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# IPOHecho

Your Community Newspaper

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## NEWS

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# IPOH-RETIREE'S RESORT



Meru Golf Resort



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*For years, our city fathers have had discussions on how to stem the Diaspora of youth from Ipoh, pulled away by the bright lights and economic prospects of the big cities, leaving Ipoh to languish in the doldrums and catering to a primarily older population. Amidst the moaning and groaning and debates on how to attract more investment to Perak, a huge opportunity exists to bring back the lustre to the city that tin built, that has been overlooked by those with the financial clout to make things happen.*

continued on page 2

## Name:

Jane Lam Wai Chuin

## Occupation:

Student

## Hobbies:

Reading, Photo Editing,  
Singing

## The quality I admire most:

Humility, Joyful attitude

## Ambition:

Lawyer

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## Malaysia – Climate, Costs and Currency – Ideal for Retirees

The United Nations population estimates and projections reveal that the world population continues its path towards population ageing and is on track to surpass 9 billion persons by 2050. In developed countries, 20 per cent of today's population is aged 60 years or over, and by 2050 that proportion is projected to be 32 per cent.

With rising costs of living and inflation, a large percentage of these older people will begin to find their retirement incomes insufficient to maintain the lifestyles to which they've been accustomed in their respective countries. In comes the 'Malaysia My Second Home' (MM2H) programme. This government initiative is aimed at attracting comfortably well-off retirees from developed countries to spend their golden years in Malaysia. The program has great potential to attract a sizeable income in foreign exchange as well as fuel property development in the country.

This is where Ipoh is ideally positioned to tap this growing economic segment if concerted efforts are made to focus on attracting and catering to the retirement community. In doing so, the medical, leisure, transport, dining and lifestyle sectors of the local economy could get a much needed boost.

### Lower Costs Of Living

Ipoh's costs of living are on the average almost two thirds and occasionally half that of its busier sister cities of Kuala Lumpur and Penang. This applies to purchasing homes, rentals, dining out, private clinic visits, home delivery of cooked food, wet market prices, and even cost of car repairs. Instead of feeling inferior being the poorer cousin, Ipoh needs to capitalise on these lower costs as a strength and use it as enticement to the retiree market.

### Better Health

Dr Koh Wai Keat, Ipoh's only Geriatrician and a consultant at Fatimah Hospital, said that as a percentage of the total population, Perak has the highest number of senior citizens in the country. Ipoh has all the facilities to provide necessary medical services for senior citizens at costs lower than KL. The medical facilities are all easily accessible, with less travel time and no traffic jams. He added that the environment in Ipoh is ideal for senior citizens with less pollution and the slower pace of life is conducive to better health.

### Best Kept Secret

Now with the Firefly connection of daily flights from Singapore, a new Medan-Ipoh air service starting this month and KL being only two hours away, Ipoh can undoubtedly live up to it being Malaysia's 'most liveable city' and 'best kept secret' as touted by Kinta Properties Group's advertising to the expatriate market.

So why aren't property developers and other business groups mining the retirement market?

Apart from building properties and selling them to retirees, or running serviced apartments and attracting tenants, there has been no real effort made to develop the retirement market in Ipoh. The reasons are manifold but essentially, there is a lack of clear understanding on the various definitions of 'retirement village', 'retirement homes', 'nursing homes', 'care homes' and other nuances. Plus there is a plethora of legal structures around which to build the concept and stay profitable for the private developers. A brief summary is in order.

### Definitions

A retirement village is essentially a community for seniors. The term is



Sunway Development

something of a misnomer because one doesn't necessarily have to be retired at all. Entry is generally restricted to people who have attained 55 years of age or have retired from full-time employment, and their spouses. The average age is somewhere in the low to mid 70's and the average entry age is somewhere in the mid to high 60's.

### Different Types

There are basically two kinds of retirement village: resident funded and donor funded. The latter are invariably owned and operated by NGOs. They include an element of charitable subsidy and entry is generally restricted to the needy. Currently in Ipoh, there are 67 private care facilities registered with the welfare department; and the health department has to certify nursing homes.

The size and style of retirement village accommodation varies enormously, from bed-sitter apartments to spacious brick and tile homes. Most retirement villages have common areas and a range of facilities available for the use and enjoyment of all residents.

### Levels of Care

A number of terms are used to describe the level of care that is provided in a particular village or in relation to particular units. Units that are described as 'independent living units' or 'self-care units' provide the lowest level of care, although a range of personal

services may be available on request on a user pays basis under an arrangement known as 'flexicare'. Units that are described as 'assisted living units' provide the highest level of care, usually including the regular provision of a range of personal services.

### Existing Facilities

In Ipoh, a well managed 'self-care' facility is the Teratai Home operated by the Lotus Foundation, a charity registered with the ROS. The Teratai has 29 residents; some in private rooms with others twin or quadruple sharing. The home is clean and bright with a dining hall and recreational hall. All their residents are ambulatory. The monthly charges including meals varies from RM800 to RM2,800 based on type of accommodation. Maids are available to take care of the residents and a nurse is available.

Cecelia Chan, Manager at Lotus Foundation said that they are planning to build a Retirement Resort in Gunong Lang for more than 100 residents on a 13-acre plot of land. The



Dato' Francis Lee Yew Hean

resort would cater for independent retirees as well as provide for assisted living. This is still in the planning stage.

When asked what happens to residents who during their stay encounter medical problems and are unable to care for themselves, Cecelia said, "We send them to the Kinta Health Care Home run by Kinta Medical Centre. They admit ambulatory as well as bedridden patients, including those with cancer and after strokes. They can accommodate 25 patients and the charges are from RM35 to RM 55 daily for long-term patients."

### Development Issues

Dato' Francis Lee Yew Hean, Perak Branch Chairman of Real Estate & Housing Developers' Association (REHDA) said that there are no typical retirement homes for senior citizens in Malaysia. He said that the concept of retirement homes and villages is well established in Australia and the USA but in Malaysia there is no legislation for requirements on setting up of retirement homes. Because of this developers were concerned that when legislation does come into being, they may face problems of non compliance. He feels that building typical retirement homes/villages based on the Australian or American model may not be in the interest of developers in Ipoh or in fact Malaysia itself. The best they can do is build apartments with safety features for senior citizens in their projects rather than separate retirement villages. REHDA does not have any plans for retirement villages.

### Development Roundup

A quick round up of the various developments in and around Ipoh revealed varying levels of interest amongst developers.

May Cheng, Assistant Manager, Marketing and

Sales, Sunway City said that a few years ago they had discussions with Koreans to build retirement homes for them and a Memorandum of Understanding had been signed. Due to the financial downturn, the Koreans have requested Sunway to hold on till the economy turns around. A piece of land has been identified for this project and meanwhile Sunway is studying the Koreans' expectations and their specific requirements.

A conversation with Jenny Yap, Executive Director of Bukit Kinding Resorts revealed that plans have actually been finalised for a retirement village right down to layouts for kitchens. A 5-acre plot has been identified for this horseshoe-shaped building in this resort in Chemor. They are currently looking for an operator who will get the project started and on completion, to manage the ongoing operation.

Chong Wearn Ee, Director of Total Investment said that he had visited Australia to see the retirement homes there and how to modify the concept to suit local needs. It is still in a preliminary stage.

### Most Advanced

The group with the most advanced plans for a retirement village appears to be the Kinta Properties Group who have a concept paper and a site plan with drawings already drawn up. Initially slated for Meru Golf Resort, targeted at the MM2H market, this will cater to more affluent retirees looking for an active lifestyle which the resort has on offer. Kinta Properties Group also hopes to establish a second tier development at their Klebang location for a wider market base.

### Government's Role

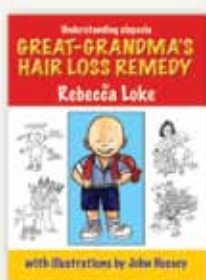
In the meantime, as developers gear up for tapping the retiree market, the local

continued on page 4



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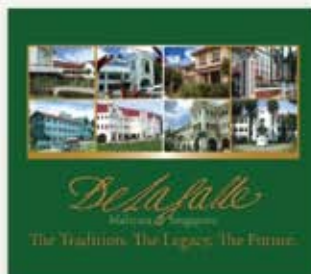
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Fathol Zaman Bukhari

## WHERE'S THE LOVING FEELING?

*Can we coexist as one when irreversible damages have been done? Your guess is as good as mine.  
We've lost that loving feeling....*

### Troubled Times

Those who grew up in the 60s would certainly recall this 1965 hit song, *You've Lost That Loving Feeling* by the Righteous Brothers. It was the number one song on the hit charts in the West. The song did fairly well in Malaysia, although it was not during the best of times. The country was being troubled by communist insurgents and a hostile neighbour bent on crushing the nation and its people. The message in the song has much relevance with the malady that is afflicting the nation today.

Although raised in a *kampung* I grew up in a town and was exposed to the bright lights at the tender age of five. Parit Buntar in the 50s and 60s was simply an insignificant provincial town with basic amenities, at best. Times were bad as the economy had nose dived due to falling rubber prices. There was not much development. The only buildings that were constructed were a row of shophouses and a 30-foot tall clock tower, a gift from a former home-

town boy who made it big in Kuala Lumpur. The clock tower, built on a tiny roundabout at the entrance to the town, is still standing today but minus its grandeur. Back then it was the town's only landmark.

### Kampung Roots

In spite of my urban upbringing I did not completely abandon my *kampung* roots. My brother and I would join our Malay brethren on weekends and during school holidays. Fishing was a form of escapism for me. The many ponds and streams that dotted the landscape were filled with *ikan keli*, *puyu* and *haruan*. I would use my grandmother's priced fishing rod to fish. Hers was a seasoned bamboo pole with a hook and line on one end. In spite of its simplicity the rod worked wonders with fish, especially *ikan puyu*. For baits there was a plentiful supply of grasshoppers available in the idle padi fields behind our house. Catching grasshoppers requires a certain amount of talent which I acquired

after watching the old lady deftly grabbing the insects with her bare hands.

The month of Ramadan was something we kids looked forward to in the *kampung*. The village's *madrasah* would be a hive of activities. We would gather at the prayer house for breaking-of-fast and the *tarawih* prayers that followed. *Moreh* (mass-cooked food) would be served to the congregation after prayers. Some of us would remain behind taking turns to beat the giant cowhide-covered drum to warn villagers the time for *sahur*.

### Hari Raya Puasa

*Hari Raya Puasa* was a time for celebration. Our house would be opened to all - relatives, neighbours and friends alike. I would invite my Chinese and Indian schoolmates over for *makan* and *kuih raya*. We welcomed them with open arms. And they would return the favour when their own festivities come around. We considered those from the Christian, Buddhist, Taoist, Sikh and

Hindu faiths as friends. Entering, eating and spending the night in their houses were never a problem. There was no distinction separating one race from another and one religion from the other. The issue of *halal* and *tak halal* never cropped up. Churches, temples and mosques co-existed harmoniously in the neighbourhood.

Yes, we had our differences but they seldom degenerated into a brawl. Yes, we used our fists to settle scores but we would patch up in matter of moments. Yes, we called names and made gestures but they were in jest rather than in zest. We were Malaysians in the purest form. We breathed the same air and drank the same water.

Why was this possible? May be it was the way we were brought up. May be it was the school we went to. May be it was destined to be such. The colour of our skins and the faith we practised were irrelevant. We were brothers and sisters and like brothers and sisters we played, laughed, fought and made

up all at the same time.

### Adopting Islamic Values

Then came the Iranian Revolution of 1979. From then onwards things began to assume a different dimension. Suddenly, *menerap nilai-nilai Islam* (adopting Islamic values) became the vogue. Nowhere was this most eagerly pursued than in the armed forces. Beer, liquors and intoxicating drinks once prevalent in messes were removed. Warriors' Day became a tame affair. No more parades at cenotaphs (except at the National Monument). No more one-minute silence in deference to the dearly departed. No more eulogies to honour those who made the ultimate sacrifices. And, worse, no more partying and merry-making. Soon all these became indelible memories to tickle our conscience.

*Haram* becomes the buzz word and is bandied about with *halal* and *tak halal*. Shaking hands with women not your *muhrim* (relation) is taboo. Showing of affection at public places

is disallowed. Entertaining your non-Muslim friends is considered improper. Sales of beer in Muslim dominated areas becomes an issue. A cow head is being used as an instrument of contempt. Open houses have turned into spurious state-sponsored functions without definitive reasons other than to splurge. Morale policing takes centre stage. And a single mother awaits caning for consuming beer. The charade has reached such levels of idiocy that it makes a mockery of our very own existence. This happens when religion and politics interface and become one. Civility takes a beating.

### Irreversible Damages

Today Najib is trying hard to relive the past by imploring the rakyat to co-exist as one. But will Malaysia ever thrive when irreversible damages have been done? Your guess is as good as mine.

**We definitely have lost that loving feeling. What a tragedy.**

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## PUBLISHER

Ipo Echo Sdn Bhd  
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No 1 Jalan Lasam  
30450 Ipoh Perak Darul  
Ridzuan  
Tel: (605) 249 5936  
Fax: (605) 255 2181  
Email: [james@ipohecho.com.my](mailto:james@ipohecho.com.my)

## EDITORIAL

Fathol Zaman Bukhari  
G. Sivapragasam  
Wern Sze Gill

## REPORTER

James Gough

GRAPHIC DESIGN/  
PHOTOGRAPHY

Rosli Mansor Ahd Razali

MARKETING &  
DISTRIBUTION  
MANAGER

Ramesh Kumar

## WEB ADMINISTOR

Kelvin Leong

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Plot 78, Lebuhraya  
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## THINKING ALOUD



by G. SIVAPRAGASAM

## LET'S BUILD UP THIS STATE TOGETHER

*Only By Listening To Each Other Can We Build Progress*

I understand that a highly placed member of the Perak State Government has decided that he will no longer read the Ipoh Echo. Apparently he does not like what the paper says, identifying my column in particular as sufficiently annoying to force him into this decision. Seemingly I have been guilty of projecting myself as a know-all; telling people who know better what to do. I do not know if there are others in the government who share his views but that would not surprise me. In the circumstances I proffer my most humble apologies to the gentleman and to the other authority figures holding similar opinions. I will do my best to revise my presentation skills.

## A Better Society

In my defence all I can say is that it was never my intention to come out preachy. Whilst I thank him for his candour I cannot agree that he should stop reading the paper or my column for that matter. To the best of my knowledge I don't think I have ever criticised merely for the sake of criticising. I have always tried to be constructive and my complaints, of things done or undone, have at all times been delivered with arguments and suggestions.

I, like him, am a national of this state and desire its progress. I am sincere and have no personal or private agenda to promote. What I highlight have only been public concerns and my objective is a better society.

I may not hold leadership position and the views I hold and the opinions I express may not find universal approval. But there may be some value in it. I do not think that only leaders can think and are capable of creativity.

The great George Bernard Shaw likened the democratic process to a hot air balloon that descends to earth once every four years at which time a host of characters struggle to stay in or get on to it. When it is full it rises and stays in the clouds for four years in perfect isolation. I am now persuaded that he may be right after all.

## 'Fourth Estate'

This leader's stance puzzles me. We have the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister of the nation seeking feedback from the people, identifying the media in particular as frontrunners for performing this task. It is not for no reason that the media is often referred to as the 'Fourth Estate'. First world countries, whose model of social structure we want to emulate, recognise the media as an institution just as important as the three other pillars of government.

'I do not want to hear anything but my thoughts' syndrome is so entrenched that on an occasion when I was about to make a presentation on tourism, the former Chief Minister Tajol Rosli had to tell the audience of State Executive Committee members and heads of Departments to set aside their prejudices and give me a chance, for my delivery might contain something useful.

## Descent to Mediocrity

I might comprehend this 'I know best' attitude if the successive state governments charged with administering Perak had been exceptional performers. If results are a measure of performance, Perak, far from being one of the leading states in the nation, has descended to mediocrity. The situation is so dismal that most of our children are forced to immigrate to other states to make a living.

## Two Fiascos

It is not as if the government has always made right decisions. Let me quote just two.

When the People's Park redevelopment project was announced and public opinion sought I wrote in the Sun warning that it would fail. I cautioned that it would be costly to maintain and would become a white elephant. Predictably, my and the opinions of others were ignored and the project was pushed ahead. Every one of my predictions has come to pass and the multimillion ringgit project has now been left to a food outlet operator to manage. On another occasion I questioned the wisdom of purchasing horse carriages from the United States

to ferry tourists around the city. I warned that our weather would make this activity impractical and maintaining horses for this task would be unfeasible. From the time the carriages arrived several years ago they have remained mothballed in the Equestrian centre at the Perak Turf Club. No less than twenty officials travelled to the States to make this decision which by itself is quite mystifying.

Engagement  
Strengthens

Those who do not agree

with what is in the Echo rather than just dismissing it could do better by explaining their stand or clarifying their position. Even retorts would be something. Engagement is what drives a democratic society and strengthens it.

You can never know. There is always the possibility that healthy engagement could result in the implementation of some good ideas and the dumping of some silly ones.

## Ipoh - Retiree's Resort . .

from page 2



and state government can do their bit to pave the way forward. Catering to an ageing population requires more attention and more awareness of the infirmities of the ageing process. Parking bays marked for the handicapped need to be strictly policed, public transport needs to be widely accessible and user friendly, an ongoing public education program, addressing issues around civic mindedness, courtes-

sy, and helping the old and the infirmed will go a long way to establishing Ipoh as a premier retirement destination.

What is certain is that Ipoh itself has what it takes to attract the active retiree, both local and foreign. In subsequent issues of the Ipoh Echo, we'll be interviewing specific retirees who have chosen to live here and the reasons for their choice.

BY: SEEFOON CHAN-KOPPEN  
RESEARCH: A. JEYARAJ

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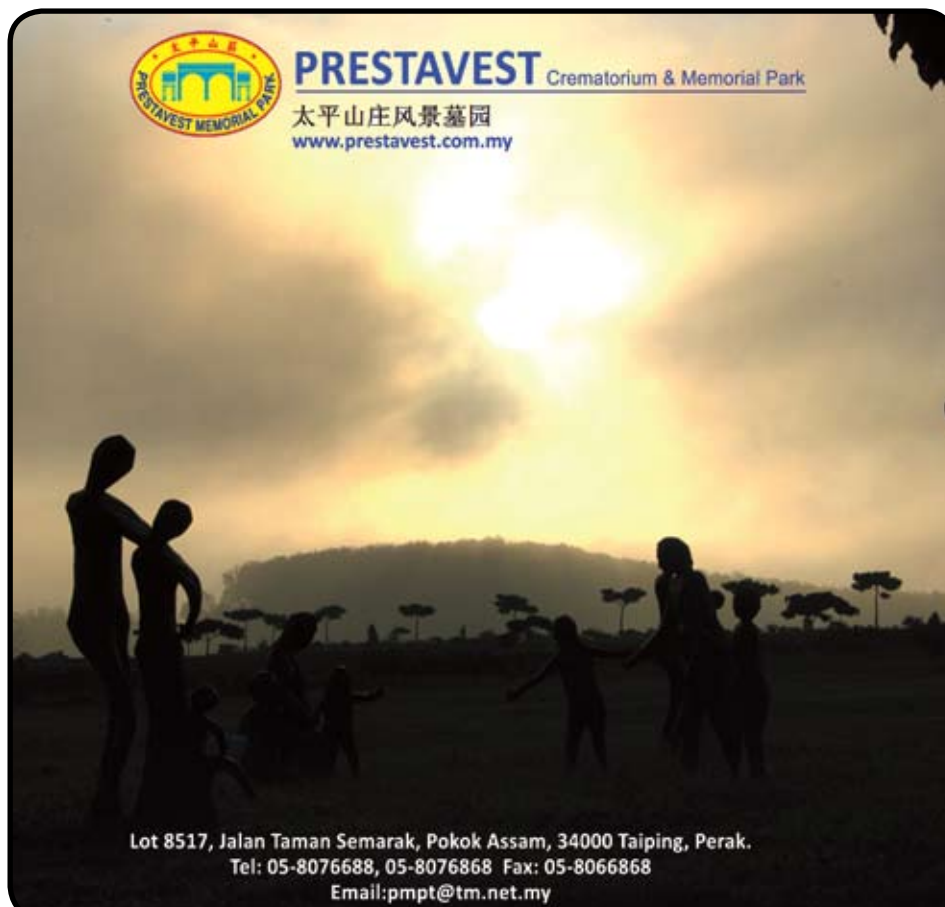
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MUSINGS ON FOOD



by See Foon Chan-Koppen  
seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

SeeFoon finds the freshest seafood on the outskirts....

Tucked away in a most remote new development of shop and terrace houses just off the Lumut highway is a gem of a restaurant called Shing Lee. Actually as the crow flies, it is probably just behind the Meru Golf resort, just beyond the range of mountains that surround the golf course.

Because of its remote location I am going to give readers exact instructions on how to find it. Coming from Jelapang, take the highway heading towards Lumut. At the first traffic light, take a right and almost immediately another right into Puncak Jelapang Maju. There at the end of the row of shophouses is Shing Lee, a restaurant serving the freshest seafood.



'Flower' Crabs

I have to admit to some curiosity as to its obscure location when I was first introduced to the place but on reflection, being only an hour away from Pantai Remis where some of the freshest seafood are either caught or farmed, it began to make sense. Particularly, when I saw all the saltwater fish tanks on entering the restaurant.

This is the restaurant to go to if you like fresh! 'Flower' crabs are shown to you still alive for you to make your selection. As are the mantis prawns and the bamboo clams and a host of other crustaceans and molluscs.

Mantis Prawns

The Mantis Prawns came first. These are weird looking



Mantis Prawns

crustaceans so called because when swimming they resemble the praying mantis when it moves its legs. Possessed of innumerable pairs of these (legs), they look like giant centipedes and can appear quite intimidating to the



inexperienced diner. The ones at Shing Lee are huge. Measuring easily nine to ten inches long and about two inches in diameter at the meaty part of the body, they are pricey at RM95 per kilo (about 3 large ones) but the taste is worth every sen you pay. Done *Tsiew Yeem* style, the carapace is smothered in salt, pepper, garlic, some chillies and quickly deep fried at very high temperatures, arriving whole at the table, all golden and crispy. One has to be careful tucking in as they are piping hot and even cutting through with the scissors provided require some attention.

But its sweet soft flesh that had everyone at the table oohing and ahing in ecstatic delight. This is undoubtedly the biggest, best, Mantis Prawns I've ever eaten. And cooked to perfection, the shell crisp, crunchy and salty with a hint of chillies and the flesh tender, moist and sweet beyond belief. Our group took a long time over the prawn, digging into every crevice, nook and cranny, in the hopes of finding yet another morsel of the tasty flesh. Sau Mei, the manager of the restaurant and the one who recommends the dishes, was very patient with us, holding off bringing on the next dish till we had exhausted our 'pleasure' hunt.

Lesson on Crabs

Our engagement with our hands wasn't to end there. Next to arrive was the flower crabs, last seen alive and waving claws at the table, now more docile steamed with egg white with a hint of sesame oil. It was full of red soft roe which I thought was a rare seasonal treat until Mei explained that it is now possible to get roe crabs all year round, although September and October appear to be the best season. These crabs, have a softer shell, have less meat and are much sweeter than their mud cousins but this evening, because the crabs had just arrived from Kuala Kulau north of Taiping, they were chockfull of meat and still carried the tang of the sea in each mouthful. We also



Hermaphrodite Crab (L)

had the opportunity to taste a rare crab, what in Malay is called the 'Pondan' crab, a hermaphrodite crab that is half female and half male. We then got a lesson in how to recognise these crabs by observing the belly side of the carapace. In regular female crabs, there is a fat, rounded fan-shaped delineation of the shell while the male crabs have a sharp triangular shaped one, but the hermaphrodite crabs will show a shape that is a cross between the two! See pix. All flower crabs RM38 per kilo.

We then moved on to the *Tsee Lor* an unusual sea-snail about two-three inches in length and have long spikes protruding all over. Not a friendly snail to meet in the sand! These were served with a chilli sauce and a ginger, spring onion, oil and soya sauce mixture which I preferred. They were easy to eat with toothpicks pulling out the reclusive snail - RM10/12/15 S/M/L. This was followed by the *Pak Cheuk* Octopus, thick chunks of tender octopus just blanched and served with the same sauces as the snails - RM12.

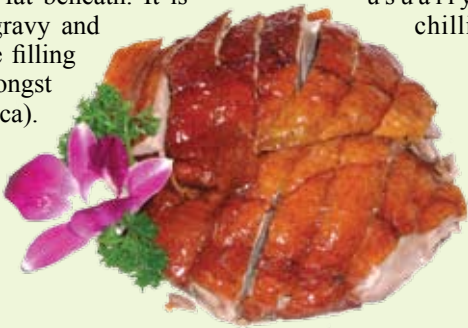
Shing Lee serves all their seafood in whichever style suits the diner. They will do it *Kam Heong* (dried chillies, dried prawns and curry leaves), *Kung Poh* (dried chillies and slightly sweet) or steamed, baked, fried or in congee.

Signature Vegetables and Others

After that abundance of seafood, we welcomed the next two vegetable dishes, both signature dishes for which Shing Lee is known. The first was a crispy fried *kangkong* (water spinach) delectably crunchy with bits of dried scallops and the second was the bitter melon fried with salted

HAWKER FOOD ROAST DUCK

Unlike roast chicken, roast duck may not find favour with some people. Where you can't go wrong with chicken, duck - if it's not cooked well, can come out as tough as shoe leather! Done well, it is tender and succulent, and the skin - thin and crisp, with a sliver of fat beneath. It is usually accompanied with plum sauce, duck gravy and sauce. The duck gravy comes from the filling of the duck itself which may have, amongst other things, 'dong quai' (Chinese angelica). This may not go down well with some people who do not like the strong herb whilst others find this flavourful and aromatic. Five-spice powder may also be added to the seasoning. Some shops will even crisp the skin just before serving.



NAME	WHERE	COMMENTS	PER DUCK (RM)	
GREENTOWN RESTAURANT YEONG WAI 10.30am-8.30pm Off alternate Saturdays	70 Persiaran Greentown 1, Greentown Business Centre (Tel: 016-5614690)	Good homemade plum sauce and chilli sauce. Duck sauce has nice herbal taste.	From 37.00 to 39.00	★ ★ ★ ★
HONG KONG OIL CHICKEN & ROAST DUCK 10am-7pm Off 4th Mon & Tues	638-640 Jln Kuala Kangsar, Taman Tasek Damai (Tel: 05-2911550/ 014-6008300)	Tender and succulent. Gravy has a 'tau cheong' (preserved beancurd) taste.		★ ★ ★ ★
TAI SAI HEE DUCK KING 10.30am-7pm	585 Jln Jelapang.	Tender and succulent. Gravy has 'dong quai' flavour.		★ ★ ★ ★
RESTORAN HONG KONG 10.15am-7.30pm Closed 3rd Thur & Fri	60 Jln Lee Kwee Foh, Canning Garden (Tel: 05-5477813)	Skin well roasted and has a slight smoky taste.		★ ★ ★ ★

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Cooking demonstration 19 Sept at 2 p.m

egg. We then finished off the meal with a *Ngan Yu Tsai Chao Fan*, fried rice with Chinese sausage, topped with tiny dried anchovies.

In addition to the fresh seafood on which their reputation is built, Shing Lee has a good offering of

all the traditional Chinese dishes like braised pig's trotters, roast chicken, tofu dishes, etc. Pre-ordering of seafood is advised for those wishing to have the crab and mantis prawns as well as for some of the pork dishes.

**SHING LEE RESTAURANT**  
#44 Prsn Puncak Jelapang 2, Puncak Jelapang Maju,  
Tel: 05-5267104/016-5935848  
11.30-2.30 p.m.  
6.00-0.30 p.m.



## RAMADAN ROUND UP

## SHARING GOODNESS AT RAMADAN

## POLICE ORPHANS FETED



The Perak Police Contingent Headquarters on Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> September, feted some 50 orphans from five police districts in Perak. The orphans are children of former policemen who had died while in harness or after retirement. The children were treated to a breaking-of-fast dinner at the compound of the contingent's *surau*. Deputy IGP, Tan Sri Ismail Omar and CPO Perak, Dato' Pahlawan Zulkifli Abdullah, were the guests of honour. Each child was given RM100 *duit raya* by the Deputy IGP. The money was donated by police personnel in Perak. They were also presented with a box of *kuih raya* each.

## CARING FROM THE HEART



Hospital Pantai Putri Ipoh and Kelab Bakti Gunong Ledang jointly organised the "Caring From The Heart" programme as part of their responsibility to society. Tan Sri Mohamed Khatib, Chairman of Pantai Holdings Berhad,

## BUKA PUASA WITH ARTS AND CULTURE DEPARTMENT



The Perak Department of Arts and Culture and Petronas organised a joint breaking-of-fast dinner at the department's premises. Prior to the dinner a mass cooking of *bubur lambuk* was conducted in the open ground. Ingredients and utensils for the mass cooking were provided by the department and Petronas. Those invited to the function were mainly members of the various theatre groups in Perak. The purpose of the gathering was to honour the fasting month of Ramadan. Department director, Encik Ramli Saleh and Petronas state chief, Encik Abdullah Azizi, were in attendance. They then gave away gifts to the theatre groups in appreciation for their roles in reviving performing arts in the state.

launched the programme at Hospital Pantai Putri recently. The objective of this initiative was to educate, motivate and maintain health standards of students from remote and rural areas of Perak. This includes children of Orang Asli. According to Encik Ir. Khairul Anwar Bin Musa, President Kelab Bakti Gunong Ledang, the club had enough volunteers to attend to the needs of these underprivileged

children. The health needs of the students would be met by Hospital Pantai Putri, assured its CEO, Dr Dilshaad Ali. The programme will be extended to orphanages, old folks homes, the handicapped and the rural poor. The ceremony ended with a breaking-of-fast dinner with 46 orphans from Maahad Darus Salam and Precious Home, Ipoh. The children were given *duit, baju* and *kuih raya*.

## BUBUR LAMBUK ALA AEON



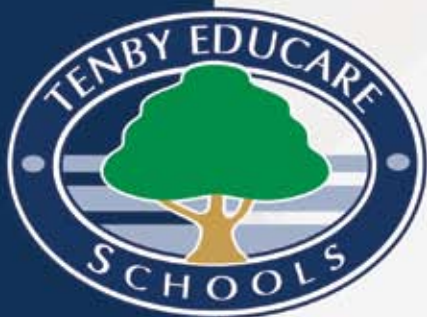
AEON Co Sdn Bhd's contribution for Ramadan was titled the 'Bubur Lambuk for Charity Programme 2009'. It was held on 5<sup>th</sup> September at Kinta City. Beginning at 1 p.m., the staff from Kinta City prepared the porridge which was cooked with coconut milk, herbs and meat. A total of 455 containers were packed which were then sold to the public. A sum of RM1,218 was collected from the sale. The proceeds from the sale will then be channelled to the 'With All Our Hearts (WAOH) Malaysia Jusco Foundation' for ultimate distribution to underprivileged children during the upcoming month long Aidilfitri celebrations. All AEON Shopping

Centres participated in the programme.

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Taman Ipoh Selatan, 31400  
Ipoh. Tel: 05-5467670

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phase costs RM70 per 12 visits.

**BMS Organics**  
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and Sundays are off.

**Riche Montana Korean BBQ Buffet**

No. 71 & 71A, Lorong  
Taman Ipoh Satu, Ipoh  
Garden South, Ipoh. Tel:  
05-5483661

**Y**ou might have noticed that Ipoh is filled with an ever-growing number of Japanese food outlets, and if you've wondered if their Korean counterparts will ever be on par, there might just be an answer to that in Ipoh Garden South. Riche Montana is a newly opened Korean restaurant that does BBQ buffets. There is a wide selection of meat and

vegetable dishes, satisfying the gustatory desires of the Korean food lover. Any connoisseur of Korean food can look forward to a taste of the ubiquitous Kim Chi (fermented vegetable in varied seasonings), assorted beef and vegetables for steaming in soup (much like the Chinese 'very own steamboat'), Kim Bap (literally translated as 'steamed rice wrapped in seaweed', or also known as Korean sushi), and other selections aplenty. Try all of the Korean BBQ for only RM29.90<sup>++</sup>. Muslims can rest assured that all food served is pork-free. Call Riche Montana for



A scrumptious display at Riche Montana Korean BBQ



Kuku Spa's glorious array of nails

reservations, and you are on your way to a fantastic Korean meal.

**Kuku Spa**

Lorong Taman Ipoh 1,  
Taman Ipoh Selatan, 31400  
Ipoh. Tel: 05-5451899

**O**ne of the most established nail spas in Ipoh, Kuku Spa is the best place to head for when browsing the boutiques in this part of Ipoh Garden South becomes too taxing. Here they are meticulous about sterilising their equipment after each use and even the foot soak comes in a plastic bag for hygiene reasons. Although its patrons are mostly women, they'll accept men

if introduced by someone they know. One can have the standard manicure and pedicure package for RM64 but currently they are offering Ipoh Echo readers a very special discount of the full spa treatment (mani/pedi/scrub/hydrating massage) at RM130 (usual price RM210) and throw in a paraffin wax treatment at half price of RM25. And while you're at it, have your nails decorated with nail art. Prices start from RM15 for a full set of hands or feet.

**For Kuku Spa:**  
mention Ipoh Echo  
when booking to avail  
yourself of the special  
offer.

## A.C.S "IN SEARCH OF EXCELLENCE"

**T**he Ipoh A.C.S. Alumni Association held a dinner recently at Hee Lai Ton restaurant which saw the reunion of old students, former teachers and heads of the two schools, A.C.S. Primary and A.C.S. Secondary, gathering for an evening of fun, fellowship and nostalgia.

The Ipoh ACS, through its 114 years of history in education has been instrumental in producing many notable stalwarts of society. Many of its alumni have been successful in their respective vocations – in the academic world, in education, in politics, on the global business and economic front, in the performing arts, as well as in science and technology. The evening, whose

theme was 'In Search of Excellence', was held in aid of their Annual Top Student Awards for STPM, SPM and UPSR. Handing out the awards was Alumni President Mr Lee Seong Yan, a notable lawyer in town, who said, "The A.C.S. alumni is committed to encouraging students to excel in their respective fields of interest and this is one of the fund-raising efforts towards this end. The Ms Foo Nyuk Yong Form 5 English Language Challenge Trophy award is also our contribution to raising the level of the English language in our school".

The primary school all-rounder award went to **Lavindran Luke**; best 2008.



Alumni President, Mr S.Y. Lee with Mr Tan Taik Lee (former headmaster of ACS) and Mrs Tan

SPM student award to **Cheah Yew Tuck**; the Ms Foo Nyuk Yong 2009 Best Form 5 English Language award to **Krizun Loganathan** and Best 2008 STPM Student award to **Jothiswaran Namasoo**.

The evening was enlivened by Betty Ismail and The Remix while the 'Belly Dancing' show from the Susan Ting dancers had the 'old boys' straining in their seats to catch a glimpse of the gyrations on stage.



Belly dancer

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**SJK(C) Padang Gajah** is now in operation. Interested parents can contact the school at **05-312 6813** for information on student enrolment.



## IPOH IN BRIEF

More pics at ipohecho.com.my

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY MICHELLE!



It was an impromptu birthday bash thrown for her by Mum Datin Janet Yeoh when Ipoh's own superstar, Dato' Michelle Yeoh came back on a flying visit. Looking relaxed and dressed casually, Michelle spent time catching up with friends.

## IMPROVED PARKING AT IPOH RAILWAY STATION



In the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2009 issue of Ipoh Echo, we highlighted the parking problems of passengers using the KTMB's KL-Ipoh train shuttle service. Recently the authorities have roped the drop off road and prevented parking of cars alongside. A signboard has been put up stating that the area is strictly for dropping and picking up of passengers. Two security guards are manning the entrance to ensure public compliance. Keep it up KTMB!

## H1N1 DAMPENS MATTA FAIR TURNOUT



The response to the 8th MATTA Perak Travel Fair (MPTF) 2009 held recently at the Indera Mulia Indoor Stadium was "dampened" by the H1N1 scare, lamented

## MERDEKA COLOURING CONTEST



The Perak State Library organised a number of activities to commemorate Hari Merdeka recently. The much awaited event on the programme was the colouring contest. It attracted a total of 56 participants from two Kemas-run kindergartens in Ipoh. The executive councillor for tourism and women affairs, Dato' Hamidah Osman, graced the occasion. She praised the private sector for sponsoring the programme. It was aimed at instilling the Merdeka spirit in the younger generation, she remarked. Muhammad Alif from Tadika Kemas Kg Tersusun Tasek was adjudged the winner. He was presented with a hamper courtesy of Jaya Jusco Supermarket.

## MERDEKA COUNTDOWN



The Merdeka countdown at the ICCC was a rather grand affair with dignitaries, VIP's and special guests celebrating the theme of '1MALAYSIA'. Festivities began with much fanfare with the food presentation served by staff dressed in the various traditional costumes of the Malay, Chinese and Indian races. Guests were treated to performances that included drumming of the three major races, dances and a demonstration of the art of Wushu. As with previous Merdeka celebrations, the night ended with a bang and guests left with a sense that we were 1MALAYSIA when they bade each other farewell.

Organising Chairman Encik Amirnurrashid Abas (pix - L). "The turnout for the first 2 days of the 3-day event was slow. Thankfully the crowd picked up on the last day."

A total of 70 booths were booked during the fair with 10 travel agents participating as compared to seven during the fair held earlier this year. However the volume of travel bookings received was 20% less than the earlier fair. The most popular destinations snapped up by travelers this time was Taiwan followed by Korea.

During the fair, Mayor Roshidi Hashim announced the commencement of Ipoh-Medan flights which will be

## 52ND MERDEKA CELEBRATIONS



While KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital got all dressed up for the Merdeka celebrations with a giant flag measuring 20 m x 40 m displayed at their main entrance, and patriotic music playing at all waiting areas, their only Merdeka baby was born at 4.22 p.m. weighing 2.7 kg. Chief Nursing Officer presented a hamper to the proud mother, Madam Soo Yik Yeng.

## RECORD WORSHIPPING!



The Malaysia Book of Records endorsed the Longest Non-Stop Worship Service of 100 hours at Church of Thaveethin Kudaram, Ipoh, on 30th August 2009. Organised by Rev. Menon Manasa, Apostle of the church, the event saw about 500 members of the congregation participating in this non-stop praise and worship service which lasted from 8.00 a.m., 26<sup>th</sup> August till noon 30<sup>th</sup> August.

The certificate endorsing the event was presented by Ms Josephine Intachat an official from Malaysia Book of Records to Rev. M. Manasa.

operated by a new low-cost carrier Silverfly Sdn Bhd.

The maiden flight which was scheduled for September 9 has now been rescheduled to September 27 instead to allow for last minute details being finalised by the relevant authorities in Medan and Ipoh.

Silverfly will fly three times per week to Medan on Monday, Friday and Sunday, departing Ipoh at 12.30 p.m. The flight time is 55 minutes. The airline uses a Fokker 50 aircraft with a seating capacity for 48 passengers.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## A LANDMARK CASE

The residents of Taman Golf's appeal for the removal of a sewage treatment plant facing their homes has been upheld.

The three man panel of the Perak Appeals Board, led by Dato' N.H. Chan, in allowing the appeal has ordered the Ipoh City Council to order the Royal Perak Golf Club to immediately dismantle and demolish the sewage treatment plant.

The residents lodged a complaint against the club early last year stating that they only knew of the sewage treatment plant after construction had begun. They further claimed the location was

prone to flooding and would be a health hazard.

The grounds for allowing the appeal is because the notices to the 'owners of neighbouring lands' allowing them their right to object, had not been served to the majority of the residents. As such "the planning permission granted to the club is invalid. It is null and void and has to be set aside", stated Chan.

The Board has also ordered the local authority to pay costs of RM5,000 to the appellants for the delay and obstacles put up against the residents, especially since the Ipoh town planner was in the



Taman Golf residents showing the victory sign. Behind them is the sewage treatment plant

Committee of the Club.

According to former Ipoh City Watch deputy president (2004-2006), Ernest Balasingam, this successful appeal is a landmark case as residents

have never before won a case against a local authority and more so where the local authority has had to pay costs to the appellants.

## ACCIDENT JUNCTION – HORLEY STREET



**Problem:** Councillor for Zone 16, Loh Kam Meng has received 17 complaints of road accidents from his constituents since June. The area identified was at the junction of Horley Street and Jalan Veerasingam. Of the 17 complaints 5 were actual accident cases while 12 were 'near accident'

cases.

**Action:** A team coordinated by Perak BN Public Service Centre visited the location to verify the complaints. Present at the on-site visit was Dato' Lee Kon Yin, BN Service Centre Chief, Councillor and Engineer Lai Kong

Phooi, MBI Director for City Buildings Azman Mat Ariff and Developer Liew Mun Hon.

**Facts:** Construction work of the Horley Street Hotel, a joint-venture between MBI and developer Liew Yin Yin Holdings and located at the junction of Horley Street and Jalan Veerasingam had begun since June 2009. Owing to initial structural work, the parking bays along Horley Street had been fenced in encroaching into Horley Street, narrowing it considerably. A single row

flexible road divider was erected but being ineffective was replaced with a double row divider.

**Resolution 1 Encroachment:** On September 10 Developer Liew reviewed the site area and moved the fencing inwards by 3 feet.

**Resolution 2 Blind spot:** The fence at the road junction was a 'blind spot'. All parties were agreeable on this. The corner cut had been 'flattened' earlier by 45% and would be flattened a further 45%. "This

## KG KEPAYANG TO GET A NEW MOSQUE



Residents of Kampung Kepayang, Fair Park, had an unforgettable day on 4<sup>th</sup> September when Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Dato' Muhyiddin Yassin visited their village to present Hari Raya contributions to the poor and under privileged children from the constituency of Ipoh Barat. Accompanying Muhyiddin on the visit was Perak Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Zambry Abdul Kadir.

Ketua Kampung (village head) Tuan Haji Mukhtar Mahmud, in welcoming the distinguished visitors, declared that "this was the first time ever that a prominent ruling politician had visited the village". In

his address Mukhtar had also requested for assistance to upgrade the village mosque.

Zambry during his address responded to Mukhtar's request by pledging to purchase 8 acres of land fronting the current mosque to be used as the site for the new mosque. To complement Zambry's offer Muhyiddin, too pledged the sum of RM2.5 million towards the construction of the new mosque.

Kg Kepayang Fair Park is one of the earliest and oldest kampongs situated close to Ipoh Town.

too had been completed on 10<sup>th</sup> September", confirmed Liew.

As the construction of the hotel is scheduled for completion before the end

of 2012, it is advisable for all road users frequenting this location to be more attentive when approaching this junction.

**JAMES GOUGH**

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## KAMPONG TALES

## SWEETS FOR MY SWEET



These are the long, hot, dry days of fasting in the kampong, when birds seem to sing with croaky voices, cats are sullen, quiet, and even the monitor lizards seem more sluggish. These are the days of Ramadan, when activities

in the kampong are reverse geared, with day becoming night and night, surprising enough, becoming day.

Languid thirsty days followed by frenetic thirst quenching nights sees fasting end and the feasting begin in earnest, and oh what delicious drool inducing, delectable feasting it is.

Down by the new kampong hall, opposite our bungalow rear, where Kopi our scruffy cat delights in roaming and spraying his unique brand of Yves St. Laurent, every evening is the Ramadan pasar.

Standing outside my kitchen, I look longingly towards the pasar and can smell the delicate aromas of the infamous Ayam Percik, sticks of succulent satay, huge woks of nasi and mee goreng, lovingly ladled into boxes of square, white polystyrene – for customers to consume with relish at the *berbuka puasa* (break of fast).

## Sweet Addiction

As lovely as the savoury dishes are, and they are lovely, oh so lovely; it is the *kuih*, the sweets, the fabulously well crafted

and mouth wateringly delicious Malay desserts which are my inevitable downfall, and no doubt, more than any wine, women or whisky will be my ultimate ruination. I am addicted to *kuih*.

At other times of the year I barely get by, but at Ramadan, when the market is just laden with all kinds of food, my pseudo stoic determination crumbles into dust, and I recall my lust and longing for the tongue teasing *kuih*.

I just adore *kuih* of all shapes and sizes, and though *kuih* takes little out of your pocket, it will inevitably pile on kilos around your waist. Even the names of the *kuih*, wrapped in mystery, and frequently banana leaf too, get my oral juices flowing at the mere mention of their names.

## Exotic Names

From the ubiquitous *badak berendam* (hippos dipping in the river), to *anak dara baju koyak* (maiden with a torn dress) and *anak dara dua sebilik* (two maidens in the same room) the names are enough to send you into raptures of both laughter and wanton desire for these heaven sent parcels of sheer joy.

The Ramadan pasar opposite has tables practically groaning under the weight of see-through plastic containers of *lompat tikam* (jump and stab), where *gula Melaka* forms a flavoursome layer between the sweet velvet santan and the soft, green, gelatinous pandan custard. Tables bow under the load of *tahi itik* (duck droppings) de-



Badak Berendam

liciously made from eggs and sugar, but the most glorious of *kuih* is the most simple, and shelters under the most mundane of names. Pineapple rolls are exactly what they say they are – rolls of pineapple.

But what rolls of pineapple. The pineapple in question is homemade pineapple jam, lovingly prepared with fresh pineapple and sugar, stewed and reduced to make the preserve, then wrapped in the softest most melt-in-your-mouth pastry that you will ever have tasted, brushed with egg and baked. The result is pure heaven in a mouthful, and, luckily, the pineapple rolls come sized to fit nicely into your mouth without, undue indelicacy.

That I have a weight problem goes without saying. Staying in Malaysia has only increased my girth, but it is the combination of having a sweet tooth, low resistance to temptation, and the long fasting days, which egg me on to devour copious amounts of Malay *kuih* during the feasting nights of Ramadan.

Yusuf Martin is an Englishman, now snugly settled in the kampong bosom of Perak.

His writings can be found in *The Expat*, *Senses of Malaysia*, *The Malaysian Insider* (online) and his various blogs on the internet.

His short stories and essays have been published in anthology volumes by publishers such as Silverfish, MPH and Matahari, while his voice has been heard on BFM radio and his girth witnessed on NTV7.

By YUSUF MARTIN

## Traditional Malay Cook

The fact that I am married to simply one of the best traditional Malay cooks also does not help my weight. A hard taskmaster – her mother, taught my wife. Both of my wife's parents are particular about how their food should taste, and my wife was tutored accordingly, encouraged to learn all the traditional ways of Malay kampong cooking. It is both a joy and a curse. A sheer joy because of the wondrous meals my wife is able to prepare, but a curse to my waistline.

So, as the evening *azan* calls for the day's fast to finish, after quenching my thirst with watermelon juice, my eyes scan the table for the *kuih*. I need to be confident that the *kuih* is sitting there, waiting for me and my appetite, as soon as I have enjoyed the savouries. Once the *kuih* is espied, I can relax and enjoy the meal lovingly prepared by my wife, eat, drink and be merry for the *kuih* is waiting.

Malaysia and *kuih* are my downfall, my wife's cooking more so.

I salivate as I write, waiting for break of fast and the beginning of feast, knowing that I may do it all over again tomorrow – a brand new day with a brand new *kuih*.

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## PARENTING

By YEUN YIN FONG

## “WHEN IS THE NEXT ONE?”... THE OTHER UBIQUITOUS QUESTION

I am sure parents of only child families can empathise with this. How often do you secretly roll your eyes and think, “Here we go again...” when well-meaning friends and relatives pop the most predictable “So, when's the next one?” question.

I am no longer annoyed by it as I simply tell the blameless offenders that there won't be a ‘next one’ – only to regret seconds later upon the resounding “But why?” response from them. This will then induce the most uncomfortable yet obligatory bare-it-all kind of explanation on why we will not have any more kids. It's almost like confession!

What is it with our society and having many children anyway? Must we have more than one child to substantiate a ‘family’? Are children without siblings doomed to be lonely,

selfish tykes and cursed with the inability to function normally with their peers? That seems to be the general misconception about such children, hence the notorious “Only Child Syndrome”.

An only child is often stereotyped with unflattering tags such as self-absorbed, aggressive, bossy and maladjusted, although hundreds of research studies have shown that only children are no different from their peers with siblings. In fact, these studies have also found that many of these children turn out to be extremely independent, have a strong desire to succeed and take on responsibilities very early in life.

My son is just four and we have already observed some of the above traits, both positive and negative, in him – which makes him no different from any



other child. It boils down to how the people around him want him to be treated. Children assume roles given to them easily and readily, especially at such a tender age. In my son's case, he becomes an ‘only child’ only when the situations call for it – mostly when they involve certain characters known as grandparents.

These days, many children are the only child in their families. Clearly there will be those that fit the conventional “only child” label but there is also an equal number that will prove to be otherwise. What matters are the parenting styles of individual families and the child's personality.

Back to the question of

why there isn't going to be a next one for us, the reasons are many. As a working couple, we have very little time left for leisure and bonding with our son every day. At present, there is already a lot of reliance on a third party (pre-school and day care) to provide care for our child. We want to make sure that we are available for him whenever we can, since it was our collective decision to bring him into this world!

It gets worse when he is unwell. As we do not have a large and extended family or a host of helpers readily available to take over under such circumstances, the responsibility to look after him falls on either one of us. At such times, guilt creeps in and I'd temporarily consider the idea of being a full time homemaker.

And then, there is the financial commitment to

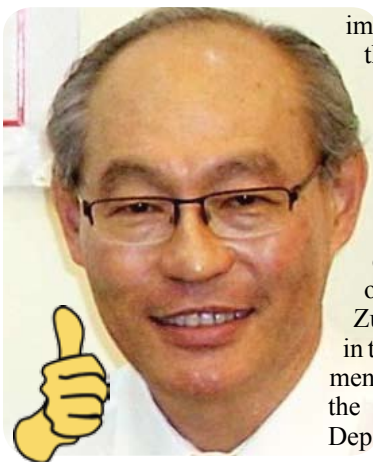
raise a child, which is no small burden for a working class family like ours. It is estimated that the cost of feeding, clothing and educating a child up to tertiary level for a middle income family, comes to more than half a million Ringgit (conservative). That is on top of servicing the various loans and bills commonplace in most households these days. With the rising cost of living, I wonder how we would be able to survive with more children and less money.

I am sure there are many parents who disagree with me but for now, I am just not ready for a second child.

So the next time someone asks the above question, I'll just answer “Soon, very soon”. I'm sure it will incite another set of questions; but that's another story for another day.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

COUNCILLOR DATO' DANIEL TAY  
DOING HIS DUTY

## THUMBS UP

**Problem:** The residents of Lim Garden were having problems for some time with the drainage system, sump pump of the retention pond and other issues.

**Action:** Dato' Daniel Tay managed to arrange for an

impromptu meeting with the Mayor in spite of his (Mayor's) busy schedule. Mr Sagadevan, Secretary of Lim Garden Residence Association was given an opportunity to convey the problems of the residents to Pn Zuraina, Senior Engineer in the Engineering department and En Zulkifli from the Community Affairs Department.

**Resolution:** Follow up meetings to be held with officers concerned.

**Appreciation:** Subsequently Dato' Daniel Tay convened a meeting with representatives from housing estates in Zone 8 comprising of Lim Garden, Merdeka Garden,

Cherry Park, Taman Idris and Taman Tempok on 9<sup>th</sup> September. Residents stressed that solving problems are more important than holding meetings to which Dato' Daniel pledged that he would contact the relevant officers for resolution. Residents of Zone 8 have expressed appreciation for the good work being done by Dato' Daniel and hopes he will continue to do so.

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4. Entrants must NOT be working for any newspaper, magazine, print or online. Professionals will be disqualified.

Once received, Ipoh Echo owns all publishing rights to the articles and retains the right to publish the articles as and when it chooses. The decision of the judges is final and no appeal will be entertained. Winners and runners up will have the option to work as paid free-lance contributors to the Ipoh Echo.

Please submit your script by email (preferable) to:  
[ipohecho@ipohecho.com.my](mailto:ipohecho@ipohecho.com.my) or by post to:  
No. 1 Jalan Lasam, 30450 Ipoh.

Closing date for entries: 15th November 2009  
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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05-2552181**; or email: [announcements@ipohecho.com.my](mailto:announcements@ipohecho.com.my), by the 9th or 23rd of every month in order to meet deadlines. Announcements by phone will not be entertained. Ipoh Echo reserves the right to verify any announcement before it is published.

**Perak Women for Women Society (PWW)** resource and service centre has been relocated effective 1 Sep '09. The new centre is at: 52 Jalan Sultan Azlan Shah (Tiger Lane) 31400 Ipoh. Tel/Fax: **05-5469715**.

**Kechara House Ipoh Study Group.** Next session on dharma teachings is 20 Sep '09, 2.30-4.30 p.m., Wisma Tan Sri Chong Kok Lim, 15B Jalan Che Tak. Contact: Dr Ming (**012-2841009**) or Mr Ngeow (**016-6052996**).

**PSPA's 'Spectacular Masquerade Party'** on Friday 25 Sep 2009, 8.00 p.m. at the Impiana Casuarina Hotel. For dinner bookings and enquiries, please contact PSPA (**05-5487814**) or Witzi Leong (**012-5088818**).

**St Peter's Church & YMCA.** 'Crazy Little Thing Called Love'. 27 Sep '09, 5.00 p.m. at YMCA Ipoh. For free invitation: St Peter's: **05-5460444**; [spcipoh@streamyx.com](mailto:spcipoh@streamyx.com) or YMCA: **05-2540809**; [ymcaipoh@gmail.com](mailto:ymcaipoh@gmail.com).

**Old Michaelians Association annual reunion dinner.** 7.30 p.m. on 26 Sep '09 at the Red Crescent Hall, Jalan Kompleks Sukan. Contact Adrian Tsen: **012-5289191** or Yip CheeThong: **019-5567913** for details.

**Perak Academy sponsored "Perak Lectures".** Title: 'Malaysia: The Challenge of the Present'. Speaker: Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah. 2 Oct '09 at Ballroom Syuen Hotel, Ipoh, beginning at 7.30 p.m. (dinner at 8 p.m.). Call Wai Keong at **05-547 8949** or **016-551 6675** for reservations.



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