



■ Mayor's Concerns



Page 3

■ We Need Cabbies, Not Ambassadors



Page 4

SeeFoon discovers a Ray of Hope in Bercham



Page 5

YBU Appeal for Flood Victims



Page 9



Kinta and Perak:

An Eco-Adventure Playground

by James Gough

Mountain biking through an Orang Asli village at Gopeng. Inset: Nomad's Earth Camp

Last February Dato' Hamidah commented that Perak had a lot to offer to the eco-adventure tourist. She made the comment after officiating the launch of Bukit Kinding's Eco Adventure Park (BKEAP) Double Zip-Line Flying Fox product which is the longest in the country measuring 486 metres in length.

Continued on page 2



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Multiple Adventure Sports All in One Location

BKEAP located at Tanjung Rambutan is a 1,400-acre resort that sits at the foothills of the Titiwangsa Range. Since last November when it introduced a string of adventure activities ranging from free kayaking to zorbing, paintball, mountain biking and later the Flying Fox, the resort has experienced a growth of new customers using their facilities mainly for team building and adventure activities.

Interestingly, although BKEAP is new to eco-adventure activities, it has been having impressive bookings from colleges, universities and corporations for its adventure activities since it started its adventure park. According to Mr Pavin Damodran, BKEAP Manager, the Resort does its own marketing and currently can handle 180 guests per time. However, it is currently constructing new chalets and dormitories to accommodate over 600 guests at any one time.

Besides adding accommodations, it recently added an orienteering course and will be adding an abseiling area soon. The fact that bookings for June are already full is testimony to the popularity of adventure activities.

Eco and Adventure Tourism versus Eco-Adventure Tourism

The definition of Eco-Tourism refers to tourists wishing to experience and appreciate the natural and cultural heritage within an environment and foster a greater appreciation of its natural habitat.

Adventure tourism on the other hand attracts tourists seeking excitement though activities that require significant personal effort and some degree of risk such as white-water rafting, rock climbing or even mountain biking.

When one combines these two definitions, Eco-Adventure Tourism, one immediately realises that Perak has all these products.

Our eco-tourism products such as Gua Tempurung and Royal Belum are world-class gems, pristine and precious and offer a wealth of knowledge. Similarly interesting are our Orang Asli villages and Ipoh's Heritage Trails. For adventure there are white-water rafting, caving and mountain biking, to name a few. Package all of these activities together and the result is a fun and adventurous eco-adventure holiday.

For all of these activities visitors need not travel to the four corners of the country but just come to Ipoh to begin their adventure because Perak has got it all.

Gopeng – A One-Stop Destination

Nomad Adventure, an adventure training company was the first adventure operator in Gopeng starting in 2003.

Its founder ChanYuen Li, an adventure enthusiast, captained the first Asian team to complete the 1998 multi day expedition Eco-Challenge competition held in Morocco, Chan is also the individual who discovered and developed commercial white-water rafting trips at Sungai Kampar.

Nomad, located within close proximity of Gua Tempurung offers a full spectrum of adventure activities which allow visitors to be at one with nature amongst the surrounding natural habitat.

Its site consists of two locations – Earth Camp and Mountain School. Visitors can stay at its eco-friendly Earth Camp-site which provides accommodations in green-house dormitories or tree houses to get the feel of communal living in a rainforest environment.

Its water activities along the Kampar River include the exciting white-water rafting which traverses 22 rapids of grades 2-3 all the while surrounded by the rainforests along upper Sungai Kampar. Subsequently this is followed by a relaxing and scenic kayaking float trip down the lower Sg Kampar drifting through river villages until Kuala Dipang.

Nomad's Mountain School at the limestone outcrop of Gua Kandu offers rock climbing, a unique high ropes course along a limestone and jungle environment, and free hanging abseil.

Visitors are also taken for caving at Gua Tempurung and encouraged to participate in the Academy Kampung community cultural activity to have a complete eco-adventure experience all within Gopeng itself.

It must be noted that Nomad being the market leader in this eco tourist market, has achieved some significant benchmark initiatives such as treating its grey water and achieving ISO9001/2008 certification, making them the only resort operator with ISO certification.

Eco-Tourism Spin-Offs: Eco-Resorts and Involvement of Local Communities

With the growth of eco-tourism, eco-tourist resorts and adventure operators have



White-water rafting on the Kampar River, Gopeng

sprouted. A year after Nomad started, Adeline Koh, the owner of *Adeline Rest House* opened a 5-acre resort at Ulu Geruntum, Gopeng. Two resort operators have since followed suit, the *My Gopeng Resort* and *Gopeng Rainforest Resort* just 2 years ago.

Gopeng Rainforest Resort is situated between the Ulu Geruntum and Ulu Kampar rivers in the Kinta Forest. Gopeng Rainforest Resort provides for accommodations, food, recreation and activities in the midst of an environment surrounded by pristine rainforests and orchards. The stylish local traditional Malay houses and chalets in Gopeng Rainforest Resort are built to blend in with the environment. Facilities here include a multi-purpose hall, fruit orchard, car parks, electricity, piped water, clean toilets, bathroom, BBQ sets, kitchen, natural stream, etc.

One can opt for various activities here like white-water rafting, Rafflesia flower (world's largest flower) trail, caving adventures and jungle trekking. One can also get to enjoy the various fresh local Malaysian fruits like durians, rambutans, *pulasan* and others during the fruiting seasons. Owner David Foon also takes his visitors on tours to Ipoh's Heritage Trail and Kinta Nature Park bird sanctuary at Batu Gajah all of which only enhance the richness of the eco-tourism activity.

Beyond Gopeng

Although Gopeng has the full plethora of eco-adventure activities, there are other unique eco-tourism products available around Perak.

Ecofieldtrips, a Singapore-based company that conducts field trips for students from primary to tertiary level from around the world has listed Perak as one its field trip destinations.

Ecofieldtrips Director Bridget Hedderman acknowledged that "Perak has a lot of outdoor learning opportunities to offer her students" adding that her Perak itinerary, besides including the activities at Gopeng, also takes in the Kinta Nature Park bird sanctuary at Batu Gajah, Matang Mangrove Swamp at Kuala Gula and "also the Orang Asli village at Ulu Kinta and Kellies Castle for its social heritage". It must be noted that the mentioned locations are within 90 minutes of each other.

Hedderman employs nature guides and graduates to run her programmes and regards Perak as a one-stop centre for eco and adventure tourism adding that "Perak has a lot to offer though I doubt that it has been marketed to the public yet."

Multiple Sports and Fun

A teacher with an international school once told Nomad's Chan that her Earth Camp was the most interesting adventure location ever as it had "multiple adventure sports" all in one destination. The teacher explained that the previous year's adventure camp was at the Himalayas for white-water rafting and that was all they did. However, at Gopeng the students had more variety, learnt more and had more fun too.

Easy Accessibility

The eco-adventure sites in Perak are easily accessible to residents from KL, Selangor and Penang and it is common to have day-trip groups especially during the weekends. The infrastructure too is good with air, rail, bus and train services being available. Similarly too with hospital services being nearby.

In early April last month Nomad received 160 visitors who came for a day trip of adventure. That is nothing significant except for the fact that all the visitors came from the Middle East.

Nomad's Chan didn't raise an eyebrow until she received another confirmation from another but smaller Middle-East group for a mountain-to-sea challenge.

New Possibilities

For the uninitiated a mountain-to-sea challenge is a 6D5N stay which takes the visitor to Cameron Highlands for the start of a 2-day trek down to Gopeng, then white-water rafting, mountain biking and caving at Gua Tempurung before taking a 70-km cycle ride to end at Teluk Batik, Lumut.

So far the only record of a trek from Cameron Highlands to Lumut was achieved by F. Spencer Chapman of Force 136 in 1945, who had to rendezvous with his getaway submarine at Pangkor Laut after which he wrote the book 'The Jungle is Neutral'.

Undoubtedly, offering activity-packed eco-adventure outings can be the start of more customers coming from non-traditional markets. Could it be that the eco-adventure tourist has gotten wind of what Perak has to offer in the way of a quality adventure? Time will tell.



Caving at Gua Tempurung. Photo by David Foon GRR

From the Editor's Desk

by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

Mayor's Concerns

It is no mean task to manage a city larger in physical size than Singapore Island. Ipoh's population has breached the 720,000 mark and is growing.

It was one of those days when you least expect the inevitable to happen but it happens. I was invited along with other bureau chiefs to a briefing on town planning by the mayor at the city council main annexe recently. I thought it would start and end, like other briefings before this. It never occurred to me that this time around it would be different.

Seldom do meetings in Malaysia start or end at the appointed time. We were told to be seated in Dewan Azlan Shah on the 10th floor at 10.00 a.m. sharp (so said the faxed and text messages). After much waiting and fussing, the briefing eventually began when the mayor walked in at 10.30 a.m. No one complained. Malaysian time, *mah!*

I felt a soft tap on my shoulders. It was Shahrizal, the harried public relations officer to the mayor. He is a gem of a person, always tactful and respectful, notwithstanding the responsibilities he shoulders. "Boss, Rosli Dahamin is not coming can you say a few words on behalf of the media?" he asked. I was taken aback. Talking from the podium was the last thing on my mind but when push comes to shove, what choice do I have? I nodded in agreement. Being the most senior newsman, in age and stature, I was the obvious choice. Shahrizal ushered me to the main table and had me seated beside the mayor, Dato' Roshidi Hashim.

The briefing was conducted by the Town Planning Division Chief, Encik Zulqarnain Mohamad who has been with the council for over two decades. Zulqarnain has a very pleasant personality and is more appropriate for Shahrizal's post rather than as the council's planning chief. But that is not the issue.

The crux of the briefing centred on the development of the city, in conformity with Ipoh Structural Plan 2020, which is in the final stage of rectification. The Plan espouses an equitable spread in developing the 643 sq km city. Five sectors are recommended, namely Simpang Pulai, Station 18, Tambun, Meru Raya and Ampangan. This is to facilitate decentralisation and to avoid the pitfalls of Kuala Lumpur, Petaling Jaya and Penang. All seemed good on paper but the lingering problem that will continue to dog Ipohites is the absence of a viable public transport system to service the designated areas. Zulqarnain gave a simplistic answer. "The Plan will be fully realised in 2020, so time is not an issue." I guess none in the hall that day had an answer.

When the briefing was over I took the opportunity to ask the mayor a few pressing questions. One was on the clamping of cars whose owners had one compound too many. Clamping is on-going he said but the extent is limited due to time and space. He would prefer errant owners to own up rather than the council resorting to such measures. The other was traffic congestion in Greentown Business Centre, Kinta City and the city centre. There are ample parking spaces, he exclaimed. The fault lies with motorists who prefer to double and sometimes triple park for their own convenience.



"It's an attitude problem," he said. I could not agree more.

On the development of Old Town he had this to say, "Efforts to convince the property owners to spruce up their properties have been taken but there doesn't seem to be any response. I am prepared to discuss terms if only they're prepared to come to the table." Strange, I thought, it was the other way around – the council refusing to give in to the demands of the owners. There is still room to resolve the problem, amicably.

It is no mean task to manage a city larger in size than (the original) Singapore Island. Ipoh's population has breached the 720,000 mark and is growing. With a working staff of over 2,000, Roshidi's responsibility to make the council tick like a well-oiled clock is daunting.

His term as mayor ends in June. "There is no indication yet of an extension," he said. "I've bought a piece of land in Ampangan and plan to settle here for good," enthused the Merbok-born civil servant. I empathise with this soft-spoken yet affable Kedahan.

World Glaucoma Week AWARENESS SERIES

Eye Health

In conjunction with World Glaucoma Awareness Week, Ipoh Echo talks to Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. Gill about this "silent thief of sight" – PART 6



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

Glaucoma as you know has been nicknamed the "silent thief of sight". This disease results in **permanent irreversible blindness** in the affected eye(s) that often goes without symptoms until the loss of vision is significant or the patient is blind. Early diagnosis means early treatment and therefore **prevention of major loss of vision**. Diagnosing glaucoma may require **elaborate testing** to be done by the eye doctor.

The following are basically the tests that are done before making a diagnosis of glaucoma:

Examination of:

1. Eye Pressure
2. Angle of the eye where the aqueous (eye fluid) drains
3. Optic Nerve check
4. Field of Vision
5. Thickness of the Optic Nerve Fibre Layer

Name of Eye Test:

- Tonometry
- Gonioscopy
- Ophthalmoscopy (dilated eye exam)
- Perimetry
- Ocular Coherence Tomography Scan

Test numbers 1, 2, and 3 were already discussed in the previous issue (141) of the Ipoh Echo.

4. Visual Fields

Visual field test (perimetry)



A visual field test (perimetry) checks for the "missing areas" of vision. This is done using a machine called Perimeter (photo on the left)

You will be shown a sequence of lights that appear in the periphery of a dome. Should you be able to see the lights appearing on and off within the dome of the machine, you will then be asked to click on a button.

If you cannot see the spots in your peripheral vision, it may indicate that the glaucoma has damaged your vision.

5. Ocular Coherence Tomography (O.C.T.) Scan

The O.C.T. Scan is a **newer and accurate way** of determining whether or not a person has glaucoma. In glaucoma the retinal nerve fibre layer (RNFL) gets thinned-out resulting in loss of vision peripherally (tunnel-vision).

The O.C.T. Scan is able to measure this thickness of the retinal nerve fibre layer (that gets thinned out in glaucoma) thereby accurately confirming diagnosis. In a confirmed glaucoma patient, by serially checking the RNFL, it can detect **whether the glaucoma is worsening or not**. This test has made glaucoma evaluation much simpler and more reliable. The downside is that the test may not be available in every eye clinic.



Dr Gill will elaborate on treatment for glaucoma in the next issue of the Ipoh Echo.

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

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3. Management Fees	455	455	455	455
NET MONTHLY INCOME	985	1,511	1,817	2,014
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Thinking **ALLOWED** • by Mariam Mokhtar

We Need Cabbies, Not Ambassadors

Not all of us own a car or motor-bike, and as Ipoh's public transport system is abysmal, many of us have little choice but to use taxis. Some depend on taxi-drivers to ferry them around whilst others swear that they will never set foot in one again. What do Ipohites generally think of their taxi-drivers? Is the service efficient, the charges reasonable and the cabbies' attitude bearable?

It was reported by Tourism Minister Dr Ng Yen Yen last March that around 4,000 taxi-drivers in the Klang Valley would become "tourism ambassadors". She would corroborate with taxi associations, and choose non-smoking taxi-drivers with adequate communication skills, whose vehicles were clean and in good condition.

She said, "Taxi drivers, as the front line staff (front liner), often interact directly with the tourists, must provide correct information and keep the country's image. This is very important due to an increase in tourist arrivals."

Her ministry had received numerous complaints from the general public and tourists, mainly about the drivers' attitude and the taximeters.

A few months earlier, in September 2011, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Mohamed Nazri Aziz said that his government would tackle corruption by working with the Malaysia Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) and engage taxi-drivers to be their "spies". Taxi-drivers would be rewarded for information which could help secure arrests and convictions.

Nazri said, "The involvement of people from all walks of life is important in fighting corruption...Taxi drivers are those who frequently interact with the public, they can get a lot of information from their passengers."

He told taxi-drivers who suspected their passengers of wrongdoing to "immediately take the passengers to any MACC office and lodge a report".

In April, the Information, Communication and Culture Minister Rais Yatim also urged taxi-drivers to "act as the government's ambassadors."

Rais told taxi-drivers to spread government propaganda and spread the '1Malaysia' concept to passengers who were especially "critical and accused the government of all sorts". He reminded them that the government had "safeguarded their welfare", and given them aid so they should be "grateful for the government's mindfulness".

The government ministers however, failed to mention the customers and their expectations. Few of us claim to be satisfied with the service given by taxi-drivers, be it in Ipoh, Perak or Malaysia.

One Malaysian who returned to Ipoh from Australia said, "When I landed at KLIA I took the bus to Ipoh. The coach was clean, the driving good and my baggage was well taken care of. On arrival at Medan Gopeng, I had to haggle with the taxi-drivers. Was there a conspiracy amongst them? No one wanted to use the meter. When I suggested a price, the other drivers would egg the driver to charge more."

"I know how much the fare should be. It was obvious from my luggage tags that I had returned from overseas. I ended up paying an inflated price which was a few ringgit short of the whole bus trip from KLIA."

"The boot had no lock and the lid wouldn't close. My suitcases were at risk of falling out. When I protested, the driver assured me that he would drive slowly, and look into his back mirror, every so often, to see if my luggage had fallen out."

Another taxi-user said, "In many countries, taxi-drivers use the meter. In Ipoh, you are at the mercy of the taxi-driver. The drivers get angry when you ask to use the meter. The more arrogant ones tell you off. Either walk or get into their taxi."

"What happened to monitoring and enforcement? What are the authorities doing about improving the services of taxis?"

An elderly lady from Taman Meru said that since her husband died, she has had to rely on taxis to ferry her to the clinic for her monthly check-up and medication. "I am lucky because my neighbour's friend, a taxi-driver, provides me with a regular service. Prior to that, all the taxi-drivers refused to take my wheelchair in the boot."

Tourists, too, are at the mercy of Ipoh's taxis. One Swiss girl said, "The lack of meters is nothing compared with the knowledge that your safety is compromised. Ipoh taxis are poorly maintained bone-shakers. Seat-belts rarely function. When I told the taxi-driver, he said to drape the belt over my shoulder so that the police would not fine me. Trying to pretend I am strapped in, is the least of my problems!"



Her companion echoed her sentiments and said, "Taxis here are heavily perfumed. If it's not the crazy driving, whizzing round corners, and sudden braking, then the sweet sickly scent is enough to make you throw up. Perhaps, the car-freshener is to mask the vomit of previous passengers."

"Your olfactory nerves aren't the only ones affected. Taxi-drivers here must play loud music from a radio station that is completely alien."

With Visit Perak Year 2012, the authorities should look into the taxi problem. Ipohites only want safe driving from taxi-drivers who take good care of their vehicles and whose aim is not to fleece the public.

Perakians are not concerned whether taxi-drivers make good tourism ambassadors or spies for the MACC. All they want is good, efficient service and an enforcement body that regulates and monitors the taxis efficiently.

Community

Organic Farmer Gets Compensation



Surin Kaur, an organic farmer who lost RM70,000 during the flood in Lim Garden was given a compensation of RM2,000 by the state government. S. Jayagopi, BN Co-ordinator handed the cheque to her.

Surin said that she had been in this business for about seven years in the same area. This is the first time her crops were devastated by flood. The chilli crop which was ready for harvesting was drowned by the flood waters. All her farm equipment was damaged; stocks of fertilisers and biopest repellent were washed away. Her nursery consisting of seedlings was spoilt.

The Agriculture Department said that it had no allocation to compensate her. She is discussing with FAMA which agreed to help her. Surin said that it would take her a few more months before she can resume normal cultivation.

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Musings on Food

seefoon@ipohecho.com.my

By See Foon Chan-Koppen

Photos by VWSL

Most food outlets exist to serve food to those unwilling or unable to cook for themselves and hope to turn a profit in the process. Some special food outlets have a dual purpose: serving food as well as helping those who serve. The **Ray of Hope Kafe** is one of these food outlets that not only serve good food but in the process, do good as well.

The Ray of Hope is a non-profit, non religious multi-racial centre set up by St Peter's and St Augustine's churches, Ipoh. Its sole objective is to give hope to people with learning difficulties. The cafe was opened in July of last year in partnership with the Hong Leong Foundation. Its bakery which now produces a wide variety of breads and confectionery was set up by the Rotary Club of Ipoh in 2008 initially for vocational training and now it is turning into a commercial enterprise in the hope of raising much needed funds for the centre.

I went to the Ray of Hope (in the vicinity of Ipoh Kiara Condominium in Bercham) not having too many expectations for a gourmet lunch, given that the Kafe serves multiple purposes: teaching the learning disabled vocational skills; provide them with opportunities to interact with customers and developing social skills; teaching them service skills and hopefully to provide a source of funding for the centre.

Delightful Surprise

Well I was delightfully surprised. An interesting assortment of breads and confectionery arrested my attention and the staff were all standing around with big smiles on their faces. Dato' Dr Yeoh Beng San, Advisor and Fundraising Chairman for the centre, and his wife Datin Mary Yeo, who is the dynamo behind the centre and the main mover and shaker for the cafe, greeted me with open arms and proceeded to show me around the training centre, the bakery and kitchen. Everything was immaculate and the toilets were the cleanest I've ever encountered – an almost impossible feat by Ipoh standards. I was also struck and touched by their motto which is emblazoned on the wall in the cafe and which says: *"Every Life Counts, Every Person Matters"*.



SeeFoon discovers a Ray of Hope in Bercham



*Every Life Counts,
Every Person Matters*



Extensive Menu

The menu is extensive. There are more than 20 different rice dishes and a similar number of noodle dishes not to mention spaghetti dishes and western dishes like chicken chops with a big choice of sauces and, fish and chips. The noodles run the gamut from egg noodles,

to flat rice noodles to vermicelli to Japanese Udon to 'lou shi fun' (short stubby rice 'pasta').

I will mention the few items which I tasted and consider the 'must-haves'. The **Assam Laksa** was a generous portion, the soup/broth had a fulsome body to it unlike some others I've had before which can be plain watery. I could taste the fish that had gone into making the broth as well as the various herbs and spices which are critical to its turning out successfully. Chunks of fish with pineapple and cucumber slivers, topped with a sprig of fresh mint, complemented the smooth white 'lai fun', enveloped in the broth – RM5.50.

I spied **Nasi Lemak** on the menu and being a big fan of this ubiquitous dish, promptly ordered it. I was glad I did. Served with Pandan/Coconut Rice, the Chicken Rendang that came with it was comparable to some of the best I've ever eaten anywhere in Malaysia and Singapore. Add to this the aromatic flavour of the *pandan* (screw pine leaves) and coconut in the rice, and the usual condiments of peanuts, egg and ikan bilis; and I found myself in foodie heaven – RM6.00.

I next tried their **Cheese Baked Rice**, a heaping bowl of rice with a mixture of seafood topped with a big slice of fish and oven baked with a generous helping of cheese. If ever there was a fusion dish of east and west, this is it; the cheese melted to a golden brown and slightly charred, the pan-fried fish underneath soft and flaky while still lower down, the rice with its garnitures, fluffy and full of flavour. This cheese baked rice comes also with chicken and instead of rice, with spaghetti – RM 12.50.



Star Bakery

But it is the bakery that shines as the star of the show in the cafe. I sampled their cookies, their different types of bread, their sweet and savoury buns, and particularly noteworthy are their **Lemon Cheese Tarts**. At RM0.70 for the bite-size and RM1.80 for the larger ones, they were melt-in-the-mouth delectable and I, a professed non-sweet eater found myself reaching for a second one. I made myself a mental note to order these for takeaways, for birthdays and other parties or as dessert *petits fours* with coffee at home after dinner; I also tried their **Siew Pao**, thin fluffy pastry with a tasty chicken meat filling. Helped by the students in filling and wrapping, these pao's are made by one of the teachers at the centre and are her own recipe. Excellent – RM1.50.



Of Pasties and Biscotti

Two other bakery items of note are their **curry puffs** and their **pasties**. The huge pasty is laudable; the crust, a cross between a suet and short crust pastry, enfolding a filling of chicken and vegetables that was delectably flavourful. This is a meal in itself and is served with salad – RM7.00. The curry puff has the same pastry and filled with a curry filling that actually has meat in it instead of the usual potatoes and onions – RM1.50.

Other items from the bakery which make great party offerings are their boxed cookies and their **biscotti**, paper thin crisps encrusted with almond and pistachio slivers, an Italian favourite of mine that is great with coffee or just for nibbling. Biscotti: RM12.00

So for all my dear readers out there who read this column, remember that the next time you feel the urge for some confectionery, need to bring a gift to someone's house, or organising a gathering, remember to place your order with the Ray of Hope Kafe and while there to pick up your goodies, linger awhile and try some of the items on their menu. Not only will you enjoy the taste treat but you'll be helping a good and worthy cause.

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Young Perak

Craft & Colour with Joyful Home

FACES Youth Society, together with Zakka Loft, organised a handicraft learning session for the 18 children of Joyful Children's Orphanage Society, Ipoh (Joyful Home) recently. Children aged 4 to 17 were taught to create a doll kitten using a sock and some cotton. Two handicraft instructors from Zakka Loft were at the children's home to teach and demonstrate. The children, with support and guidance from the volunteers of FACES, enjoyed themselves in this simple yet fun handicraft session.



After two hours of hard work, it was a delightful scene as each and every child was seen to have their own customised doll kitten in their hands. Goodie bags containing cookies, toys and stationery, courtesy of Zakka Loft, were then distributed to each child after the handicraft session.

Joyful Children's Orphanage Society, Ipoh (Joyful Home) has recently moved to No. 3, Jalan Ghazali Jawi, 31400 Ipoh. For more information, contact Mdm Irene at 016-5463089.

Telematch For Students



What a fun morning it was when students from Sunway College Ipoh got together at the YMCA field recently, to participate in a friendly telematch against members of IpohBUG, a local sports club. It was organised by students from the college's School of Business and Marketing.

The objective of the telematch was to create an outdoor activity for students of the faculty; to take them away from their books for just one morning. According to the President of the Business and Marketing Club, Clement Heng, they planned on holding an outdoor sporting activity once a month, where youth games would be played, including basketball and football.

It was an opportunity to foster new friendship among the youngsters. Everyone enjoyed themselves, playing games such as "sweet picking", "plug-the-holes", seven-a-side Frisbee and three-legged football.

Food hampers were later presented to the two teams, as a token of fellowship since there was no winner or loser.

EL

Aladdin By ACS Ipoh

The Music and Drama Society of SMK Methodist (ACS) Ipoh staged the play "Aladdin" recently. The cast, led by Haniff Harusani, 16, who played the lead role of Aladdin and Sevita Sharma, 19, as Princess Jasmine, enthralled audiences with their captivating light effects and Arabian costumes. Teacher advisor cum director, Susila Devi, stated that the team had taken five months to perfect their performance. The limelight, however, was stolen by Robin Lee who took the role of the genie with a burst of wacky character and a great sense of humour. The compact but exciting play contained a few musical performances, including the Disney favourite "A Whole New World" and some self-scripted songs. The play, which went on for three days, attracted many from outside Perak, testimony to ACS's proud theatrical tradition that has withstood the test of time.



Ann

Festival of Colours

Festival of Colours of the World 2012 was held at the University of Technology Petronas, Tronoh on April 7. The objective of this annual event is to showcase dancing talents of students from institutes of higher learning. The audience was entertained by 33 dance troupes from both public and private institutions of higher learning, including one from an international university. Teams performed an array of dances in line with the theme "Celebration of Folk Cultural Dance" plus traditional dances of Mozambique, Uzbekistan and Myanmar. Six dance groups were then chosen to perform at the "Root of Heritage" concert which was held at the Dewan Philharmonik Petronas on April 10. Dance groups from UNITEN, UTP and Sekolah Seni Johor Bahru were also included. Chief Minister Dato Seri DiRaja Zambry Abd Kadir, who graced the occasion, said that the event was a great way to bring out the best in students.



Ann

PIBG SMJK Yuk Choy's Adoption Project



SMK Yuk Choy, Ipoh Parents and Teachers Association (PIBG) have adopted the football team of the school by sponsoring the team's training t-shirts, jerseys and footballs. Mr Chan Kok Heng, a former student and ex-international Malaysian footballer, helped to train SMJK Yuk Choy, Ipoh football club members. He hopes SMJK Yuk Choy, Ipoh will re-emerge as the power house for footballers in Perak and Malaysia in the future.

During the function, jerseys and T-shirts sponsored by Mr William Chan, the Vice Chairman of PIBG, were handed over to the school principal, Mr Chan Hen Huan. Mr Chan Hen Huan urged students to be involved in healthy activities in line with the Ministry of Education's 1 Student 1 Sport aspiration. He believes a healthy mind will make an all-rounded student.



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News Roundup

"The Lady" Comes To Ipoh

It was my privilege to attend the Malaysian premiere of "The Lady" at Kinta City's TGV theatres on the night of April 23. The event was attended by a veritable Who's Who of Ipoh's elite and on hand to meet and greet the guests was Janet Yeoh, whose charm and grace made everyone feel welcome.

The film, of course, stars Ipoh's iconic international film star Datuk Michelle Yeoh who fulfilled a long time desire to portray Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese Nobel laureate who also has the distinction of being the first woman in Asia to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Michelle made a brief appearance to introduce the film and dedicate the evening to her family and friends on hand explaining that prior commitments had prevented her from attending her mother's birthday celebration several days before. She is currently working on a new film in Bangkok. In describing the challenges of playing the role of Suu Kyi she relayed to the audience how she

had to learn to speak Burmese and shed almost 8kg.

"The Lady" which is set against the backdrop of decades of political strife and military oppression in Burma is as much an epic love story between Suu Kyi and her British husband Michael Aris (played by David Thewlis) as it is a commentary on the Burmese people's goals to achieve democracy and political freedom. Suu Kyi and her husband are forced to endure years of separation and personal sacrifices in support of her determination to bring about political change in her beloved Burma. Most poignant is Michael's love and devotion and unending support of Suu Kyi amidst all the turmoil.

I have seen most of Michelle Yeoh's English language films and in my opinion, this is by far her best role to date. She is captivating and very believable in her portrayal of her character Suu Kyi and makes this film a must-see. Be forewarned though, you should bring a supply of tissues as you will surely be brought to tears at certain points in the movie.

Michelle Yeoh also informed the audience that the KL premiere is on April 25 and will be attended by the Prime Minister.

Chris DiGiovanna



Confessions of a Drug Mule



"The money may be good but it's not worth the effort," said Rosna Shariff, a former drug mule who had turned a new leaf. Rosna from Penang was caught smuggling 5kg of cocaine into Peru and received a 5-year prison sentence. She was released on good behaviour after serving half of the full term in a Peruvian jail. The Penangite fell for the promises of a rich picking by a sweet-talking Nigerian whom she met in Kuala Lumpur. Rosna was asked to send a bundle to a contact in Lima, the capital city of Peru. The prospect of an expense-paid holiday in faraway South America and the cash reward awaiting her, bowled her over. Unbeknown to Rosna, the bundle she carried contained cocaine, a banned drug in Peru.

"We must be wary of foreigners, especially Nigerians who come in and out of our country so freely," she exclaimed. Rosna was addressing an audience of over 300 women at the auditorium of the State Secretariat Building, Ipoh recently. The occasion was an outreach programme for women jointly organised by the Department of Women Affairs Perak and the Perak Women for Women Society. The one-day forum was under the auspices of the office of Dato' Hamidah Osman, Executive Councillor for Women Affairs. Hamidah, in her opening remarks, reminded the audience of Rosna's fate and warned them of the perils that await those who act impetuously.

At the closing of the forum Hamidah presented a mock cheque for RM58,600 to Puan Halida Mohd Ali, Deputy President of Perak Women for Women Society. The money is for conducting similar programmes in major towns and districts in the state.

Most of the participants were appreciative of the efforts by the state government to enlighten them. "Rosna's confessions are chilling indeed. I didn't realise that such things could befall us so easily," said Fatimah Fadzil, 53, to Ipoh Echo. "This programme is most beneficial for women," she added.

RM

MBI Lucky Draw Winners



Thirty very fortunate Ipohites became proud winners of prizes won at the special lucky draw for rate-payers who paid their assessment bills in full for 2012. The special draw, held at the council foyer recently, was officiated by mayor, Dato' Roshidi Hashim. The two top prizes were a Honda Wave 125 and a Honda Icon motorcycle. "The top prize next year will be a Perodua MyVi," said Roshidi to reporters. The council, said the mayor, had allotted RM30,000 for this special draw. "The strategy seems to work. Enticing rate-payers with attractive prizes in a lucky draw encourages them to pay their dues in full," he remarked. The council has introduced a new award beginning this year. It is aimed at corporations who are the biggest rate-payers. Five corporations won the Golden Award for their promptness in payment. They include Lion Parade, Equity Nirvana, Uda Holdings, Impiana Hotel and Tasek Cement Corporation.

RM

Flea Market Must Be Relocated



I have been visiting the Sunday Flea Market from the time it was operating from the back lane behind Lam Looking Bazaar. The present location has become very congested and with three hotels operating on Horley Street, it is inconvenient for the guests. The location in the heart of the city centre is also causing traffic jams and parking problems for motorists.

There is a more suitable and convenient place from where this market can function. Medan Istana is deserted on Sundays. This is a very big rectangular area and cars can be parked along the roads on the perimeter. There are no busy roads nearby. Geographically the place is next to Jalan Lim Bo Seng, from where the present market is operating. A new road has been built from Jalan Lim Bo Seng to Medan Istana along the Kinta River.

Since this is a big area, MBI can be innovative and allocate dedicated areas to stalls, based on the products they sell. Stalls can be separated into those selling antiques and old items, shoes, clothes, trinkets and new items, fruits, food, etc. This would be convenient for shoppers and it would not be necessary for them to walk all over the place to look for what they want.

MBI must seriously consider this option and regular shoppers would support this move. It would also provide a better image to tourists and we can attract more local and international tourists. This is also one of the unique attractions of Ipoh.

A. Jeyaraj



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News Roundup

Residents and Police Dialogue



The *Jalan Serindek Neighbourhood Watch Committee, Ipoh Garden* recently held a dialogue with the Police on how best to co-operate and curb the recent increase of house break-ins, snatch thefts and petty thefts in their neighbourhood. The dialogue was well attended by over 40 residents while the police team was headed by Deputy OCPD of Ipoh District Superintendent Ahmad Tarmizi together with the Officer-in-charge of Sungai Senam Station Inspector Vised, and Sergeant Jaafar.

During the dialogue residents highlighted their concerns with a resident from Jalan Kakatua Madame Yip elaborating her ordeal of burglars breaking into her home while she was still inside.

Supt Tarmizi in his address to the residents acknowledged that crime in the area including Canning Garden, had increased a few months ago but was being kept under control. He also assured the residents that effective the next day he would double patrols in the area using uniformed and non-uniformed personnel.

Tarmizi commended the residents for organising the dialogue and requested them to play a role of being the eyes and ears for the police and to alert them of any suspicious individuals in their neighbourhood.

A subsequent follow-up with residents a week later revealed that police patrols had indeed doubled after the dialogue. While being pleased with the extra patrols, they nevertheless wondered if it would be permanent, with the fervent hope that it would be so.

JAG

First Aid & Home Nursing Competition



17 teams took part in the Annual Perak First-Aid and Home-nursing and 16 teams took part in the St John Ambulance Junior Competition organised by *St John Ambulance Malaysia* (SJAM), Perak branch. In the Ambulance section SMJK Hua Lian, Taiping emerged as overall champion while SMJK Ave Maria Convent, Ipoh was winner in the Ambulance Nursing section. In the Ambulance Junior section SJK (C) Pei Yuen Kampar emerged as overall whereby nursing section SJK (C) Ave Maria Convent, Ipoh was the overall champion. About 250 members and officers from the North, Central and South Area took part in the Competition. Organising Chairman Dr Micheal Cheong said the teams were tested on their skill in providing First-Aid and Home-nursing. They were also tested on foot drills by Army personnel. The overall champion will go to the National competition in the month of May 2012. Among the judges were doctors from Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun, Ipoh, private medical practitioners and nurses from nurse college Ulu Kinta Ipoh. Deputy Commander SJAM Perak Dr Harbaksh Singh gave away the prizes. Among those present were Dr Liaw Kok Toon Senior Principal Assistant Director Perak State Health Department, Manin Singh SJAM Perak Hon. State Secretary, Ang Lye Hong Area Commander Taiping, Teoh Ewe Hun Area Commander Central, Tan Beng Lee Deputy Commander Teluk Intan Dr Javinder Singh Eye Specialist Hospital Raja Permaisuri Bainun, Ipoh and Mohd Rawi Secretarial Barisan Nasional Ipoh.

Tok Batins Head For Sabah



A special seminar for *tok batins* (Orang Asli village heads) was officiated by Chief Minister Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir recently. The one-day seminar, held at the Kinta Riverfront Hotel and Suites, was attended by some 100 *tok batins* from various parts of the state. The Orang Asli population in Perak presently stands at 54,515. They are located in 254 villages and each village is headed by a *tok batin*. The objective of the forum was to familiarise participants with the demographic makeover of Sabah ahead of their planned trip to the Land Beneath the Wind.

It is hoped that the trip, which is fully sponsored by the state government, will inspire the *tok batins* to be role models in promoting the virtues of the Orang Aslis to Sabahans. Its other objective is to provide the participants an opportunity to expand their networking while interacting with their fellow citizens from across the South China Sea. The event was organised by Jabatan Hal Ehwal Orang Asli. This is the second time the Perak government has sponsored such a field trip. Last year the *tok batins* went to Sarawak. Orang Asli students who did well in last year's SPM Examination received prizes from Zambry during the function.

Performance of Councillors to be Monitored

Know Your Councillor Survey Questionnaire
(Please circle your answer)

Name : _____

Area of Residence : _____

1. Do you know that Ipoh City is divided into 22 zones and each zone is assigned to a particular councillor? YES / NO

2. Do you know which councillor is assigned to your zone? YES / NO

3. Are you aware of what your councillors are doing in the course of their duties? YES / NO

4. Are you satisfied with the performance of your councillor? YES / NO

5. Have you seen your councillor visiting your area in the past 12 months? YES / NO

Tel : 013-5217234, Fax : 05-3661268, Email : gairaperak2012@gmail.com

A "Know Your MBI Councillor" campaign has been initiated by some NGOs in Ipoh with the initial proposal for councillors to carry out self-appraisal through a questionnaire. The objectives of the campaign are to help ratepayers understand the roles and functions of city councillors.

None of the councillors responded and gave absurd reasons in the Chinese press for not doing so, one being they are not obliged to answer to the residents.

At a Press Conference recently, Cheng Heng Chung, spokesman for the group said that they will conduct a public survey in all 22 zones with a questionnaire with Yes/No answers for five simple questions. In each zone 50 residents will be interviewed. The survey will also be conducted through phone and email. It plans to complete the survey within one month ending on May 20. The responses will be compiled and made public.

For details please contact Ms Chan 013-5217234.

AJ

PPSMI: The Never Ending Quest

The popular Andersonian Club here was a hive of activity when PAGE (Parent Action Group for Education) Ipoh Chapter organised a dialogue entitled "PPSMI: The Never Ending Quest". Hundreds of parents showed up to support the move that the PPSMI policy needs to be reviewed by the Ministry of Education. Datin Noor Azimah, Chairman of PAGE Malaysia spoke on the topic.

Datin Azimah started by explaining the reason for the formation of PAGE Malaysia. Furthermore, she stressed that PAGE might be fighting a losing battle when it comes to PPSMI. However, with the support of the various non-government organisations and individuals the PPSMI issue is therefore a "play it safe" right of the parents. She noted that the biggest challenge facing parents is the fact that many schools are resisting co-operating, and they do not adhere to the Education Ministry's advice. Therefore she emphasized that the Education Ministry must look into these problems and ensure that there are proper mechanisms to ensure that PPSMI is ongoing.

Mr Soong Kok Hong, Chairman of Malaysian Employers Federation Perak Branch, emphasized that English is an indispensable tool that will enable us to achieve our aspirations for the 21st century. Thus, fluency and knowledge in English will enable us to prevail against many of the challenges posed by the effects of globalisation. He stressed that English has the largest number of speakers in the world and, in addition, most books and other resources are written in English. All professionals such as human resource personnel, accountants, doctors, engineers and others must have a strong base in English to further their careers. He noted that many of our young candidates are unable to speak or write in English, causing them to lose out in the international market.

This dialogue also gave the opportunity to the moderator, Datuk Dr Anwar Hassan to propose appeals from PAGE Ipoh Chapter that include the following:

1. To allow PPSMI option to be given to Standards 1 and 2 students and to set up PPSMI classes for positive responses by a minimum number of 30 students.
2. Declare names of Primary and Secondary National Schools in Perak offering PPSMI – each PPD to make a public list of such schools as undertaken by PPD Petaling Utama, Selangor.
3. Make readily available English texts for Science and Mathematics in ALL National Schools offering PPSMI.
4. Designate a cluster of permanent PPSMI schools for boys and girls in each district of Perak.



Hospital Fatimah's New Purchase

Hospital Fatimah Oncology Centre will become a reality by year's end. It will occupy two floors of the new 8-storey wing presently under construction within the hospital's premises. The centre will comprise of radiotherapy and brachytherapy bunkers and a dayroom for outpatient-based chemotherapy. On Friday, April 13 a signing ceremony, witnessed by the hospital top executives, was underway to initiate this momentous endeavour. The signatories who signed on the dotted lines were Brother Ambrose Heng, Chairman of the Board of Directors Hospital Fatimah and Wong Huat Beng, CEO of Abex Medical System Sdn Bhd, the supplier of the soon-to-be-acquired radiotherapy machine. Ipohites can now look forward to the latest in cancer treatment at an affordable price, courtesy of a benevolent private hospital in the city.

Ed



YBU Appeal for Flood Victims

by Rosli Mansor

Elite Squad to The Fore

Members of Yayasan Bina Semangat Darul Ridzuan's (YBU) elite squad were first on the scene when they were alerted of natural disasters occurring in Lawin, Gerik, Manjoi, Kg. Baru Kuala Dipang and lately, Kampar. These areas were inundated by floodwaters caused by heavy downpour and the bursting of river banks. The tragedy in Kampar is still fresh in our minds as its effects were far reaching. A number of villagers in Jeram and Kampung Pisang in the District of Kampar had to be evacuated for their personal safety.

The YBU squad consisted of volunteers specially picked for their skills and fortitude. They can operate independently and are apt at dispensing aid to victims, both the physiological and psychological forms. Their timely arrival at the points of disaster made the difference between life and death.

Help the flood victims either in kind or cash, call: **05-255 5945/5946** for details, or go direct to YBUDR at: Aras D-2-1, Greentown Square, Jalan Dato' Seri Ahmad Said, 30450 Ipoh. All forms of aid will be channelled to the victims by the foundation, post haste. Readers' kindness is much appreciated.



A Second Lease Of Life

An elderly couple nearly lost their lives during the recent floods in Kuala Dipang, Kampar the result of an unusually heavy downpour which caused the nearby Sungai Dipang to overflow its banks. Osman Ibrahim and his wife Azmah Embok, both in their 90s, escaped in the nick of time before flood waters enveloped their house.

The sight of their humble dwelling being swept away by the swirling current was too much for the frail lady. In between sobs she recalled the chilling tragedy. "It happened so fast. I saw the surge and suddenly my house was swept away. It broke into two pieces. My husband and I could only watch in disbelief," she told Ipoh Echo. Her husband, traumatised by the incident, said little. Their village had been hit by floods before but was never on such a scale. The April 11 flood was the worse ever, said Azmah. Besides the grieving couple's house, a number of other houses were similarly affected but could be recovered. Fortunately, no lives were lost. Hamidah Ishak, 53, recalled her eerie experience. "It was raining cats and dogs early in the morning. I heard sounds of gushing water. I peeked into the night and to my horror saw the whole village inundated." She immediately alerted her neighbours and ran out of her house. Her neighbours followed suit. "We were lucky to be alive." Hamidah's car was damaged beyond repair.

Members of Yayasan Bina Upaya Darul Ridzuan's (YBU) elite squad, upon hearing the news, rushed to the scene. They immediately set about saving the lives and properties of the villagers. They set up a relief centre and dispensed aid in the form of food parcels to the victims.

The following morning CEO Dato' Zainal Abiddin Omar dropped by the village to survey the situation. "The condition of the ground is not yet suitable for recovery works to begin," he said. "We'll wait till the ground is dry before proceeding. However, it will take at least a couple of months to restore the village to its original status."



Sport

Ipoh Hockey League



Heavy downpour in the first half of the game failed to deter the spirited play of both MBI and Perak Sikh Union (PSU) in the Division 1 final of the 2012 Ipoh League Hockey Tournament, held at Stadium Azlan Shah, recently. The tournament, organised by Ipoh City Hockey Association, is one of two local leagues in the country; the other is held in Kuala Lumpur. Sikh Union played a solid game to put in two goals into MBI's net; one from a penalty corner by Jasdev Singh and the other, a field goal by Riduan Nasir.

Manager, Hardav Singh, was proud of his boys' achievement, having lost to MBI last year on a golden goal. His team had trained hard for the tournament and played exceptionally well. The winning team received RM500, medals and the challenge trophy while runner-up MBI took home RM300 and medals.

On the adjacent pitch, Ipoh Lads faced Tsuyoi Club from Teluk Intan in the Division 2 final. Ipoh Lads won scoring three goals; one from a penalty corner by Mohd Anuar and two from field goals by Hussin and Saiful Adzuan, respectively. Tsuyoi Club only managed a solitary goal through Muhd Azam, who converted a penalty corner. Ipoh Lads took home RM300 while Tsuyoi Club received RM200.

Prizes were given away by Perak Hockey President, Dato' Hj Abdul Rahim Mat Ariff.

EL

Adios Popovic!

Competing against the legacy set by Keita Mandjou and Carlos Caceres must have been a delicate prospect. But every Perak fan rejoiced when Lazar Popovic's signing was officially announced by the Perak Football Association in January of this year. With Kubala, glimpses of the Krescka-Repassi combination so dominant during the 90s were expected from the Seladangs this year.



Perhaps the expectation was too much for Popovic. Yet nobody predicted that early on, with the Serbian proving his goal-scoring credentials during pre-season friendly matches. While Kubala took time to adjust, Popovic showcased his languid style effectively, suggesting that he was going to be a hit in the Malaysian Super League.

Perak's luck with strikers was never dismal. When Frank Seator departed the team in 2004, the fear was that we would not be able to get a capable replacement. In came Keita Mandjou and the rest is history. Similarly, when Keita left, Chilean Carlos Caceres took on the mettle and continued with the legacy.

However, it hasn't been the case with Popovic. Despite his towering presence upfront, the "Serbian Berbatov" failed to impose himself and often had to struggle to overcome the opposition's defence. Michal Kubala was already proving to be a hit with his near-perfect set-pieces but the same could not be said of Popovic.

"We all know that Popovic is a good striker. He just needs time to prove himself," Kubala enthused when asked about Popo's hard luck. Perhaps time was just a variable in his situation. Or maybe, Popovic himself was a variable for Perak? Either way, a solitary goal in 15 Super League matches made him a liability for the Seladangs.

The April transfer came and the Serbian was shown the door. After weeks of rumours about the possible re-engaging of Keita Mandjou, who currently plays in the Indian League, Popovic's contract was ended and another unknown forward was snapped up in the form of Albert Bodjongo.

Bodjongo's arrival was kept under wraps, with not much information on him being leaked. However, it is believed that the 23 year-old former Doula Athletic Club striker has an eye for goals, something that Perak side is lacking thus far.

So it's a beginning of a new dawn for the Seladangs. The FA Cup is no longer part of the agenda while Norizan Bakar's men are too inconsistent in the league. The stage has been set for Albert Bodjongo to shine impeccably and inspire a revival in fortunes. Even though the Super League title is beyond reach, a creditable finish would create some good vibes ahead of the Malaysia Cup campaign in August.

Keesh

Advertorial

Recovery from Stroke

Getting back on your feet is likely one of your top concerns after a stroke, and stroke rehabilitation can help. The goal of a stroke rehabilitation programme is to help you relearn skills lost when stroke affected part of your brain. Participating in stroke rehabilitation helps you regain independence and improve your quality of life.

There's still so much we don't know about how the brain compensates for the damage caused by stroke or brain attack. Some brain cells may be only temporarily damaged, not killed, and may resume functioning. In some cases, the brain can reorganise its own functioning. Sometimes, a region of the brain "takes over" for a region damaged by the stroke.

Stroke survivors sometimes experience remarkable and unanticipated recoveries that can't be explained. General recovery guidelines show:

- 10 per cent of stroke survivors recover almost completely
- 25 per cent recover with minor impairments
- 40 per cent experience moderate to severe impairments requiring special care
- 10 per cent require care in a nursing home or other long-term care facility
- 15 per cent die shortly after the stroke

The goal in rehabilitation is to improve function so that the stroke survivor can become as independent as possible. Stroke rehabilitation may include some or all of the following activities:

- Therapy for communication disorders
- Strengthening motor skills
- Mobility training
- Range of motion therapy
- Psychological evaluation
- Constraint-induced therapy
- Electrical stimulation

The sooner you begin stroke rehabilitation, the more likely you are to regain lost abilities and skills. The duration of your stroke rehabilitation depends on the severity of your stroke and related complications. Your stroke rehabilitation plan will change during your recovery as you relearn skills and your needs change. The length of each stroke rehabilitation therapy session varies depending on your recovery, severity of your symptoms and responsiveness to therapy.

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- Arthritis & Joints Pain
- Nerve Injuries & Palsy
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- Periarthritis Shoulder Pain
- Osteoarthritis (Hip & Knee Joint)
- Fatigue & Twitching Muscles
- Spinal Disc Prolapse
- Whiplash Injury
- Stroke Rehabilitation
- Paediatric Rehabilitation
- Geriatric Rehabilitation
- Sport Injury Rehabilitation
- Pre and Post Operative Rehabilitation
- Gait Rehabilitation
- Diabetic Foot Ulcer
- Cardio - Respiratory
- Surgical wound management
- Headache & Insomnia
- Tendonitis & Capsulitis
- Spinal Scoliosis
- Deep Vein Thrombosis

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News Roundup

The Bonding Of Lasallians

While generations of ex-Michaelians are looking forward to the centenary celebrations of St Michael's on September 29, there is an upcoming event involving other Lasallian schools in Perak, known as Brothers' Schools namely St George's, St Anthony's and St Michael's.



Chan Kok Keong, Chairman of the Regional Lasallian Education Council, announced that Founders' Day will be celebrated on May 19 at the La Salle Centre which is located within the grounds of St Michael's.

The dinner will be an occasion for the Principals, Board of Governors, PTA, Alumni and other stakeholders to meet for the fellowship and strengthen the bonds within the Lasallian family.

When asked to expand on the role and significance of celebration Founder's day, Chan recalled some critical dates in the history of the Lasallian Fraternity:

- The first school was founded in France more than 350 years ago by John Baptist de La Salle;
- The Brothers first landed in Singapore in 1852;
- The last Brother Director, Brother Paul Ho, retired from St Xavier's Institution on June 21, 2009. Ironically, this was the first of the Lasallian schools in Asia;
- A new district the Lasallian East Asia District or LEAD was formed on May 15, 2011. The Sector Head for Malaysia is Brother Anthony Rogers.

Chan characterised the work and role of the Council as being the epicentre for dissemination of the Lasallian spirit in the schools and wherever there are Lasallians.

When asked what the mission of La Salle schools is today, he said, "Our Mission is an inter-faith multi-cultural vision based on faith, service and community. We aim to educate the young people, especially, the poor and the needy. Focusing on the last, the least and the lost."

For further details call La Salle Centre at **605-2559 220**.

Ed

Wellness

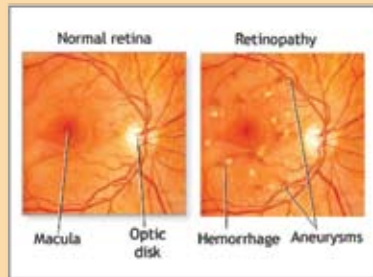
Eye Chat — From A Retinal Surgeon's Perspective

Retinopathy a sign of Cognitive Decline

The eye is often described as the "windows to our souls" and in the medical sense, they are indeed the "windows" through which eye doctors can observe a lot of disease processes going on! The retina is a particularly common place to look when there are other systemic diseases (like diabetes) as there is a wealth of information that can be obtained by looking at the blood vessels in the retina.



Dr Lee Mun Wai



What is retinopathy?

Retinopathy refers to a group of conditions whereby the common feature would be dysfunction of the retinal blood vessels. In the case of diabetic retinopathy, the presence of excessive levels of sugar in the blood has an adverse effect on the retinal vessels causing them to be more "leaky" and consequently, blood

and proteins can leak out causing retinal swelling and reduced vision. There is also insufficient oxygenation of tissue and this results in abnormal "growth" of new blood vessels which are prone to bleeding.

Hypertension can also be associated with retinopathy – blood vessels harden with age and progressive narrowing of vessels and reduced oxygenation can lead to bleeding, swelling and strokes in the eye. Other conditions which may be associated with retinopathy include anaemia, leukaemia, lupus and radiation.

Retinopathy and cognitive decline

There has been a recent study which reported a possible link between the presence of retinopathy and worsening cognitive function in older women. This study looked at over 500 healthy older women (over 65 years of age) as part of the Women's Health Initiative Memory Study and they used retinal photography to assess the eyes of these women, the Mini-Mental State Examination to assess cognitive function over time and also Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) of the brain to look for specific changes.

What they found was that the presence of retinopathy was associated with poorer scores on the mental state test as well as a greater volume of ischemic (oxygen-starved) areas in the brain.

What it means?

The findings of this study add to a growing body of evidence that diseases of blood vessels have a role in the decline of cognitive function in people. Retinopathy may therefore, be an early marker of small vessel disease in the brain and this could imply that screening the eyes for retinopathy could help detect early vessel disease in the brain and cognitive impairment (dementia). Conditions such as Alzheimer's have far-reaching consequences and if detected early by means of eye screening, could be treated earlier with better outcomes.

But of course these are still early days and further research and studies will be required to evaluate the true relationship between retinopathy and cognitive function. Again another case of "watch this space". But meanwhile, take care of the "window to your soul"...

For more information about this topic or other eye health subjects, please visit my blog at: www.lec.com.my/youcare-eyecare. Or call Lee Eye Centre : **05-254 0095**.

Heritage 'God's Little Acre'

They are called graveyards – places where dead people are buried, and they would be most uncommon stop. Well, my friends and me. During the we spent a good hour exploring one. We strolled freely at this well-kept 'God's Little Acre', in Batu Gajah. I was told that this cemetery has been a part of the Anglican Holy Trinity Church since the mid 1880s.



It may not be like the latest memorial parks with beautiful landscapes, but it is well-worth a visit. Buried here are 116 planters, police officers, miners and civilians, killed in the Emergency (1948-1960). We also found the oldest grave dated 1886, soon after the town of Batu Gajah was created as the Administrative Centre of Kinta Valley.

In 1980, retired Superintendent of Police, Dato' R. Thambipillay started the tradition of the annual commemorative ceremony. The ceremony is a solemn occasion. It is attended by foreign dignitaries representing the countries of those who gave their lives so that we could live. The ceremony takes place on the second Saturday of June. On this day, surviving old-timers return to honour their colleagues and friends.

As we strolled, we spotted the graves of some famous personalities of Perak like Alma Baker, Cecil Rae, Labrooy and other FMS servicemen. Here, too, lies planter Donald Baxter, the son-in-law of the Danish architect, B.M. Iversen. Baxter was killed in a salary heist in 1964 somewhere near Tanjung Tualang. His stone is one of a kind, a block of marble selected by his wife, Ruth and Iversen himself. It can be easily identified. (Source: Law Siak Hong, Perak Heritage Society.)

To get to the cemetery, drive under the archway facing the main building of the Batu Gajah Hospital, you will pass the Jail and the Anglican Church. Go straight to the end of the road. You can't miss it. Cemeteries are our heritage so please visitors, be respectful when you are here in the place of the "unseen residents".

The heritage charms and the rich stories locked in 'God's Little Acre' could be turned into a tourism spot.

S. Sundralingam



Happy Mother's Day

Date 11, 12 & 13
May 2012

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Package A (Buunch / Dinner)

Venue : *Palong Coffee House*

Time : 12.00 pm - 4.30 pm (Buunch)
: 7.00 pm - 10.30 pm (Dinner)

Price : *Rm 55.00 (Buunch)*
: *Rm 65.00 (Dinner)*

Package B (Chinese Delight)

Venue : *Great Miner Chinese Restaurant*

Time : 12.00 pm - 2.00 pm (Lunch)
: 6.00 pm - 10.00 pm (Dinner)

Price : *Rm 588.00 / Rm 688.00 per table*

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Land Encumbrance : OCBC Bank (M) Bhd
Price : Min RM 594,510
Max RM 977,800
Approving authority : Majlis Bandaraya Ipoh

Haven Musical Extravaganza

Peter Chan of Haven Lakeside Residences Tambun is never short of ideas when it comes to entertaining friends and clients. His idea of an endearing evening with his associates is a continental dinner with the accompaniment of music and songs within the cool ambience of his "real estate" – 'Where else but the Haven'. The occasion was warranted, as Peter's project is near completion. So on Saturday, April 14 a steady stream of dignitaries, consisting of the Who's Who of Ipoh's society, made their way to the Roof Top Garden of the Haven Show Gallery to do justice to Peter's beckoning. It was well worth the attendance. Guests dined amidst the splendours of a green background with the trademark rock in full view from the terrace. Juwita Suwito's rendition of her cover pieces brought back the bliss of the moody 1990s and early 2000s. The songs, the music and the food were simply incomparable. Peter, with one touch of the magic wand, you have transformed Tambun and this writer. Cheers.

Ed



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05-2552181**; or email: announcements@ipohecho.com, 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.

Children's Art Colouring Competition by Y's Men's Club Ipoh, Saturday, **May 5** from 8.00 a.m. to 12 noon at YMCA Ipoh. For details call Charanjit Kaur **016-553 8443**.

Easwaramma Day Celebrations organised by the Sathya Sai Baba Centre of Ipoh, Saturday **May 5**, 6.00 p.m. at No. 46 Jalan Medan Istana, Bandar Ipoh Raya, Ipoh (opposite Sri Subramaniyar Temple, Gunung Cheruh). All are welcome. For details, call: B. Prithivi Raj **013-5201920** or K. Asogan **012-4579568**.

Public Talk "Practice for Enlightenment" by Kyabgon Phakchok Rinpoche, **May 11** from 8.00-9.30 p.m. at Tower Regency Hotel in Greentown. There will be Chinese translation, admission is free. Other events in conjunction with Rinpoche's visit – Teaching: Wisdom of Passing Sutra, **May 10**; Green Tara Fire Puja, **May 12**; Vajrasattva Empowerment, **May 13** – all starting at 8.00 p.m., held at Rangjung Yeshe Perak Centre, 3 Persiaran Happy Garden, Ipoh. For enquiries, call Mrs Pang **012-5887397**, Fay **017-5790303** or Bryan **012-5059321**.

Kinta Craft Trail (Art & Craft Fair 2), **May 12 & 13** at the Garden Villa, No. 5 Jalan Gopeng, Ipoh. You are invited to participate or meet at this upcoming Fair. Calling all crafters in Perak to contact: Dolly at **016-5516018** or email: dollyquah@gmail.com.

GP Symposium: Cancer (for General Practitioners only), Saturday **May 12**, 7.30 p.m. at St Mike's Bistro & Restaurant, 5 Jalan Sultan Idris Shah. Topics: (1) 'Chemotherapy Myths and Realities'; (2) 'Freeze and I'll Shoot: Basics of Radiation', by Resident Consultant Oncologist & Radiotherapist, Dr Chan Wee Han. Contact: **05-5455777** Ext. **276**.

Motivational Talk for Students by Apex Club of Ipoh, Kinta, Sunday **May 13**, 9.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m. at the YMCA. This is specially meant for Forms 4 & 5 students. Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Contact: Mrs Vejaya Manokaran of Pusat Bahasa Pertama at **016-5345089**.

Public Forum: Gastroenterology by Resident Consultant Physician, Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist, Dr Saravana Kumar Karunanithi, Saturday **May 19**, 2.00 p.m. at Hospital Fatimah Conference Room, 4th Floor. Topics: (1) Colon Cancer is Preventable; (2) Hepatitis B and Liver Cancer. Contact: **05-5455777** Ext. **276**.

Fatimah Kids' Health Camp, Saturday **May 26**, 8.30 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. at Hospital Fatimah Conference Room, 4th Floor. Contact: **05-5455777** Ext. **276**.

Tarcisian Convent (TCS) Class of 82 Reunion Lunch, Saturday **June 2** from 11.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. at Heritage Hotel, Ipoh. Tickets at RM100. For details contact: Shanti Jeyaraj @ **012-2892233**.



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