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INSIDE!

Perak Tourism News Supplement



IPOH COMES ALIVE as 1,200 cyclists take to the streets

"It is indeed the pride of Perak to have an event such as Century Ride Malaysia... with more than 450 foreign riders," says MB

Ipoh was just rousing from the night's slumber when more than 1,200 cyclists took to the streets and blazed a trail that would last 100 miles. The day was Sunday, July 17 and time 7.00 a.m. The occasion was the fifth edition of Century Ride Malaysia (CRM), the oh-so-successful annual event organised by Kelab Roadrunners Ipoh (KRI) that has succeeded in putting Ipoh on the map among cyclists from across the region in the five years since its debut in 2007.

Continued on page 2



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CRM – Promoting Perak to the world through cycling



Daniel Lee, 28, G Club Cycling Team (Penang) with more than 10 representatives:
"It's fantastic!!

This was my second CRM, very different course from last year's, with each course having its pros and cons. What I love most about CRM is I get to meet so many like-minded people from all over the world. I have made many friends from CRM over these last two years. I have participated in a variety of cycling events and I rate CRM as a fantastic organisation. One suggestion is to have more water given out after the 100-km point. Overall, the safety concerns are well looked after." (Photos and more inside stories on <http://www.gclub.com.my/node/1428>)



XL Cycling Team, a contingent of 33 participants from KL, the single largest contingent represented in CRM 2011 led by President and Team Manager, Encik Abd Razif Ibrahim:

"The XL Cycling Team is made up of cyclists from all walks of life, from doctors, engineers and professionals to clerks and mechanics, all united by our love for cycling. We started out as a mountain biking group which gradually evolved to become road cyclists as well. This is not our maiden CRM; in fact we are back for the third year in a row and it is good to see the event getting bigger and better every year. This is also the first time that we are in full team jersey which we designed ourselves earlier this year. We prefer this city route as it is simply more convenient logistically. We can just walk or cycle over from the hotel. Great event, next year, we will do better".

(Photos available from XL Cycling Team on Facebook.)



Matthew Law, 28, Team Operation Smile (England):

"I did my first CRM last year where the course was more hilly and challenging. I prefer this year's course which is flatter but a lot faster. This year, I'm happy to have come back with a team of 20 of us from Singapore, where I am based at the moment. We call ourselves "Team Operation Smile" and our objective is to raise funds for "Operation Smile", a charity that repairs childhood facial deformities such as cleft palates etc. We do this everywhere we cycle. This way we get to do what we love – cycle – and are able to give back to the community. Obviously, the more cyclists we involve, the more funds we raise collectively. I am definitely coming back next year, hopefully with an even bigger contingent. As the event grows in size, more police are needed as well as tighter traffic control, to ensure the safety of cyclists."



On hand to flag it off at Dataran Ipoh was Dato' Zainol Padzi bin Haji Paharuddin, Director of Jabatan Belia dan Sukan Perak on behalf of Menteri Besar Perak. "The Perak Sport and Youth Council sees potential in cycling and CRM as a catalyst to bring out hidden talented cyclists among Perak youths," Dato' Zainol said.

On his part, Dato' Bandar of Ipoh, Dato' Haji Roshidi bin Haji Hashim acknowledged that Century Ride Malaysia was one of the most prestigious cycling events in Malaysia, having easily attracted 1,250 cyclists from Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Brunei, Myanmar, Hong Kong, Japan, as well as throughout Malaysia. "I hope this event will be a permanent feature in our Perak calendar of events," he said.

Mr Chong Him Shoong, President of KRI and the man who initiated the first ever CRM in 2007, can take pride in the knowledge that the event has finally reached the status it deserves in this part of the world.

"From being a little known home-grown event, it has succeeded in attracting a wide reach of participants from as far afield as Japan and even Europe. This is an achievement that we in Perak are certainly very proud of, as our objectives are to promote our state to the world through cycling, as well as to promote economic and social activity in Perak," Chong said.

Cycling Malaysia Magazine:

"... Large turnouts. Nice routes. Lots of prizes and sponsors. Fun filled. Beautiful T-shirts and medals. Very well organised."

Exciting Spectator Sport

It was also the first time that CRM was flagged off in the city centre location of Dataran Ipoh, in an attempt to introduce it as an exciting spectator sport that would create more awareness of the event and attract greater participation in the future.

"More than 300 policemen were mobilised to control traffic throughout the 100-mile course, while the Fire Brigade, St John's Ambulance and other uniformed bodies also joined hands to make the event as smooth and incident-free as possible," Chong explained, commending the Perak State Government and Sports Council for their valued support and sponsorship.

Filled Hotels and Food Outlets

Mr Ernest Balasingam, Organising Chairman of CRM 2011 emphasised the fact that about 750 cyclists – or 60% of total participants – were from outside Perak, including 450 foreign

nationals from across the globe.

"The single largest contingent from any country outside Malaysia was Singapore, with more than 200 participants from the republic making their way to Ipoh for the event. They also fielded the strongest participants in terms of performance. Together with other foreigners as well as Malaysians from other states, these visiting cyclists accounted for the fully-booked hotels throughout Ipoh over the weekend not to mention busy food outlets and brisk business enjoyed by restaurants, services and shops across the city."

Winners List

The overall winner of CRM 2011 was Adrian Chua (Men's Open category) in a blistering course record time of 4:07:01 while Christina Liew was the fastest lady to finish in an impressive time of 4:10:59. Check out www.kricycling.blogspot.com for a complete list of participants, winners and timing details.



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IPOH **echo**

From the Editor's Desk

by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

A KAMPONG IN TRANSITION

Seven years down the road, where are the much-touted stadium, bus terminal, police station, hospital, shopping mall and hypermarket which were originally planned?

Mention Manjoi and the image that comes to mind is a quaint Malay village seemingly removed from the hustle and bustle of a vibrant city life in Ipoh. Manjoi typifies a semi-urban Malay kampong in Malaysia – active but laid back. Although just a stone's throw away from mainstream activities, one will have this nagging feeling that it is a village in transition – sandwiched in between Jelapang to the north-west and Merdeka Garden to the south-east. Of late it has become a convenient bypass for motorists wishing to escape the Silibin crawl on their way to Jelapang and back.

The fact that Manjoi's arterial road has assumed a less dignified role has Manjoi's residents up in arms. That was the main grouse of the villagers when Council Secretary, Dato' Rahim Md Ariff came calling one blustery morning on Wednesday, July 13. One other lingering problem that does not have a solution in sight is flooding. Unless something is done to the low-lying bridge along Jalan Puteri, water from the river will spill over the banks after a heavy downpour.

My first introduction to this village within a city was in 1988 when I was invited to a friend's house located deep in the hamlet. The impression I had upon arrival was of tardiness and disorder. The main road was in disrepair while the side roads were narrow and sandy. Manjoi sits on former mining land which was barren and dry. Wooden shacks, some dilapidated, were scattered about without any semblance of organisation.

Riding motorcycles without helmets was an obsession with the kids. It was sheer recklessness on their part. Children played on the roads oblivious of passing vehicles. Amenities that were found in the city, a short distance away, were not available in Manjoi. It was a rural setting minus the comforts afforded by a municipality. Life had ground to a halt in this frontier-like settlement. The inhabitants were mainly Malays from the lower rung of the social ladder. For these itinerant settlers, Manjoi



was a convenient place to squat just like Kampong Baru and Kampong Pasir were in Kuala Lumpur.

In 1995 Manjoi came under the ambit of Ipoh City Council and basic amenities such as rubbish collection, a drainage system and street lighting were provided. But it came with a price. Residents had to pay a small fee in the form of assessment to city council for services rendered. Quality of life improved dramatically and over the years this once sleepy hollow has assumed a more urban-like atmosphere.

Gugusan Manjoi is a collection of five villages within the Manjoi complex. Plans to develop this cluster of villages, the largest Malay settlement anywhere in Malaysia, into a modern township were first mooted by the MP for Tambun, Dato' Seri Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah in 1995. He foresaw the benefits commercialism would bring to the village.

The exercise called for the establishment of a commercial hub in Kampong Sungai Tapah with enough oomph to jump-start economic activities and the ensuing multiplier effect. The RM300-million project, estimated to be completed by 2009, would transform Manjoi into a bustling township rivalling Jelapang and Silibin in stature.



The project launch was made in July 2004 with much pomp and fanfare amplifying our penchant for publicity and merriment. Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi was invited to the ground-breaking ceremony and the whole city held its breath.

Seven years down the road, where are the much-touted stadium, bus terminal, police station, hospital, marketplace, shopping malls and hypermarket which were originally planned? Save for an enclosed space with a tall billboard announcing a mammoth project in progress, the proposed site looks as listless as ever.

The hype surrounding the project is long gone. The Malay proverb, *Indah khabar dari rupa* (news is far better than looks) holds true. Have the RM300 million been exhausted or more funds are being sourced? We have no way of telling, as the truth is hidden behind the blue-coloured metal boards surrounding the area adjacent to the Land Office.

While the powers-that-be decide the fate of Gugusan Manjoi, the poor residents will continue to suffer in silence. Flooding is not about to end. Errant motorists will ply the main road to the chagrin of the kampong folks and getting to the Land Office is a test of one's patience and courage. Little has changed.

A Light at the End of the Tunnel

by Peter Lee

One major concern for many wage-earners nowadays is the cost of living. The domino effect on daily necessities and services is felt when the price of fuel goes up. This badly affects the monthly budget of many motorists. Then there are the food prices which never seem to go downwards whether it is vegetables or poultry. Most wage earners drive to their office, eating out during the work day, paying for their parking, paying for their house rental or bank loan and spending on their children's expenses. Many say that it's very tough to even save RM200 per month with all these expenditures. The cost of living is always a hot topic among all of us especially now because it affects our daily lives and voicing our grievances over these issues is certainly valid. However, it won't help us and our family if we don't take action like earning some extra income for them by having an extra job or learning other skills to provide meaningful services to others.



One of the meaningful services which you can consider is the Estate Planning Services (Wills & Trust). This is a service that every family requires but until today there are still many families who do not have even a simple will because they are either unaware of the importance of it or it never crossed their minds. This is where you will fit in if you are in this service. The simple objective of this service is to spread the message on the benefits of Estate Planning for every family and at the same time earning some extra income for your family. Some of you may ask, "Where do I look for my prospects to spread this message?" The answer is, "the prospects are already in your hands." For instance, our daily lives involve meeting our colleagues everyday in the office, having meals with them, catching up with friends over tea and what do we usually talk about? Usually, it's about our work, families and casual talk. Here is where you can make a difference by sharing with them the importance of having a will. But you must set an example by making yours first.

For a start, to acquire some knowledge in Wills and Trust, you can first join an Estate Planning Company like Rockwills who are the pioneers in Estate Planning services for the past 15 years. The company has a team of full-time lawyers specialising in this field, who have trained many individuals to help families fulfil their wishes with a will. To complete the Estate Planning picture, the company also has a Trustee company like Rockwills Trustee Bhd. to provide Trustee services to families because it has the expertise, accountability, impartiality and perpetual existence. With this support, you can help many families in fulfilling their wishes and giving them peace of mind. In return you get the satisfaction of helping others and at the same time earning some extra income for your family. So don't curse the darkness but instead take action because there is always a light at the end of the tunnel.

Peter Lee is an Associate Estate Planning Practitioner (Wills & Trust) with Rockwills International Group. He is also an Islamic Estate Planner providing Wills & Trust services for Muslims. He is based in Ipoh and can be reached at: **012-5078825/05-2554853** or excels@streamyx.com. Website: <http://www.wills-trust.com.my>.



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Thinking ALLOWED • by Mariam Mokhtar**Michael Jeyakumar Deveraj:
An Enemy of the State?**

Dr. Michael Jeyakumar Devaraj (PSM) is no ordinary doctor. In the Sungai Siput community, he is a saviour and champion. But they are not the only ones singing praises about him. His tireless work helping the poor, the socially deprived and the marginalised of other parts of Perak, Sarawak and Penang has endeared him to many.

On June 25, around 30 members of the Parti Sosialis Malaysia, including Jeyakumar were arrested and charged under Article 122 of the Penal Code.

Many of those whom Jeyakumar was in contact with, mainly through his profession as a medical doctor and social activist expressed incredulity at the charge. The portrait of a communist and a traitor is not one his friends and colleagues at work recognise.

Helping the Downtrodden

Jeyakumar has for most of his life been involved in helping the downtrodden and socially excluded of society. His work with these people has taken him into contact with the people in the estates and the plantations, the industrial workers and the ordinary poor of both urban and rural communities.

He has campaigned against forced evictions in the estates, has fought against retrenchment in industry and demanded that workers' rights be protected. Among his many causes has been for the minimum wage to be set up, and that workers unions be recognised. For the women, he has advocated that the 90-day maternity leave also be respected.

His medical training and working experience has taken him into many areas none of us would even think of venturing into. His posting in remote areas of the Sarawak jungle and work with the Flying Doctors Service proved invaluable.

The challenging conditions in the interior increased both his medical expertise but also opened his eyes to the imbalance in social conditions and the failure of the state in providing for its people.

Witness to Environmental and Human Suffering

He saw the destruction of the rainforest when rivers which he described as 'clear blue waters teeming with fish' became barren with contamination.

Jeyakumar also witnessed the terrible consequences of logging accidents which resulted in death or serious injuries, and adversely affected the longhouse people. These issues were never properly highlighted by the authorities.



From Kapit, Jeyakumar was posted to the District Hospital in Teluk Intan, Perak where he highlighted cases of beriberi (thiamine deficiency) among migrant workers and also the high proportion of deaths amongst the detainees of the Semenyih camp.

His work with the Orang Asli raised serious issues about the health-care system of the Orang Asli which he believed affected them socio-economically.

When at the Ipoh Hospital, Jeyakumar created awareness of the resurgence of tuberculosis in Malaysian society because of the cramped and unhygienic living conditions, malnutrition and heavy physical labour of the migrant workers.

Award for Community Service

Few of us would fail to appreciate Jeyakumar's many achievements and contributions towards medicine and public health in Malaysia. In 1999, he received the Malaysian Medical Association's Award for Community Service.

One of Jeyakumar's friends from his student days recalled the time when Jeyakumar was at the University of Malaya studying medicine, "He was involved in the plight of the estate workers. He started tuition classes in many estates from Sungai Siput to Butterworth for poor students during his semester breaks. The legacy he started continues till today with Indian students sacrificing their time during their breaks to tutor underprivileged students in estates."

Many of us feel that Jeyakumar is a true patriot and is only intent on throwing out injustice, poverty and crimes against humanity.

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Y's Men's Club of Ipoh Installation Dinner on Friday, **August 19** at the Royal Ipoh Club at 7.00 p.m. For details call K. Letchumanan **012-5381939**.

Perak 2011 Photography Competition organised by Perak Tourism in conjunction with VPY 2012. Closing date is **August 31**. Open to all shutter bugs from ages 12 and above. Go to Announcements at www.ipohecho.com.my for more information. Entry forms may be downloaded from Perak Tourism website at www.peraktourism.my.

Food for Life – Sponsor A Day Meal For Needy People. A service project by "Persatuan Kebajikan Komuniti Perak" in Ipoh, **September 24**, at 7.30 p.m. at Banquet Hall, Setiausaha Kerajaan Negeri Perak. Contact: Su – **012-5232415** or Lawrence – **012-5219066**.

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Musings on Food

seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

Photos by Christian DiGiovanna

SeeFoon gets all steamy again, this time in Bercham

Perhaps I have been having a surfeit of rich food. Lately I find myself hankering for lighter food, something wholesome as in steamed food. None of the potentially carcinogenic trans fats generated by heating vegetable oils prior to stir frying or deep frying. None of the ship sinking heaviness or gastric reflux producing bloating that can occur for some of us after an oil laden meal. Steamed food is so healthy and satisfying. Full Stop. No ifs and buts about it.

Steam House in Bercham is just the ticket when one craves for dishes with none of the sacrifices to taste that one conjures up when the subject of steaming comes to mind. Here I can still indulge in the mouth feel and flavour that my taste buds are partial to.

Proprietor Lester Foo is usually on hand to explain and recommend the various live fish which he keeps in his tanks. Here you will find swimming **Tualang prawns** in small, medium and large sizes priced at RM6, 7 and 8 per 100g. The night I was there, we had 8 of the large prawns which came to just under 1kg – RM90. They arrived on a bed of egg white topped with scallions and slivers of ginger, each one succulent and fragrantly fresh.

Live Fish

Live fish include **Soon Hock** or marbled goby, highly prized locally as ‘the’ fish to order and is priced at RM120 per kg. Most of the fish that I saw swimming in their tanks were mostly about 1.2kg. **Wild caught Catfish** go for RM70 per kg although most of the fish are smaller than that size. Lester recommends that the catfish be simply steamed with ginger. The best value fish is obviously the **Tilapia** at RM15 each for a fish of about 700-800g. The night we ordered this it came with a chilli black-bean sauce which was absolutely delectable – spicy, pungent with a hint of garlic. They also have a wonderfully melt-in-mouth fish belly already sliced that they call the **Miri Wang Pu Liao** (Mandarin meaning unforgettable). Perhaps this is a poor cousin of the astronomically prized Empurau which can cost up to RM500 per kg but this eminently tasty dish only cost RM20.



Soups of the Day

Steam House offers twelve styles of steamed presentation. One can choose from Bean Paste, to chopped chilli, garlic, ginger, Nonya, Asam,



Hakka, Preserved Vegetable, Essence of Chicken, **Fu Yu** (preserved soya cheese) and others. There are two soups on the menu which vary daily. The day I was there, we had both the soups. The first a herbal soup made with **Snake Head** (*Sang Yu* or Ikan Haruan) which the Chinese believe is excellent for recuperation after surgery. This was excellent with not a hint of fishiness, and in fact, it tasted so clear I mistook it for chicken soup.

The second was peppery melange of carrots, potato, chicken feet, red dates, *goji* berries and pork ribs. All soups RM10 (large) and RM6 (small).



Egg Specialties

Next came the steamed egg with something which they called **Fong Wong Miu** or Phoenix King young shoot. It was unusual to find vegetables in steamed egg but this appears to be one of their specialties, the other being spinach steamed egg. Steamed egg which appears so deceptively simple in its presentation is actually quite difficult to cook to perfection. Ours arrived in just the right state – still wobbly but silky smooth on the tongue with the vegetables adding textural nuances to the experience – RM8.

With one memorable dinner under my belt, I was not content and had to return for another meal to sample some of the other taste treats I spied on the menu. This time I had the following dishes which were all equally memorable. Beginning with the **Wine Salted Kampong Chicken**, fragrant, with Dong Quai RM23 (half) and RM46 whole, we moved on with the **Ham Har Fah Lam** or Shrimp Paste with Pork Belly which was so delectable that I couldn't stop picking at it and almost cleaned the plate – RM12 (small) and RM25 (large). The **Brinjals with Fu Yu** (preserved bean cheese) was scrumptious with hints of ginger and chillies – RM10 (small) and RM15 (large). Next on the table was the **Mui Tsoi Kao Yoke**, preserved vegetables with belly pork, sweet, salty, fragrance of the preserved vegetables infusing into the slow braised pork – RM12 (small) and RM25 (large).

Steam House, all in all worth getting steamed up about.

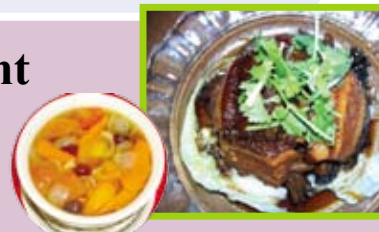
Steam House Restaurant

No. 40 Persiaran Bercham Selatan 1,
Taman Desa Kenchana, Bercham.

Tel.: 05-5486034

Lester Foo: 016-917 6034

Directions: At the first traffic light after Tesco Extra, make a right turn with Glamour Square on the corner. Then turn immediately left into Persiaran Bercham Selatan 1. Steam House is two blocks down on a corner on the left.



RECIPE

By Margarita Lee

Orange Rice



Ingredients:

2 cups rice (soak for 2 hours, drain for later use)
150 ml freshly squeezed orange juice
150 ml water
20 gm butter
2 tbsp olive oil
2 pips garlic
1 tbsp grated ginger
1 cinnamon stick
2 star anise
4 cardamoms
½ an onion thinly sliced
3 slices turmeric
1 tbsp raisins
Salt to taste
Fried shallots and parsley for garnishing

Method:

1. Sauté turmeric in olive oil for 1 minute. Discard turmeric slices.
2. Add in butter, garlic, ginger and onion, stir fry until aromatic.
3. Add in cinnamon stick, star anise and cardamom
4. Add in rice and raisins, stir well. Pour in orange juice and water. Bring it to boil. Add salt to taste.
5. Transfer rice mixture into a rice cooker.
6. Garnish with fried onions and parsley.

Note: serves well with curry dishes.

HAWKER FOOD

By Rosli Mansor

Sup Ekor



Sup Ekor is popular among the Malays but has gained popularity with the rest of Malaysians probably owing to its nutritional value. **Sup Ekor** is delicious when eaten with hot rice as it has its own benefits, especially for men. It is believed that consumption of **sup ekor** can help increase one's libido, relieve fever and muscle pains. The combination of oxtail and spices adds to the tantalizing aroma, aids in blood flow and provides energy. There are many stalls around Ipoh that sell **sup ekor** but we have only listed four. You will be sure to enjoy the appetising flavour of this lovely soup.

Restoran Sulini

Stall No. 6, Kg Tersusun Batu 6, Tambun.

RM7 for a bowl of about 3-4 pieces of tender fresh oxtail.

Opens 4.00 p.m. to 2.00 a.m. everyday.

Aromatic spices and a little vegetable with fresh onions. Less spicy and a little sour.

Restoran Di Naina

No. 37 Jalan Sri Ampang 1, Taman Sri Ampang, Ipoh.

RM6.00 for a bowl of 5 pieces of fresh tender oxtail.

Opens 24 hours everyday.

Aromatic spices with celery, *cili padi* and fresh onions. Less spicy and a little sour.

Restoran Nasi Vanggey

Persiaran Greentown Business Centre

RM7.00 for a bowl of 3 pieces tender fresh oxtail.

Opens 24 hours everyday.

Aromatic spices with celery, *cili padi* and fresh onions. Spicy and mildly sour.

Gerai Nasi Goring Udang

No. 24, Medan Selera SSI Corner, Jalan Panglima Bukit Gantang, Ipoh.

RM7.00 a bowl of 3 pieces fresh tender oxtail.

Opens 4.00 p.m. to 2.00 a.m. everyday.

Aromatic spices with celery, *cili padi* and fresh onions. Sour and spicy.

Tourism



Since the launch of Tourism Malaysia's "Ipoh Food Trail" in December last year, interest in Ipoh's food seems to have increased exponentially. Encouraging feedback from those in the food business prompted Tourism Malaysia (Perak) to get media representatives from all over the country to come to Ipoh and savour the city's culinary delights.

The two-day event took place over a weekend on June 18 and 19. Thirty four media personnel representing various publications, including some very prominent social magazines, went on a conducted tour of Ipoh led by Norshamsida Abdul Rahman, Director of Tourism Malaysia (Perak). The guests were accommodated at a 3-star hotel in the centre of the city with easy access to many of the eateries featured in the palm-size pamphlet.

"It's our intention to publicise and promote Ipoh's food as a touristic product along with the city's architectural heritage," said Norshamsida to the invitees. The guests were taken to the museum on the first day of the tour. The objective was to acquaint them with the state's historical past, particularly that of Ipoh. A treasure hunt was the next item on the agenda. The game was to reaffirm information the visitors had gathered on Ipoh at the museum and from Norshamsida's briefing earlier.

The first food stop was lunch at the famous Restoran Tasek Raban next to Stadium Perak. The visitors soon realised why the open-air restaurant is so popular with Ipohites, especially the Malays. The wide selection of Malay dishes, prepared in true Perak fashion, is the drawing factor. Grilled fish was the guests' favourite, as most were having more

Food Trail Revisited

than their share.

After a hearty meal they were taken to Gua Tempurong to witness Ipoh's most visible limestone cave at close range. Manan Idris, the tour guide, took time to explain the various attractions found in the cave. It was one exhilarating field outing which worked on the visitors' appetite.

From Gua Tempurong they were taken to Mee Rebus Ramli, a restaurant synonymous with good food in Ipoh. Mee Rebus Ramli has been around in Ipoh since the 1980s. From a humble beginning, the late Ramli had expanded his noodle business from hawking on wheels to operating in plush restaurants. He now owns three, all operated by his children. The guests were feted at Ramli's restaurant in Jalan Yang Kalsom. They were then taken to Ipoh's only theme park, the Lost World of Tambun, to rest their tired bodies and limbs amidst the delectable man-made ambience of the park.

The first day tour ended with a sumptuous dinner at Restoran Nasi Lemak Ayam Kampung in Jalan Ali Pitchay. Tucking into the delicious *nasi lemak* with a generous helping of fried kampung chicken seemed problematic since most of the visitors' bellies were filled to the brim. But ate they did, as the aromatic coconut-milk-laced rice and succulent chicken were simply too good to resist.

Breakfast, the following morning, was at Ipoh Hainan Restaurant in Jalan Musa Aziz. The Ipoh Heritage walk was the first item on the second day's programme. The guests were driven to Ipoh's iconic railway station and were greeted upon arrival by Dato' Hamidah Osman, the Executive Councillor for Tourism. They were taken around Old Town for a first-hand look at buildings left behind by the British and the Chinese tycoons of yore.

Kellie's Castle in Batu Gajah was the visitors' next destination. On the way back the bus stopped at the Jalan Kampar pomelo stalls to allow them an opportunity to taste Ipoh's famous citrus fruit. The final day's programme ended with a *satay* treat at Satay Endut located at the public food court (Taman Kanak-Kanak) in downtown Ipoh.

It had been a fun-filled weekend for the visitors. Obviously, the two-day gastronomic holiday was not enough to relish all the food that Ipoh has to offer. "I'll be back for more," said one very pleased journalist who was full of praise for Tourism Malaysia (Perak) for having organised such an eventful tour.

RM

LAUNCHED: MONTHLY PERAK TOURISM NEWSLETTER



Perak Tourism News, a newsletter focusing exclusively on tourism news in Perak, was launched by State Exco for Tourism Dato' Hamidah Osman at Heritage Hotel, Ipoh on Tuesday, July 26. According to Hamidah, the launch is also part of the state government's programme to kick-start Visit Perak Year 2012.

The 4-page newsletter is a joint-effort by Tourism Perak Management Berhad and Perak Tourism Association.

A total of 20,000 copies will be published each month with 15,000 being distributed as a supplement together with Perak's only community newspaper Ipoh Echo while the remaining 5,000 will be issued to government agencies and private entities via Tourism Perak.

The content will feature tourist activities, off the beaten track destinations, gastronomic spots, open air restaurants and warungs as well as to update and promote tourist events.

Readers can access the newsletter online by going into Ipoh Echo's website at www.ipohecho.com.my to make comments and share observations which would provide stakeholders with positive and negative feedback from end-users.

It will also be used as a platform by stakeholders to keep abreast of happenings taking place within the tourist industry. Hopefully, it will create a congenial environment for tourism to flourish.

JAG

Sport

KL Team is Futsal Champion



Court Soccer from Kuala Lumpur emerged champion at the inaugural MBI-Kronos Futsal Fiesta held at the Indera Mulia Stadium, Ipoh recently. The KL-ites beat Perak's Marlin A in a penalty shoot-out after tying 1-1 at the end of the final match. The winning team was awarded the Datuk Bandar Challenge Trophy, a trophy replica, medals and RM5,000 in cash. Runner-up Marlin A took home the runner-up trophy, a replica, medals and cash worth RM3,000. The best-player award went to Mohd Ridzuan of Court Soccer while Zaidi Zainal of Marlin A was adjudged the top scorer of the championship. Mayor Dato' Roshidi Hashim gave away the prizes. In his closing remarks, Roshidi emphasised the importance of sports in shaping a healthy nation. "Youths need to indulge in healthy pursuits so as to keep them away from unhealthy activities."

RM

VACANCIES

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Arts & Culture

Top Class Ghazal



Kudos again to Greentown Indian Cultural Society (GICS) together with the Indian Cultural Centre Kuala Lumpur for presenting Ipoh residents with another top class Indian cultural event in the form of Ghazal or Hindustani Classical Songs.

Ghazal singer, Suman Devgan, rated as one of the top Ghazal singers in the world, kept the audience that night entertained and enthralled with her rich and melodious voice which she performed with emotional fervour.

When asked later she admitted that "whenever I sing I sing from the core of my heart". Suman Devgan comes from a family of physicians "from my grandfather downwards" but I am the only musician in the family. I have loved music from the age of 7 and was initiated in Hindustani classical music. "However, it was after my marriage to an Indian Air Force officer that I considered going professional."

Suman has been performing for almost 30 years and has a wide repertoire which explained why she was able to entertain song requests from the audience.

Equal praise too must be given to the 4 top-class musicians for complementing Suman's singing and making every song sung by her a joy to listen to.

JAG

Wellness

BANYAN SPA – The Wellness Destination

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

With the Banyan Spa just around the corner from the Ipoh Echo office, it's now becoming a habit for me to 'pop in' every now and then for a pampering treat.

As I was greeted by Penny Lai, the MD and the creative force behind the whole concept, I was struck by her glowing skin which, despite her gruelling schedule taking care of clients and managing the myriad details which a spa of this size entails, presents a vision of glowing vitality. When I asked her what her beauty secrets were, she replied without hesitation, "I use our Collin products especially the Regenerating Collagen Gel and I have the Chromalift facial once a week".

This facial which I detailed in issue 121, is given using the Biodrainer machine coupled with the Chromapuncture light machine and if Penny's skin is testimony to its efficacy, I am ready to sign up for a course of them immediately.

This time however, I was there for a foot reflexology session and was led upstairs where a foot bath awaited me. The reflexology area is a haven of comfort with dim lights and as I sank into the arm chair, I allowed the rubbing, prodding and kneading of my feet to soothe away the hassles of the day and quickly fell into soporific bliss. The 60 minutes was soon up and I was asked to sit up on the stool while the therapist gave me a shoulder massage which went a long way to relax the taut muscles there. For RM68 for the session, I was relaxed and ready to wend my way home.

Foot reflexology can be had for RM58 without the shoulder massage and for those having other treatments at the spa, a mere RM38 as an add-on special. In my view, certainly well worth spending the extra hour.

On my way out the door I decided to stop in at the hair salon on the ground floor to check on the hair-washing facilities and was delighted to find that they have a most ergonomically designed chair that you lie on, and where one's head is usually dangling uncomfortably over the edge of the basin, this one has a head support inside the sink providing relief for the neck. I picked up a brochure for their Shiseido Fuente Scalp Relaxing Treatment and made myself a promise to come back on another occasion for one especially since the hair washing facilities looked so comfortable. Apparently, the Fuente series contain Hop, Piper Fruit Extract, Arnica and Panax Ginseng which are highly effective ingredients to nourish healthy hair as well as care for the scalp, prevent hair loss and minimise gray.

Approaching my car to drive home, I noticed that a yoga class was in session and decided to take a peek. Instructor Lee Mun Choon was animatedly demonstrating one of the *asanas* (poses) and not wishing to disturb him, I left, making a mental note to return another day for a class.

Yoga classes are held both mornings and evenings five times a week.

Banyan certainly lives up to its slogan as a Wellness Destination.

Banyan Beauty

40 Raja DiHilir, 30350 Ipoh Tel.: **05-2426866** or **012-5073866**
Email: customercare@banyanspa.com.my Website: www.banyanspa.com.my

Zainal Taking YBU to Greater Heights

Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan's newly-appointed Chief Executive Officer, Dato' Hj Zainal Abidin bin Hj Omar, 58, feels that there are similarities between his current post and that of his former, as State Development Director. "I was responsible for the development of rural areas in the state, which is about eradicating poverty, especially in the interiors," he said. "We provide grants which are not repayable. However, here at YBU the foundation helps the poor, the needy and the marginalised with micro-credits which are repayable but with very flexible terms."

Zainal thinks he can adapt given his experience when helming the state agency. "The only difference is the magnitude and the urgency." He acknowledges that keeping tabs on the state's poor and those in need of assistance is no mean task, as it requires accurate input and data. The collation of these data, to his mind, is imperative. "Wrong information means wrong decision," he quipped.

The mission statement enshrined in the foundation's constitution is clear and that is to help the poor and the needy regardless of race and creed. This is central to the formation of YBU, as its primary responsibility is to serve the rakyat.

Zainal expects full commitment from his staff. "The best way to empathise with the poor and the needy is to feel for them," he stressed. He wants his staff to react in the manner that will prove beneficial to the target group, which the foundation is tasked to assist.

Zainal was, initially, sceptical of the foundation's goals, as there are other agencies with almost identical goals and aspirations. But after seeing YBU's achievements, he is now convinced that the foundation is indeed a viable entity dedicated to the betterment of Perakeans on the whole. He will now concentrate on taking YBU to greater heights.

RM

Stye in your Eye

In our continuing series on Eye Health, Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr. S.S. Gill talks to us about STYE.



Dr. S.S. Gill
Resident
Consultant
Ophthalmologist,
Hospital Fatimah

A stye is an infection of the hair follicle of an eyelash. It is also called *hordeolum*. It presents as a small painful lump on the outside (external *hordeolum*) or on the inside (internal *hordeolum*) of the eyelid. It basically looks like a pimple on the eyelid (called "ketumbit" in Malay).

A stye is not harmful to vision but does cause a discomfort to the eye. It can occur at any age but most often affects infants and children. It is most often caused by bacteria called *staphylococcus*. This bacterium is found in high concentrations within the nose and therefore is easily transferred to the eyelids by our unwashed fingers!

When an eyelash follicle gets infected with the bacteria, it swells up and becomes filled with pus. The eyelash follicle then looks like it has a pimple on the eyelid becoming red and painful.

Symptoms of stye may include the following:

- * Diffused redness in the affected area of the eyelid.
- * Burning and droopiness of the affected eyelid is another common symptom.
- * Later, a pimple-like lump appearing on the eyelid.
- * A yellow point at the centre of the red lump appears when it fills up with pus.
- * Occasional discomfort during blinking of the eye.
- * Tearing or watering of the eye, and increased sensitivity to light occasionally.
- * Later, crusting on the eyelashes if the stye ruptures and pus is expelled out.



What causes a stye?

Pretty much everyone has the potential to develop a stye without outside contamination since it is most often caused by bacteria in the nose. This bacteria is transferred easily to the eye when you rub first your nose, then your eye.

However, people with certain chronic conditions like diabetes mellitus, chronic skin conditions (*seborrhoea*) and chronic illnesses that reduce immunity are more prone to developing styes than the general population.

How are styes treated?

Most styes heal on their own within a few days. Warm compresses applied for 10 to 15 minutes, three or four times a day, over the course of several days helps to encourage resolution. It relieves the pain and helps "ripen" the stye very much like a pimple. The stye usually ruptures to drain the pus collection and finally heals.

Remember never to "pop" a stye like a pimple; but always allow it to rupture on its own. The internal type of stye (that appears inside the eyelid) may sometimes not heal and therefore require drainage of the pus by your eye practitioner. Your doctor may prescribe an antibiotic eye ointment along with oral antibiotics depending on how severe it is. If you suspect you have a stye that keeps on worsening, seek medical attention.

More on treatment and prevention of a stye in the next issue.

For more information, contact **Gill Eye Specialist Centre** at **05-5455582**, email: gilleyecentre@dr.com or visit www.fatimah.com.my.

Young Perak

English Language Week Singing Competition



S MJK Yuk Choy Ipoh organised a Singing Competition for the afternoon-session students recently. It was held in conjunction with the English Language Week. The competition had three categories, solo, duet and group where students presented different genres of English songs from hip-hop to love songs. Teacher-in-charge of the competition, Caren Lai said this year the competition had the most contestants taking part in the solo category and also the most contestants joining the singing competition. "The response was overwhelming. We had 25 entries just for the solo category but earlier auditions held in the school culled it to 16 contestants," she said. As for the duet, there were five pairs and for the Group category, there were four groups.

The school Afternoon Supervisor, Sit Wai Yin, who was one of the judges, said that by participating in such competitions students can improve their pronunciation. "English is an international language and these students have shown interest in learning the language through songs. The students had fun," he added. The other judges were senior English Language teachers, Krishna Kumary and Josephine Yap.

The winners, Ho Min Hwei, a Form Two girl was the overall winner for the solo category followed by second runner-up, Wong Lai Yan, a Form One girl and the third place went to Choo Chin Hong, a Form Two boy.

My Say

By Jerry Francis



Yes, I have been severely criticised by some enthusiastic heritage buffs. Whether I am being rightly or wrongly criticised for my recent view of the heritage buildings in the city, even to the extent that one of them had stated that one day “you too will be declared an ‘eyesore’ and be torn down and a car park erected in your place”, I am not too concerned because as I was prepared to criticise others I must expect to be criticised.

After all, the aim of “My Say” column is to keep an issue alive and debated by the readers. It is the view of one person, not even Ipoh Echo, and I do not demand that everyone agrees with my views, fully or even partially. After all, one man’s food is another man’s poison.

But, let us express our views and criticisms in a civilized and mature manner no matter how “appalling and misguided” the opposing views are. As a journalist I was expressing not only my view, but also those of the owners of the old buildings, who are in a dilemma because of the call to preserve their buildings.

Just put yourselves in their shoes. Inheriting one of the old buildings in the city can be a financial burden to them. What more if the buildings are to be restored as heritage?

Why are those who feel strongly against the demolishing of the building at the junction of Jalan Sultan Idris Shah and Jalan Raja Musa Aziz only voicing their opposition now? That building, which was destroyed by fire, had been left, in the last two or three years, to deteriorate

Keeping Alive an Issue

further to the extent of posing a danger to motorists and passers-by.

In all those years, no one had come up with suggestions that it be preserved. After it was pointed out that it could be a danger to motorists and passers-by, the city council put up the barrier which often collapsed.

Yet, it was not too late to save the building. But did those who are voicing loudly now do anything about saving the building? I believe no one did.

The decision to demolish the building was not mine to make. I had merely pointed out the danger of having such buildings. It was the city council’s decision. Perhaps it was inspected and found to be structurally unsafe, like the way the well-known landmark Yau Tet Shin market which was demolished in 2001.

Wake up heritage enthusiasts; it is not too late yet to save the heritage buildings in the city. Form a strong pressure group or a heritage foundation to get the authorities to expedite the preservation of heritage buildings.

Although the city council had identified 120 old buildings to be gazetted as heritage, I have my doubts that it can be done before the end of the year.

Those who have spoken strongly about heritage have been Europeans, understandably, for in their countries heritage is being given top priority.

When I was a press representative to UK in 1990, I began to appreciate how heritage buildings are being pre-

served by heritage foundations. Old mansions with their large estates, which are no longer manageable by their owners, are being managed and preserved by heritage organisations and visitors are charged fees for entrance. It was the same with every other site, including tourist attractions such as the Stonehenge.

The British are very far ahead in preserving heritage. But in Malaysia, where financial gains are top priority, heritage is just a much talked about subject, with very little achievement. The authorities are dragging their feet although some enactments are in place.

Take for instance, the century-old mining town of Papan. There has been so much talk about preserving it. Now, even the national heritage department seems to have put aside its proposed plan to preserve the Istana Raja Bilah – home of a chieftain and pioneer Malay tin miner.

At least, I can take pride for bringing to the attention of the authorities various issues in the interest of the members of the public. Whether my views and suggestions are worth two cents or not, I cannot be unduly concerned. My only hope is that some worthy views and suggestions can be taken into consideration for the benefit of the people and Perak.

As a journalist I am committed to my responsibility to the readers without fear or favour. And, I will continue to do so as long as I have the ability and opportunity.

Thumbs Down

ETS Advertisement Misleading



The poster in front of the ticketing office of ETS (Electric Train Service) in the Ipoh Railway Station states that the promotional fare for the shuttle service between Ipoh and KL is RM16 for a one-way journey for their Silver service. This is valid till end of the year.

When passengers wanted to buy tickets at the promotional rate, they were informed that the ticket must be purchased 15 days before the journey. There is no mention of this in the poster. This is not ethical. ETS must clearly indicate this condition in their poster or offer the special price to all passengers making the trip. Many passengers were happy with the low fare but were disappointed and felt cheated by ETS when they were told of the condition which is not printed in the poster.

ETS must immediately remove the misleading poster and print new ones with the condition or allow all passengers to enjoy the benefit.



Father's Wish Fulfilled

A father’s wish was fulfilled with the timely intervention of the Menteri Besar through the good office of Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan (YBU). Newspaper vendor, Ragaven Murugiah, 50, of Ladang Kg Ayer Tawar, Manjung, was at wit’s end trying to figure out how to buy his college-going daughter a lap top for her use. The father of three earns barely enough to make ends meet and spare cash is hard to come by unless a miracle happens. And a miracle did happen.

“In my utter despair I wrote a personal letter to the Menteri Besar making my humble request known the way I see fit,” he recounted. “I was pleasantly surprised to receive a call a month later from a YBU officer saying that my request has been granted by the MB.”

A teary but happy Ragaven was overjoyed with the gift and thanked the MB profusely. “I am truly indebted to the state government for having fulfilled my wish,” he said when met after receiving the lap top from YBU’s Chief of Corporate Services, Hairul Anwar Mohd Noor at the foundation’s headquarters recently. “It couldn’t have come at a more opportune moment,” he told Ipoh



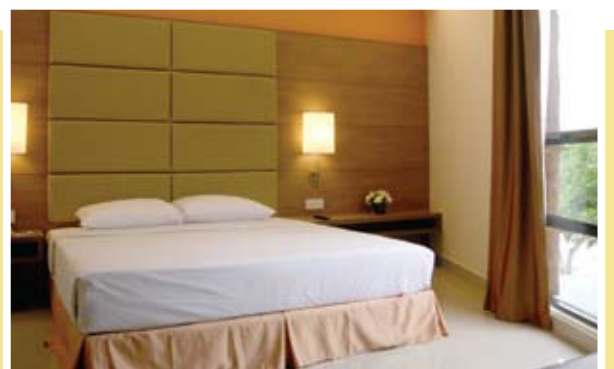
Echo. “It’s the best gift I’ve ever received. Hopefully, it’ll motivate my daughter to do well in her studies,” he quipped.

Hairul reaffirmed YBU’s commitment to help the poor and the marginalised in the state regardless of their ethnicity and beliefs. “Aid in the form of money or in kind will be given to all deserving cases,” he said.

The foundation is founded on the principles of charity, fairness and equality. Since formation last year it has disbursed aid worth millions to the unfortunate many ranging from hard-pressed single mothers to first-time entrepreneurs to enterprising Orang Asli.

RM

Worlds within WORLDS IN TAMBUN



The Lost World Hotel is the latest addition to the Lost World of Tambun. This RM60 million theme park is an action packed, exciting adventure with the most thrilling rides and attractions in Ipoh. Now families can plan on enjoying all the facilities without having to drive off to their homes or hotels at the end of the day.

The Lost World Hotel, located just a hop, skip and jump from the theme park is now open and guests can avail themselves of all the facilities with ease. Consisting of 134 rooms with a choice of king or twin beds, the Hotel also features 20 service apartments in the second block which is currently under construction.

Room rates at the hotel range from RM200 to RM600 with corporate rates available. All room rates come with two complimentary breakfasts and two ‘Lost World Hotsprings and Spa by night’ tickets.

The Lost World of Tambun has many ‘worlds’ packed into one and visitors, both young and old, can find activities to suit all tastes and inclinations. Five elements

make up this world of adventure, the Water Park, the Amusement Park, the Tiger Valley, the Lost World Petting Zoo and the Lost World Hot Springs and Spa.

The latter is the latest addition to the ever-evolving theme park. The majestic garden is a sanctuary for visitors to relax and enjoy the hot springs. The thermal water at the resort comes from a natural source and is not recycled, flowing freely through their various pools from the source and into the Kopisan River, making the water totally safe and hygienic for use. Visitors can finish off their thermal spring dips with a treatment at the Crystal Spa where they can choose from Aromatherapy, Head and Shoulder, Hot Springs Stone or the traditional Malay Urut massages.

And because the hosts of activities are so myriad and engaging, having the Lost World Hotel next door can only enhance the total Lost World experience, providing a comfortable night’s sleep to start the adventure anew the following day.

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News Roundup

TAJ College Adopts Secondary Schools



TAJ College is adopting 23 secondary schools in the Kinta District as one of its Community Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives.

During a high tea held at its campus in Jalan Tun Abdul Razak recently, Education Department's head of special education and private education, Tuan Haji Zawi bin Yahya handed over the Certificate of Appointment to the representatives of the schools.

Puan Tina bt Dato' Haji Tajuddin, chief executive officer of TAJ College, spoke of the courses conducted in TAJ and facilities available.

The objective of adopting schools is to establish close relationship between the college and secondary schools in the district for mutual interest as well as development of the community.

Programmes would be organised between the schools and the college which would benefit both. Students in SPM and STPM classes would be briefed on the opportunities available to continue their studies in tertiary institutions.

AJ

Masquerade Night



The Convent Girls Alumni or COGA, started in 1957, recently held their 54th annual dinner at the Royal Perak Golf Club with an attendance of 150 former students and teachers.

The theme for this year's dinner was 'Masquerade'

and a majority of the members turned up with a mask at the very least.

It was a fun night with entertainment of belly dancers provided by Susan Dance Academy and of course the most creative masquerade costume which was won by former student Anne Marie Tham.

Twins, Anna and Agnes Wong, both former students, added gaiety to the evening with their emceeing.

During the dinner a sum of RM500 was collected for the Alumni's annual social project called "Next Step Project". According to Alumni President Terezinha Gonsalves the project is an annual programme which provides its students with information on the vocational opportunities available after leaving school saying that "not everybody will score 10 As but there is an opportunity out there for everyone to earn a living and possibly contribute back to the community."

JAG

Ramadan at Clearwater

Clearwater Sanctuary Golf Resort, Batu Gajah is serving up a Minangkabau and Perakian Cuisine buffet for the month of Ramadan starting August 1, at the Lakeside Terrace. Dishes like, Ikan Patin Masak Tempoyak, Rendang Tok and Ayam, Sambal Udang Petai, Satay, to name a few, are enough to wet one's appetite. There will be several kerabu dishes, a variety of *ulam* accompanied by different *sambal*. For something sweet, dessert consists of Malay *kuih* (cakes) and Pengan Pisang. The buffet is RM35⁺⁺ for adults and RM18⁺⁺ for children ages 6-12.

Their F&B and Culinary Operations Director, award-winning Chef Ricky Parlanti has introduced à la carte menus with 'Wine of the Month' for the coming months. For more on promotions, visit: www.cwsgolf.com.my.

VWSL



Insurance Partners Get Together 2011



Pantai Hospital Ipoh's third insurance get-together saw 380 guests, comprising of insurance agents, representatives of insurance companies and Third Party Administrators as well as consultants from the hospital, attending the event. The evening was held to appreciate the support and cooperation insurance partners had given to the hospital. In her address, Ms. Vino Nallaya, Chief Executive Officer said, "We have come a long way as partners in health, bringing quality care to those in need. Together we see ourselves as a team who have become of paramount importance for the general

public to be able to access private healthcare, which years ago was presumed to be only for the affluent." Ms. Vino said, "As strategic partners, we believe that it is our responsibility to be transparent in delivering what we promise, taking into account the economics and needs of patients and clients." She added that communication and information was the way to becoming true partners in providing a valuable and vital service and together preventing costs from spiralling at both ends.

Guests were later treated to pulsating belly dance performances by the Susan Dance Academy and the evening exploded into a fiery finale with exhilarating performances by Helmi Gimik who played multiple lovable and affable Chinese and Indian characters.

Ground-Breaking Ceremony

The long-awaited and much maligned Tanjung Rambutan wet market will finally become a reality. Once the RM5.8 million structure is completed, the mess, smell and congestion that greet shoppers will be a thing of the past. The present wet market is well past its shelf life and is on the brink of extinction, so to speak. The location in itself is inappropriate as it is sited on the bank of the Kinta River. Effluents from the market have contaminated the river and the surroundings. Moreover, the site does not facilitate a smooth traffic flow due to its size and disposition.

Dato' Seri Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah, MP for Tambun and Second Deputy Finance Minister, is the driving force behind the construction of the new marketplace.

On July 23 Husni was given the honour to officiate at the ground-breaking ceremony of the project. Mayor Dato' Roshidi Hashim was present along with scores of excited residents and shoppers who did not want to miss the historic occasion.

There will be ample parking space so shoppers need not park their vehicles haphazardly as they do now. A food court will be built adjacent to the market to cater to those in need of a bite while shopping. This is indeed a welcome change not only for shoppers but for the residents and students of the nearby nursing college.

Construction is scheduled to be completed by end of 2012. The new market will help transform Tanjung Rambutan into a vibrant suburb with an image of its own.

RM



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LETTERS

We reprint some of our reader's comments from our online paper. Go to <http://www.ipohecho.com.my/> to read more. The views expressed in these letters are not necessarily shared by the Editorial Board. We reserve the right to refuse or modify the letters we publish.

'Dirt Vigilantes' Campaign

I am a visitor to Ipoh and have been here a number of times living with friends born in Ipoh. As an Engineer with considerable operational expertise in the Global Waste Recycling industry, I read the articles posted by Jerry Francis re your current Mayor. I see this as a lost opportunity for Ipoh, not only to clean its streets but also establish an eco-Green initiative and utilise on behalf of the Ipoh community, the value of its considerable discarded waste resources. If help is required by the Mayor to create such an initiative, as a practical environmentalist, I would be willing to assist.

Philip Moore

'Efficient' Public Transport System

I refer to your article "Update on Bus Services for Perak" (Ipoh Echo Issue 123) and wish to highlight the following:

Ipoh bus service is still poor in spite of the many new buses plying the city routes. There is still no bus serving the Bercham-Tasek Industrial area route although a large number of people who work there live in Bercham. Three decades ago there were buses plying the said route but there are none today. Our complaints have fallen on deaf ears.

My one other observation is the absence of proper bus schedules. The buses at Medan Kidd come and go at the whims and fancies of the drivers and conductors. Their attitude is causing much hardship to commuters who have to wait indefinitely, especially at the Super Kinta and Ocean bus stops.

I sincerely hope the authorities would do something to address these shortcomings. What is the point of talking about the future when the present problems are being conveniently swept under the carpet?

Perhaps, Dato' Dr Mah Hang Soon should spend a day in the streets and see how Ipohites grapple with a very 'efficient' public transport system on a daily basis. He may learn a thing or two this way.

**Christopher Ng
Bercham, Ipoh**

"Annual Assessment a Necessary Evil"

I read your editorial on the above subject with great amount of interest at least initially. What you have exhaustively detailed in your article is just one side of the story – the story of what assessment rates we the Ipoh property owners are being levied with by City Hall. Nothing is mentioned about how the money collected is spent to provide the necessary services to the paying members of the community. Yes we are levied the highest rate in the country. But are we being given the best service compared to other local authorities? If we are, then I rest my case. The answer is sadly NO. Just take one service for example – garbage collection. I will compare with Penang Island local authority as I am familiar with that because I own a property there. The rate is just above 8% and for a property worth about RM2m I pay hardly RM600 p.a. In Ipoh I pay RM1,100 p.a. for a property worth hardly RM1m. In terms of services in Penang, kitchen garbage collection is done three times a week with a dustbin provided free to avoid garbage being thrown about everywhere. Garden garbage is done once every week as opposed to once a month in Ipoh hence you have mounds of garden garbage thrown all over the road sides. Road and drain cleaning is done by assigning an individual worker to cover certain roads giving him full responsibility. What I see being done in Ipoh is that this job is being tasked to a group of ten or so workers moving from one area to another. It appears great but the workers, when they are in a group, spend more time talking, sitting, eating and smoking than working. The result of this kind of situation is that service is of poor quality at possibly higher costs. Hence you need to raise taxes at the expense of property owners.

For the information of fellow Ipoh residents, I have appealed and called twice the assessment committee over this issue but my appeals were turned down with no valid reason. It is about time the local property owners make a concerted effort to get better services if not reduce the rates.

Zambri Mahmud

Polo Ground

In February 2010, Ipoh Echo first brought to light the issue of street vendors and hawkers who set up unsightly stalls at Taman Rekreasi Sultan Abdul Aziz (more popularly known as "Pologround"), a sorry situation that takes away all the appeal of the park. Fast forward to a year later, and sadly, the situation has not changed. In fact, if anything, it has worsened. Left unchecked by MBI, the hawkers have flourished, leading to a growing tension among residents and park users, and worsening traffic congestion along the street. In spite of relentless complaints to the relevant authorities, councillors and the Datuk Bandar, these seem to have fallen on deaf ears and blind eyes. We have been told that the hawkers would be relocated to a suitable, more contained, area near to Pologround, but it remains to be seen if this will really happen.

Meanwhile, long-suffering residents as well as irate park users have to contend with the pollution, bad traffic and noise when a park should be a sanctuary of rest and relaxation.

This once pristine park is very well maintained by MBI, but what good is all the greenery, raintrees, beautiful landscape and natural environment when the long stretch of hawkers on the entire street right next to the park, take away all the beauty, serenity and tranquillity of the park??

Street Names

Recently when we lost one of our most outstanding architect-engineers, Tan Sri Stanley Edward Jewkes, many including Tun Ahmad Sarji wrote about his contribution to our country. His remarkable workmanship includes the Stadium Merdeka (1957) and Stadium Negara (1962). One letter to the editor even suggested that a street be named after him.

Truly, not many of us are aware of the origin of various street names and the stories behind them. Some streets are named after distinguished individuals, sometimes directly associated with the town or the state after their demise.

Recently, it came to my knowledge that the Perak Writers Society is attempting, through the Ipoh City Council, to change Caldwell Road to some other local name. Streets names can usually be changed easily by the City Council for various reasons. However, in the case of Caldwell, many might not be aware of his contribution to Ipoh and Perak.

William John Caldwell, a miner and a co-founder of the famous Sengat Estate in Kampung Kepayang, Ipoh was also a manager of the Miru Tin Mines. Besides that, he was also an agent for the Straits Trading Company which started commerce in Ipoh during the early 1900s. Straits Trading Company which was established in 1886 was dealing with the tin smelting business in Ipoh. Thus he had contributed to the growth and development of Ipoh in the early days.

Eliminating a street name that already exists could sometimes prove to be controversial. Ipoh City Council should consider deeply before any attempt to change the street names in Ipoh.

S. Sundralingam

The original legislation stated very clearly "No Hawkers" on the park notice board. (This has since been conveniently "removed" by vandals – it does not take a genius to guess who the culprits are.) When did this change and why? Who was responsible for issuing licences to the hawkers in the first place? Should a recreation park be a place where the public goes for hawker food? Where is the propriety of the park if anyone can just set up stall and sell anything under the sun?? These are questions which beg answers. It is time the Datuk Bandar himself comes out and addresses these issues and provides a satisfactory solution once and for all.

The park has been stripped of all its pride if it can be a free for all in such unbecoming fashion. The authorities must act, and act quickly.

Irate Park User

Book Review

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

Effective Sales Force Recruitment



According to Dato' Daniel Tay, who wrote an endorsement on the cover of this book, this is "a must have for both an intending employer and employee". He also implores people to "read this book before either conducting or going for an interview".

Joshua Tan who is currently a Sales Manager in one of the growing organisations in Ipoh, has written a 'how-to' book for

those looking to recruit a powerful sales force. Although the emphasis is on recruiting sales people, the book is a veritable treasure trove of tips and tactics for the whole recruitment process in any department.

The book has many practical and useful examples and is laid out in chapters on all the topics pertaining to the recruitment process from pre-interview to selection, to the post-interview and the final words which details the various Malaysian laws around employment.

The appendices are useful with a sample application form, an interview rating form, part 3 of schedule 3 of the Employment Provident fund and SOCSO rates.

Joshua Tan has been in consumer sales for 20 years and has written several short training materials for the company he works for. He holds an MBA from Nottingham Trent University and is involved in several NGOs like the YMCA, the Haggai Institute and FGBMF.

This 90-page paperback is available for sale at MPH and Popular bookstores for RM24.90. Also from Joshua Tan at **016-5127635**.

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Young Perak

GenY and Mabel Wong

Reports about youths resorting to suicide and substance abuse to overcome the stress of modern living are rife. Unemployment among graduates is also a major issue in Malaysia. Mabel Wong talks to Ipoh Echo about the recently launched Generation Youth (GenY) and how it can equip youths with the right armoury to face these challenges.



IE: What is GenY about?

GenY believes that when young people learn to touch base with their true selves it will enhance their resilience. It's about knowing how to bounce back when you fall. This voluntary organisation, the first in Perak, provides youths with effective life skills, especially in emotional quotient (EQ). GenY works closely with Perak Women for Women Society for mutual benefits.

IE: What is your role and designation?

I am the President-mentor. I oversee and manage the overall activities of the society.

IE: Who can participate in GenY and how?

Everyone can participate. We have an adult-youth ratio of 3:2. Our annual membership fee is only RM5. We have a 9-position council whereby 4 positions are for youths aged 21 to 30 years. We have ambassadors in schools and colleges such as Sam Tet, SMK (P) Methodist, SMJK Hua Lian, and UTAR. We now have 45 members.

IE: What does GenY do and what methods do you employ?

We provide sex education, which is important as baby dumping is a prevalent issue. We teach them about personal safety when dating and how to manage relationships. We create awareness about gender violence and child sexual abuses. This is done through road shows and camps.

IE: Are there any upcoming events on the cards for GenY?

We organise 3 non-profit camps annually. The GenY EQ Camp will be held from August 29 to 31 at Adeline's Resthouse, Gopeng for 15 to 19-year-olds at a minimum fee of RM199 per pax. The camp concept is based on EQ 4-Leadership Levels, which I authored. EQ, leadership skills, soft skills, emotional resilience, personal growth and team-building are several things that we focus on. Our casualty record is clean due to good safety measures.



IE: You work on developing EQ. Why is this so important?

GenY teaches and equips youths with soft skills and behavioural competencies. Schools deal only with IQ, and have no energy to deal with soft skills. GenY fills in the gap. Young people will be able to lead effective lives if they have good EQ. IQ skills may get one the job opening, but EQ skills get one the promotion.

IE: What skills do you find lacking in today's youths?

Firstly, human interaction is ill-developed. A lot of time is spent in cyberspace; hence, youths are inept at face-to-face communication. Secondly, their focus is primarily on academic progression and the development of IQ. The magnitude of EQ is not taken into account. We need effective young leaders with integrity.

IE: At the 'One Million Youth Gathering' recently, the Prime Minister announced an initiative to form a Parliament of Youths. Do you think Malaysian youths are ready for this?

The parliament will provide youths the platform and freedom to project their views. It's a good training ground. So, my answer is a yes. The youths must possess passion and interest with no underlying agendas. Young people have to take away the "subsidy mentality". It is about possessing sufficient self-confidence to work hard and be what you aim to be. Emotional resilience is the key.

LYW

For details on GenY, call Mabel Wong at **012-5340063** or Kai Qi at **016-5202007**.

Theatre Appreciation Workshop

SMK Gunung Rapat Ipoh hosted a two-hour workshop to expose students to the basic foundation of theatre on June 29. Five neighbouring schools were invited to participate along with 10 Australian students who were guests of Gunung Rapat School. The schools invited were Sekolah Tuanku Abdul Rahman, SM Raja Permaisuri Bainun, SMK Seri Ampang, SMK Wira Jaya and SMK Rapat Setia.

The workshop was conducted by a guest trainer, Ms Sylvia Wong, an experienced drama teacher. The participants were introduced to techniques in vocal skills, theatre exercises and improvisation.

It was an exciting affair as participants and their teachers got to express themselves in unique and fun ways. They also learned to do facial and physical expressions.

The coordinator for the workshop, Hjh Nur Aida Ahmad Nazeri, pointed out that the workshop aimed to familiarise the participants with techniques used in theatre and improve their spoken English. She also hopes that after joining the workshop, more schools would be interested in having drama teams in their respective schools and compete in drama competitions in the near future.



Photo Contest for Students

Lions Club of Ipoh Evergreen is organising a photo contest for secondary school students and members of Leo clubs in Perak, Perlis, Kedah, Penang, Selangor and Cameron Highlands. The contest is part of the club's environmental awareness programme, which was launched by Lions District 308B2 Governor, Hudson Hah, at the club recently. Closing date is August 31.

The winner will get a DSLR camera, a blood-test package, a pair of sunglasses, clothes and a challenge trophy. There will also be prizes for the runners-up. The winning shot will be submitted for an international photo contest early next year.

Hah commended the club for organising the contest and the members for carrying out many community-based projects. He presented the Lions Clubs International Certificate of Achievement to Dr. Anthony Ng for his efforts in promoting environmental awareness.

Get details and application forms from: Foto Digital, No 11, Jalan Perajurit, Ipoh Garden East, Ipoh or call Kelly **012-5655732** or James **016-5130998**.

RM



Lifestyle

Allegra Deli at Meru Resort Club House

There is no stopping Ipoh's own celebrity Chef Datin Julie Song. With her Indulgence Restaurant garnering the reputation as the restaurant to be seen in with their innovative and highly creative dishes, serving posh nosh to Ipohites and visitors who come from all over the world to stay at her luxury boutique hotel with its seven themed rooms, Julie is now indulging her creative flair and has opened a boutique Deli cum gift shop in Meru Valley Golf Resort.

Named *Allegra* for her first grandchild, the Deli is set to be a welcome hot spot for Meru residents and members who patronise the club for golf and other recreational activities. The Deli section features sandwiches and hot snacks to be savoured with your favourite latte or cappuccino, all for takeaway only. Warm snacks for sale include pastry rolls named 'Draps' by Julie, stuffed with a choice of lamb, spiced chicken, meatballs, beef, vegetables or mushroom.

Small pies like tuna and dill and chicken are also available as are a variety of her famous cakes and pastries.

Allegra Deli is a gourmet mini market with certain fresh vegetables like imported yellow and green zucchinis, fruits, a large variety of imported mustards, PICI Italian pasta from Tuscany, cheese, frozen sausages, imported soft drinks and later on, wines and special liquor. Of special note is the lamb bacon which is imported from Australia by Julie herself and which is the first of its kind in Ipoh. A few tables are available outside, overlooking the golfer's area and the pool where one can enjoy the snacks and coffee in the open air.

Items to look for include the homemade oven-dried tomatoes, pesto sauce, imported chocolates, kitchen, serving and decorative ware and 15 types of gift sets as well as lotions and potions from the luxury brand of Crabtree and Evelyn.

The Allegra Deli is open from 8.00 a.m. till 6.00 p.m.

SFC



Watch out for Julie Song's TV debut in 5 episodes of Discover Perak co-hosted with Xandria Ooi as they bring to the world the sights, sounds, and charms of Perak; first episode on AFC channel on August 22.



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Sport

Bowled Over at the Special Olympics

A contingent of 10 special Olympians, accompanied by coach Choong Chee Hin, represented Malaysia in bowling at the Special Olympics World Summer Games Athens 2011 in Kostava, Greece recently. Coach Choong and team member, Andy Hussaini Mus Albakri, both hail from Perak. Andy, 23, is a student at the Perak Association for Intellectually Disabled (formerly known as Perak Association for Mentally Retarded), Kampong Tawas. Out of three players, Andy, who has been playing for two years, was the only one representing Perak in the national team. To prepare for the games, the Perak players trained for 2 to 3 years. About 40 teams from different countries participated in bowling and the Malaysian team bagged six Gold, eleven Silver and eleven Bronze medals in the event.



CHESS GRAND PRIX 2011

The 2nd annual Chess Grand Prix 2011 organised by the Perak International Chess Association (PICA) ended smoothly on Sunday, July 10 at Syuen Hotel, Ipoh.

The competition, themed "Chess Makes Us Smart", attracted over 200 participants of all ages from all over the state. The youngest was a 9-year old boy. The competition, organised in five legs, was held at Taiping, Bagan Serai, Slim River, Kampar and Ipoh.

According to the spokesman of the main sponsor, Kuala Lumpur Kepong Berhad (KLK Group), chess should be encouraged as a healthy sport in Perak. He congratulated the mayor for his presence and the event organisers for a successful outing.

Mayor Dato' Haji Roshidi Hashim thanked the participants and the organisers. In his closing address he said that the council would support measures taken to enhance the game's appeal, especially to Perakeans. He pledged RM10,000 as donation to PICA before giving away prizes to the winners.

Seventeen-year old student, Fong Yit San from Kampar, walked away with top honours winning a gold medal, cash prize and a certificate of recognition.

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