computer Engineering student said: "It would be nice to have cuisine like Thai or Vietnamese food, which are not sold at canteens, so that international students can feel at home."

With U-Haven, NTU students expect to bid a final farewell to the label, *ulu*.

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Girl power

Roadshow boosts awareness of women's issues among women

Lee Kai Ying
News Editor

FROM *samfus* to power suits, Singaporean women have come a long way. Still, NTU students do not know much about women.

A study done by a group of NTU students showed that most never heard of women's events such as Conversations with Uncommon Women and Women's Day Out, or else felt they had little relevance to their lives. The respondents also had limited grasp on issues concerning women in Singapore, such as gender discrimination at work and women's legislation and rights.

They also found that 97.4 per cent of the respondents have never participated in any event run by a women's organisation.

"Besides our surveys, we found through our focus groups that awareness among young women towards woman's issues are limited to topics like Breast Cancer and AIDS. So we want to let people know where to go when they need help," said group member Tan Keng Hui, 23.

Tan was part of a group of final-year project group from the School of Communication and Information who surveyed 350 people aged between 17 and 35, of which 75% were women.

The findings led them to set up a roadshow to inform young women of the organisations they can turn to for help.

Known as PreDiscovery 120, the roadshow held on 13 Janu-

ary was designed to get youths to participate in International Women's Day (IWD) 2006 celebrations. IWD falls on 8 March every year.

"The showcase of the *samsui* and modern woman represents the shift in women's status and power," said Aaron Yeo, one of the groupmates.

Samsui women were Chinese immigrants in Singapore who worked as female labourers during the early 20th century. They were recognised by their distinctive navy blue outfits and red headgear, which are known as *samfus*.

There were *silat* and *wushu* performances put up by women, posters to inform students about SCWO's services, and a thrift store selling donated goods, from which proceeds goes to the Star Shelter, a temporary refuge for victims of family violence and others in need of protection.

"We want to let people know where to go when they need help."

Tan Keng Hui, 23,
final-year Communication
and Information student

Yeo added that the choice of using sports for the roadshow was firstly, to encourage women to empower themselves by engaging in sports. It was also one of the main activities they planned for the IWD 2006 celebrations.

"Besides engaging women, we also want men to take part

in such activities and understand issues which are important to them, if not now, in the future, because they are part of the community," said Ms Michelle Chan, Manager of the SCWO.

From men to motherhood, the SCWO addresses a wide range of women's issues. This umbrella organisation currently has 55 member groups and reaches 150,000 women from all walks of life. It seeks to coordinate these groups into a national movement.

The roadshow proved to be an eye-opener for many female students.

Yup Yanwen, 20, a second-year Bioscience student, had never heard of the SCWO. "It's good that they are holding this roadshow to raise awareness. It is important for women to be aware of the functions of the organisation so that they know who to turn to when they need help in future," she said.

Third-year Business student Celine Lee, 21, agreed. "Women should be involved in such organisations that benefit them as they help make their lives more enriching," she said.

She added that she is likely to join the organisation in the future.

This year, the SCWO is celebrating International Women's Day (IWD) with a special five-day treasure hunt called Discovery 120 beginning 8 March. Throughout the five days (120 hours), participants can, among other things, join a sporting activity, learn about entrepreneurship and watch a martial art expert in action, all of which will lead them to discover the things women can do in Singapore.

"For this year's IWD, we want to let women discover the different things they can be, hence the name Discovery 120," said Ms Chan.

To take part in the IWD event, visit: www.scwo.org.sg

A new look for edveNTUre

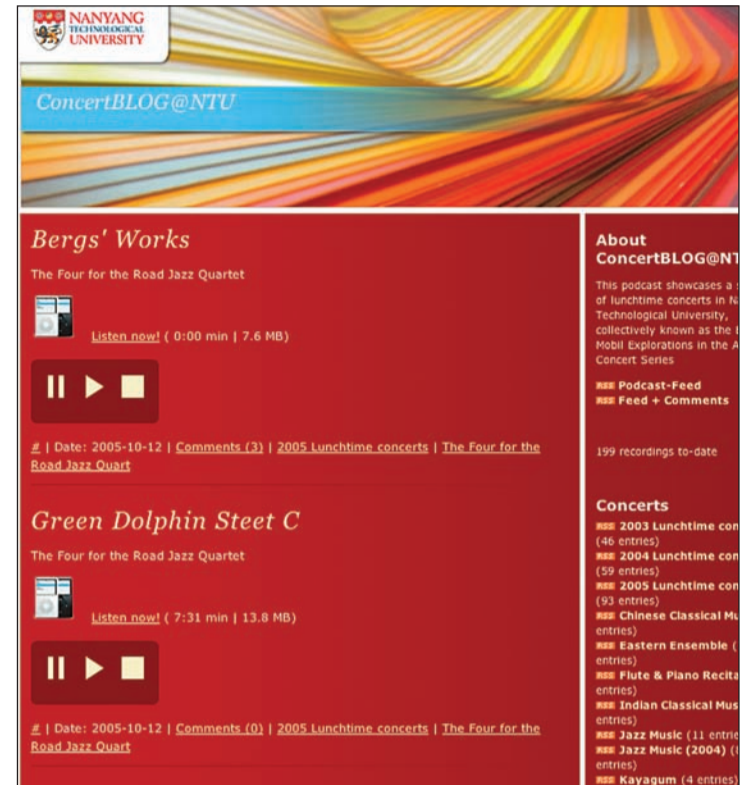


PHOTO | SCREENSHOT

Felda Chay

VISIT the edveNTUre site and you will notice that it looks very different from the one you visited one semester ago.

This is because the Centre for Educational Development (CED), the team behind edveNTUre, has made considerable changes to the website. The result is a more exciting and vibrant site aimed to enhance students' learning experience.

One new feature in the revamped website is ConcertBLOG@NTU, which showcases a series of podcasts of lunchtime concerts in NTU, collectively known as the Exxon-Mobil Explorations in the Arts Concert Series.

Mr Goh Wee Sen is a member of the team behind the new site.

He said: "Since two years ago, I've heard colleagues and students in informal chats saying they wished they could go to the concerts they missed.

"We hope that with the podcasting of the lunchtime concerts, the community here can find and listen to quality audio recordings whenever they wish, wherever they want, and on any device they have," he added.

Apart from the lunchtime concerts, students can soon hear podcasts from their friends.

"The CED will be happy to assemble and collect students' podcast feeds and publish in a page on the edveNTUre front. We will set up a 'Submit your podcast' feature on edveNTUre by the end of January," said Mr Goh.

David Lee, 20, a first-year Communication and Information student added: "I am supportive of this idea. I feel it allows creativity at little or no cost."

There will be no restriction on the genre of music that you can post. However, each podcast feed will be reviewed before they are accepted for publishing.

Besides podcasts, there are also webcasts from Research-Channel, original animated movie tutorials on popular software like Photoshop and Dreamweaver, links to ChannelNTU, as well as Channel NewsAsia.

However, it seems that students are not aware of the new features. Those the Nanyang Chronicle interviewed said they did not know about the revamped edveNTUre.

Lee said, "I only use it to check my school work so I didn't know that it has these new features."

CED is also planning to come up with a photo gallery where students can contribute pictures.

Browsable video archives of NTU related events such as convocations and heritage walks will also be available in future.

"We're driven by the desire to provide a student-centric experiential learning experience for all..We'd love to be seen as innovative, relevant, and listening," said Mr Goh.

Judging by the comments that have been left on the quick message board, it seems that the edveNTUre team is well on its way towards achieving its aim.



A student dressed in a *samfu* (left) with the modern power woman.

PHOTO | SZE JIA MIN



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Stub out that cigarette with Taufik

New anti-smoking campaign endorsed by Singapore Idol draws mixed reactions

Lee Pei Qi
Assistant Opinions Editor

RACHEL Tan, 20, is a social smoker, but that will soon change. The Singapore Institute of Management student said: "We (young smokers) will be motivated to stay away from cigarettes together with our idol".

The idol in question is Singapore Idol Taufik Batisan.

"Taufik Smoke-Free Journey", the latest anti-smoking campaign, that is targeted at youths was launched last Saturday at Atrium@Orchard.

In the campaign, spokesperson Taufik Batisah, who used to smoke, sends out the message that one can quit smoking yet remain 'cool' like him.

Seeing his example, smokers like Tan now want to quit.

"My friends and I are quite big fans of his. So we decided to cut down on our smoking after the event," she said.

And it was no empty talk. From smoking a pack each time they met, Tan and her friends have reduced to smoking two to three cigarettes each time.

"We're trying and working our way towards quitting," she added with a smile.

To appeal to youths, the campaign has interactive features like personalised emails, SMS and phone calls like were incorporated into it. A website was set up at www.taufiksmoke-free.com too.

The Singapore Idol will send support and encouragement, through SMS, to help them start their smoke-free journey.

Ms Choo Lin, the manager of the National Smoking Control Programme from the Health Promotion Board said: "The response has been extremely encouraging with almost 600 SMS and 153,000 web hits received so far."

However 23-year-old Jeffrey Ng, who is planning to quit smoking as part of his New Year resolution, does not think that the campaign will persuade smokers to quit the habit.

The second-year Civil and Environmental Engineering student said: "I think the decision to quit smoking lies with you and not a celebrity."

"Incentives like freebies and party passes would not really work well on me," he added.

Erik Tan, a second-year student from the School of Electrical and Electronic Engineering agrees with Ng.

The 23-year-old said: "Hard-core smokers will not be easily swayed by idols."

"This campaign would probably work well only with his fans. But I will sign the pledge card as I personally intend to make a conscious effort to quit smoking."

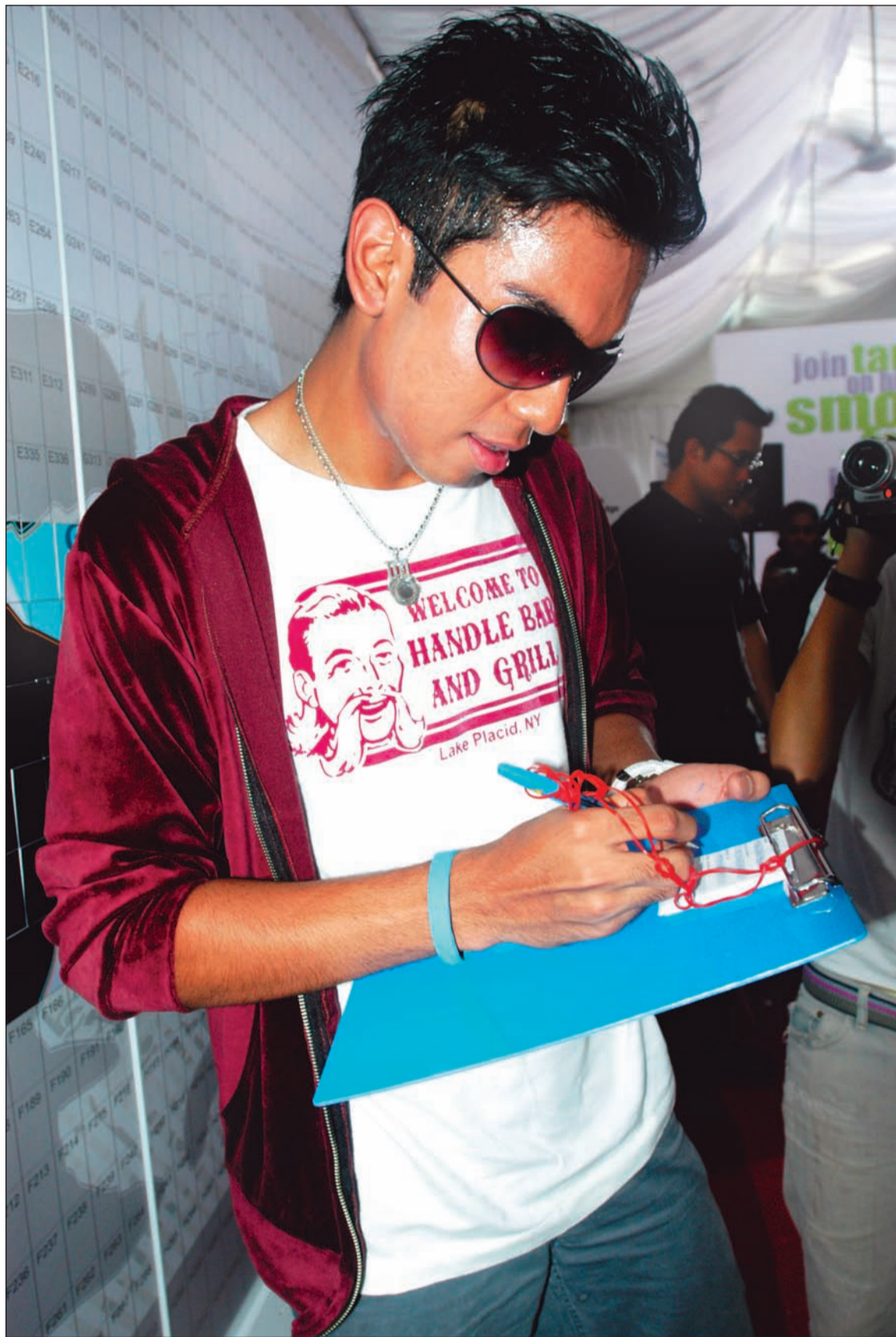
As part of the campaign, both smokers and non-smokers can show their support for a smoke-free lifestyle by signing a pledge card.

Taufik signed the first pledge card which will be part of a giant jigsaw puzzle, comprising 5000 pieces of smoke-free pledge cards.

This jigsaw puzzle will be pieced together over the next two months, as more people sign the pledge cards. The cards will be available during roadshows held at various shopping malls island-wide.

A pharmacist will then contact each smoker, offering free personalised consultations and customised quit plans.

As an added incentive for his fans, Taufik, who quit smoking after he became the Singapore Idol, will host a private party in April for those who have successfully quit smoking, and will personally meet and interact with them.



The smoke-free Singapore Idol encourages his fans to stay away from cigarettes. PHOTO | ADELINE ONG

Hostels reserved

Jocelyn Lee

DURING the holidays, some foreign students chose the safest way of ensuring a room this semester - by paying for their room during the six-week vacation.

This was done even when they returned to their home country during the vacation. Their empty room was kept as a way to book their rooms for the semester.

Margareta Astaman, 20, a second-year Communication

and Information Studies student, reserved her hall room in Hall 14 by paying for it, and then left for Indonesia, her home country.

"If I did not pay the rental fees and moved out, I would have to apply in the second round and there is a chance I would not get the room."

"I'd rather not go through the trouble," said Astaman.

International students like Astaman choose to reserve their rooms because of the unfortunate experience of "squatting".

Earlier, some foreign students had to "squat" in their friends' room after their initial hostel applications were unsuccessful.

Students were allocated on the Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) point system, and many international students did not meet the General Cut-Off Point and thus placed on a waiting list.

SAO said that it has since cleared the waiting list of foreign student applicants.

Still, after the experience, foreign students maintained a level of cautiousness towards the hall application.

Out of the estimated 250

rooms available during the new round of application, just 40 international students applied.

The deadline for the new hall application was 17 January, and students had to apply online for rooms left from the previous application last semester.

Mrs Tan-Ong, a manager from SAO said: "I don't think we will have the same problem of not having enough rooms for students to stay in this semester as we have a new hall."

She added that seven foreign students had applied for Hall 16.

SAO also said the latest hostel application allocated

the remaining rooms left from previous semester's application by computer balloting to ensure a fairer way of assigning their rooms.

Still, some could not wait for the new round of application.

Stephanie Tan, 22, rented a Woodlands apartment after two failed attempts to apply for a hostel room last year.

"I prefer to look for ways out of the situation instead of waiting," she said.

The second-year Civil Engineering student from Malaysia gave up waiting and chose a flat near the Causeway, so that she could return home easily.

Fancy a brand new university experience? Go local.

Think exchange programmes equate going abroad? Sze Jiamin and Helen Nofrina show you how to go on exchange without having to leave our sunny island

EXCHANGE programmes are often thought of as a chance to go overseas. However, you do not need to buy an air ticket to get a new university experience.

Students who have been on local exchange feel going local can be just as rewarding.

A check with Student Affairs Office showed that in the first semester of the academic year 2005/06, there were seven Singapore Management University (SMU) students and five National University of Singapore (NUS) students who came over to NTU on the Singapore Universities Student Exchange Programme (SUSEP).

Under SUSEP, there were three NTU students who went to NUS and 17 who went to SMU in 2005/06.

SUSEP commenced in July 2001 when NTU, NUS and SMU reached a tripartite agreement to offer student exchange opportunities. It offers the option of going on a partial exchange

and full exchange.

Partial exchange allows students to take three subjects or less in the host university. Going on full exchange means that students do a semester of studies entirely at the host university.

Goh Sek Teng, 21, is one of four students from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASS) at NUS who came over to NTU for local exchange.

The third-year psychology student sees SUSEP as a viable option for students who may be tied down financially or prone to homesickness.

"I was afraid I'd take a long time to adapt and my studies would be affected. I was also reluctant to leave my family to go overseas," Sek Teng said.

Vincent Teo, 22, also had a SUSEP experience by going over to SMU for one semester.

The second-year Accountancy and Business Law student from NTU said: "The opportunity to get a feel of a city campus

is enticing."

Regina Foo, 21, a third-year SMU Business student is now on partial exchange to NTU. She chose to do it due to the flexibility it offered.

Regina noticed the lush greenery surrounding NTU and the difference in architecture style as compared to her school.

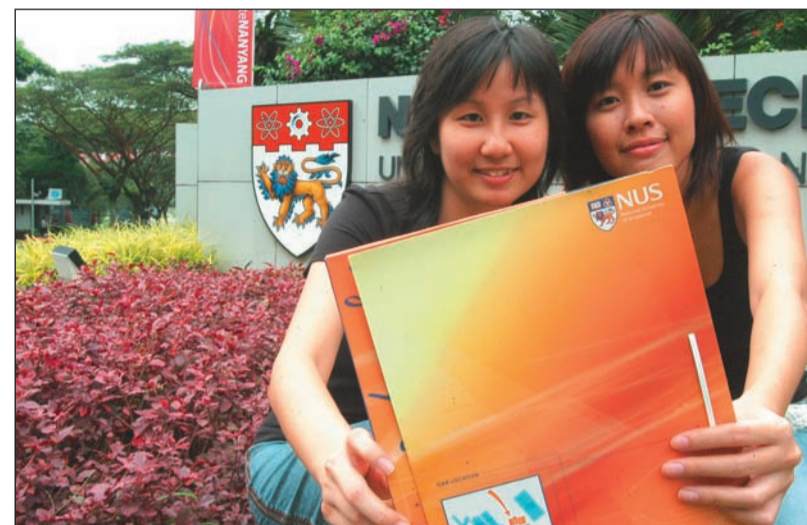
She said: "NTU buildings are very old [but] the scenery is very nice."

However, Wong Yoke Theng, 20, felt being on partial exchange did not allow her to fully experience life in NTU, like staying in hall and mingling with NTU students.

Nonetheless, going on local exchange certainly made a difference to some.

Sek Teng said she would have gladly chosen to study at NTU's School of Humanities and Social Sciences after she had experienced campus life for herself here.

She felt NTU offered her a



Sek Teng (right) with a fellow NUS SUSEP student. PHOTO | SZE JIAMIN

hands-on approach to learning that will give her an edge over her peers in the marketplace.

While most enjoyed the experience of local exchange, some still missed their own university.

Noor Lyna Bte Zainuddin, a second-year student from FASS who is currently in NTU on full exchange, is one of them.

The 20-year-old said: "Sometimes I miss my NUS friends, as I don't really know anyone here."

However, she will recommend SUSEP to other university students "as we are young and should step out of our comfort zone to explore."

Additional reporting by Mabel Chong



Chia Yen Yen visits the library to get gift ideas for special occasions.

PHOTO | KEVIN LIM

Library of memories

Shermaine Wong
Lifestyle Editor

WHILE growing up, many would remember visiting libraries as a child.

Now, these recollections are being sought after by the National Library Board (NLB).

They are eager to hear all about the memories that Singaporeans have of libraries.

Earlier this month, the NLB launched a four-month long nationwide campaign called "Celebrating Libraries".

The participants of the campaign include the libraries of the three local universities and five polytechnics.

As part of the drive, the NLB is encouraging Singaporeans to come forward with stories about how libraries have impacted their lives.

These stories will be collected into a book slated to be published in September this year.

For Angeline Quek, 22, libraries are places that allow her to seek solace in books.

"Friday nights were reserved for the library. It was

something that my parents and I looked forward to," the final-year Business student recalled.

"The best part was coming home, having supper and reading my book."

The library holds a special place in 25-year-old Teo Li Yin's heart as well.

"My mother used to surprise me when I was a kid by telling me we were going some place special after dinner. Then she would bring me to the library," said Li Yin, who is currently studying for her postgraduate diploma in NIE.

Chia Yen Yen, 20, remembers going to the cookbook section of the library with her sister in search of recipes to cook for one particular Mothers' Day lunch.

The second-year Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering student recounted with a laugh.

She said: "My sister and I wanted to prepare sweet and sour chicken and *gula melaka*, a Malay dessert made out of brown sugar, for my mother.

"The chicken that my sister cooked turned out fine but the dessert I made turned out really wrong! But my mother was very touched nonetheless," she said.

The campaign also saw ten "library ambassadors" being selected to share their library experiences.

They include prominent personalities such as Land Transport Authority's Chief Executive BG Yam Ah Mee and Nominated Member of Parliament Eunice Olsen.

"The best part was coming home, having supper and reading my book."

*Angeline Quek, 22,
first-year
Business student*

Ms. Lim Soo Hoon, Chairman of NLB, had this to add: "At some point of our lives, libraries must have had an important impact on us.

"What we hope to achieve through 'Celebrating Libraries' is to refresh our memories of the role of libraries in our lives and how they can continue to shape them."



the International Students Special

Rooming with a stranger

Before you cringe at the thought of rooming with an international student, Sophia Huang and Charis Cheong speak to students who tell you otherwise

DIFFERENT language, different food, different habits – rooming with an international student can be daunting. But, judging by students interviewed, it can be rewarding.

And as nearly half the students on campus are from overseas, according to Student Affairs Office (SAO), adaptation and tolerance are the name of the game.

Abigail Huang, 19, said living with her Indonesian roommate, Margareta Astaman, 20, has been a really good experience.

It's the little things that count. "Margareta is very considerate," said the first-year Biological Sciences student.

"She doesn't insist on keeping the light on while she is doing her work and I want to sleep. If she's talking on the phone, she will leave the room so that she doesn't disturb me doing my work."

Abigail makes up a minority of local students who stay with

international students, as most international students choose to room with students of the same nationality.

SAO said that international students make up 45% of students living on campus.

Michael, a French exchange student who studied in NTU in 2004, made the choice to stay with a local even though he had originally been allocated a French roommate. He made the request as he wanted to know

more about the Singapore culture and way of life.

Though Michael was not fluent in English, his roommate Dennis Lau, a second-year Materials Science Engineering student, could still chat with him.

Dennis tried to speak using simple English while Michael took the effort to use the English-French dictionary.

The roommates also helped each other out in their school work. When Dennis needed help with his Math tutorial, Michael explained the problems patiently to him.

Communication wasn't a problem for others such as Arlene Pang, 23, and her former Chinese roommate, Xiao Yen, who spoke very good English. That helped friendship blossom between the two girls.

Having roomed with a Singaporean before, Arlene, a final-year Biological Sciences student, felt that living with an international student was like staying with anybody else.

She said one reason that she didn't see any major difference living with an international student is because foreigners adapt to the Singaporean culture.

For example, unlike many local hostelites who habitually go to bed late, Michael turned in at about 10 p.m. when he first came to Singapore.

"I thought that like most university students, he would sleep late. But as he got used to the Singaporean culture, he started sleeping later, at 1 or 2 a.m.," Dennis said.

Margareta agreed: "Living with a Singaporean helps me adapt more to the Singaporean lifestyle. Anyway, this is where I'm going to stay [for the long term]."

Dennis summed up best why living with an international student was an invaluable experience: "It's good to know people from other countries. If I ever go to France, I have someone who can show me around," he said.



Abigail Huang (left) is happy to have Margareta Astaman as her room-mate.

PHOTO | SOPHIA HUANG

Travel around the world with iGlobal

Lee Kai Ying
News Editor

A PERMANENT scar from Switzerland.

Independent learning in Canada.

Never-ending fields of flowers in France.

These were the memorable experiences that students, who went on exchange programmes, shared with The Chronicle.

On 18 January 2006, NTU presented iGlobal06 at the Nanyang Auditorium, a showcase of NTU global initiatives for undergraduates.

At the fair, students were introduced to an array of exchange programmes.

They are the Global Immersion Programme (GIP), International Student Exchange Programme (INSTEP), Global Summer Studies (GSS), Overseas Attachment (OA) and Global Leadership Exposure

(GLE) programmes.

Charlotte Ying, 22, is one student who went to Switzerland under NTU's OA programme from January to June 2005.

"I fractured my left ankle while skiing and was sent to the hospital. Now, I've got this scar as a memento," said Charlotte, with a laugh.

The final-year Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering student added: "I wasn't scared or worried then because the doctors and nurses were very nice."

Ler Yu Min, 23, a final-year Materials Science and Engineering student, reminisced on her 20 km cycle to the countryside in France last June, which left her with an aching body.

"It was worth it because the countryside was very beautiful and enjoyable," she said.

Yu Min was in France under the GSS programme.

For Koh Wee Kuan, 25, a final-year Mechanical and Aero-

space Engineering student, his trip to Canada's University of Waterloo under INSTEP was an eye-opening one.

"Their education system is indeed very different from Singapore's. Their lecture rooms are small – about the size of two tutorial rooms in NTU.

"The cosy environment made lectures very interactive and engaging," he said.

Independent learning was also something Wee Kuan picked up.

Wee Kuan had to do so as very few notes were given to students, which meant that they had to make their own.

Going on exchange programmes may not always be a one-off affair.

NTU dragonboater Ashley Ong, 26, has been to Malaysia thrice under the GLE programme.

He went with his dragonboat team as part of their training.

"I learnt a lot about other

rowing strokes because they were not taught here in Singa-

"I grew to be a lot more independent, street-smart and spontaneous while I was overseas.

Koh Wee Kuan, 25, on what he gained from his iGlobal experience

pore. We got to see those strokes in Penang," said the third-year Civil and Environmental Engineering student.

Charlotte was thankful that she did not face racial discrimination while on exchange in a foreign land.

"I used to think the Europe-

ans were snobbish but I realised they are actually very friendly and hospitable people.

"They knew I couldn't speak their language so they made the effort to speak to me in English," she said.

For Wee Kuan, he felt that the Canadians are "very approachable" people.

The freedom to do as one fancies is also what the students who went overseas found exciting.

Wee Kuan had fun travelling with his friends, "driving around by [themselves], getting themselves lost and then asking for directions."

Fun aside, students who return home often take with them something more valuable.

Wee Kuan explained: "I grew to be a lot more independent, street-smart and spontaneous while I was overseas. That, I think, is something students can nurture while being in a foreign land."

the
International Students Special



Celebrating Chinese New Year 3,000km away

Law Shu Hui finds out that friends may be the next best thing to family for foreign students



GRAPHICS | NERISSA XUE

AT HOME in China, they would be celebrating with firecrackers, pasting red couplets on doors, and eating sumptuous dinners with their family.

But for Chinese New Year in Singapore, these Chinese students settle for a game of cards in front of the TV with friends.

Zeng Zinan, 21, from Guangdong province, says his celebrations here are very low-key.

"I go out on New Year's eve to buy food, and eat while watching TV and playing cards with fellow Chinese nationals in my room," he said.

The second-

year Computer Engineering student said the short Chinese New Year break wasn't long enough to fly home last year.

"I usually celebrate with my family by going for tea, and visiting relatives," Zinan said.

"Sometimes, the village will have dinner to celebrate in the open space. Preparations are made throughout a week before the dinner, and everyone is invited."

Though he has the company of friends here, Zinan feels that they cannot replace the warmth of the family.

"The atmosphere is livelier at home. Here in Hall 12, it's quieter since most people go home to celebrate," he said.

Chen Ying-Hsu, a first-year Accountancy student from Taiwan, at least gets to go visiting at his Singaporean friends' house. Some invite him every year.

The 20-year-old is glad to keep the red packets he gets during these visits to his friends' houses, as he had to "surrender" them to his parents back in Taiwan.

"Although I'm away from my loved ones, I'm glad to have friends with me,"

said Ying-Hsu.

"There are also no reunion dinners or celebrations here in Hall 4 – and anyway, I don't think they're important to usher in the New Year."

But some Chinese nationals will feel the warmth of Chinese New Year, thanks to Singaporeans such as Wilfred Lim, 23.

"I have invited non-Chinese friends and those from China back home a few years ago," said the third-year Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering student.

"I feel sorry for these foreigners who are alone in a foreign land," Wilfred said, "And I hope my small gesture can make their day."

Zinan, at least, won't be alone in this foreign land for the celebrations.

This year, the long break means he can fly home to China.

So instead of his card-playing friends, there's an extended family of 20 people waiting for him.

With them – and the firecrackers – this Chinese New Year will go with a bang.

Union launches new initiatives

| Daniel Ong

EXCHANGE students and foreign visitors need not fret when it comes to learning more about NTU.

The Students' Union has introduced two new initiatives in mid-December last year – the Student Ambassador Programme and the Buddy Programme.

According to Avanti Anil Save, Public Relations Officer of the Students' Union, students in the Ambassador Programme will represent NTU in various activities

They will host foreign visitors to NTU and make trips to junior colleges and polytechnics during open houses to attract students to the university.

The ambassadors began their duties only two week-

ends ago at university talks that were organised for polytechnic students.

Celest Yeo, 24, a final-year Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering student and ambassador in the programme, saw this as the perfect opportunity to give something back to her school.

"I gained a lot of experiences throughout the two and a half years that I have been in NTU," she said.

"Joining this programme has allowed me to share these experiences with external parties."

Launched at the same time last year, the Buddy Programme aims to help exchange students ease into life in NTU and Singapore.

Buddies introduce foreign exchange students to the local culture and tradi-

tions through outings. They make arrangements amongst themselves and decide on the programme for the day.

Commencing after last semester's exam, some buddies brought exchange students for sightseeing at places such as Chinatown.

For Alicia Teng, she jumped at the chance to be a buddy.

Having lived abroad all by herself for quite a while, she knew how intimidating it could be in a foreign country.

"It is a lot easier to have a local showing you around," the 19-year-old said.

"This is especially important since most of them come from the other side of the globe."

When asked for her most unforgettable experience,

the first-year Business student said it was to see "the expression on [foreign students'] faces when they eat durians".

Exchange students such as 20-year-old Griffin Delaney Strole are grateful to their Singaporean buddies for helping them understand the place better.

Griffin, from the University of Illinois – Urban Champagne, is currently studying Chemical Engineering in NTU.

"After three weeks in Singapore, I have come to the conclusion that I love this place," he said.

He added the food, the weather, the scenery – even classes here beat Illinois hands-down.

Recruitment for both schemes was done during

last December holidays, with response being "overwhelming" for both the initiatives, Save said.

However, not all were accepted as there were only limited vacancies for the positions.

"We will be recruiting more ambassadors if the demand increases and more projects come along this semester," Avanti said.

"But for the Buddy programme, the numbers will depend on the number of incoming exchange students."

Even if you are not in any of these programmes, it does not take much to make an exchange student feel welcomed in NTU.

As Griffin said: "Come up and say hello because we're all happy to meet more locals".



Influences and nuances

Rachel Lim meets local four-piece band, Nuance, who talks about what their name means, Condoleezza Rice and long-distance songwriting

LOOKING at an unusual band name like Nuance, you may conjure up a picture of moody or weird art-rockers. The opposite holds true for the friendly four-piece local band. Nuance is just a bunch of easy-going lads who share a love for football, computer games and music.

The band is made up of vocalist and guitarist Donald Pan, 24, drummer Calvin Chien, 23, lead guitarist Xu Yong Hui, 23 and bassist Kevin Loh, 22.

Nuance debuted at Prince of Wales, a backpacker's hostel and bar in February 2005. This year, they have played at Sembawang Festival, Singapore's biggest music festival featuring 35 local and global acts from 20-21 January and two sets at the Esplanade.

Their musical relationship began in 2003 when the band, then known as Subdivision, consisting of Calvin, Donald and Kevin, recorded a three-track demo. Yong Hui who helped on lead guitars was then recruited into the band.

Nuance's music crosses genres, due to their musical influences which range from folk, indie rock, metal and Bossa Nova. The band is also a big fan of the British band Mansun. British rock infused guitar riffs and can be heard on Nuance's songs.



(L-R): Kevin Loh, Donald Pan, Calvin Chien and Xu Yong Hui.

PHOTO | HAZE KANG

"In different songs, we stick to different elements; a song may sound rock, another may sound post-rock or Indie, it's hard to describe a genre that Nuance belongs to," Donald said.

With a band name that means subtle differences in expression, the band tries to achieve this in their music.

Donald said, "We keep the same theme running with slight variations here and there, that's the bit of nuance we want to have."

Nuance's music will catch your attention, with themes like human experiences such as love, religion and politics. According to Donald, an original, Soup

of the Day was even inspired by a line on democracy said in a speech by Condoleezza Rice, the American Secretary of State.

With Donald currently pursuing his Masters in Psychology in Australia, a trans-continental creative relationship exists in the band.

Donald, the main songwriter in the group said: "When I write songs in Australia, I record them as MP3 files and email them to the rest. They will come up with the riffs for the songs. When I'm get back, we work on the material during jamming sessions."

Relatively new to the local scene, friends have been an important source of support for Nuance, in particular, Joe Ng, local composer and member of the late 90s local band, The Padres.

"Joe has been very helpful giving us tips and gathering support, including local musicians to our shows and was the one to push us to start gigging," Calvin said.

When asked about its direction, Nuance wants to take things one step at a time.

Calvin said: "I think we have some good songs in our repertoire which can be recorded, but we have no great five-year or 10-year plans. Anyway, music making is about having fun."

Sneak Peek

Kang Cheng Xi, 21, First-year Common Engineering student

Juggling a hectic schedule between studies and showbiz, Star Idol finalist Kang Cheng Xi finds time to talk to the Chronicle.

Currently in the final rounds of the competition, Cheng Xi is preoccupied with rehearsals and television recordings at MediaCorp.

Grateful for the support from friends and family, Cheng Xi says they spur him on in the competition.

We peek into his bag and uncover interesting finds. "I like to keep the things I carry to a minimum. This bag is in my favorite color, white. As it is a gift from my good friend, it is all the more special to me," he said.

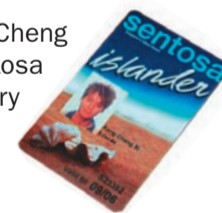


PHOTOS | WANG XIAO CHONG

Star-struck

Kang Cheng Xi may not be a real celebrity yet, but he already has fans showering him with gifts. Ong Dailin digs into his bag

Telling The Chronicle about one of his favorite haunts, Cheng Xi said: "I like to visit the beach whenever I go to Sentosa to chill with my friends. I used to go there almost every weekend but now with my packed schedule, it's been a long time since I enjoyed myself under the sun."



"I always put two tokens in my wallet because I don't like to make decisions," Cheng Xi shared his unusual habit with Chronicle. "So when I need to make decisions, I will just flip the tokens. For example, when I want to decide what to eat for lunch."



"This was given to me by a very good female friend for my 21st birthday. My wallet was in a very bad state and she bought a new one for me. The coin pouch had such a big hole in it that I dropped one of my lucky tokens and had to replace it. You can imagine how spoiled my old wallet was," he said.



"I bought this chain in Far East Shopping Centre about half a year ago. I wear it every day. I think it is quite nice and I got it only for \$5.00. It has two bullets and I took out of the heads of the bullets to personalize it."

Model students strut their stuff

Models seem to lead the high life with their designer clothes and funky hair-dos. But as Eunyce Yap finds out, it's not all glitz and glamour for these student models

WHILE most undergraduates have to be content with mundane jobs like tuition or waitressing to support their expenses, there are those who just have to preen, pose and pout to see the money rolling in.

With so many varsity pageants, more undergraduates are realising their potential on the catwalk and turning to modelling as a part-time career.

Modelling brings these students extra income, and also provides other perks through their widened social circles.

Miss Singapore Universe 2004 finalist Lee Cheng Ling, a second-year Business student said: "Modelling enables you to meet a lot of new people. Many of us know a number of hairstylists and make-up artists."

The 20-year-old spoke of perks such as getting free haircuts and engaging the help of the make-up artists when they have events to attend.

While it sounds like a dream come true for girls to doll up and sashay on-stage in pretty gowns, Alison Phua, 21, who took part in Miss Singapore Universe 2004, said her modelling stint was less than pleasant.

The third-year Biological Sciences student said that beneath the veneer of beauty, ugly catfights happen.

"A girl claimed I stole her white top during the Singapore Universe pageant. Also, a media commentator said that I was bitching about other contestants when I was caught laughing on camera. But I was merely sharing a joke with a friend," said Alison, who was also one of the Top 10 finalists in the Cleo Cover Girl Contest in 2004.

"I also get stereotyped as a bimbo just

because I take part in beauty pageants," Alison added.

Sceptics who think beauty and brains don't mix should meet Fong Yue Yeng, 20, a second-year Communication and Information student.

This Dean's List student, who is currently in Cornell University in the USA on NTU's overseas exchange program, took home the Best Catwalk award in the Ford Supermodel of the World 2005 competition.

While most were quick to agree that modelling was a fun and fulfilling learning experience, none saw long-term prospects in it.

"In Singapore, it's hard for local models to get enough exposure as there is always preference for the Pan-Asian look. Although one may get paid a lot for one assignment, you might receive no other assignments for the next few months," Yue Yeng said.

She feels modelling is an irregular job,

and added: "I want to be a high-flying PR or marketing executive and earn more money than all the Kate Mosses in the world!"

Albert Tan, 24, winner of Singapore Face 2004, and who is with Quest Models, scoffs at the idea that modeling is a lucrative business to be in.

The third-year Electrical and Electronic Engineering student said: "The salary is not constant. Full-time models earn \$500-\$1000 per month only. I'd rather be an engineer."

Some saw modelling as a platform to bigger things.

"I'm interested in PR and hotel management and I feel that if people see you on TV and magazine covers, it will somehow help you gain recognition," said Cheng Ling, who is now a MediaCorp artiste.

Low Jiarong, 23, who modelled in an NKF television advertisement in 2005, warned about dubious modelling agencies that try to cheat money out of aspiring models.

"You must pay them a sizeable amount for your portfolio first, and you may not even get assignments. The really good agencies may pay for your portfolio, but they don't take in any Tom, Dick or Harry," the third-year Communication and Information student said.

Jiarong had this piece of advice to share: it is safer to get a modelling job through a friend or contact in

"I'm interested in PR and hotel management and I feel that if people see you on TV and magazine covers, it will somehow help you gain recognition."

Lee Cheng Ling, 20, a second-year-business student on why she went into modelling

the industry.

However, those blessed with the looks and right connections may not have to fork out a single cent.

Cheng Ling, whose face has graced local magazines like Her World and SHAPE, advised: "Be smart. You don't have to pay for everything. I didn't pay for my portfolio - I built it over time. At first I had to go for castings, but after awhile, when people knew me, I just had to send my portfolio down."



PHOTO | COURTESY

Jamming to their hearts' content

| Sanny Chen

JAMFEST 2006 was a smashing success this year with eight NTU hall bands participating.

The event, currently into its second year, serves as a platform for hall bands to showcase their talents to not only their hall mates, but also to the rest of NTU.

This year, Jamfest was a joint collaboration between Hall 15 and Hall 7.

Held in the evening of 16 January at Canteen A, the crowd was entertained by the smooth tunes and cool beats of the bands.

Firduous Hanif, 20, a full-time NS man was visiting his friend in NTU at the time Jamfest took place. He was awestruck by the event that attracted large crowds.

"I think Jamfest is a really cool event. It's like having multiple gigs in a school setting," he said.

Others like Adrian Ng, 22, had suggestions to offer.

The first-year Materials Science and

Engineering student, felt Jamfest should be organised on a larger scale.

He said: "Hopefully next year publicity can be improved, perhaps with more mass emails and publicity posters [being put up] all over the school because it's a really great event."

First-year Accountancy student, Jeffrey Yu, was one of the organisers of Jamfest 2006.

The 22-year-old said: "Jamfest is a good avenue for NTU hall bands to start out. It gives them more exposure and more chances to perform to a crowd."

He praised Hall 8's jam band, Crea, for their spontaneous and crowd engaging performance which saw the male band members take off their shirts midway through their performance.

Another one of Jamfest's organisers, Kelvin See, 23, who was also Hall 7's jam band's drummer, felt extremely satisfied with the audience turnout.

The second-year Biological Sciences



Hall 10's jam band, King Kong Jane, in the limelight.

PHOTO | ARIEH SINGER

student said the event shows that there is a lot of musical talent and potential among hall bands.

"It was encouraging to see the over-

whelming turnout and response from the crowd. It would be great to see every hall band in NTU perform next year," he said.

upcoming events

week four

(January 23 to 28)

H.A.N.D.S 2006

January 25, 3.00p.m. to 10.00p.m.

NTU SRC swimming pool

For more details, visit <http://clubs.ntu.edu.sg/lifeguards>

Do your part for charity by participating in the annual charity swim organised by the NTU Lifeguard Corps. H.A.N.D.S, or Help A Needy Swim, is aimed at raising funds for the charity organization, Christian Outreach to the Handicap (COH), which assists the care of autistic children and handicapped patients. Be ready to get wet participating in the mass swim as well as the 3km Challenger Swim.

week five

(January 30 to February 3)

Surf n Sweat 2006

February 5, 8.00a.m.

Sunset Bay, Sentosa

For more details, visit <http://www.ntusportsclub.com/surfnswheat2006/Home.html>

Organised by the NTU Sports Club, the annual Surf n Sweat is back again this year. Main events include Surf n Run and a new category called the Lover's Challenge, added to the Surf n Blade event. Side events include Beach Volleyball, Beach Soccer, Beach Touch Rugby, as well as Ultimate Frisbee. Appealing to a

different group of sportsmen, these side events are carried out in a more fun, yet competitive manner. Look out for jam-band performances, the Surf Babe and Surf Hunk competition, as well as other exciting programmes like the hot-dog eating competition and the strongest man competition that promise to entice beach-goers.



week six

(February 6 to February 10)

Nanyang Invitational Challenge

6 - 10 February

Sports and Recreation Centre

For more information, visit www.ntu.edu.sg/sao/sports or contact Ms Royce Yap at 67905166

Come support the NTU athletes in the Nanyang Invitational Challenge 2006. The event was planned last year in collaboration with NTU's 50th anniversary celebrations. Watch six universities from around the world pit their skills in exciting men's basketball and women's table tennis matches. The Nanyang Invitational Challenge is an extension of a previous sports exchange program between NTU and Jinan University. All are encouraged to cheer the NTU teams on home ground!

Strings & Serenades: Corinne May in Concert

February 12 2006, 7.30p.m.

University Cultural Centre Hall, NUS

Tickets at \$28- \$48 from SISTIC

Hailed as Singapore's answer to Canadian singer Sarah McLachlan, Corinne May's last local performance was a sold-out concert at the Esplanade in August 2005. Do not miss this evening of ballads, adult-contemporary tunes and new songs. Corinne's one-night-only acoustic concert, backed by an 8-piece string ensemble, kicks off the NUS Arts Festival.

BOOKS

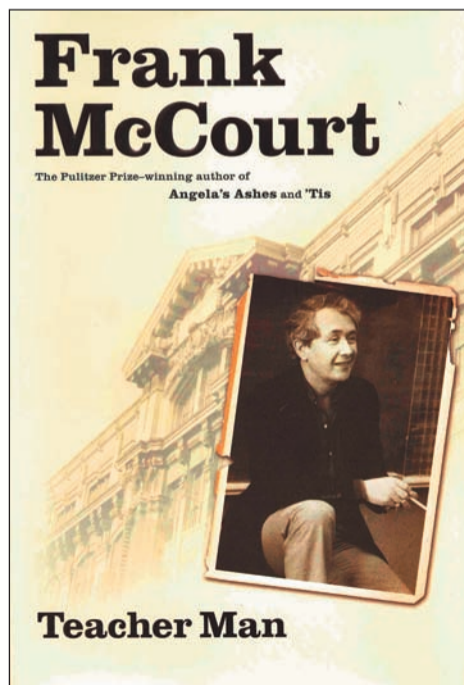
Teacher Man

by Frank McCourt

\$44.10

Scribner

Available at Borders



IF THERE is one thing that embodies the spirit of Frank McCourt's *Teacher Man*, it's this mea culpa.

As a high school teacher in New York City, Frank unravels his variegated experiences in an animated and refreshingly candid way that wholly encapsulates what it really means to be a teacher. It's more than just conducting a class and grading essays, it's about being a storyteller, actor, therapist, friend, etc.

Tapping on his students' immense talent in writing excuse letters for not having attended class, he assigns the class to write, "An Excuse Note from Adam or Eve to God" as homework.

Frank's ingenious and unconventional antics in the classroom sometimes relegate him in the eyes of the other teachers and the principal, yet on other occasions, he is eulogized by his superiors for his vivid spontaneity and imaginativeness.

In the perpetual trajectory of his teaching career, he learns a great deal from his students and is inspired by their astute sense of judgment.

Teacher Man is a sincere account of a teacher's confessions and reflections.

As you read this splendid novel, feelings of nostalgia drift you back in time and you relive those precious and unforgettable moments of when you were in high school. You may even think to yourself, "Mea culpa". You aren't the only one. We all are. So we learn to learn.

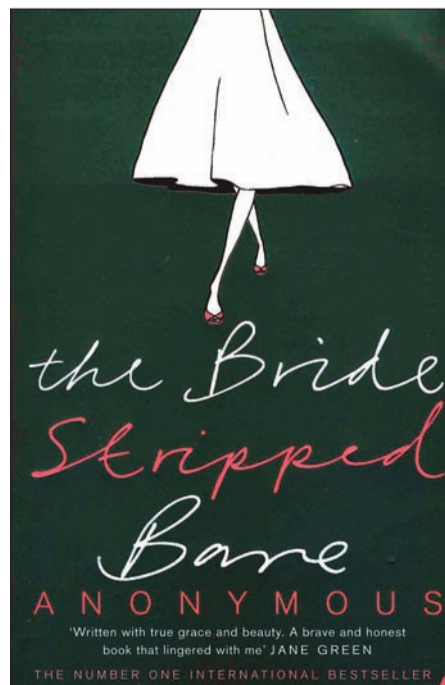
The Bride Stripped Bare

by Nikki Gemmell

\$18.90

Harper Perennial

Available at Borders



The Bride Stripped Bare plays off on the premise that a mother found her daughter's journal after her daughter and grandson disappeared under mysterious circumstances.

The book is written in a series of diary entries – amounting 138 "lessons" and artfully charts the sinuous paths of marriage and desire.

The author of the journal, a nameless 30-something housewife, embarks on an affair that changes her life to a large extent, not only in that it opens her up to viewing sexual pleasure in a different light, but thinking about life and how she is living it.

The book gets more interesting after the illicit affair as it explores how she gradually rekindles her love for her husband.

The renewal of their damaged relationship is much more enlightening than her tedious experiences with her Latin lover.

Bride Stripped Bare may be extremely graphic, but not without reason. It was only through her sexuality that the character grew and found her true identity.

The story is not written in a crude manner, but in a matured, matter-of-fact style.

To some, the *Bride Stripped Bare* may start off slow, but as it progresses, the climax is simply out of this world.

This book is wonderfully sensuous and witty in its construction, a subtle portrait of a modern marriage. It's never too early to learn.

MUSIC

And The Glass Handed Kites

(Mew)



AT FIRST listen, tracks on Mew's *And The Glass Handed Kites* may sound nondescript, but after a few more spins, the gems on the album are slowly revealed.

Kites, the follow-up to Mew's debut album *Frengers*, does not fail to deliver Danish band's signature dreamy space-rock sound.

The interesting part about Mew is their The Pet Shop Boys meets Death Cab for Cutie vocals. The boyish and airy vocals contrast with the sobering melodies on tracks like "A Dark Design". Dark tunes aside, upbeat tracks are also found. "Special" is reminiscent of 80s' pop and "The Zookeeper's Boy" is an uplifting track with a infectious chorus.

The endearing album seamlessly weaves all fourteen tracks through short segues like "Fox Club" and "Small Ambulance". Listening to *Kites* is akin to reading a novel, with dramatic build-ups in the angsty "Apocolypso", gentle fluxes and quiet resolutions in the slow "White Lips Kissed".

Mew stands out with their innovative rock melodies on *Kites*, amidst the many copies of the new-wave rock movement in the European scene.

Pop this album into the player for a spin on those languid days and take a musical trip to your subconscious.

Rachel Lim

Mrs Henderson OST

(Various)



I'M NOT a big fan of musical soundtracks, but *Mrs. Henderson Presents* I do like.

Directed by Stephen Frears and based on a true story, *Mrs. Henderson Presents* is a musical comedy about London's first nude "showgirls" in a wartime theatre in the 1930's.

The score, composed and arranged by legendary composer George Fenton (*Anna and the King*, *The Crucible*, *Dangerous Liaisons*), is remarkable in its ability to tell a story in and of itself.

Divided into four sections - 'The Early Years', 'Naked Girls', 'War', and 'We Never Close', each section tells its own story and features its own distinct style. Largely a collection of old, jazzy music hall-style music, the album transports us to the era of Vaudeville.

The highlight of the album has to be "The Girl in the Fan", a mellow yet haunting piano piece with a touch of genuine emotion. Other worthy mentions are 'Persuading Tommy', also an instrumental piece, and 'The Sails of the Windmill', a duet performed by Will Young and Camille O'Sullivan.

Mrs. Henderson Presents is an album which completely encapsulates the film it represents, featuring equal parts of sentimentality and whimsy and a revue of jazz, pop, and nostalgia.

Jolene Tan

Chris Brown

(Chris Brown)



"IT'S an honour to introduce the future of RnB." Too good to be true? Let me try to tell you why. It's because Chris Brown is only sixteen years of age. He is not great yet but certainly has the potential to be. The single "Run It!" from this self-titled debut album reached the top of the Billboard singles charts when released late last year. He is the first solo male artiste to do so.

Brown comes from a small town in Virginia called Tappahannock and grew up listening to Usher, Tevin Campbell and Michael Jackson. So it's unsurprising that he ends up sounding like them with his smooth vocals and catchy tunes. The good stuff ends here.

While style is present, substance is lacking in this collection of songs for hormonally charged pubescent boys. In his website he explains, "I'm young. I want to appeal to people my age." Surely he achieves that when all he croons about is trying to get with girls.

He sings, "When I seen the hottest chick/ That a young'n ever seen before/ I said Yo". And that line pretty much sums it up. Thank goodness he plans to head in a different direction when he is twenty, and it better be the right direction.

Unless he finds his own, Chris Brown will just be wasted potential. This album is at best a preview of better things to come.

Helmi Ali

MOVIES

I Not Stupid Too

(Jack Neo, Xiang Yun, Huang Yi Liang, Shawn Lee)



ONCE again, Jack Neo offers excellent critique on the Singaporean brand of education and communication in *I Not Stupid Too*. Heavier in tone than its prequel *I Not Stupid*, it blends clever banter with poignancy to give the viewer insights on the feelings of students and their parents as both struggle to carve out happy family lives amidst the pressures of school and work.

The movie centres round the lives of two teenage boys who hail from different family backgrounds but share similar educational experiences. The boys, Tom and Cheng Cai, have problems with their parents and Chinese teacher, leading to

a series of events that explore a host of issues such as corporal punishment, the need to feel a sense of belonging, and the responsibility that schools and parents have for a student's emotional well-being.

Like its prequel, *I Not Stupid Too* discusses education extensively. It points out the narrow definition of "success", in which academic achievement is held to be the chief indicator, to the extent that other talents are thrown into obscurity. On communication between teacher and student, the movie rigorously calls for teachers to look at the good side of students, not just their flaws, and learn to be more generous in according praise.

This piece of advice regarding communication forms a motif that weaves itself into commentary on parent-child relationships, encouraging parents to open their eyes to their children's talents. The movie shows how parental love is poorly conveyed through constant nagging, while the skill to listen is all but neglected, resulting in impassiveness within children. Many a Singaporean child can readily identify with some aspects of this archetypal family portrait.

Overall, *I Not Stupid Too* is a movie that holds great appeal for the average Singaporean, given its skilful portrayal of these aspects of Singaporean life packaged with a strong local flavour.

Marianne Choo

Cheaper By The Dozen 2

(Steve Martin, Carmen Electra, Hilary Duff)



AN OVERSIZED dog; an immortal galloping packrat; a pregnant woman; and a group of children large enough to make a basketball team (with a few reserves) are all perfect ingredients for a potentially annoying and immature comedy.

Cheaper By The Dozen 2 - starring Steve Martin, who is arguably the king of physical comedy, is surprisingly palatable as far as the run-of-the-mill slapstick antics are concerned.

I must admit to having negative preconceived notions as I waited for the movie to start. I expected forced comedy and stunts that pushed the bounds of what can be expected in a day in the life of an ordinary family - then again, the Bakers are not your everyday family.

Besides age-old variants of the over-

done pie-in-the-face stunts, the writers of the movie provided a healthy dose of sarcasm; which- I noticed- seemed to fly right over the heads of the audience at the screening.

In this sequel, the Baker family reluctantly leave Chicago for Winnetka Lake in order for them to have some quality family time, as prescribed by the patriarch Tom Baker (Steve Martin). It seems that Tom and his wife are starting to experience 'empty nest syndrome' even though ten little members of their litter will still be at hand when their two eldest daughters leave home.

The secluded location has sentimental value for the entire Baker family, and even more deep-seated issues for Tom Baker whose lifelong archrival still lives there and has come to own the majority of the location.

It is often said that the reason Hollywood movies appeal to a cross-section of audiences around the world is that they deal with universal themes- this movie is no exception. The average Singaporean will find a lot to relate to in this movie, as it explores in cardinal Asian values, namely: filial piety, competition (a.k.a. kiasuism) and population growth.

Steve Martin's acting is standard; Hilary Duff's performance is nothing to write home about, while Carmen Electra does an unsurprisingly convincing portrayal of the trophy bimbo wife

Bulelwa Makina

TECH

Your Lovable Music

You are tearing your hair out for the ideal gift for Valentine's Day and it is less than a month away. Don't panic! **Dennis Lim** and **Poh Sok See** may just have what you need.

Creative Zen Vision:M

Mammoth performer



CHRONICLE
OUR PICK
Gadget Guide

SPECIFICATIONS

Retail price	\$598
Capacity	30GB
Playback time	14 hours
Supported Format (Audio)	MP3, WMA, WAV

MERITS

2.5-inch high resolution 262k LCD screen
Has content password protection and selectable themes to match your mood

SHORTCOMING

Small reset button, not easy to reset if there is a need to

CREATIVE'S latest reply to its rival Apple, Zen Vision:M, is quite an item to behold. Vision:M is a photo viewer and it can store about 120 hours of video - 10 times longer than the length of the whole of LOTR trilogy! A regular feature in Creative's products is built-in FM radio and Vision:M is no exception. It syncs with Microsoft Outlook, keeping users up-to-date with appointments and tasks. Incorporating a touchpad is a good idea, just be firm on those tactile buttons. Vision:M comes bundled with a protective pouch and the usual stuff like power adapter and earphones. In short, Vision:M is both aesthetically and functionally pleasing.

Shiro DA MP3

Lightweight entertainer



SPECIFICATIONS

Retail price	\$111 & \$155 respectively
Capacity	256MB & 512MB
Playback time	8 hours
Supported Format (Audio)	MP3, WMA, WAV

MERITS

Built-in LiPolymer battery, chargeable via USB
Lightweight, weight only 20 grams with battery

SHORTCOMING

E-Book supports only .txt formats

IT SEEMS that our hectic lifestyle has finally caught up with our beloved MP3 players. Shiro's DA MP3 player includes an integrated phone book organiser and a Text File viewer. It can serve as a backup for your SIM card; all you have to do is to synchronise with your computer. DA can also serve as a USB (2.0) Flash drive and as a recorder for FM or voice. It has the 7 sound equalizer mode and the usual selectable music playback sequence. DA's ID3 Tag Support feature allows up to 16 languages to be displayed as titles and lyrics, such as Polish and Russian. This player is seriously worth considering if you have a small budget.

LeMON F17

One-for-two player



SPECIFICATIONS

Retail price	Not available at print
Capacity	512MB
Playback time	6 hours
Supported Format (Audio)	MP3, WMA, WAV

MERIT

Two earphone jacks

SHORTCOMING

E-Book supports only .txt formats

THIS silver clad player's best selling point has to be its two earphone jacks. This is ideal for couples who insist on listening with both ears, sparing the sole earphone from competing with noise from the environment. Other than that, the rest of the features are the norm in most MP3 players nowadays. It has a FM radio and recording functions. The F17 also has voice recording abilities and multi-language (e.g. Chinese) support for ID3 tags and lyrics. Interestingly, the display comprises of two colours and comes with screensaver options. Overall, the F17 scores decently with its regular specifications, but get it only if you need the extra earphone jack.

First look at interesting gadgets from CES 2006



p!ng | realtime quirky bits
Netholas



PHOTO | Cnet.com

IN CASE you didn't know, CES stands for Consumer Electronics Show. It is an annual event held in USA, showcasing the latest products in the technological arena. In the recent CES in Las Vegas, the world was shown the inevitable tide of technology barraging their way into our lives. From a 40-inch LCD monitor to detachable laptop screens, it makes us wonder what else technology has up its sleeve.

Panasonic showcased a laptop that is unconventionally powered by a fuel cell that is claimed to provide 20 hours of usage. An upcoming storage medium called Holographic storage may be able to cram 500GB into a device the size of a business card.

For those bookworms out there, Sony has released its new e-book reader which can hold up to 80 books with the option of more with SD card slot. Philips introduced its still-in-research Entertaible, which is a huge horizontal touch screen for board gaming.

Interesting gadgets never fail to amaze us and the future looks good. And did we mention that our local Creative's Zen Vision:M won the "Best of CES: Best in Show" award at CES 2006?

In The Hotspot

Never mind the coffee

Getting bored of the usual coffee joints? Jennifer Law and Ng Xiuling set out to explore some theme cafes in town.



PHOTOS | YEOH KEAT WEI

Settler's Cafe

Where: 39, North Canal Road Singapore 059295

Tel: 6535-0435

Operating hours: 2.00 p.m. to 11.00 p.m.
(Tuesday to Thursday, Sunday)
2.00 p.m. to 1.30 a.m.
(Friday, Saturday, and eves of public holidays)
Closed on Mondays

What's on: Hidden amidst rows of shop houses near Clarke Quay, the first board game themed café in Singapore was established more than two years ago, Settler's café stocks over 300 board and card games, ranging from the familiar Monopoly and Cluedo to lesser-known ones like Power Grid and Cranium. You can even purchase and take home the games from the café.

What's hot: The comfy café allows you to pit your game skills with friends for a no-holds-barred time of fun. It is a good opportunity to try new and complicated games, with the staff helping by explaining the rules. Settler's appeal lies in the laidback yet enjoyable gaming experience.

Café Cosmo

Where: 47 Amoy Street, Singapore 069873

Tel: 6220-9510

Operating hours: 3.00 p.m. to 12.00 a.m. (Monday to Friday)
5.00 p.m. to 12.00 a.m. (Saturday)
Closed on Sundays

What's on: Husband-and-wife team Ray Chen and Vikki Tan started Café Cosmo in May 2005, with the aim of supporting the independent music scene. Occupying a shop house in the heart of Chinatown, the eclectically furnished cafe offers customers plenty to do in the cozy establishment. From reading to having a spin at the DJ console, or just chilling out to great music with drinks and food, customers can rest easy here. It is no surprise that the stylish joint is a platform for music lovers and aspiring musicians, when co-owner Ray Chen himself plays the bass for the local band, Surreal. Events held include "Indie Pop Night" on Fridays, and "Cosmo House Party" on Saturdays.

What's hot: Cool items are sold in store, ranging from a variety of rare, imported music CDs, music t-shirts, and vintage ornaments from the 60s and 70s.



The Book Café

Where: 20 Martin Road, Seng Kee Building #01-02 Singapore 239070

Tel: 6887-5430

Operating hours: 8.30 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. (Sun – Thurs)
8.30 a.m. to 12 midnight (Fri & Sat)

What's on: The Book Café is a gem for those who want some quiet time reading while enjoying a nice cuppa or having a hearty meal. Tucked away near Robertson Quay, it first opened its doors five years ago. The café's trademark is its wide selection of books and magazines, ranging from glossy fashion publications to favourites like C.S. Lewis' much-loved series, The Chronicles of Narnia. Together with inviting warmth, the chic American-style café is perfect for those seeking a getaway to de-stress after a long day.

What's hot: The café serves over a hundred items on its extensive menu, leaving customers spoilt for choice. Late-risers need not fear missing the morning meal, as breakfast is served here all day long. Prices for food and beverages here are affordable, ranging from \$3 to \$17. Wine is also served for who need their fix of spirits. Perks that make the café perfect for group project meetings include free wireless service and a computer reserved for patrons' use. For those who cannot bear to leave their pets behind, get this: The Book Café allows patrons to bring their pets along in the outdoor dining area. According to its assistant manager, Henry Seok, the café might even introduce a pet's menu in the future.



A Nig

The night of 14th January at the
Stefanie Sun. Our local sunshine
and music items and was topped
to the highest wh



The Singapore Indoor Stadium was ablaze with the stunning presence of NTU alumnae who wowed many with her much-awaited public concert. It featured energetic dance moves and was set off with a breathtaking array of dazzling lights and colours. The mood was lifted when she performed with, guest stars, the dynamic Taiwanese trio F.I.R.

新馆长 新作风

王润

四十九年前，他第一次踏上云南的土地。四年后，他的毕业典礼在前南大行政楼（现华裔馆）前举行。今天，他重返这个熟悉的校园，别样的身份、别样的心情。

廖建裕博士以华裔馆第



2006年1月，廖博士被委任为华裔馆第四任馆长，任期三年。
摄影 | 林晋平

四任新馆长的身份重返阔别了49年的南大校园，套他的一句话，这次他“不再是过客”的身份了。

重新踏入曾经是旧南大图书馆的华裔馆，廖博士感慨万分，“以前的南大跟现在的理工大学有很多的不同，但这座楼没有太大的改变，还是我所熟悉的样子。”

专研东南亚历史和政治的廖博士，对东南亚华人社会的文化、政治等课题很感兴趣。他至今出版了40多本作品，其中一半以上都是关于东南亚的华人社会。

虽然廖博士刚刚上任两个星期，但已安排好三年任期期间的工作计划，而且工作重点已经在筹备当中。

《东南亚华人名人词典》将是廖博士任期期间的工作重点之一。他说：“整个工作将会是一个长期而且繁琐的过程，不过相信这套词典将会是有关东南亚华人出版物

中较有份量的作品。”

这套以国家分册的词典将包括每个国家在政治、经济、文化、艺术等领域的著名人物。

除此之外，华裔馆还会继续举办年度国际会议。接下来三年的会议主题将是全球化时代东南亚华人社会的文化、移民和新移民与国际问题，以及东南亚国族打造的课题。

华裔馆作为海外华人研究中心，在增进人们对中华文化的传承，以及对全球华裔社区的认识和了解方面，起着重要的作用。

廖博士也认为，华裔馆一方面要做学术研究，另一方面要向社会做普及工作。

在南大的两个星期，廖博士不禁感慨对华裔馆似乎没有太大的“热情”。

他不解地说：“如果游客来参观NTU，第一个要到的地方就应该是华裔馆。可是华

华裔馆“所谓海外华人？”图片展

如果你是华人，你是否想过，怎样才算是华人呢？何谓华人？你可以比别人更“华人”吗？

时空转移，我们走进了现代化世界，一个由科技推动、充满流动边界的世界。我们更难回答像“我们是谁？”的问题。

华人移民的历史漫长、范围广阔，他们接触许多华人以外不同种族的人，这为他们提供了身份认同的多元选择。

展览上会有两个年表：一个描述中国发生的重大政治事件，另一个则反映海外华人如何影响这个民族主义的号召。

展览通过五位在西方艺术领域有杰出表现的华人艺术家的作品，检视其中的文化多样性。他们分别是导演李安、画家赵无极和常玉、建筑师贝聿铭和大提琴家马友友。

展览以历史学家王赓武教授的专访作为结束。身为海外华人、学术背景跨越东西方的王教授从他的个人经历出发，为展览主题作诠释。

地点：华裔馆二楼展厅

开放时间：上午9时30分至下午4时40分

（星期一至星期五）

入场免费，讲解服务费用学生每位一元、成人三元（请提前至少一个星期预约）

裔馆对NTU的学生来说好像不是一个热门的地方。”

廖博士希望在他上任期

间，能够与南大地师生有更多地交流，使华裔馆成为南大校园活动中心之一。

天地人时 试问谁知

陈维新

命理风水学是中国古老的占卜术，但是这门玄术的科学根据是被受争议的。但对王龄玉而言，却不以为然。

本是室内设计师的王龄玉花了三年的时间学习风水学，并且开了一间把现代室内设计与古代风水学成功结合于一体的公司Senses - The Art of Living。

她认为推动风水学的许多原理都来自科学。“风水学讲究的是环境的因



王小姐的公司专门为顾客们提供一站式的设计与风水服务。
摄影 | 陈维新

素、地球的走势、地心吸引力以及磁场威力对人的影响等。这些原理都是由西方科学提倡并且加以鉴定的。”

王小姐觉得风水学其实并不是迷信，只因人们对它的了解不够深，而且又融合了许多宗教的因素，所以才会长于人们一种故弄玄虚的误会。

迷信正是风水学的绊脚石。因为风水学受到排斥，所以尝试了解这门学问的人

也越来越少。这自然也就形成了迷信即迷信的看法。

受访的王小姐表示，风水的顾客群为35至45岁之间的商业家及企业家居多。但是年龄鉴于25到35岁之间的年轻顾客有着上升的趋势。其中的原因是网络的普及。

“年轻的顾客都会上网查询风水的资料，从中便得到更深的了解。”

大多数的学生却对风水学含着半信半疑的态度。受

南苑访问的众学生当中，有完全不信者，也有宁可信其有者。

陆克曼（传播与信息学院、一年级）觉得风水可信，但不至于接纳风水师的意见。

南大商学院一年级的蓝继祥则相信风水学所带来的好处。

“以后如果自己布置新居，也会随着风水学而决定家具的摆放位置。”

尽管如此，受访的学生都认为现代年轻人对风水学的认识不深，因此也就对这学问不加思索。

虽然围绕风水学的疑团还有待解开，学习这门学问的人却与日俱增。学习的不止是华人而已，西方国家对命理风水学的热忱是有目共睹的。

据王龄玉所言，基本上命理风水学就是环境科学。“假设风水这门学问不存在。人的本性就是选择最舒服的环境来栖身。风水也就是教导人们如何整理周围的环境来提升自己的生气及旺气。”

2006 生肖运辰

鼠、马、羊：

须注意健康，提防血光之灾。

狗、兔：

和老板上司和睦，可出外旅游。

虎、龙：

须保持低调，安分守己，少与人合作。

蛇：

运势属12生肖最好，姻缘可能会来到。

猴：

须注意交通安全，以避免意外。出国谋生是不错的建议。

鸡：

有承诺就必须遵守，不然债主会来讨债。

牛：

对于男性不错，可能偶遇女贵人。

猪：

对于女性佳，事事都会顺利。

人之茶情

在这个速食年代，对一般年轻人来说，泡茶还不如泡面。泡一壶茶竟然需要茶具一大堆，还不如袋装红茶来得经济又方便。还有谁会有那种时间、那种闲情逸致坐下来，耐心地泡茶、品茶呢？就让南苑记者林安琪改变您的看法。

为了对茶有多点认识，记者分别到新加坡三个茶馆《茶渊》、《茶乐》和《茶芝林》做了探访。

“茶的学问很多，从什么时候采摘茶叶、怎么采摘、如何烘焙、在哪里储藏，至正确的泡茶步骤与品茗过程，都很讲究。”《茶乐》的服务小姐黄祺祺说。黄小姐学茶道已经有八年了。

例如茶叶“西湖龙井”得在清明节前后二十天里采摘。西湖龙井的新芽特别嫩，所以采的时候得拔出嫩芽，不能用指甲掐断，否则会留下痕迹。

说到茶具，《茶芝林》的服务小姐秋琦指出深色紫砂壶最受欢迎。“紫砂上有小孔，可以吸进茶味。所以爱茶的人会‘养壶’。紫砂用得越久越让人玩味，就算只注入开水，倒出来还是品尝得到茶味。”

“另一个特别之处，就是被水淋湿的紫砂壶在三十秒左右会干，爱茶之人以此断定茶是否可以享用。”

如何泡一壶好茶呢？

《茶渊》的一名茶客简应隆先生很热心地为记者示范。年仅二十岁的简先生从小学五年级就开始对茶道就有浓厚的兴趣。

首先，简先生把热水倒入



饮茶所需的茶具，有分成不同种类。除了在这所见的陶瓷茶具外，也有大受欢迎的紫砂茶具。摄影|黄歆尧

壶中温热，再从壶中把热水倒入其它杯子。他说这“除了卫生外，也可避免第一泡时，冷壶吸收水温，使泡茶时的水温降低。”

取出适量茶叶放进壶中后，将热水以打圈的方式倒入壶中，以确保茶叶所吸收的热量相同。水的份量，以盖上壶盖水溢出为准。盖上壶盖后立即将水倒掉，让茶叶吸收温度和湿度。

这一泡为“温润泡”，一般不喝，立刻将之倒入公道杯（最大的杯子）。这泡茶可用来淋壶，有“养壶”的作用。

冲泡第二泡时，大约需等30秒后，将茶注入公道杯。接着注入闻香杯（较瘦高的杯子），再从闻香杯倒入品茗杯（喝茶的杯子）。

在冲泡茶的时候，简先生把茶杯紧靠在一起，用茶壶沿著小杯打转地注入茶水。他表示“这叫做‘关公巡城’，目的是要把茶水的份量和香味均匀地分配给每只杯子。”

接下来，他将最后最浓的茶汁一滴一滴平均分配，这叫“韩信点兵”。关公即关羽，韩信是能征善战的将军，中国人把军事术语套用到喝茶，很情趣，很创意。

品茶中的一道过程叫做“闻香”。热乎乎的闻香杯在手中搓揉，放在鼻下闻，立即茶香扑鼻。

闻完茶香，再小口喝茶汤。先含在口中品尝味道，然后再慢慢吞下感受其滋味变化。

喝绿茶的益处。

据记载，从茶开始受欢迎以来，喝茶喝得最厉害的皇帝要属乾隆，一天三次，茶杯里的茶垢还不准擦掉。

传说乾隆85岁时想不做皇帝，老臣跪说国不可一日无君，乾隆回答竟是，君不



饮茶的乐趣，不限于华人。在《茶渊》内，外国人也慢慢地被感染到了。摄影|黄歆尧

可一日无茶。且说在历史上230个皇帝中，乾隆最长寿，其中传闻其原因与绿茶脱离不了关系。

《茶乐》的黄小姐说，世界上公认的饮料只有六种，第一种就是绿茶。那绿茶好在哪里？

“绿茶里面含有茶多酚（tea polyphenols），而茶多酚是抗癌的，还可抵抗辐射。绿茶里也含有氟（fluorine）。”而氟具有清洗牙齿，使牙齿坚固的功效。

其实这道理在古时候，人们很早就知道了。曹雪芹在《红楼梦》里说贾府的人吃完饭都拿茶漱口。而苏东坡每次吃完饭也拿中下等茶漱口。

新加坡的天气炎热，以品绿茶最可去暑。因为绿茶属未发酵（ferment）茶，性寒。“寒可清热”，最能去火。

茶的好处多多，喝茶能使身体健康，又怡情养性。“酒醉不如烟醉，烟醉不如茶醉”。

传说，喝茶醉了的人是很难清醒的。笔者对茶懂得不多，只知道喝茶时很愉快，很舒展，很自由，而这就是茶的魅力。

在同一个速食年代，若有机会能在清静的午后，沏上一壶好茶，在悠闲的气氛里，轻言细语、浅笑小饮，不也是另一种情趣与雅兴。

知道了茶的好处，当然还必须知道饮茶的好去处。

1) 《茶渊》

9A Neil Road

电话号码: 6226 1175

《茶渊》座落在翻新过后的店屋中，走上深色木楼梯，犹如走入了早期移民的回忆与历史。

茶渊有韩国式、日本式、中国式座位任你挑。如果不介意付多一点钱，还可坐上英女皇来喝茶时坐过的位子，喝杯以女王命名的“茗茶”。

因为座位多，生意好，在繁忙时间想找个不被打扰的座位品茶不大容易。服务小姐可能因为客人太多忙不过来，招呼也顾不得打了，有话就说，要茶就点。这里适合找几个死党来叙旧。因为人多热闹，聊天的兴致也就跟着高了起来。

2) 《茶芝林》

Far East Square No. 76

Telok Ayer Street

电话号码: 6224 6873



福德祠建于1824年，是新加坡有历史记载的最古老庙宇之一，距今已有182年了。摄影|黄歆尧

本来住着保佑早期移民的大伯公，后成了博物馆，两个月前才成了茶馆。而茶馆仍保持着庙宇的外形。

庙里有师傅给人讲茶、教人泡茶。在庙里喝茶，别有风味。尤其是下雨时，看着前门露天空地从天而降的雨水，啜一口好茶，时间似乎可以就止于那一刻。只是千万别选在人多的时候到访，怕是自己也变成了展览物，供路过的观光客观赏。

3) 《茶乐》

420 North Bridge Road

#01-05 North Bridge Centre

电话号码: 6339 3739



茶乐的室内设施，融合了中西元素。虽简朴，却给人一种清幽的感觉。摄影|黄歆尧

小小的茶馆，不到十张桌子。柔和的灯光，幽闲的背景音乐，一到里头就有种与世隔绝的感觉。因为特别幽静，在里面说话的声音自然而然地也小声起来。

柜台后面，就那么一个服务小姐，很可爱、很亲切，谈上几句就可以成为朋友。茶乐的老板则较低调，笔者在那儿的三个小时内只是静静地、悠闲地在一旁看书、喝茶，偶尔抬头望过来微笑一下，便又回到自己的世界去了。

这里，适合一边品茶，一边下棋，让时间缓缓地流从身边流过。等夜来临时，才发觉已经坐了那么久，才发觉已经舍不得走了。

迎新之时，此事莫忘

郭靖利

去年的平安夜一转眼，便来到了喜气洋洋的农历新年。除了熟悉的新年灯市，牛车水也如被一股鲜红的龙卷风般扫袭。老老少少，红男绿女手携手，往大街小巷购买年货，沉醉在新年的气氛中。一个完美的新年佳日当然少不了一个温馨的大家庭；它不仅有亲戚朋友的陪伴，更是给予长辈与小辈们有机会交流的空间。传统与新潮混淆于此，趣味繁多。所谓敬老尊贤，身为晚辈的我们在这十五天的华人新年里应该做些或不该做些什么呢？以下提出的几个新年习俗，你又懂得几个呢？

切记千万不能

1. 不能在农历新年扫地或使用剪刀。否则会把家中的好运和才气都扫走或剪掉。
2. 不能在农历初一吵架或大哭大闹。如果不是快乐的一天，来临的一年会运程不佳。
3. 不能挂上风扇或送和风扇相似的礼物。不然会把坏运都“吹”走。
4. 新年一定要穿红色，不能穿黑色。红色象征好运，能驱走妖魔鬼怪；黑色象征死亡与不吉利。
5. 全身上下一定要是新衣、新裤、新鞋、新袜子。新的一年要有新的开始。
6. 小孩们睡觉前要把父母给的压岁钱压在枕头底下，最好是迟些入眠。压岁钱的本意就是让孩子们快高长大；孩子越迟睡越能证明他们父母的寿命会很长。



新年本来就该大红大绿，喜气洋洋。身为晚辈的我们，应当多注意习俗，以免冒犯前辈
摄影 | 杨吉伟

以下四个礼节可以说和大家熟悉的新年问候息息相关。

7. 农历新年给人拜年时，一定要送一对橘子来祝贺亲友。所谓“好事成双”，“成双成对”才能“大吉大利”。
8. 农历新年，米桶和冰箱一定要满。四个字：“金玉满堂”
9. 农历新年的零食里少不了年糕、糖果和瓜子。吃年糕能让工作人士“步步高升”、舔糖果会让夫妻“甜甜蜜蜜”、吃瓜子则使家族里“子孙满堂”。
10. 农历新年的正食包括吃鱼肉，但避免吃粥。吃鱼肉让大家年年有余。避免吃粥则代表就能避过下雨天。
11. 最好别在祖父、祖母面前打破玻璃或容易杂碎的工具。虽说“落地开花”，但打破东西仍是个非常坏的征兆。

真演习 假防恐

刘叔翰

等待多时的反恐演习终于分别在1月8日和15日，于地铁巴士站、小贩中心等地点举行。

这两次反恐演习规模庞大，参与组织有22个之多。实际动用人员超过2000位。1月8日的反恐演习。更是我国历来最大规模的民事紧急演习。

据报道，为了使演习更为逼真，民防员动用了500民防学员扮演死伤者，还用碎羊肉、雷光弹等来模拟恐怖爆炸情况。

除此，演习地点还选在繁忙的地铁站、巴士站、熟食中心等，进行，让公众有份参与。

虽然主办单位处事周全，尽量把演习细节照顾好，但据公众的反应显示，演习不够逼真，“既浪费时间，又浪费金钱”。

有名曾在英国旅游而

碰上伦敦地铁恐怖袭击的女乘客甚至认为雷光弹爆炸声不及真正爆炸声。

演习真的那么失败吗？演习真的那么没有用处吗？

民防人员、地铁工作人员等在演习15分钟前预先通知乘客演习的开始，也在雷光弹巨响之前提醒乘客掩耳，这些防备措施都错了吗？

所谓演习便是模拟，不是真实的。主办单位在这演习中不只要测试各民防组织的配合程度，还必需顾及到乘客的安危、乘客的心理准备程度，不是说要演习就能演习那么轻松。

1月8日的演习中，就有一妇女因惊吓晕倒。试想若不给乘客一点心理准备，乘客岂不是会在个普通不过的演习乱了阵脚，搞不好互相践踏。若发生这种场面，恐怖分子不笑死才怪！

演习尤其重大意义，国人不该只专注于表面的花絮。举行这场演习的目的，除了要测试各民防组织的合作，更要以此告诫恐怖分子：新加坡已经为反恐作好了十二分准备。

所谓防恐，最重要就是预防。官方处心积虑把演习的重大讯息传给各界恐怖分子，让他们对向我国下手存些戒心，不敢来犯。

这一层防范措施办妥了，问题是民防机构与人民防范准备作好了吗？

据说演习前，警察、医院、民防部队等参与演习的组织都已经准备就绪，只等上头号令一出，便倾巢出击。

据目击者说，民防部队5分钟内便到了。实际情况里，这有可能吗？

在一个真正的状况中，一场爆炸估计须由爆炸处的负责人通知警察，再由警察通

言论

知各单位。各单位在调动人员在大本营聚集，取出拯救器材，再出动到事发现场。途中若在繁忙时段，碰上交通阻塞，也只有咋舌的份了。

公众所要求的“真实”程度，其实应该是这种“真实”。普通一场火灾，只牵涉到警察、消防员和医院，都得花上15分钟才能抵达现场，更何况这次是繁忙时段的大爆炸。

所以说，官方所要测试的，应该是这种组织人员的警惕心与准备速度。

另外，人民的警惕心也非常重要。1月10日的《早报》有一则报道，说记者“把手提式大袋放在地上，然后躲在一旁观察有没有人发现可疑物件”。

结果，“保安人员、地铁和巴士公司职员和不少乘客都经过大袋，但最多只瞄了一眼，并不多加理睬。”这项测验可悲到记者不得不无奈地转移话题赞国人“路不拾遗”。

国人缺乏警惕心。这类例子处处可见。如当南大警钟巨响，我校的学生却总是漠不关心，把警钟声当成校园各处的建筑工地的杂声一样的“背景音乐”。

然而，就因为建筑工地多，祸患发生的可能性才高。但学生对这一点根本不了解，也不想去了解。这就是我们“读书忘命”的最佳证据。

新加坡公众警惕心太弱了。而各机构、民防单位的警惕心恐怕亦是如此。看来官方必须做的，应该是教育国民，免得我们变成“不见棺材不流泪”的一群。



绘图 | 薛婷

文艺

年轻的爱

朦朦的
像薄雾
团着你我

淡淡的
如水般
一点懵懂的感情

她，
春风里飘过的花香
夏雨中奔跑的身影
秋叶里埋藏的思念
冬雪下温暖的阳光

田鹏



绘图 | 薛婷

抬头仰望
星空烨然
织女尚在
牵牛何处

年轻的爱
不过
是一场璀璨的流星雨

| 意祝

邂逅

与她无心插柳的邂逅，
与她屈指可数的对话，
却激起了莫名的喜悦，
也重燃了生命的期待。

距离

人与人的距离，
忽近忽远，
人与人的感情，
忽冷忽热，



绘图 | Firdiana

只能把握现在的节奏，
只能冀望明天的契机

娱评

生肖传奇



图片 | 邵氏机构提供

12生肖的成员各个栩栩如生，表现出动物们的各些特征。例如：忠厚老实的牛、拥有雄心壮志的老鼠、机灵的猴子、忠实的狗和威风凛凛的龙等。

动画片把动物们描绘得非常可爱、讨人喜欢。尤其是一心只想早日完成任务回到家人身边的老牛“奥利”和温柔的蛇“丝凯若”。

片中的歌曲与动画片的情节配合得天衣无缝。尤其是描述蛇“丝凯若”的心境的《寻梦》，更是令人感动。这首歌是由本地女明星范文芳所演唱，她也为片中的蛇和猫配音。

另外两首歌，《生肖王之歌》和《信》，分别由全体配音员和资深广播员周崇庆演唱。周崇庆也为生肖中的老鼠和鸡配音。

影片以诙谐有趣的方式叙述家喻户晓的12生肖故事，并呈现出另一种风味的动画片。

即将在本地春节前上映的《生肖传奇》绝对是一部适合阖家共赏的贺年佳作。大家不妨到戏院去观赏部由本地制作的第一部华语三维动画片，一起迎接狗年的到来！

劳诗敏

《生肖传奇》

The Race Begins) 的故事讲述玉皇大帝如何在众多动物中挑选出十二生肖，及动物们为了取得自己在生肖中排名的旅程中的点滴。

大地初开，因为人类毫无计时计年的概念和时辰的管制，所以人间各地陷入混乱。邪恶的老树妖精便利用人类的这个致命伤到处制造灾难、危害人间。

为了阻止妖精的阴谋，掌管人间的玉皇大帝便宣

布将举行一项拯救人间的竞赛。生肖王的竞赛就此展开了！

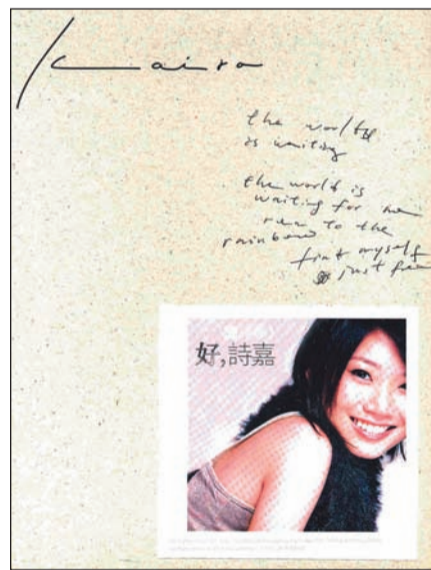
人间的众多动物为了争取竞选生肖王，纷纷来到庙街报名，希望能获选为12生肖的一员。

小老鼠“林可”受猫主人的命令，到庙街去为猫主人报名，但却阴差阳错的夺走了原本属于猫头鹰的最后一个名额。经过种种选拔，12位生肖成员终于诞生了。

为了争夺生肖王的名衔，12只动物们起程前往齐天峰。它们一路上接受严格的试验和磨练，包括老树妖精的从中作梗。

好.诗嘉

| 黄淑琴



图片 | 华研音乐提供

许多著名音乐人的作品。

《远远在一起》更是由很少帮新人写歌的陶吉吉为诗嘉量身订做的。优美的乐曲配合诗嘉感人的歌声，成了完美的组合。

《好.诗嘉》里也有多首著名制作人陈佳明作词的歌。例如歌词丰富的《历险记》与《一天天》和触动人心的《如果真爱我》。

虽然专辑歌曲多以抒情为主，但是里头也收录了一些轻快的歌曲如

《不想自由》和《十字路》。诗嘉可说唱出了潇洒与自我的独特风格。而且这两首歌都由诗嘉作词作曲的。据了解，从创作到专辑的完成，诗嘉共花了两年。

在众多歌手强调复杂的演唱技巧及华丽的音乐编曲下，诗嘉的音乐则是简单、清新的城市民谣抒情曲风。目的只想强调声音与音乐的原汁原味。

在充满喧嚣与压力的音乐竞争中，不妨让耳朵放松一下，听听没有压力的声音，听听诗嘉唱出无重力音质的好音乐吧。

对 龚诗嘉这个名字是不是感觉有点熟悉？是的，她就是新加坡新出炉的女歌手。诗嘉在处女作《好.诗嘉》以自然亲切的造型贴近观众。对歌曲的品质丝毫不马虎，原因就是要把最好的音乐呈献给听众。

《好.诗嘉》一共收录了十首歌。当中有七首是诗嘉的作品。诗嘉的嗓音轻柔却具渗透力，以不矫饰的语言唱出细腻的情感。

主打歌是《再一次拥有》。诗嘉用心的投入加上独特的唱腔，完全能表达歌曲的意思。专辑里还蕴藏着

娱乐



燕姿过人 光四射

| 赵梅吉

绚丽的舞台、灿烂的烟花、动人的歌声、七彩缤纷的灯光以及整齐的舞蹈，这些视觉与听觉上的享受在孙燕姿的演唱会上是一样也没缺。

阔别了四年，孙燕姿在一月十四日，室内体育馆举行了她在本地的第二场公开售票演出“孙燕姿2006新加坡演唱会”。

开场时，穿着白色公主装的她站在伸降台上从底层



生色具备的演唱会，令在场的观众赞不绝口。摄影 | 江汉忠

升上来，用她清澈的嗓音唱着《风筝》，迷倒了全场的观众。

顶着一头红发的她就站在白薄纱布中，看起来既娇媚又高贵。她那雄厚的嗓音让人惊叹，如此瘦小的女子是如何发出那么强而有力的歌声？

舞台也不时燃放烟花，让观众看得目不暇给。舞者的活力和现场演奏的音乐效果为演唱会带来了不少声色。

休息了一年的她与从前比起来多了一份成熟、歌声里也多了一点沧桑。这难免让人想起她那段刚结束的爱情，也会让人猜疑她是否在

为这天折的感情哀悼。

演唱会的舞台设计很巧妙。舞台中央设有机关，让孙燕姿出现于舞台的各个角落，以免冷落反正方的观众。主办单位也在屏幕上播放歌词，让歌迷能跟着燕姿一起K歌。

然而，演唱会也有美中不足的地方。麦克风在前半场不时失灵，吉他手在燕姿要开始唱《同类》时失手走音。燕姿在唱《难得一见》时，也不小心踩了身边的舞者一脚。

虽然演唱会上出现状况，但是孙燕姿却能临危不乱，以微笑带过，照样地唱歌、跳舞。这也就是令人佩服的

地方，可谓天后的风范。

孙燕姿这次邀请了她的师妹和师弟FIR作为演出的嘉宾。当FIR站在伸降台上与燕姿一起高唱她新专辑的歌曲《第一天》时，全场的歌迷几乎陷入疯狂。

除了有FIR担任特别来宾外，Tanya蔡建雅也到场助兴，与燕姿合唱了《原点》和她的创作《陌生人》。这两位本地的优资歌手搭配得天衣无缝，歌迷都听出了耳油。

演唱会的尾声，燕姿在观众的“encore”声中，终于穿着军装再次出场。她唱着《绿光》和《梦不落》，大跳踢踏和军式舞，引起了歌迷热烈的欢呼声。她那一首《天黑黑》也成了当晚的最后一首歌，观众朋友也随着她一起唱着这首成名曲。

天后的号召力是无人能比的。演唱会上星光熠熠，新传媒艺人郑惠玉、王建复，许振荣，黄慧和李之仪都是当晚的座上之宾。

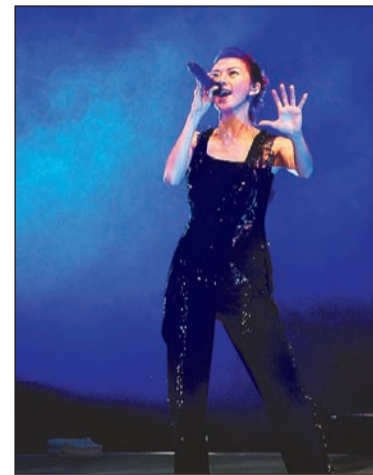
在受访时，李之仪说：“我觉得（演唱会）很不错，她进步很多”。这位孙燕姿的头号歌迷也说当燕姿在唱前几首歌时她被感动到，尤其是在“当她唱得很

有感情的时候”。

孙燕姿这次的演出票房绝佳，一票难求，价格最贵的票也一扫而空。幸好本校企业公关部门愿意割爱，才让南苑记者有机会观看这一场难忘的演唱会。

孙燕姿在演唱会上与大家分享了一句名言，“Man should not accept our destinies, we should choose it”。她也透露她在选择当歌手前的不安和恐惧。

然而，凡是到场的观众都应该会为她的选择和努力感到骄傲和表示支持。骄傲的不只是因为她在演唱会所呈现出的漂亮成绩单，也因为地向全亚洲证明了新加坡也是有人才的。



歌坛上的闪亮之星，新加坡的骄傲。摄影 | 江汉忠

整李生活，主持心声

| 赵梅吉

李腾。凡是在夜晚习惯听933广播的人都不会对这位兼职DJ感到陌生。

除此之外，这位热爱主持的南洋理工大学学生最近也参加了新传媒电台所主办



李腾是否会从比赛中脱颖而出？就让我们大家拭目以待吧！照片 | 李腾先生提供

的《超级主持人》（《Superhost》）比赛。另外，心直口快、敢说敢言的李腾，最近对一场淘汰赛的成绩说出了一些个人看法，而引起关注。

为了让读者能更加了解事情的来龙去脉和更进一步地认识这位超级主持人，南苑（南）特地安排了一场访问。就让读者从以下的答案自己去评断、自己去了解李腾（李）吧。

南：你是否能提出你对比赛的模式的看法？

李：蛮特别的。因为有所谓的专业排名以及人气排名。排名最后的两名参赛者必须站在终极擂台，由其他参赛者投票淘汰。有点像是学校排名那样，希望每一次都会进步。

南：你认为比赛因该有什么

变动好让参赛者更能够以才能胜出。

李：可能就让各组别的师傅来做最后的决定吧。但也有可能发生师傅偏心的质疑，所以没有一个制度是完美。

南：你也曾因为淘汰制度而与其他参赛者有过争执，你是否能谈一谈当时的情形？

李：曾经在第一轮的比赛时，其它参赛者一致把当时专业排名第一的伍洛毅淘汰。

当时我以为他们把强者淘所以对他们的行为进行了谴责，但后来他们解释认为柏荣的态度和潜力会比较好，所以我也就释怀了，因为毕竟每个人的评分准则不同。

南：你认为比赛公正吗？

李：我认为没有一个比赛是公正的，有时候运气也占了很重要角色。重点是要尽力

而为并以平常心看待比赛结果。

南：难道你不担心会因为此事而影响比赛吗？

李：我是就事论事呀，如果他们因此将我也淘汰出局，那这样子的比赛我也没有必要继续。但时间也证明到目前为止大家都是以实力来竞争的。

南：让其他的参赛者决定自己的命运，你认为这么做是否有欠公平？

李：多少会，但这也是这次比赛的挑战。因为身为一名成功的主持人EQ一定要很高。但其实这也是个很好的机会来了解自己的人际关系以及处事态度是否有瑕疵。

南：参赛者间的友谊是否有因为比赛的格式而产生疙瘩？

李：我本身是不会因为比赛的制度而去讨好其他参赛者。我一直都秉持着以诚待人，就事论事的态度。对于其他人的看法并不会太在乎所以还是以平常心看待我们之间的友谊。

南：经历了那么多场的淘汰赛你是否有了应付比赛的心得？

李：每场比赛都是硬战，千万不要有得过且过的心态。因为观众的眼睛是雪亮的，就算你侥幸赢得了比赛，也会得不到尊重。

南：你在比赛中学到了什么？

李：成功的艺人，除了兼具相当的的实力外，待人处事也是很重要的。

当一个艺人光鲜的站在舞台上，幕后的工作人员是功不可没的。

好好女声

胡温馨

一九三九年《乱世佳人》(GONE WITH THE WIND) 中的郝思嘉爱的不畏不惧让人动容。2005年龚诗嘉让大家“再一次拥有”这样的听觉感动。

华研年度新优质好声音，好好女声龚诗嘉，让耳朵不再有压力、音乐更加有诚意。“好·诗嘉”唱出无重力音质的音乐新生命。

话说龚诗嘉当年是国大的学生，从初院时就开始创作。在一次国大宿舍举办的歌唱创作比赛中，诗嘉面对朋友的要求，便答应帮忙演绎其朋友创作的歌曲。

她的声音实在耐人寻味，让台下评审之一的吴庆隆耳朵为之一亮，因此把她签下，也顺利地开拓了她的歌手生涯。

在专辑里，诗嘉自己创作了七首歌。其中，她最喜欢的是《白鸽》这首歌，也是她用了一个晚上写的。

诗嘉觉得这首歌神秘中带有淡淡的忧伤。她觉得夜深人静时，是创作最好的时候，感觉其灵感来得特别快。

另外一首较轻快的歌曲《十字路口》，则是诗嘉在选择是否要当歌手时写的。

她觉得自己太害羞，不适合当歌手。但是诗嘉后来想想，机会来了就应该好好把握。于是在大学毕业后，她选择了梦想，也就是歌唱。

专辑中还请来了音乐教父陶吉吉为诗嘉量身写歌。和诗嘉碰了面、切磋音乐后，陶吉吉用了自己最拿手的‘groovy’风格写了《远远在一起》这首歌。

由于知道是陶吉吉创作的，听到demo时，她倍感压力。因此在诠释时，她不断地求好心切，甚至还搞得喉咙疼痛。

专辑里除了得到音乐界的重量级人物的创作，诗嘉也与SHE的Ella一同拍MV。身为新人的诗嘉感到万分荣幸，从他们身上学到了很多。

然而，在十一月的唱片‘战国时期’发片，让她与当红歌手周杰伦碰头。

诗嘉觉得在销售量上难免会有些影响，但是她相信把自己的本份做好然后把最好的一面呈献给大家才是最重要的。

很多人觉得她的声线与孙燕姿、蔡健雅和许美静十分相似，对于这个说法，诗嘉觉得很奇妙。她认为三位歌手的声音都很棒，却迥然不同，能与她们相提并论她觉得是件好事。她希望自己能向她们多多学习，然后自我检讨，以求更多的进步。

一个人到台湾发展，诗嘉难免会想念在新加坡的家人及家中的两只猫，



新加坡音乐歌坛的新才女，人美歌甜的龚思嘉！ 摄影 | 李烈锋

名为‘Meow-mie’和‘Moo’。她表示无法把它们接到台湾陪她，因为诗嘉害怕太忙而无法陪它们。

诗嘉表示如果她不唱歌，也应该不会尝试主持节目。不说你可不知，诗嘉可是国大英文系高学历毕业生，因此华语表达及理解能力并非很强，也蛮担心自己会口齿不清。

当南苑记者问及音乐以外的诗嘉时，她表示自己喜欢像 Johnny Depp 这类型的男生。她觉得 Johnny Depp 有股神秘感，而且越老越有魅力。诗嘉也很喜欢五月天、英文乐坛的 Cranberries 及日本的彩虹乐团。

她希望有一天能组织一个乐团。问及何时，诗嘉则可爱的表示不是现在，因为现在没人陪她。

新的一年，诗嘉希望专辑能大卖，然后准备录制第二张专辑。

她也表示很想学鼓，因为她很佩服那些能一边唱歌一边打鼓的人。

她觉得这样唱出来的声音，才是最真诚、最发自内心的。做出来的音乐也有如随心所欲般，没有特意的风格，也非常有新鲜感。

诗嘉为自己的专辑《好·诗嘉》打了七到八十分。她觉得这张专辑有待进步，也希望下一张专辑会是一百分。

诗嘉认为她接下来会到中国及香港发展，下一张专辑也应该不会等太久，也一定会尝试不同的曲风，所以大家敬请期待吧！

再一次拥有唯美的音乐

田鹏

拥有亲切笑容、优质嗓音、创作才华的本地才女龚诗嘉带着她的首张个人专辑《好·诗嘉》来到了我校，为同学们带来她在新加坡的首场校园演唱会。

这场由南大文化协会(NTU CAC)举办的“好·诗嘉南大校园演唱会”于1月11号晚上在李光前讲堂为大家呈现了诗嘉的新歌。

演唱会一开始，诗嘉就先为同学们献唱优美动听的《再一次拥有》。独特的嗓音，加上MV凄美的气氛让现场的同学们都为之一震：原来诗嘉唱现场是这样的棒！

诗嘉表示专辑中最喜欢的歌曲是《白鸽》。而这首歌则是她在一个深夜里，仅花了短短2个小时的时间坐在钢琴前面创作完成的！

歌词里的真实感情、诗嘉的深情演唱，再加上动人的曲风让大家陶醉在《白鸽》制造出的唯美音乐意境里。

另外，当晚诗嘉也与另一位弹吉他的男生吉乐米共同合作连唱英语歌曲。这是诗嘉第一次“串烧”自己喜爱的英文歌曲。《Kiss me》、《She will be loved》这些都是大家耳熟能详的歌曲。

诗嘉对歌曲独特的演绎方式给大家带来了全新的体验并且表达了她对这些经典歌曲的新诠释。

谈到校园演唱会时，不喜欢去唱KTV的诗嘉却表示自

己特别喜欢唱现场的感觉。而且诗嘉认为在台湾唱现场更有摇滚的感觉，也更热烈。新加坡的气氛唱现场则比较适合唱自己擅长的抒情歌曲。

一听此言，台下的同学们立刻欢呼声四起，让诗嘉着实一惊：原来南大的同学是这样的热情，丝毫不逊色于台湾的歌迷！

接近演唱会的尾声时，诗嘉带来了由音乐教父陶吉吉为她量身定做的《远远在一起》。

这是诗嘉首次与陶吉吉合作。她还向观众透露自己之前还不太敢唱这首歌。虽然背负的压力沉重，但是大家的阵阵掌声无不证明了诗嘉精湛的演绎。

唱到情绪高昂时，诗嘉突然说：“我还是走下台吧！”

亲和力十足的诗嘉与南大的同学们零距离的接触，自然乐坏了现场观众！工作人员也在这时给诗嘉递上了亲笔签名的海报，由诗嘉亲自送给现场支持她的歌迷。气氛霎时之间冲到了当晚的最高点！

“让耳朵不再有压力，音乐更加有诚意”。诗嘉给南大的同学们献上了一场完美的演出，同时也让我们更加地了解做为新人的她充分体现出真诚、坦率和热情。

好声音、好个性、好才华，是对好好女生龚诗嘉的最好诠释！



新加坡又另一颗闪亮的星星诞生了。

摄影 | 李烈锋



和蔼可亲的诗嘉与记者分享她发第一张个人专辑的心得。 摄影 | 李烈锋

EDITORIAL | *Shape your future — speak and listen*

Buangkok station finally began operations on January 15. The white elephant has become symbolic of the lobbying carried out by residents.

Yet, the white elephant was only a creative spark that captured the attention of other Singaporeans.

More importantly, Mr. Charles Chong, Member of Parliament for Pasir Ris-Punggol GRC and his team of grassroots leaders had worked hard on the ground.

They conducted surveys and talked to the transport operator with the clear objective of getting Buangkok station

operating and it finally paid off.

There can be parallels drawn with NTU's Hall 3 saga. The Hall 3 JCRC has also chosen to engage the administration — over their new hall fees.

They submitted a proposal asking for lower hall fees and are awaiting its outcome. The SAO has said that the proposal stands a good chance of being approved.

It is encouraging to see Singaporeans take up an active role in shaping the future they want. In both instances, the parties were clear about what they wanted and worked within the boundaries of the law.

The results have been encouraging too. The administration has been willing to listen and make changes if necessary.

Such a process may be long and tedious but it is a win-win situation for all. Everyone stands to gain with a clearer understanding of the needs and wants of all involved.

It is with such a system that a decision which benefits the most can be made.

Indeed, as Singapore evolves into a more inclusive and open society, much more meaningful debate can only happen if we speak our mind and choose to listen too.

Frankly, my dear

Same same, but different

Danny Tan
Sports Editor

PICKING up your brother from the MRT station should not be too big a deal. Unless, of course, he has just enlisted the week before, and is standing together with a few hundred other similarly attired young men (men, not boys), all eager to have their first taste of the mainland on their return.

It gets worse if your brother's phone goes flat on him while he is trying to point himself out in a sea of shorn heads, any of which could belong to recruit Tan Ming Hui Benjamin.

Twenty minutes and a frantic call from a stranger's phone later, however, my brother somehow gets lucky and finds our car on a road which was so jammed that it really should have had Electronic Road Pricing (ERP).

Ah, the oh-so-familiar rituals that the families of Singaporean boys go through. It seemed like only yesterday when I was part of the bewildered green tide, mesmerised by the lights and sounds of Pasir Ris Interchange.

In the few minutes that I was scanning the crowd of army boys, it struck me that they were largely the same. Most of them spoke in decent English or Mandarin, and it hit me then that I was looking at the so-called "JC batch" of army boys.

I was concerned with what is being done to integrate these elite batches of recruits with the rest of their peers.

I recall my own period of service to the nation.

It began with three months of basic military training. Having watched both the stage play and film army daze, I eagerly anticipated meeting my platoon mates.

My father had told me many

stories about his time in NS. He spoke of incredibly ridiculous punishments which have been since been outlawed by the army. He told me about the oversized uniforms they received and how lucky we are now (a fact he never fails to reiterate).

Above all, his most memorable experience of national service, was meeting people from all walks of life. Thus, I wanted very much to experience this for myself and was eager to meet others beyond my social circle.

However, when I first entered my bunk that was to be my 12-week abode, I could not believe it. Every single one of us was Chinese, from well-to-do families, and were all waiting entry into local universities.

Three months passed, and we were soon posted to different units. Some became pilots; others were trained to build bridges. I wanted to become a commander but I became a military policeman instead.

In the following two years, I came into contact with people from vastly different backgrounds. There were the spoilt mama's boys, pizza-delivering boys and there was even a guy in a death-metal band who growled most of the time.

Working as peers gave me invaluable insights into the values they hold, giving me a whole new perspective towards issues like loyalty and spiritual faith. One guy, for instance, thought nothing of using up all his leave

for a pilgrimage to Mecca. Needless to say, his mates offered to cover his duties.

The disappointment of not being chosen to become a commander slowly faded away as I began to appreciate the opportunity of being around these quirky characters.

While conflicts arose from time to time, they were easily resolved and bonds of friendships formed in their place.

My brother will, most probably (a 70 per cent chance according to army pamphlets) become a commander. If so, I feel that he would have missed out on an essential ingredient of the army experience: to be peers with fellow Singaporeans from all walks of life.



GRAPHIC | NERISSA XUE

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Redefining meritocracy in Singapore schools

Jamie Lee
News Editor

SINGAPORE'S education system is based on meritocracy. Or so it has been said.

Unfortunately, such meritocracy has been degraded to a chase to collect as many prestigious school badges as possible.

Certainly, our education system is founded on meritocracy. Students use their scores from streaming examinations like the 'O' and 'A' levels to gain entry into higher education.

This form of assessment ensures that students go to schools that correspond to their academic ability.

The scramble for the top grades is down to a simple equation: Do well, and get into an elite school.

Sumiko Tan, a columnist for The Sunday Times, recently said she thought that an elite school was better than a neighbourhood one.

She felt extra resources, dedicated teachers and an active alumni allowed elite schools to stay at the top.

She added that "having a good school to your name allows you to go through life basking a little in its glory...no matter how successful one is in adulthood, a person who went to a nondescript school is likely to feel a little bit apologetic about it".

My brother, who had just entered secondary school recently, told me that he saw a friend in a neighbourhood school's uniform.

He asked me: "Why is she in that school? I thought she was

really smart."

This mentality has created a set pattern in defining what success in Singapore's education is.

Students have to take the same well-worn path in order to consider themselves elite, and successful.

The irony is when students excel at the streaming examinations — they limit their choices to the same tried and tested schools, which are considered the best in Singapore.

My brother's question is symbolic of how the notion of elitism has imbued local students with

the idea that meritocracy means enrolling in elite schools.

However, as Dr Lee Wei Ling, Director of the National Neuroscience Institute of Singapore, pointed out in a letter to the Straits Times Forum last month, students can still choose a less well-known school and excel.

She was responding to the dissenting voices against a top PSLE student who chose not to go to an elite school.

Dr Lee felt that schools are only a contributing factor to success.

There are many routes to excellence, and taking the less

trodden path indicates the success of meritocracy better than its simplistic interpretation.

Nonetheless, there is progress. Channel NewsAsia reported last month that the education system is evolving to one based on talent, rather than examination meritocracy.

It is to become less standardised as students are assessed on their talent, rather than just their results.

Education Minister Tharman Shanmugaratnam then said: "(It is) a certain fuzziness that comes when you move from a system that is about efficiency, to a sys-

tem that is about choice."

The emphasis may be on nurturing talent, but the underlying theme is choice.

Students in a meritocracy should be able to choose, rather than follow a traditionally accepted pattern.

Still, there are many mechanisms against change, like the idea of affiliation among schools.

Schools are grouped according to religious ties or name-sakes, providing preferential treatment to affiliated students.

Point reductions are given to these students, albeit capped, but it is enough to deny another a chance to enter.

Nonetheless, removing affiliation would raise protest, as alumni would fall back on traditions and sentimentality to oppose this move.

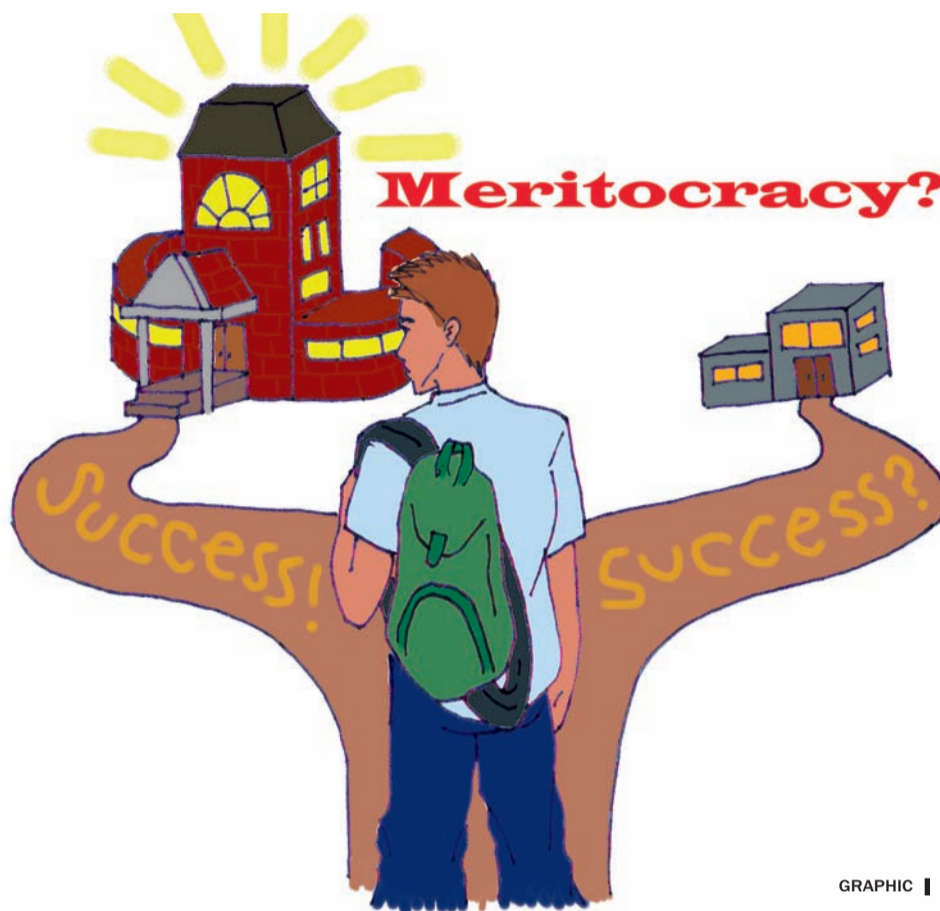
Parents who think ahead, take advantage of another enrolment criteria — the two kilometre radius.

One of the biggest loopholes in our education, it allows students who live within two kilometre of a school to gain priority for entry, as it saves travel.

This also means that parents who want their child to get into elite schools, intentionally move to areas where the top schools are.

Thus, a student can begin schooling at an elite primary school and work their way up via affiliation.

Despite such mechanisms, there is hope that in time, students will not be glorified for the badges on their uniform, but what they have achieved in their education pursuits.



GRAPHIC | NERISSA XUE

Give me a hug — send it online!

Daniel Ong

I WAS surprised when I read in the papers last year about a team of NTU researchers who had successfully created virtual hugs that can be transmitted from one end of the Internet to the other.

At an exhibition held at the Interaction and Entertainment Research Centre to showcase the new system, a live chicken was fitted into a wire-laced jacket.

It was connected to a computer at "Home", while a chicken model was located in the "Office" to simulate a work and home environment. A camera then captures the chicken's movements, and data is sent over to the model, which moves accordingly.

The owner has to only stroke

the model chicken and data will be sent to the jacket, causing a series of vibrations to give a hug to the live chicken.

Well, firstly, I'm worried for the chicken. Who really knows if animals will enjoy it? It may be a pain to them.

Apparently, this system is being considered for testing on humans next. If it happens, and gets incorporated into our daily lives, imagine how interesting it can be.

We would be in for that much more fun. You need not worry about giving goodbye hugs anymore if your friends cannot send you off at the airport.

All you need is to wear the jacket, inform your friends on the other side and you are almost immediately hugged. Or if you are feeling down, just tell your friend over a web chat, and

soon you'll be on your way to feeling better.

However, it can also be quite a scare to think about what else can happen.

We will not appreciate a hug if we just wear a jacket and stare into thin air

We were stunned when we first saw people talking and walking loudly into thin air wearing their mobile phone earpieces. Some of us even thought they are crazy.

Similarly, we would be quite taken aback today if we were to see someone beside us suddenly laugh or giggle, or even

jerking from one side to another saying "Stop it, you are making me laugh!"

It's even scarier if our wardrobes contain models of our family members all lined up in a row, ready to be hugged.

In this case, technology is being used as a substitute for the lack of the physical presence. Sadly, it can never be a good or apt one.

Simply because nothing beats giving hugs physically, in the present moment.

We will not be able to fully appreciate a hug given to us by those whom we know if we just wear only a jacket and stare into thin air.

The same goes to the hugger. We won't feel satisfied as much as we do hugging a mannequin than a human being

We may even forget the

meaning of a hug, which is a form of bonding and expressing of a desire to be close to each other.

Really, nothing beats skin-on-skin. The worst thing, however, is when we become overly attached to the model instead of the person, treating it like a real human being. That is certainly something that we do not want.

Nonetheless, this is as close as we can get towards creating a real hug.

As scary as it seems, let us bear in mind that such a system is not a solution in itself, but rather, another way of expression.

Hey, perhaps something good can come out of it. All of us can now have the opportunity to master the art of giving hugs!

Service takes two hands to clap

| Daniel Ong

LAST month, SMRT taxis introduced a new initiative for disgruntled customers.

They can dial its call centre hotline to lodge complaints against errant and unfriendly taxi drivers. In return, they get vouchers for taxi rides.

It's a two-way street. Passengers are also encouraged to tip drivers when they give good service, above and beyond the usual "keep the change" practice.

In addition, SMRT buses has restructured its wage scheme and upgraded the job title for its drivers, aiming to give them a greater sense of professionalism and pride.

But, do you think these changes will effectively improve our service standards?

Fear of complaints can only last so long in getting taxi drivers to give better service.

Better pay packages and better sounding job titles can only do so much, and could even become a vicious circle of

more payrises and more unlikely sounding titles.

Rather than implementing these changes, I think it would be better to look at the underlying issues for our current indifferent service culture.

Service staff must learn to serve from their hearts, not the customers' pockets

There seems to be a lingering stereotype that only certain groups of consumers will tip, and do so generously – that usually means the well-heeled and often Caucasians.

Recently, a waiter in a bar bypassed me and my group of Chinese friends and headed straight towards a group of Caucasians directly beside our table to serve them first instead.

Evidently the waiter's myopic

view that only Caucasians will bother to tip needs to change.

It is not fair to give the red carpet treatment only to certain customers; and it is not right to serve only with the intention of getting a tip.

Borrowing a line from a café which I walked past, service staff must learn to serve from their hearts, not the customers' pockets.

Another issue is the attitude Singaporeans have towards service. I often find myself thinking that to serve is to 'lower' one's self, but to be served is 'higher' or normal.

I believe that many share my sentiments. Put simply, some Singaporeans are still stuck in the old idea that "the customer is always king".

This mindset can only cause problems – consumers expect good service no matter how unreasonable their demands are.

This demoralises people in the service industry as they are made to feel in a subordinate position, obliged to give in to any whims and fancies of the

customer – all in the name of good service.

On the other hand, it can be argued that customers pay, so they can expect value-for-money service in return.

But not when the customer is blatantly wrong, or when service staff are treated as if they're a lower form of life.

We pay for the goods and services, not the right to impose ourselves on a fellow human doing this for a living

Have all our years of courtesy campaigns gone down the drain?

Before anyone takes any sides to these opposing opinions, we must recognise this

basic fact: service is a social exchange between two or more people.

Our actions and attitude towards the other person will affect what we receive. We pay for the goods and services, not the right to impose ourselves on a fellow human doing this for a living.

As consumers, we have a part to play in making the experience positive in greeting, smiling or starting small talk.

We need to be considerate; we are not the only ones being served.

We will not lose by taking the initiative. Instead, we gain much more, when our care for others is returned.

Singaporeans are among the most adaptable people thanks to our shrewd thinking and pragmatism.

Though we may not have a natural service culture, or the warm greetings of "Sawadika" or "G'day, mate" as PM Lee said, in the end, actions do speak louder than words. It takes two hands to clap, after all.

Show our local heroes more support

| Esther Fung

ADVENTURER Khoo Swee Chiow, recently set a world record, submerging himself in a water tank for nine days, beating the previous record by seven hours and 30 minutes.

Critics wrote in the Straits Times Forum saying that he "is losing his bearings" and that "he should be more respectful of his talent for surviving conditions that scare people to death."

Setting high standards is not just confined to how well our paychecks can feed us. We have to ensure that our icons can feed their egos too.

It seems the contention was not about the \$10,000 sponsorship for the event, but rather, how Mr Khoo reduced himself to performing in a circus-like manner.

Give the man a break. What more do you expect of someone who has cleared the world's highest peak, the two poles, cycled to China, and swam the Malacca Straits?

Think of it this way, Mr Khoo did not scorn the underwater tank challenge as an insult to his qualifications, but graciously accepted that opportunity to test his limits.

Plus, unlike his previous achievements, he challenged himself in Tampines, where heartlanders like us could actually meet him and see for ourselves who Khoo Swee

Chiow is.

The two times I met Mr Khoo he was with his family. As much as the media has heralded him as a man pursuing his aspirations and dreams like a sole adventurer, what really struck me was his attachment to his wife and son, and also, Singapore. He bore no air of arrogance, and could easily pass off as someone's favourite uncle.

After the numerous feats he has done for Singapore over the years, he surely deserves better treatment.

While we Singaporeans have high expectations for the people who have done the nation proud, let us not get too carried away with our criticism when they do not perform as spectacularly as they did before.

We live in such a fast-paced

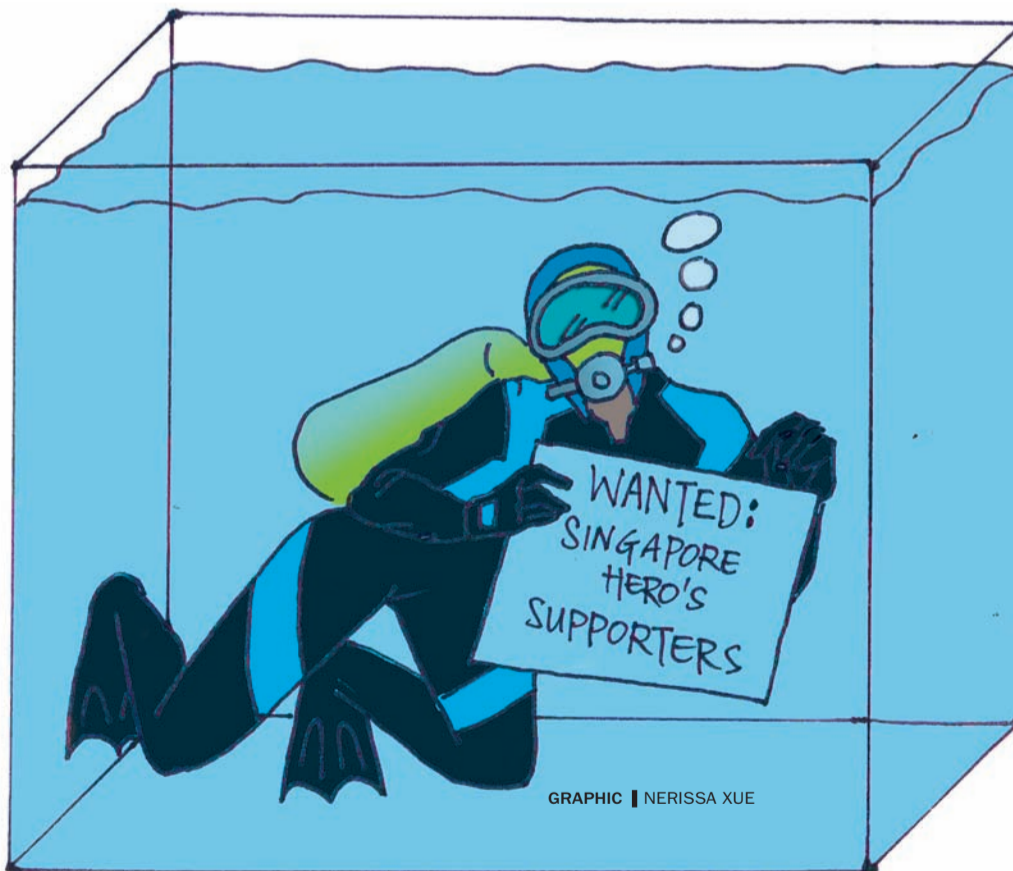
society driven by economics, and it seems that setting high standards for ourselves is now not just confined to how much our paychecks can feed us. We have to ensure that our national icons can feed their ego too.

Granted that they have to face public scrutiny because their influence have far-reaching consequences, being nitpicky about Mr Khoo's less than glamorous feat just fuels the 'ugly Singaporean' image.

Perhaps we should include a "Cut-Some-Slack" campaign in the Singapore Kindness Movement

Perhaps we should include a "Cut-Some-Slack" campaign in the Singapore Kindness Movement, or ... perhaps not. We would not want to lose Singapore's status of being number one at trying to be number one in everything.

Well, here is another thing we could possibly try our hand at. Being number one at supporting our national heroes. After all, they put Singapore's name as a number one somewhere else too.



Reaching out to the world with Singaporean films

I Elrica Tanu

LAST year has been a good one for the local film industry. At one point we had four local films competing against each other in our cinemas, a first for Singapore.

Encouragingly, at least two of the films, *The Maid* and *Be With Me*, have found a market in cinemas overseas.

Many film industry players believe that there simply is not enough of a home market to support a vibrant film industry. Hence, this leads to a surge in the number of local movies being exported overseas.

However, some worry that exporting local films will alienate Singaporean audiences as the films might lose their local flavour in the quest to please the overseas market.

Yet, I believe that there is no cause for worry as most local films that are well received overseas still retain their strong local content.

It is this strong local content, that critics argue inhibits the exporting of local films as audience overseas might find it hard to understand our brand of humour

Taking Jack Neo's *I Not Stupid* as an example, although it has done fairly well in Hong Kong, the number of local references in the film may have prevented it from becoming an even bigger box-office hit.

Should local flavour in our films be diluted to allow them to do better in foreign box offices then? Especially so, when the movies use dialects or *Singlish*. More often than not, these lose the meaning after translation. Just imagine reading the subtitles while watching *I Not Stupid!*

Some worry that exporting local films will alienate Singaporeans audiences as the films might lose their local flavour

I believe that all films would be able to survive in the overseas market, as long as they have a universal appeal that everyone can relate to.

There is no need to intentionally play down local culture, which would then alienate the movie from its local audience.

Eric Khoo's *Be With Me* has been a spectacular success over-



PHOTO | YEOH KEAT WEI

seas, being praised for its high social commentary. Although the situation shown in his film may be unique to Singapore, the human condition it portrays is universal.

Another example is the movie, *City of God*, a film about a typical Brazilian growing up in the 1960s, depicting violence as the Brazilian's way of life.

The violence connected with moviegoers everywhere, so it was easy for the international audience to relate to, despite it being set in an unfamiliar environment.

That means ultimately it is up to the local filmmakers to come up with creative ways to incorporate local flavour in without hindering the understanding of the film.

A fine example is the movie *The Maid* directed by Kelvin Tong.

It used the Hungry Ghost Festival unique to Singaporeans as a clever premise for a horror story. This movie showcased local culture (the Hungry Ghost Festival) and had a universal appeal (a horror movie) and clearly distinguished itself as a

Singaporean movie.

Indeed, the film has done extremely well in Singapore and even attracted the attention of a major distributor in Hollywood. It shows that we do not have to give up our culture to attract the attention of others. Instead we should leverage on our unique culture to appeal to the masses.

With such a small local market, the export of local films is necessary to keep the industry afloat.

Furthermore, if a film is successfully exported to foreign shores, the increased international attention will bring about valuable opportunities for the local filmmakers.

The tourism boost that could follow is an added incentive, just look at how New Zealand has benefited from the *Lord of The Rings* trilogy.

All in all, a local movie should not see culture as a barrier to reach out to a greater audience. Instead, it is something that can make a local movie stand out amongst the onslaught of movies out in the market today.

CanteenTalk

Many have described NTU as “ulu” and boring. The upcoming University Activities Bridge and the shopping mall at the other end, U-Haven, might change all that. What else would make NTU a more vibrant place? The Chronicle asks the students...



“NTU should include more non-academic modules that are interesting, like golf.”

Fong Pak Ling, 25, second-year NBS student

“More open forums with the Student Union. There is lack of interaction between students and the union.”

Choo Li Lin, 22, fourth-year EEE student



“The canteens should have a greater variety of food.”

Shum Chak Hon, 21, second-year EEE student

“NTU needs a whole new coat of paint to make the building look more like a school than a factory.”

Grace Kwan, 21, second-year SCI student



“We should be allowed to think out of the box and not be restricted by so much rules.”

Andrew Oh, 24, fourth-year EEE student

Going the distance

As the Institute-Varsity-Polytechnic (IVP) Games start in January, Track and Field athletes are preparing hard for the matches. *Jocelyn Lee and Sheikh Luqmahn find out more*

Low Kian Teck 400m hurdles

A GAME of catch with his primary school friends fuelled his passion for running. Low Kian Teck's teacher spotted his talent in running as he sprinted after his classmates.

From that moment on, running for Low became more than catching. Low was selected to represent his class in running competitions.

Low went on to represent his school and later on, his homestate, Kuala Lumpur, in Malaysia.

Now, the 21-year old second-year student from the School of Biological Sciences is a junior record holder for 400 metres hurdles in the Chinese private schools' track and field competition in Malaysia.

Besides being a record holder in that competition, Low also won the 200 metre and 400 metre races, and was even awarded the best male athlete title.



Low leaps for greater heights at the IVP Games. PHOTO | SZE JIA MIN

Low is an IVP athlete for NTU's track team as well as floorball team.

Last year, he did NTU proud by coming in second in both the 400 metre hurdles and the 4 by 400 metre relays in the Inter-Varsity meet.

The athletic all-rounder rep-

resents his hall not only in track and field events, but in volleyball too.

To prepare for his competitions this year, he keeps to a strict training regime.

Low said: "I go for my floorball and volleyball training which is twice a week each and I

"I want to defeat NUS as they are a very strong team and we lost to them last year."

Low Kian Teck 21, second-year Biological Sciences student

also go jogging once a week."

His gruelling training schedule also includes practising drills and baton passing, to train for his 4 by 400 metre and 4 by 100 metre races.

Besides training hard for his upcoming matches, Low watches his diet carefully too.

"Before matches, I don't eat chilli as my coach said that it will affect my breathing and thus, my performance," Low said.

He added: "I also eat more vegetables and drink more water."

He said his motivation comes from losing the 400 metre race in the National Juniors Track and

Field Competition in Malaysia.

He explained: "I wanted to win the race so badly but I finished fifth. After that match, I told myself to train even harder and continue to improve."

Apart from his desire to do his best, Low is also spurred on by his friends to do better.

"I have many friends in Malaysia who trained and ran together with me so we motivated each other," he said.

However, running has not been a smooth journey for Low. Two years ago, he suffered from a back injury due to doing triple jumps.

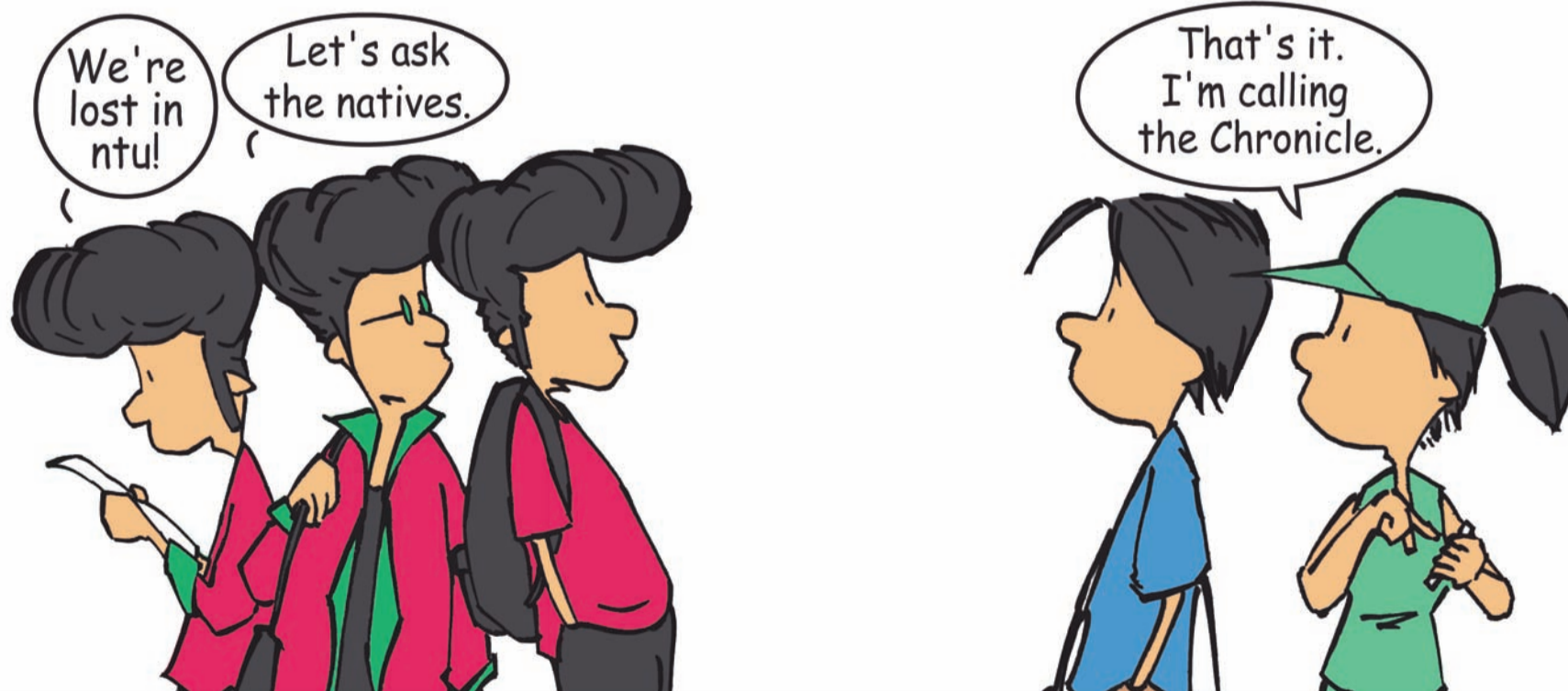
His injury has since affected his performance in races.

"I have recovered from my back injury but my performance now cannot be compared to the past any more," he revealed.

However, Low hopes to finish in the top three for his 400 metre hurdles in the coming IVP meet.

He added: "I want to defeat NUS as they are a very strong team and we lost to them last year."

If you spot something interesting around NTU or have a burning issue to raise...



**...email to chronicle@ntu.edu.sg or
call our news hotline 6790-6446**

Sumiko Tan Long distance & Biathalon

WHILE most students here do not recall how they spent their early childhood, Sumiko Tan Sok Hue clearly remembers feeling entirely at ease in the water.

A first-year Diploma in Physical Education student, she began swimming when she was three years old and has never looked back since. She continued swimming competitively till she was in Primary 6 when she was spotted to be a runner.

She performed well enough in an 800m race to catch the attention of the teacher-in-charge of track and field in Nanhua Primary. She soon moved on to longer distances, and recently took part in the historic 168 km run around Singapore as part of NTU's anniversary celebrations.

Though she is no stranger to long runs, having ran a marathon within 3hr 37mins, her leg swelled up during the last parts of the run round the island.



A determined looking Sumiko gamely poses for the cameras after finishing a gruelling 168km run.

PHOTO | ADELIN OONG

Looking at the tanned, lithe athlete with the insurmountable drive, one is not likely to suspect that a painful episode from her past forms a very large part of

her motivation to succeed.

Two of her teammates in Primary 6, whom she was especially close to, died in a tragic traffic accident. This episode left

Sumiko devastated.

She decided to honour their memory by doing her best in her athletic endeavours. She explains: "They had such dreams

and ambitions...and by doing what I do, I hope to live their dream."

Besides running endlessly, she is still very much into her first sport, swimming. Furthermore, she has started cycling and she has also been training with the national triathlon team.

"They had such dreams and ambitions... and by doing what I do, I hope to live their dream."

*Sumiko Tan Sok Hue, 21
First year Diploma in
Physical Education*

The versatile athlete represents NTU in no less than five events, ranging from Track and Field to the biathalon team.

She is also part of the running outfit, MR25, which stands for Macritchie Runners 25. Created in 1975, the club's main aim is to nurture recreational runners to do even better by switching to competitive running.

Dawn Ooi 400m sprint

RUNNING is Dawn Ooi's passion. To her, nothing could be worse than having an injury that will interfere with her training. Ooi's worst nightmare came true when she injured her outer shin about a year back.

Ooi, 22, hurt herself while coming to a stop when she felt an excruciating pain shooting up her leg.

"It just happened all of a sudden, my muscles hurt terribly and I could not do anything to stop the pain," the first-year student from the School of Physical Education and Sports Science said.

"I think it was the way I landed my feet when I ran, which over exerted my muscles," she said, explaining the cause of the injury.

Dawn was kept out of action for two months. For a passionate runner who trains six days a week, two months was an eternity.

Instead of wasting the two months away, Ooi did other kinds of exercise to maintain her stamina.

She did not want the injury to affect her performance in competitions in any way.

"I could not run, so I did other kinds of exercise like swimming, cycling and running on grass. These exercises helped keep me fit and did not put a lot of pressure on my muscles." Ooi said.

Fortunately, Ooi's injury had

recovered after two months and she could continue to run and train properly again.

Now, she is training hard for the races she is taking part in this April.

For the Inter Varsity Player from NTU's track team, training hard is a must in order to succeed.

Ooi trains with her coach, and her strenuous training includes endurance run, short sprints and lifting weights. To her, juggling studies with training is all about having good time management.

"I want to be the best that I can be and you never know your own strength until you try."

*Dawn Ooi, 22,
first-year
School of Physical and
Sports Science student*

She said: "It is hard to train when all the assignments start to come in. But I continue to train six days a week although it is very tiring.

"The key is to plan my time well," she added.

In order to perform well in races, Ooi watches what she eats carefully, other than training hard.

"Basically, it is no soft drinks, no deep fried food and no fast food for me," she said. She ex-

plained that these foods have a lot of fats and for a 400 metre race, which is a long sprint, a runner could not afford to put on much weight.

In her most recent meet, Ooi ran a 400 metre race in 60 seconds, achieving her personal

best timing to date. For her, clocking better timings in her races is her biggest motivation.

"I want to be the best that I can be and you never know your own strength until you try," she said.

In the coming IVP Meet, Ooi

hopes to improve on her speed and beat her personal best timing. She also wants to bring her passion to greater heights.

She said: "I want to continue to do well in my races and one day, I hope to be able to represent the country."



NTU President Su Guanng welcomes the returning SEA games athletes with a dinner honouring their contributions to Team Singapore.

PHOTO | ADELIN OONG

In good company

Island-wide demand for all-women exercising environment rises as women warm to the idea of fitness groups, with NTU undergraduate females being no exception

| Bernadette Yuen

WOMEN all around Singapore are hitting the gymnasiums and fitness centres around the island.

According to a Straits Times article dated January 4, more women health centres have emerged after a Singapore Sports Council (SSC) survey showed that Singaporean women tend to prefer exercising in an all-women environment.

A separate study by SSC also showed that regular participation of women in sports was more than ten percent less than their male counterparts.

The study revealed that the percentage of women who exercise regularly stood at 32%, compared to males at 45%. Non-participation in sports by females is a high at 62%.

Ong Peixin, 19, a first-year student at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, says: "My friends and I don't exercise enough. I think a programme



Many women find exercising in packs fun and motivating

PHOTO | YEOH KEAT WEI

that forces girls to exercise together is good as it won't make them feel so alone. Also, they can feel more comfortable and less self-conscious."

Jiang Meiru, 23, doing her final year at the NIE, is an avid jogger who does her rounds around hall grounds frequently.

She also goes for regular dance classes outside of school. She says, "It's definitely more fun exercising with girls. You get to bond with your girl friends and also look out for and help pace each other! That way it's more comfortable."

However, Fiana Santoso, 21,

a second-year student at the School of Communications and Information, does not think so.

She said: "I think with guys you tend to exercise more – like going to the gym – guys exercise more and you will feel pressured to exercise more to look good!"

Some female undergraduates depend on programmes like those offered by Pretty Tuff to help them stay in shape.

Sarah Pillai, a third-year student at the School of Civil Engineering, 22, quipped: "It's a start for me. I don't think I exercise enough, and it helps that the programmes are catered just for women!"

Pretty Tuff, a women-only

"It's more fun exercising with girls. You get to bond with your girl friends and also look out for and help pace each other!"

Jiang Meiru, 23
Final-year student
National Institute of
Education

fitness club, opened for registration of programmes at Canteen A between the 11th and 13th of January. It was clearly a success as streams of female registrants could be seen at their booth.

President of Pretty Tuff, Mabel Loon, 23, said: "I don't think that the female students here exercise enough. That's why Pretty Tuff was created by the SRC, to encourage women to exercise."

"The response has been very good. Last semester we had 600 plus registrations, and this semester, our online registration is completely filled out."

Pretty Tuff prides itself on being an organization dedicated in getting more women to start getting active. This semester, a fresh round of programmes have been launched. These include MTV dance, combat yoga, power yoga and Pilates, which are among the most popular exercises among NTU's female student population.

On her thoughts on whether women only tend to exercise more when with other women, Loon says: "I think it depends on the activities."

Tan Huishan, 20, a second-year NBS student agrees: "Guys probably won't want to join classes like salsa or Pilates anyway!"

Pretty Tuff still draws the crowd

| Danny Tan & Joanne Chua

WORKING-OUT together is, apparently, something that NTU girls can't get enough of.

Classes offered by Pretty Tuff, an all-female fitness organization in NTU, continue to be popular among students here, despite fewer and odd time slots for lessons.

Its president, Mabel Loon, 21, estimates that enrolment for its classes, ranging from various forms of yoga and pilates to more aggressive sports like kickboxing and combat yoga, stood at about 600 this semester.

This is a drop of about 70 students from about 670 last semester.

The third-year Civil and Environmental Engineering (CEE) student attributed the slight decrease in enrolment to the unpopular time slots the classes received.

She revealed that while most of the classes used to be in the evening, they are now in the morning.

In addition to the odd timings of the classes, which could be as early as 1030 in the morning, she added that the number of timeslots has also been reduced this semester.

Loon cites an increased

usage of the common training rooms as well as having to accommodate the instructors' schedules as the reasons behind the unfavourable timeslots received by Pretty Tuff.

Nevertheless, the fitness club seems to have retained its appeal. One of the possible reasons could be the increased variety of courses it offers.

Six new courses have been added this semester due to popular demand.

A form of martial arts that has its origins in colonial Brazil, Capoeira comprises mainly of acrobatic movements that are usually accompanied by music. It uses groundwork extensively, as well as sweeps, kicks, and head butts.

Another reason put forward by Loon is the introduction of online registration on the Pretty Tuff website.

Registration in previous years had to be done in person at the registration booths traditionally stationed in canteen A.

This isolated the schools located outside of the North Spine area, such as Nanyang Business School (NBS) and the School of Chemical and Bio-engineering (SCBE).

It is telling that students from these two schools make up the bulk of first-time registrants.



Participants in one of Pretty Tuff's yoga classes focus on stretching their limits

PHOTO | KOAY JING LI

PRETTY TUFF'S FIVE NEW COURSES THIS SEMESTER

Capoeira is a form of martial arts comprising acrobatic movements including sweeps, kicks and head-butts.

Hatha yoga combines physical movements with breathing exercises, most of which are stretching positions.

Asthanga yoga is a dynamic,

athletic style of practice. It is a continuous flow of movements that keeps you moving in and out of postures, controlled breathing while you keep each stance locked, and hence, helps to improve one's ability to focus.

Power yoga is modeled closely after Asthanga yoga.

However, in power yoga, there is no one definite set of postures to follow.

Yoga combat is an amalgamation of Karate, kickboxing and Thai boxing moves. It also infuses Hatha yoga practices and postures into its practice. It is a workout which both burns fats and tones your body.



More paddlers will be slicing their waypast opponents.

PHOTO | NG XINYAO

More can play

IVP Table-tennis and badminton teams have to field a minimum of four different players, in a changed playing format

Danny Tan
Sports Editor

TWO players used to be all that was needed to win an Institute-Varsity-Polytechnic (IVP) table-tennis match, but not any longer.

In a rule change that has been enforced in this year, IVP Badminton and Table-Tennis teams must field a minimum of four players.

Previously, teams were able to reuse their singles players in the doubles matches. Thus, a team technically required only two exceptional players to win a game.

Table-tennis Manager, Ms

Royce Yap Tiong Heng, applauded the move, saying that "most institutions preferred this to the previous format" as more students would be able to participate.

She added that more students would get to play in the competitive matches, thus helping the team to improve as a whole.

Support for the rule change also came from Badminton Manager, Mr Yum Shoen Keng, who noted that the whole point of the IVP was to get students to play against each other. He added that the change had taken two years to process, from the time NTU brought up

the matter.

Apart from both managers, players on both teams also felt that the change was a step in the right direction.

Chee Junlin Junne, 20, Captain of the NTU women's table-tennis team, called the move an attempt to make the game "fairer". The second year accountancy student argued that a level playing field would allow more players to participate in competitive games.

The veteran paddler, who has been playing competitively for more than a decade despite her youth, added that the NTU women's table-tennis team currently had 21 players in all, with only 12 being selected to represent the university. With the old system, only two had to play.

Captain of the Badminton women's team, Tan Zhen Dian, 21, suggested that the change boded well for NTU shuttlers. She said: "Unlike other varsities like Temasek Polytechnic and the National University of Singapore, we don't have any superstars."

The final-year accountancy student explained that she felt her team was more all-rounded than some of the other IVP teams, meaning that they now stood a better chance of winning games.

Table-tennis Captain of the Men's team, Ng We Liat, 24, recalled an incident two years ago involving two exceptional China-born players who represented Nanyang Polytechnic. While unable to remember specific details, the third year MAE student knows that if the no-repeat rule was in effect then, the NTU team would not have lost as easily.

They said that?

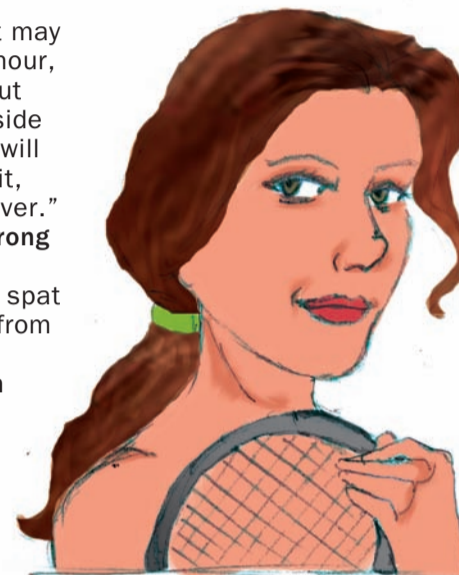


"There is no doubt she's going to win and when she wins, she's going to win a lot."
- Golf swing coach, David Leadbetter on golf player Michelle Wie's chances at the next tournament.

"Why don't you bring your face up here and let me punch it? Then you can tell me (if I'm stronger)."
- Basketball player Shaquille O'Neal

"Pain is temporary. It may last a minute, or an hour, or a day, or a year, but eventually it will subside and something else will take its place. If I quit, however, it lasts forever."
- Cyclist Lance Armstrong

"I thought those who spat had just come down from the trees."
-Athletic Bilbao coach Javier Clemente commenting on the incident where FC Barcelona striker Samuel Eto'o, spat at Bilbao defender Unai Exposito.



GRAPHIC | NERISSA XUE

"It's the repetition of affirmations that leads to belief. And once that belief becomes a deep conviction, things begin to happen."
- Boxing legend Muhammad Ali

"I'll have to suck it up and just try to do the best I can."
- Tennis player, Maria Sharapova, on her shoulder injury.

"I never looked at the consequences of missing a big shot... when you think about the consequences you always think of a negative result."
- Basketball legend Michael Jordan

Sports Opinion

Confessions of a jogging addict

Lim Say Heng

MY FRIENDS think that I am mad.

I jog four times a week, whether on campus or at home, ranging between five to seven kilometres each time. I jog late in the night, when the air is much cooler, and even on nights when there are slight drizzles.

Why do I continue to "punish" myself even after a long day in school? The answer to that can be very commonly heard: I think I am fat.

Which I actually am, according to the Body Mass Index (BMI). The BMI calculates the ratio between one's mass and height. It basically indicates if one is overweight, underweight, or of acceptable weight.

At my heaviest, I used to have a BMI of 35, which puts me in the "very obese" category, and at a very high risk of getting health problems later on in my life, should I not attempt to lose

weight. With my jogging regime, I have reduced my BMI to 26, which still places me in the "overweight" category, and at moderate risk of having health problems.

While most people I know with the same complaint of being overweight who continue to sit on their laurels and whine while they balloon, or adopt fad diets which effects are still highly debatable, I chose to jog.

Why choose this painful option, you say? One simple reason. It is cheap.

Pills and sessions at the slimming centres cost a lot of money, and most of such methods have to be accompanied with a proper diet and some form of exercise for a person to lose weight effectively.

I never believed in "painless" ways of losing weight anyway. I believe that the harder the process is, the more I would appreciate what I achieve.

What is achieved easily will be lost just as easily.



GRAPHIC | NERISSA XUE

Gym memberships are also too expensive for me, and I never liked the idea of exercising in gyms, especially running on treadmills. I always likened people who run on treadmills to pet mice running in their wheels; you can keep running but you are getting nowhere.

Jogging is a much cheaper option to take: I just needed a good pair of running shoes, comfortable running attire and

some determination to complete what I started out to achieve.

For me, jogging is more than just a painful way of losing weight. I enjoy the solitude of my jogs, which gives me time to reflect and get to know myself better.

It is also quite an effective way to de-stress after a hard day of juggling between school projects, my readings and outside commitments.

Also, I like the freedom of running: I can choose when I want to run, how long I want to jog, and the different routes to take.

Furthermore I love the natural high I get when I finish my jogs; the rush of adrenaline to my head and the fulfilling sense of accomplishment when I cross my imaginary finishing line.

People who are just starting out on jogging as a form of regular exercise might find it difficult to maintain their programmes.

However once you surpass the pain barrier you will find

I always likened people who run on treadmills to pet mice running in their wheels. You can keep running but you are getting nowhere

running enjoyable, and even addictive in some cases, due to the adrenaline rushes.

So the next time you see people running around the campus past the witching hour, do think about what I have written here and consider taking up jogging as an avenue to de-stress, or to shed some pounds.

I am not mad.

You just don't know what you're missing out on.

Aikido



Wondering what Aikido is all about? Zheng Yongmian, Chairperson of Aikido Club, has been practicing Aikido for three and a half years. The 22-year old second-year EEE student tells us more.

Chia Mei Liang
Sports Editor

What is Aikido?

The word "Aikido" is made up of three Japanese characters: 'Ai' - harmony, 'ki' - spirit or mind, 'do' - the Way. It is a self-defense martial art in which we make use of our opponent's energy with flowing, circular movements to gain control of them or to throw them away from us.

How do I join as a member?

You can drop by our regular training sessions every Saturday at 9.45 a.m. to have a try-out in

your sports attire. If you intend to join as a member, there is an annual membership fee of \$20. You will also have to buy the uniform and 'bokken' at \$60 and \$20 respectively.

Do I need any experience?

No. Juniors and seniors train together, we help and learn from each other.

What made you join Aikido?

Both the stunning techniques and the rich spirituality of Aikido attracted me when I was first introduced to Aikido by one of my Junior College teachers.

I was also intrigued by questions about the meaning of our existence and the contradictions of life. Aikido is all about unifying forces of the universe. Through this understanding, it has provided me with a path to the answers.

How do you practise at home?

I will get relevant readings from books and the Internet, view video clips, practice the sword

movements (because a lot of basic movements are derived from sword play) and meditate. I take meditation as a chance to make connections between Aikido and things I do in my life.

How has Aikido benefited you?

The training sessions allow me to fully immerse my mind and body in something I feel so passionate about. I learnt to go for each session with an eagerness to learn more because I treat them as a new experience. As I have applied this kind of attitude to my school work, it has benefited me academically.

Aikido also trains my focus, awareness and courtesy. Aikido teaches me to make friends instead of enemies. It also teaches me to be aware of surroundings and to accept as well as to give. But essentially, Aikido opened me up to embrace the world I live in.

Interested in Aikido? Contact Aikido Club at zhen0022@ntu.edu.sg or visit <http://clubs.ntu.edu.sg/aikido>.



PHOTO | MALCOLM QWAH

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