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# Chinese Opera

## – Rising like the Phoenix

by James Gough



Left photo. Main roles played by Sung Hung Poh and Ko Lai  
Inset: Local actresses (l-r) Choy Tong Lim, Sum Yee and Peggy Choy

Chinese Opera in the Kinta valley is rising like the proverbial Phoenix from its ashes (an expression from Greek mythology, of a long-lived bird that is cyclically regenerated or reborn from the ashes of its predecessor). This was the conclusion Ipoh Echo came to based on the recent Operatic event held at the 118-year-old Kuan Ti temple at Batu Gajah in August this year. The Opera ran for twenty days and it had a good turnout every night. What was interesting was the increase in the number of younger attendees, which had hitherto attracted a primarily older audience with the majority being women.

*Continued on page 2*



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## Younger Audience, Younger Performers

My first encounter with Chinese Opera was four years ago when I was invited to Papan to view the Opera there. Not having a clue about Chinese Opera I went along. What attracted me then was the rich make-up and the kaleidoscopic costumes of the actors and actresses. It was a small stage in a small town with a rich cultural history and for the two nights which I attended, the audience was less than a full house.

However the scenario at Batu Gajah was different. There was a buzz of anticipation. Up front red plastic chairs and wooden benches were lined up before the stage. The Opera normally starts around 7.30pm to 8pm and lasts till 11pm. As is usual, the organizers had allowed hawkers to sell food and drinks around the periphery for the audience who would patronize them in between acts.

Back stage was a hive of activity. In between acts actors would change costumes, touch up their make-up and reread their scripts all the while being assisted by their helpers. Everyone went about their duties knowing what was up next.

The scripts are all based on traditional stories handed down through centuries and each night was a different script. The actors may have done the script before but before each act they would be seen rehearsing their lines again.

Chinese Opera comes in many forms and each is notable for its own unique style. Whilst many foreigners sometimes joke that it sounds like someone strangling a cat, this is most unfair as it is a highly developed art form that many simply do not understand. It is known as 'opera' to emphasise this point.

Intrigued by the better audience at the Batu Gajah opera, I returned a subsequent evening early around 5.30pm. I was told to come at this time because after their dinner the actors would begin preparing for the show which would start at 8pm.



Main Actor Sung Hung Poh getting ready

### Opera Company

The Batu Gajah event was organised by Pusat Drama Chinese Opera Cheng Yi or the Cheng Yi Chinese Opera and Drama Centre. Established two years ago by Ms Peggy Choy Poh Peng who comes from a background in Chinese Opera. Her father was a Chinese Opera musician while her mother helped to dress the actresses. During this particular event in Batu Gajah, I was delighted to see that Choy's father was still playing the erhu with the rest of the orchestra.

Choy herself learned to perform Chinese Opera and was active until she stopped over 15 years ago due to family commitments. Although she had stopped performing she still followed the performances although she felt that they lacked polish and she was generally not satisfied with what she saw.

Four years ago she decided to return to performing and subsequently started her own drama company as she felt that she could do better and could contribute to improve the Chinese opera culture.

Choy loved the Opera and starting her own company gave her the opportunity to allow her to promote Opera by doing it her own way. Cantonese opera perform more freely than Peking Operas and in Cantonese operas, actors are allowed to improvise.

Music, singing, martial arts, acrobatics and acting are all featured in Cantonese opera. Most of the plots are based on Chinese history and famous Chinese classics and myths. Also, the culture and philosophies of the Chinese people can be seen in the plays. Virtues (like loyalty, love, patriotism and faithfulness) are often reflected by the operas. Thus Choy had free reign to adapt and improvise.

Acknowledging that the Opera needed to cultivate young talent she initially got



Main actress Ko Lai praised Peggy Choy for preserving the art

her younger relations to participate while ensuring that their performances did not clash with their studies. One of her nieces, Choy Tong Ling is thirteen years old. Although she likes the Opera her involvement began as she enjoyed helping out her Aunt and being around the family.

At the Batu Gajah event there were a total of four youths performing, with the youngest being Sum Yee, 10, a Standard 5 student at SJK Min Sin Ampang Ipoh. While not a relation of Choy's, Sum Yee had shown an interest in Opera and she was promptly recruited after her grandfather told Choy's musician father about her. Sum Yee has now been with the centre for 2 years singing and acting a lot, mainly playing the part of boys.

She refers to Choy as *sifu* (master/teacher) and for the Batu Gajah event started rehearsing for it six months earlier. For the twenty days, due to her school and tuition schedule she played extras parts but on the final night she played a main role.

### The Hong Kong Factor

According to Choy the Chinese Opera circuit averages 60 to 70 shows each year. Before Batu Gajah the centre had performed for 10 days in Gopeng. Her acceptance of a 'gig' depended on whether the price was right as "the actors and actresses need to be paid". As there many temples in Perak she is kept busy most of the time sometimes going as far afield as Penang and KL. She does draw the line at performing at shopping malls though.

An undisputed draw to the Opera is the participation of Hong Kong actors. One of these is actress Ms Ko Lai, who has been acting for twenty years and whom Choy calls her step sister as she used to act with her during her early days. Ko Lai only performs in Cantonese and mainly in Ipoh. Ko Lai is very popular and her fans follow her performances when she is here.

The event in Batu Gajah included a total of eight actors from Hong Kong. Besides Ko Lai who played the lead female role, she brought along Sung Hung Poh, who played the male main role and up and coming young actor Alan Tam Wang Lun, 19.

### Preserving Opera

It is well known that Chinese Opera is a dying act. Ko Lai knows full well explaining that "if a trade cannot make a living it will die naturally". However she was full of praise for Choy's effort to preserve this art by trying to cultivate the young and organizing these events to the enjoyment of Opera enthusiasts. "With the plethora of media entertainment, audiences have more entertainment choices. Nevertheless a good Opera will always attract an audience."

### Local Fans

Undoubtedly praise must be given to the fans. As I waited for the last show to start, I noted vans from Kampar and Tapah laden with fans and family members arriving over an hour before the start of the show.

Opera fans Chan Whai Ping and Nancy Tan must be voted the heroines for driving from Teluk Intan nightly to catch the show just because "this year it is very good". When I enquired if they were worried for their safety going back after 11pm at night Tan brushed off the suggestion saying the most danger was from the cow in the middle of the road.

With ardent fans like these Choy only needs to maintain the quality of her events for it to gain popularity over time. Quite possibly by then Choy's centre could perform at a temple in Ipoh where tourists could hop over for a few acts after dinner as one of the "things to see".

Then, no longer will Chinese opera be a dying art form but like the Phoenix, it will rise from the ashes to become a sought after and much enjoyed entertainment medium.

Meantime children who are interested to act or learn music can contact Peggy Choy at 016 566 6104.



Local actresses (r-l): Peggy Choy with young actresses Choy Tong Ling and Sum Yee



The fans (bottom right photo) Chan Whai Ping and Nancy Tan



## From the Editor's Desk

by Fathol Zaman Bukhari

I may not have been in the media business for long but eight years have enabled me to separate the wheat from the chaff. We started Ipoh Echo in 2005 and, hitherto, much water has passed under the bridge. Time in its infinite dimension provides one with the wisdom to pick and choose, to decide who is right and who is wrong and, above all, to judge someone's character whether he is genuine or crooked.

Ipoh Echo is a community newspaper, and at this material moment, it is the only community newspaper in the country – warts and all. It is no idle boast but that is the gospel truth. And having survived many uncertainties for over eight years is something to shout about, although some may want to dispute it. But that is of no consequence here.

The habit of some, especially politicians, is slowly but surely making life a little unpleasant for us in the media business. This habit, for some unknown reason, is beginning to spread and now even those in the private and public sectors are being affected.

It has to do with press conferences. Having a press conference to announce this and that has become fashionable. Not a day passes by without me receiving an invitation to a press conference. The occasion can be as insignificant as an annual dinner or a blood-drive campaign. I even received invitation to a conference for an annual general meeting. And believe me, an extraordinary general meeting of an old boys' club. How ridiculous is that?

Obviously, many out there do not know the meaning of press or media conference. Call for one by all means, after all we cannot stop someone from doing so. But make sure that reporters' time is not wasted on some insignificant news which does not merit publication, or worse, earn the wrath of the editors. I have sent my reporters on wild goose chases far too often that now I am beginning to become a little wiser.

There were many instances when we were invited to a media conference on a

*We were invited to a media conference on a proposed event which would take place the following day. My question is, why must a conference be arranged when we are privy to the event taking place?*



proposed event which would take place the following day. My question is, why must a conference be arranged when we are privy to the event taking place? Is this not a waste? Reporters' time is better spent on some other worthy cause other than pleasing the organisers and having a free tea break.

An event is newsworthy if something sensational is about to happen or has happened. A newsworthy event goes beyond mundane fire and casualty evacuation drills and site visits by some Tan Sris. I posed this question to one corporate executive recently, as to whether he would read a news piece on fire drill or visit if he comes across one? He answered in the negative. If he does not read it what makes he thinks others would? Or is the *shioh sendiri* (feel-good) factor the

real reason?

I can quote many anecdotal incidents but will refrain from making references, as I believe they were being made without any malice or ill intent. It is the hype surrounding such events that prompted most, if not all, from following this silly trend! Have a heart for the poor reporters who, not only have to brave inclement weather and insufficient parking space to make an appearance, but to have their reports assigned to the bins instead.

Yes, Ipoh Echo is here for a reason – to be the sounding board for Ipohites' dissatisfaction with the authorities and a notice board for the posting of upcoming and past events. Like everything else, the paper has its limitations, budget being one. If one's interest is personal glory, then Ipoh Echo is not the place for him or her.

For a community paper to work, the support of the community, in whatever form, is desirous. And calling for a spurious media conference for an event of no significance or news value is definitely not a wise thing.

Come on! Give us a break.

## In The Name Of My Father's Estate

Episode 23

by Peter Lee

Midway through the family meeting in Dave's office, both Mrs Patricia Lee (Lee Sr's first wife) and Connie (Lee Sr's 2nd wife) stepped out from the meeting room. Connie quickly called her lawyer, May, to write a letter for her to be sent to ZNA Bank, Singapore on the same day to freeze the joint bank accounts between Lee Sr and Mrs Patricia Lee in ZNA Bank, Singapore amounting to S\$3 million. Although Connie has only the birth certificates of her children to prove her relationship with Lee Sr, her fear that Mrs Patricia Lee will withdraw the entire sum prompted the move. While she was giving instructions to May, Mrs Patricia Lee made a phone call to book a flight for the next day to Singapore with the intention to withdraw this amount.



After both of the ladies stepped back into the meeting room, Connie then said to John and Michele, "I have another appointment in 2 hours' time. So, can we make it quick about our discussion on the family company shares?" John and Michelle agreed. After the rest of the family members left the meeting room, Michele said to Connie, "Since we (John, Michele and Connie) are the joint Administrators of my father's estate, I hope we can work together to distribute the estate as soon as possible. I think my family won't mind distributing the estate according to Intestacy law. Even mum with so much reluctance has indicated that she is willing to distribute the S\$3 million in Singapore according to Intestacy law. On top of that, she has also suggested in our earlier meeting that our family can renounce your joint bank accounts with my father and your children as well, which are now frozen. With all this, I think you would have a sizeable cash amount."

"So, I really hope you can renounce your rights to the 70 per cent shares which father owns in each of our family companies to avoid further complication. By the way, we have also mentioned in our earlier meeting that you can keep father's shares in the investment companies which you have set up with him." In response, Connie said "You know, I don't think there will be any complication holding shares in three of your family companies. After all, my children and I are not going to manage the Companies." John, feeling agitated, quickly interrupted and asked, "What if we work out a figure and pay you an amount and in return you give back your entitlement and your children's as well to our family?" Connie then asked "Well, it all depends on how much you are offering." John then said, "I have to ask my accountant to calculate the value first and only then can we discuss." In response, Connie said, "You do that first and then I will consider. Ok! Is there anything else because I have to go now." John turned to Michele and said, "I guess we have to meet once again after we have calculated the value of father's shares." Connie then quickly left in a hurry heading towards May's office. May was ready with the letter to ZNA Bank, Singapore when Connie arrived. Once Connie signed the letter, she handed the birth certificates of her children to May and instructed her to send the letter through courier and email. In addition, she also asked May to call the bank manager.

Peter Lee is an Associate Estate Planning Practitioner (Wills & Trust) with Rockwills International Group. He is also an Islamic Estate Planner providing Wills & Trust services for Muslims. He can be reached at: 012-5078825/ 05-2554853 or excelsecms@gmail.com. Website: <http://www.wills-trust.com.my>. His Book "To Delay is Human but to Will is Divine" (96 pages, RM28) is available at his office: 108 (2nd Floor), Jalan Raja Ekram, 30450 Ipoh; Rashi Mini Market (019-510 6284), 37 Jalan Perajurit, Ipoh Garden East; Ipoh Echo and at all major bookstores.

## EYE HEALTH – COLOUR BLINDNESS

Ipoh Echo's EYE HEALTH series continues with Consultant Eye Surgeon Dr S.S. GILL talking to us about Colour Blindness or Colour Deficiency.

So many of us take the ability of seeing colours for granted. Every year, 17 year olds undergo colour vision assessment as part of their drivers' licence test. A fraction of these teenagers are shocked when they find out that they have colour blindness (better called Colour Deficiency). What does colour deficiency mean?



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

### HOW THE EYE FUNCTIONS

The eye is a very sophisticated camera! Inside the eyeball, right at the back of the eye is the layer of the retina where all the nerve cells are. These nerve cells comprise of special cells called Rods and Cones. The Rods have no colour vision function except that they are very sensitive to light and help in our night vision.

On the other hand, the cells responsible for picking up the colour that we see are the Cone Cells. Among these Cone Cells, there are varying degrees of pigment present. Depending on the pigment present in the Cone Cells, they help react to different colours. Some of them respond and pick-up the longer wavelength light like the red colours and some of them respond to the shorter wavelength light like that of blue colours.

### CAUSES OF COLOUR DEFICIENCY

Although there are many conditions that can result in Colour Blindness, for most people who suffer from this, it is mainly of genetic cause. This just means that they are born with Colour Blindness. When we say it is genetic, it means that the Colour Blindness has been passed down in the genes from the parents.

In our genes, there are the X and Y chromosomes. The gene which is responsible for Colour Blindness is carried on the X chromosome and so more men suffer from Colour Blindness than women. Women are usually only the carriers but do not normally have Colour Blindness. Worldwide it is estimated that there are some 250 million people who are colour blind to a lesser or greater extent.

### TYPES OF COLOUR DEFICIENCY

Colour Deficiency may be mild, moderate or severe. Also, depending on the amount of pigment deficient, it may be divided into:

- Red-Green Colour Deficiency – Is the most common type where the reds and greens appear similar (adjacent picture is a simulation of how it would appear)
- Blue-Yellow Colour Deficiency – These are less common. Most of the time they also have some concomitant red-green deficiency too.



### TREATMENT

There has been on-going research in the area of gene therapy for the treatment of Colour Deficiency. Animal studies for this have shown promise where the introduction of a gene (opsin gene) has given the animals colour vision that they did not have before treatment.

In the USA, special kind of spectacles have been developed which are purplish in colour that are able to help those with the most common form of Colour Blindness. These glasses filter out certain wavelengths of light that disturb the perception of colour vision. They are not without trouble though because some things disappear from vision when these glasses are worn in some instances. If you are unsure of whether you have colour deficiency or not, do not hesitate to get your eyes checked.

For more information, call Gill Eye Specialist Centre at Hospital Fatimah (05-545 5582) or email [gilleyecentre@dr.com](mailto:gilleyecentre@dr.com).



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# Ipoh's Reputation Trashed

Last March, Ipoh Mayor Dato' Roshidi Hashim, said that the Ipoh City Council (MBI) was hoping to achieve an 80 per cent level of cleanliness in the city by August. It is now November and a public spat is brewing between the residents of Ipoh and MBI, each side is blaming the other and the tussle is most disheartening.

Ipoh is a city which is struggling with its image. Previous nicknames give an insight into its former glory; 'City of Millionaires ... Town That Tin Built ... Bougainvillea City' and presently, 'The Green, Clean and Developing City'.

Many senior citizens will fondly recall the Ipoh of yore, which they claim is nothing like what it is today.

Lately, over-flowing bins, discarded black bin bags, streets littered with refuse, clogged drains, stray dogs rummaging for food and rats are not just an eyesore but a health hazard. No area is spared. Inhabitants of new townships on the outskirts of the city, and the privileged people in the posh residential areas, have grown familiar with the unsightly mess of growing piles of rubbish.

One person may dump a plastic bottle under a tree, or by the road side, and before long the litter assumes a life of its own and grows from a tiny mound to a mountain of muck. Branches from a pruned garden, left by the roadside, will attract more garden waste from elsewhere, until the compost heap stretches along the road.

Uncut grass verges encroach into drains, causing weeds to choke the flow of water, thus increasing the chances of mosquito infestation. Snakes and monitor lizards from unkempt areas have invaded the gardens and homes of readers.

At one time council workers would demand to inspect the gardens of residential homes, and then impose a fine for growing large leaved plants like the crab-clawed heliconias or pitcher plants; these plants had large foliage or flowers which would naturally hold rainwater.

It is frustrating to speak to council officials who refuse to acknowledge that fogging is not as effective as the regular servicing of drains or clearing of rubbish. Piles of rubbish, with empty tins of stagnant water and rotting food which attracts vermin, pose a serious health risk.

Recently, Mayor Roshidi admitted that he was unable to keep the city clean and faulted the residents for the filthy state of the city. He was right to an extent, as residents are partly to be blamed for the state of affair. However, those who pay their assessment rates promptly and are very civic conscious strongly believe they are being short-changed, especially with respect to keeping their city clean.

Irregular rubbish collection will inevitably result in illegal dumping of rubbish. When the city's rubbish trucks make irregular trips to residential areas, it is not the residents fault. When the rubbish men leave some of the rubbish behind, it is not the fault of the house-owner.

If there are insufficient garbage bins in and around eateries, patrons and food peddlers cannot dispose of their litter properly. If blocked public drains are only cleared after the city council has received repeated calls from irate citizens, the public services cannot be deemed to be efficient.

If small, manageable back-garden bonfires are not permitted, how can people dispose of their garden trimmings? Why doesn't MBI allocate each home a few large, reusable, heavy-duty garden refuse bags so that each fortnight, garden waste like twigs and grass cuttings can be collected? The council could convert this into compost and sell it back to the public for use in their gardens.

Why doesn't MBI install more recycling bins in the city centre, and bigger dedicated recycling collection centres in and around Ipoh, for recycling garden waste, discarded furniture, old electrical goods, household waste, used motor oil and old batteries?

Is Ipoh's rubbish problem because of a shortage of money, an ineffective rubbish programme or incompetent rubbish contractors? Some people wonder if workers are supervised adequately. Are rubbish prone areas adequately monitored? Is enforcement effective?

Are our schoolchildren being taught the importance of cleanliness? Youngsters who are empowered can reach



## THINKING ALLOWED

by Mariam Mokhtar

out to their older relatives and educate them. Are there adequate numbers of public education programmes?

Perak Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri DiRaja Dr Zambry Abd Kadir, wants Perak to be a developed state by 2015. With strict controls and enforcement, developed countries like Japan, Singapore, Switzerland, Germany and Denmark are proud of

their recycling efforts and rubbish disposal record.

The problem of rubbish, just like safety, is everyone's responsibility. Ipohites would like to know how the mayor and his councillors want to resolve the rubbish problem. MBI should consult the public as well as talking to companies which want to secure local government contracts.

Efficient rubbish collection is like baking a cake. You throw in the right ingredients, in the appropriate order and everything will come out alright.

### Dr Saravana.K

Consultant Physician,  
Gastroenterologist & Hepatologist

## Digestive Health

### HEPATITIS C



Hepatitis simply means "inflammation of the liver" (the suffix "itis" means inflammation and "hepa" means liver). Hepatitis C (HCV) is a specific type of hepatitis that is caused by a virus. There are many other hepatitis viruses such as hepatitis A, B, D, E, etc. The only thing they have in common is that they all affect the liver. Most people infected with the HCV have no symptoms until liver damage shows up decades later, during routine medical tests.

It is spread when you come in contact with blood contaminated by the virus. Three per cent of the world's population is chronically infected with HCV. In Malaysia the prevalence of HCV is about 1.5 per cent.

#### SYMPTOMS

- HCV infection usually produces no signs or symptoms during its earliest stages
- Fatigue, fever, muscle and joint pains
- Nausea or poor appetite
- Yellowing of the skin and whites of the eyes (jaundice)
- Leg swelling, abdominal distension
- Passing foul smelling blackish stool
- Vomiting blood

#### How do I become infected with HCV?

- Health care and emergency workers who have been exposed to infected blood or accidental needle stick injury
- Have ever injected illicit drugs
- People with HIV infection
- Received a piercing or tattoo in an unclean environment using non sterile equipment
- Received a blood transfusion, clotting factor concentrates or organ transplant before 1994
- Received hemodialysis treatments for a long period of time
- Was born to a mother with a HCV infection
- Sexual partners of anyone diagnosed with HCV infection
- People with hemophilia.

People with the above risks may want to talk to their doctors about **screening for hepatitis C** infection, to detect it early and prevent complications. HCV infection at the initial stages produces no symptoms and if detected early treatment could be administered to prevent complications such as:

- **Scarring of the liver tissue (cirrhosis).** After 20 to 30 years of HCV, cirrhosis may occur. Scarring in your liver makes it difficult for your liver to function.
- **Liver failure.** A liver that is severely damaged by HCV may be unable to function adequately.
- **Liver cancer.**

HCV can be diagnosed by doing **simple blood tests** that include:

- **HCV antibody test:** To determine whether you have the HCV virus.
- Measure the quantity of the HCV virus in your blood (**viral load**) and the genetic makeup of the virus (**genotyping**), to determine your treatment options.

#### TREATMENT

##### Antiviral medications

HCV infection is treated with antiviral medications intended to clear the virus from your body. Your doctor will decide whether you are eligible for treatment and may recommend a combination of medications taken over several weeks. Throughout treatment your doctor will monitor your response to medications and for side effects.

##### Liver transplant

If your liver has been severely damaged; a liver transplant may be an option.

#### PREVENTION

Protect yourself from HCV infection by taking the following precautions: stop using illicit drugs, be cautious about body piercing and tattooing and practice safer sex.

##### Tips To Maintain a Healthy Liver

- **Vaccinations** against the hepatitis A and B viruses. These viruses can also cause liver damage and complicate treatment of hepatitis C.
- **Stop drinking alcohol.**
- **Avoid medications that may cause liver damage.**

For more information call Saravana.K Gastroenterologist and Liver Specialist Clinic at Hospital Fatimah (05-5487181) or email [gastrosara@gmail.com](mailto:gastrosara@gmail.com).





## MUSINGS ON FOOD



# SeeFoon goes in search of Teochew Food

By SeeFoon Chan-Koppen

Pics by YY Chin & VWSL

Call it Chaozhou, Teochew, or Teochiew as in the case of the Teochiew Restaurant on Maxwell Road but I drive past it almost daily and the name has caught my eye but like most other restaurants that my eagle foodie eye notices, I don't dare make a move to try it until my intrepid Foodie frontrunner Ginla Chew has checked it out and decided it is worth reviewing that I venture forth, to eat, to taste and to write.

Such is the case with Restoran Teochiew. In the day, it looks nondescript enough but at night, its a bustling hive of activity as local foodies congregate to eat, drink and make merry in this restaurant with its open space next door.

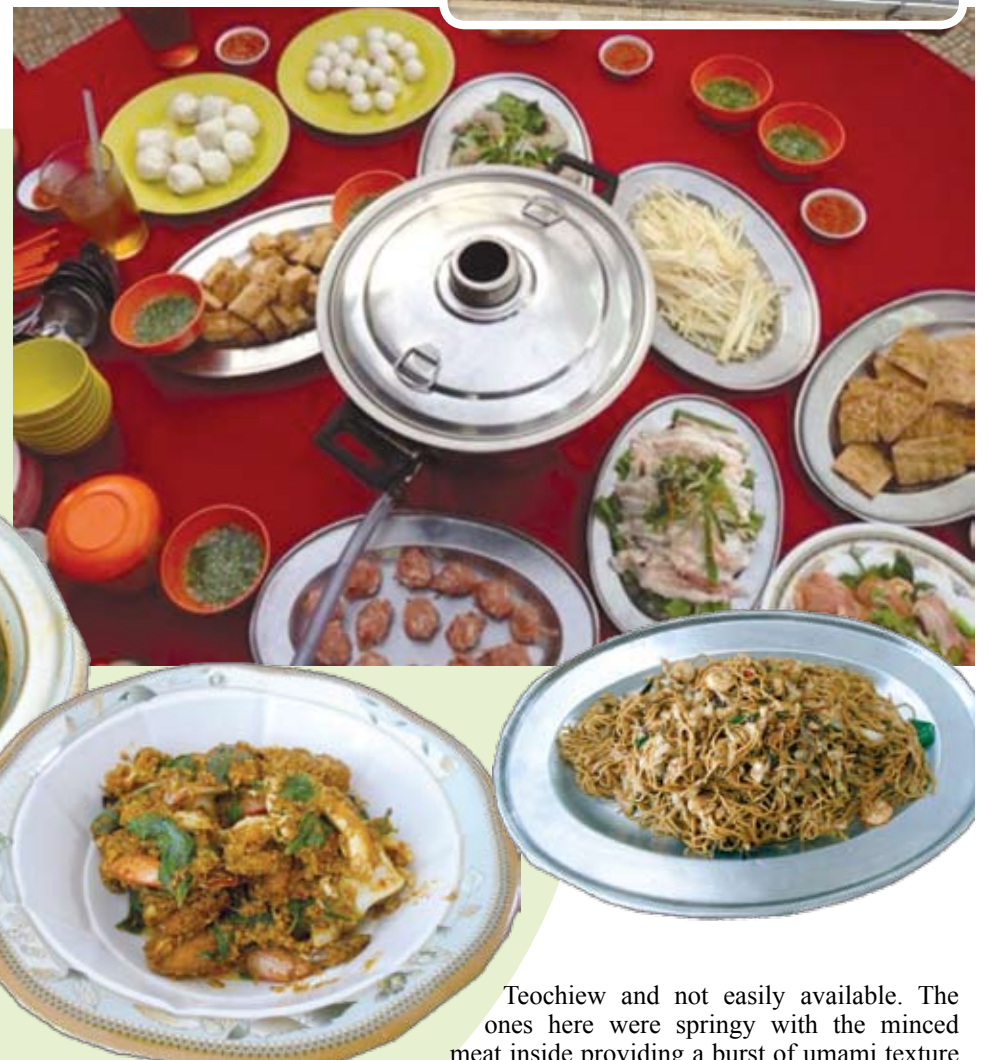
As is typical, this is a fan-cooled-only space but they do lay on the red table cloths if you call to reserve a table. On the day we went, we were a group of six and my foodie friend Ginla was already there when I arrived with my two guests, one an American from Hong Kong and the other from USA.

We had come here specially for the **Steamboat or Hot Pot** which 'legend' (or what passes as legend in Ipoh, which is word of mouth) has it, is very special and very reasonably priced. This we immediately ordered and it arrived with a steaming tureen of bubbling stock and many plates of goodies to dip into the soup.

Unlike the usual steamboat stock one finds in other steamboat restaurants, this soup is your typical Teochiew one, with preserved mustard greens (*Ham Choy*), tomatoes and other unknown ingredients. I suspect this stock remains on the stove and is continuously

replenished with fresh ingredients, not unlike some Hong Kong chefs who allegedly use the same superior broth that is preserved for decades (according to popular media). I wondered if this restaurant did the same thing but all attempts to get an answer was to no avail.

The ingredients that go into the tangy broth are not your usual off-the-factory-shelf ones. The standard set costing RM40 had nice fresh medium sized prawns in the shell, chicken slices, jelly fish, homemade minced pork scoops, tofu, regular fish balls and unusual meat-stuffed fishballs. These latter ones are very typically



Teochiew and not easily available. The ones here were springy with the minced meat inside providing a burst of umami texture when biting into them.

Vegetables were minimal and we decided to order separately, calling for a big helping of watercress which were young and crispy. We could have re-ordered extra portions and make the hotpot our main meal but we chose to try other dishes instead and waited patiently for them to arrive.

Other dishes came rapidly, the **Keong Nga Kai or Ginger Chicken** was well coated with a generous amount of ginger and had good 'wok hei' (pan fire), the chicken tender and juicy. Black vinegar trotters followed, not too sweet or sour and the trotter pieces cooked to the right degree of tenderness.

**Mustard greens or Ham Choy** came next, well married with roasted pork leg and stewed till tender. We then had the **Fried Tofu**, crispy morsels of soft tofu served with an interesting garlic, chilli and coriander or Chinese parsley sauce.

The two dishes of distinction had to be the following: the **Thai Style 'Otak Otak'** which was tangy, spicy and full of flavour. Made from mixed seafood, the paste that binds it all together was irresistibly fragrant, hints of Thai basil appearing above the melange of other spices and the coconut milk lending its creaminess to the mixture.

This was followed by **pork ribs braised in a whole pumpkin**, with peanuts providing texture and dried prawns lending their inimitable aroma, elevating the whole dish to new heights. The pumpkin was sweet, tender and juicy and eaten with the stuffing, I found myself in culinary heaven. Something so basic, simple home cooking raised to divine levels.

We finished the meal with the 'de rigueur' noodle dish with on this evening and a specialty of the house, was the **Kon Lo Meen** or the dried fried noodles. This was done just right, with the usual prawns, egg, and green accompaniments; the noodles dry but well coated.

This is one restaurant I would go back to again, a friendly place where the beer is cold, the food hot and some dishes, divine!

## SPECIAL PROMOTION

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### Suggested dishes:

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- Honey Ginger Chicken – RM12
- Black Vinegar Pork Trotters – RM12
- Fried Teochiew Tofu – RM8
- Pumpkin Pork Ribs – RM26
- Braised Mustard Greens with roasted pork – RM16

### Teochiew Restaurant

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Business Hours: 10am-2.30pm and 5pm-midnight

Closed Tuesdays





## Healthcare

# The Kindest Cut of All

Given the option to have surgery with a choice of surgeons, I would certainly choose Dr Chan Ching Phing. As consultant General Surgeon in Fatimah Hospital, Dr Chan has only recently left General Hospital Bainun to take up full time consultancy a year ago.

The reason for my choice of Dr Chan as preferred surgeon is due to her one and a half year's training in the Plastic Surgery department at the General Hospital in Ipoh. Not that I have any actual experience of her operating on me but having had a fair number of surgeries in my past, I have enough scars on my body to qualify for the "Most Scarred For Life" title if there was ever to be a competition. And these are scars not embellished by the specialist touch of a plastic surgeon's handiwork. Which are always much finer, the stitching, more delicate.



Understandably, the *raison d'être* for going to a General Surgeon is not for cosmetic reasons but often for life-saving ones, but it certainly helps to put oneself in the hands of a surgeon who does delicate suturing work as well.

Dr Chan never dreamt of becoming a surgeon. Finishing her medical degree and posted as a houseman at the General Hospital in Ipoh in 1992, she found herself in the Plastic Surgery department and it was here that she developed her passion for surgery.

Applying for the Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons (FRCS) a professional qualification for practising as a surgeon in the British Isles in 1995 saw her

passing her first examination with ease and subsequently breezing through Part 1 in 1996 and Part 2 in 1998 soon saw her accredited as a full fledged Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons.

Further training in Laparoscopic surgery soon established Dr Chan as one of the few laparoscopic surgeons in Ipoh, performing minimally invasive surgery, banded surgery, or keyhole surgery, which is a modern surgical technique in which operations in the abdomen are performed through small incisions as opposed to the larger incisions needed in laparotomy. This technique is ideal for gall bladder removal (known as cholecystectomy), or appendix surgery.

Other surgeries commonly performed by Dr Chan include Hernioplasty which require repair of the abdominal wall or repair of inguinal hernias more commonly found



in men, which occurs when tissue pushes through a weak spot in the groin muscle. This causes a bulge in the groin or scrotum that may hurt or burn.

But her true sub-specialty as a General Surgeon is in breast surgery where most of her current workload is focused. "Actually, the correct person to manage breast cancer is the General Surgeon, together with the Oncologist of course. While the detection of breast lumps may come from any physician or specialist especially the gynaecologist, the decisions on removal and subsequent management rest with the surgeon in consultation with the oncologist."

"Breast Cancer can be localised or systemic and the treatment options will vary depending on the diagnosis. I prefer a conservative approach, always recommending a lumpectomy (removal of the breast lumps or lumps) first and only as a last resort, a total mastectomy" she added.

When asked what she thought of Superstar Angelina Jolie's double breast mastectomy as a breast cancer preventive due to finding a specific gene indicative of a tendency towards breast cancer, Dr Chan said, "I think she is very brave, not just to be able to live long enough to see her children grow up but to tell the whole world about herself losing her breasts (one of GOD's greatest creation for a woman). By doing so she can actually help many women to face their disease and continue to live normally. Bravo Angelina! I give her a big salute."

One of the principal precepts of medical ethics which is taught in all medical schools is that of "Primum non nocere" or "First Do no Harm". Given that a General Surgeon's primary task is to perform invasive surgery, Dr Chan finds herself walking a constant tightrope between recommending invasive surgery or leaving a medical condition well alone and prescribing palliative treatment instead. Judging by the number of happy patients treated by Dr Chan, is testimony to the fact that she walks that tightrope very well.

**To contact Dr Chan Ching Phing:**

**CP Chan Surgery, Hospital Fatimah, Suite 11 (Grd flr)**

**Tel: 05 548 9098**

## News

## Shade for Railway Garden

Ipoh's City Council planted 52 trees at the garden of the Railway Station recently. Fifty of the trees are the Spring Black Olive (*Bucida Molineti*) while two are the Rosy Trumpet Tree (*Tabebuia rosea*) which blossoms during the hot weather.

Led by Ipoh Mayor Dato' Roshidi Hashim and assisted by 30 teachers and students from SMK Anglo Chinese School Ipoh, who earlier in August had etched their name in the Malaysia Book of Records when they created the largest flower formation using 31,000 plants in their Florathon project themed 'Lets Green the Earth'. Dr D. Karthiesan, ACS's Project Coordinator for the Florathon joined in with the students to plant trees that morning.

According to Roshidi the council initiated tree planting after receiving feedback from residents saying the area was bare. The feedback requested that trees be planted to provide shade for daytime visitors. Currently the sole large tree here is the Ipoh Tree in the centre of the garden.

The Railway Garden, located within the core of the Ipoh Old Town Heritage Trail, was recently upgraded and landscaped at a cost of RM2.3 million. It has a rhythmic water fountain and has been drawing crowds day and night since it started operations in August this year.

The location where the trees were planted took into consideration that in future the trees would not block the view of the Heritage buildings and architectural design of the surrounding environment.

Roshidi stated that the total cost of the tree planting exercise was RM50K and the proposal was mooted a month ago.

JAG



## Flying Fox Maiden Flight Rescheduled

Flying Fox Airways, Perak's fledgling airline, whose maiden flight was scheduled for Friday 8 November to Medan, has been rescheduled to next month on Friday December 13.

At a press conference called by its CEO Mr Danial Lee, the reason for the rescheduling was due to "applications" and he gave an assurance that there would not be any more delays.

Flying Fox Airways frequency to Medan for December will be twice a week departing at 9pm on Monday and Friday. Lee anticipated that by March or April the frequency to Medan would be daily. The one way price to Medan is a flat rate of RM400 and RM800 return. The fare includes airport taxes and fees, booking charges, 20kg checked luggage and light refreshments.

Lee described using Flying Fox as a "convenience". He compared the current method to get to Medan where a traveller had to drive 2.5 hours to KLIA, pay for petrol and toll and had to check in 2 hours before flight departure for international flights. By comparison a traveller to Medan via Flying Fox only needed a convenient ride to Ipoh airport, 45-minute check in time, add 55 minutes flying time and he would arrive at his destination within 3 hours.

For the time being travellers wishing to purchase their tickets can contact Flying Fox at their office at 8B Laluan Medan Rapat, Off Jalan Raja Dr Nazrin Shah, Ipoh or telephone 05 313 3331. Their airport office will be ready by the end of November and similarly so for their website.

Regarding tourist promotions, Lee stated that their area of focus is towards golf tourism, medical tourism and ecotourism. Over the last few weeks he had met with Medan tour agents and is currently working with two large Medan agents ASITA and ASPPI to promote Ipoh and to provide tour services to visitors to Medan.

This week, Lee will be meeting with local Ipoh establishments such as hotels, hospitals and tour agents who want to promote their products and services by submitting their promotion proposal. Lee's next area of focus would then be to initiate flights to China with the destination to Shenzhen via Medan.

JAG





## Healthcare

# Hospital Fatimah's Nicotine-Free Campaign in Schools

"You will never have to quit if you have never started", said Dr Chan Chee Hoe, Chairman of Hospital Fatimah's Clients' Support and Counselling Centre (CSCC), in his recent talk at Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Perak Campus.

The CSCC has held a few Nicotine-Free campaigns this year to reduce the use of nicotine, especially among school-going students in view of the alarming increase in smoking-related diseases (for example, heart disease, cancers and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) lately. Statistics show 23 per cent of Malaysians smoke, with the highest rates among men (1 in 2 males smoke), teens (new smokers) and women (highest rate of increase).

Members of the CSCC, comprising nurses of the Hospital and Dr Chan Chee Hoe, Consultant Physician, have held this campaign at SMJK Ave Maria Convent, St Michael's Institution, UTAR Kampar and in Hospital Fatimah itself.

The objectives of this campaign are to develop a persuasive argument against smoking, examine the effects of smoking and impart information on the health effects of smoking to school-going students.

This 1½-hour programme comprises various interactive activities for the students such as a debate, a straw game, a role-play by the nurses of the CSCC on the effects of smoking followed by an extensive presentation on 'How to Quit Smoking' by Dr Chan.

The responses from participants of these campaigns have been so encouraging that the school teachers have requested for repeated programmes in their respective schools. Schools or any organisations dealing with adolescents that are interested in



organising this programme may contact the Hospital at **05 5455 777 Ext. 276**.

The CSCC in Hospital Fatimah provides personalized clinical counselling services to patients starting from the ward and extending to outpatients for their follow-up care. The CSCC aspires to educate patients on their illnesses and to answer any doubts or problems pertaining to their illnesses and to provide physical and psychological support to patients during the process of rehabilitation, reference material/pamphlets, and preventive and aftercare services to meet our community needs.

Some of the services provided at CSCC are counselling for people with Diabetes Mellitus, Stroke, AIDS/HIV, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and those who want to quit smoking; coordination of palliative care, cardiac rehabilitation and weight management. All counsellors at CSCC are trained in conducting counselling services and they are available to counsel in the language that patients prefer.

## Arts & Cultural

# Charity Ballet: Alice In Wonderland

A charity ballet in aid of *Make-A-Wish Malaysia* will be held on November 23 and 24 at Taman Budaya, Jalan Caldwell, off Jalan Raja DiHilir, Ipoh. The performance is presented by Ipoh's premier ballet school City Ballet in cooperation with the Lions Club of Ipoh Evergreen. This is in conjunction with City Ballet's 30th anniversary.

*Make-A-Wish Malaysia* is the 35th affiliate of *Make-A-Wish International*, a charity which grants the wishes of children with life-threatening medical conditions to enrich their human experience.

There are over 20,000 children in Malaysia with such medical conditions and since 2010 has granted 150 local wishes. It aims to grant 72 more wishes in 2014. Some of the wishes granted so far was to a 9-year-old who wanted to be a flight stewardess and was put through a training programme thanks to Malaysia Airlines.

The Charity Ballet anticipates to raise RM50k and the proceeds from the charity will benefit Perak children who are in need of that little hope, strength and joy in

their lives.

At a press conference to announce the charity event media personnel met with the cast of *Alice in Wonderland* who included Alice, played by Carmen Pang, the Mad Hatter played by Charles Pooley and the Queen, Jaime Chang. Later the cast in full costume distributed pamphlets at the Polo Ground.

Admission to the ballet is by donations of RM150, RM100 and RM60 with discounts for students and senior citizens. For further info please contact Witzi Leong at 012 508 8818 or City Ballet at 05 253 7114.



JAG

## Book Review

By Chelvi Murugiah

# Woven in Deception

**W**oven in Deception is a classic Indian tale condensed in a 153-page book on the trials and tribulations of three generations of a wealthy Indian family, spanning over a century. The book relates the geographical move from India to Malaysia and the continuing struggles faced by three generations of the Kamelanathan family, apparently due to a curse inflicted upon them.

Although the theme seems heavy-handed, Woven in Deception is pretty much a light and easy read from start to finish. The author is able to keep the reader entertained with her tales that are easy to comprehend and, notably, identifiable individual and group behaviour within typical Indian households.

So, if you happen to be looking out for a good weekend read, nothing too mind-boggling, this book is quite straight forward, and would make an ideal selection.

The author, Nirmala Kasinathan, of Indian origin and a doctor from Ipoh, aptly reflects the Indian diaspora in Woven in Deception, beginning in the early 20th century. She takes readers through a litany of imaginary happenings, portraying living conditions during the British and Japanese Occupation, right up to post-Independence and leading to incidences as current as 2010.

The historical background of Malaysia and evolution of the Indian origin compliments the unravelling of the extended family saga spanning three generations. The book tells tales of love, marriage, betrayal, despair, frustration and more. These emotions and manifestation of human sentiments are revisited through the unfolding of the descendants' lives throughout the book.

Woven in Deception is centred on the belief that a curse so strong had been inflicted upon three generations of the Kamelanathan family by an angry, never-to-be father-in-law. The reading reveals the customary practices (mainly superstition), within the Indian and Ceylonese communities where an elder of a family, takes on a superiority position to consult with an astrologer for predictions on their family members' future. An astrologer's word, however illogical, is seemingly held in high esteem and is considered the absolute truth, no evidence required. As spelled out in Woven in Deception, each member of the extended Kamelanathan's family's misfortune is decidedly due to the curse, inflicted three generations earlier.

Progressing through the chapters, are revelations and turning points in the lives of the protagonists in each generation. Secrets and personal longings are reflected upon to justify intentions and actions taken. The "sizzle" factor, however, takes on a rather passive note, as the author chooses to depict the main characters' private lives and thoughts rather politely. However, the storyline does reflect, in reality, the workings of a typical class-conscious Indian family.

Whether by design or not, Woven in Deception's storyline is, in my opinion "woven-in-deception" through the revelation of strong subliminal influences which form the crux of the Indian community's identity. The Indian social organisation is, till today, structured on its culture, superstition, social norms, caste system and its discriminating patriarchal social system, that define roles of family members within an Indian household.

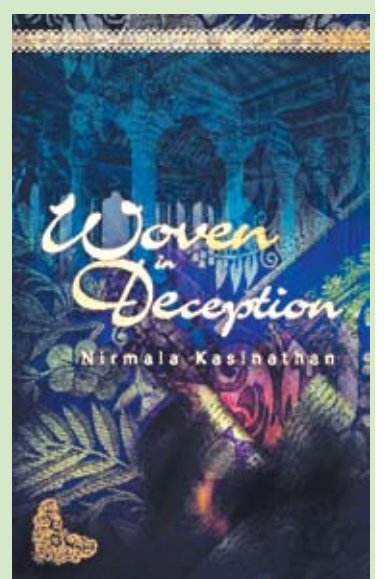
As an advocate for the equality for women, I abhor patriarchy, and commend the author, although she did so passively, for revealing the conservative traditional and restrictive beliefs practised by Indians and Ceylonese till today.

Woven in Deception is a good medium to create awareness to the readership on gender discrimination and social-class segregation, caste systems, traditions, norms and culture that inhibit the progress of the Indian community, per se.

To quote Arundhati Roy, an accomplished Indian author and political activist, "Our strategy should not only be to confront but to lay siege. To deprive it of oxygen, to shame it, to mock it, with our art, our music, our literature, our stubbornness, our joy, our brilliance, our sheer relentlessness – in our ability to tell our stories. Stories that are different from the ones many are brainwashed to believe."

*Woven in Deception* (166 pages) is published by Strategic Book Publishing in Houston, Texas. The book USD12.95 and can be ordered through the publisher's website: <http://sbpra.com/NirmalaKasinathan> or at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) or [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com).

For Malaysian readers, the book can be obtained directly from the author at RM40 per copy (inclusive of postage and handling). Contact Dr Nirmala at 016 508 4263 or 05 527 6453, or email: [nirmya78@hotmail.com](mailto:nirmya78@hotmail.com). (Those interested can bank into Maybank account 108225181197 (Acc. holder: Nirmala a/p A K Nadan @ Kasinathan) the cost of the books as ordered and email the author the banking slip as proof of transaction. Kindly provide full mailing address. Books will be sent by Poslaju within 2-3 days or may be collected personally from the author's residence in Ipoh.





## Young Perak

Over a hundred 6-year-old kids were the stars of the night at the KinderJoy Graduation Concert, receiving their graduation certificates on stage. Parents were given the honour to present the certificates to the graduating classes.

Themed "It's a Beautiful Day", the children also put up an interesting array of dances to entertain their parents, grandparents, siblings, friends and well-wishers. Dressed in glittering costumes, the children danced to popular tracks like Tennessee Waltz, Mamma Mia and even Gangnam Style, to rousing applause from the audience.

For the first time, KinderJoy presented High Achiever Awards to their former students. The 16 young alumni who are now in Primary One to Three, have achieved excellence in both academics and extracurricular activities.

The concert, held at Dewan Leong Wan Chin on the evening of Saturday, October 19, was attended by Pn Jamila Sharuddin, a senior officer from the Perak Education Department.

Emily

## News

### Toastmasters Club Joint Meeting

The YMCA of Ipoh Toastmasters Club hosted a joint meeting with Premier Advanced Toastmasters Club of Kuala Lumpur at YMCA Ipoh recently. It was a regular meeting, but was open to the public. The objective was to show what transpires during a Toastmasters Club meeting and to clear inaccurate perceptions about the club.

Under the umbrella of Toastmasters International, members of Toastmasters clubs learn communication English, effective communicative skills, public speaking and leadership development through role-playing.

After the meeting was called to order, an inspirational speaker gave a short motivational speech. This was followed by the introduction of a rarely-used English word by the Word Master, who explained its definition and encouraged members to apply the usage of the said word in the day's proceedings.

The Table Topic Master then invited members and guests to give a two-minute impromptu speech on one of the eight topics given. It takes a lot of guts to speak at the front of the hall but a Toastmasters meeting is a training ground for this, and speaking in front of friends builds up one's confidence in public speaking.

The main part of the meeting was the manual project, where Toastmasters had to present their assignments based on their manual, within a given time frame. Each manual project speaker was assigned a dedicated evaluator, who is an experienced Toastmaster. The evaluator then gave his or her feedback, usually first highlighting the strengths of the speech, followed by the weaknesses and suggestions for improvements, and then challenging the speaker to do better next time.



Fellow Toastmasters and guests had the opportunity to vote for the best speaker in the Table Topic session, as well as the manual project speeches. Ramesh Victor, one of the four manual project speakers, was presented with an award by Area Governor H1 Richard Tan Yi Jer, for completing the Competent Communication manual.

Competent Communication (CC) manual is the basic level in Toastmasters. It is followed by the Advanced Communicator Bronze (ACB), Silver (ACS) and Gold (ACG), and finally, Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM). To reach the highest level a Toastmaster would have given a total of at least 50 assignment speeches based on the different manuals, and had taken on various roles during meetings.

"The Toastmasters manual may be outside of the Malaysian school curriculum but the club provides a platform for members to speak in public confidently and to think on their feet, which would boost their marketability in the competitive job market. We encourage Form 6, college and university students, as well as young working adults, to join us. If you want to speak well you've to speak first. Every member is assigned a mentor," said Peter Bucher, President of

YMCA Ipoh Toastmasters Club.

Membership to YMCA of Ipoh Toastmasters Club is open to those who are at least 18 years of age. One-time registration fee is RM80 while membership fee is RM160 half yearly. Members meet at YMCA Ipoh every 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 7.45pm.

For details call Peter Bucher (Pak Peter) at 019 574 3572.

Emily



# Pesta Kuda

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## Community

# DJS' Cakecraft

“Helping women help themselves”, is the goal that Jabatan Pembangunan Wanita has always been actively working towards. In their newest venture, they have formed a partnership with DJS' CAKECRAFT to offer programmes designed to assist those interested, a means of self-supporting income through the art of cooking and baking.

Under the *System Latihan Dual*, DJS' CAKECRAFT will train participants to bake and cook, thus equipping them with the means to venture into small business enterprises or the opportunity for employment in the food industry. Participants between the ages of 18 to 45 are eligible to register with the government body, which will then inform them of sponsored workshops.

The Jabatan Pembangunan Wanita is also keen on initiating more programmes that will teach and provide industrial training for participants in the near future. With this programme it is hoped that there will be less dependence on foreign labour as more local people will be qualified and experienced enough to work as chefs in various commercially run establishments.

An allowance for the course work and transportation is given, with the hope that more people, both men and women alike, will take this golden opportunity to make a better life for themselves and their families.



Speaking to Ms Alice Sebastian, the director of the programme and owner of DJS' CAKECRAFT, I learnt that many such programmes are currently available but little is known about them. Although most of the programmes are tailored to help single mothers, there are a lot of other people who can also benefit from signing up for such courses.

Besides being a part of this new government project, Ms Alice also conducts other smaller individually tailored programmes. These other programmes are conducted periodically, at very reasonable course rates. Ranging from pastry courses to international cuisine courses, Ms Alice carefully designs the course content to fit current market needs. Everything is provided, ranging from the equipment to the ingredients, which is completely covered by the course fee. At the end of the course the participant will be given the opportunity to take an exam and receive a certificate upon passing. Upon passing, the participant will receive a *Sijil*

*Kemahiran Malaysia*.

Ms Alice is also an expert in vegetarian cakes. In an earlier issue the Ipoh Echo had covered a story on Ms Alice's wonderfully delicious wholemeal bread selections that have no preservatives. She actively promotes the “No preservatives” element in her recipes which makes this the cornerstone of her creations, thus ensuring that everything is healthier.

For those interested in trying their hand at becoming a chef, or even simply wanting to learn a new thing or two about the wonderful world of cooking, enrolling in any of the various courses available at DJS' CAKECRAFT would be a good first step to take. No need to go overseas, or even to big cities to explore your cooking passion, when DJS' CAKECRAFT is just round the corner.

Serena Mui

**DJS' Cakecraft**

Tel No: 05 526 5129 Fax: 05 527 3991

Email: djs3@streamyx.com

## 67 pupils graduate from DAYBREAK

In 2008, Persatuan DAYBREAK and the Special Education Unit of the State Education Department started the Work Experience Programme for pupils from special schools around Ipoh. The purpose of this programme was to provide the pupils the opportunity to learn various vocational skills (assembly & packaging, general cleaning, plant nursery and socks manufacturing), cultivate good work habits and prepare them for open employment. Since then, 300 pupils have been given the opportunity to attend this 15-week programme held at DAYBREAK.

This year, 67 pupils attended this programme with the support of their teachers. Each of them were presented with a certificate at a graduation ceremony officiated by Encik Aznan Bin Haji Alias, Ketua Sektor Pendidikan Swasta dan Pendidikan Khas, Jabatan Pelajaran Negeri Perak at DAYBREAK recently. In his speech, Encik Aznan congratulated the pupils for having successfully completed the programme this year and expressed his gratitude to the teachers for their support for the past six years. He applauded DAYBREAK for hosting this programme and expressed his wish that

DAYBREAK will continue to carry on this programme for the benefit of persons with disabilities in our community.

Also present during this ceremony was Encik Rahmat Bin Ismail, Pengarah Jabatan Tenaga Kerja (JTK) Negeri Perak and his staff members. Encik Rahmat presented some slides on JTK's *Program Azam Kerja* which was aimed at helping individuals in need of training to support and learn a skill or trade for a better future. He identified DAYBREAK as a centre of excellence and would like to work with Jabatan Pelajaran Perak to provide skill training opportunities to pupils from special schools associated with DAYBREAK.



## LETTERS

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

### The Miracle Boy

It is a miracle that Mohd Amar Mohd Azizi, 10, who was hit by a bullet, underwent a successful operation at the Ipoh General Hospital recently.

What was most amazing was that the boy tolerated the whole episode in spite of a dangerous and delicate operation and being placed under undue duress caused by public attention.

I join the rest in praying for Amar's complete recovery so he can join his schoolmates at school. I praise Amar's parents for their vigilance and care when he was in the hospital.

My heartfelt congratulations to Dr Cheang Chee Keong and his team of dedicated doctors and nurses for having performed the unexpected.

As a member of a non-governmental organisation based in Ipoh I wish to visit Amar at his home with my other members. However, this was being discouraged by the hospital for reasons best known to all. Amar needs all the rest he deserves for the moment.

Notwithstanding that, I wish to thank Ipohites for the concern you all have shown.

A. Letchimanan

### AmanJaya Bus Terminal

I refer to the AmanJaya Bus Terminal in Jelapang which has received so much public complaints by users.

It should be on record that this was a project initiated by the Pakatan Rakyat State Government.

The then DAP majority State Government only presented the plans to the public after it coddled up a deal with some businessmen. There was no prior consultation with the public before the site was decided and the plans drawn up. If my memory serves me it was the State Exco for Local Government (Nga Kor Ming) who announced some sort of competition (naming the station?) with “fabulous” prizes as candy to soothe an irate public.

I wrote to the press then, condemning the high-handed manner the PR state government handled the matter. It was a “we know best” attitude DAP had often accused BN of. I also pointed out the inconvenience and extra cost to the travelling public.

However, whichever party blundered, this untenable situation must be corrected. Don't expect Joe-Public to pay for your mistake and arrogance.

Yin

## Way Beyond Ketupat and Kimchi

Ketupat is to Malaysia what Kimchi is to Korea. The culture and taste may be different but when brought together the beauty and joy each culture exudes is still a wonderful experience. Such was the cultural experience that was evident at the cultural extravaganza “Beyond Ketupat and Kimchi, Celebrating Our Cultural Inheritance” a Korean and Malaysian cultural dance presentation.

The presentation was organised by event company ‘The Brain Truster’ led by Danielle Liang and ‘Prospect’ an NGO headed by State Assemblyman for Pasir Pinji, Howard Lee Chuan How. Second Secretary & Consul Embassy of the Republic of Korea Chung Chi Won drove down from Kuala Lumpur to grace the event that evening.

Korean national dance team Branch 2 Dance performed the traditional Korean dances while MBI's dance team Gema Warisan Budaya presented traditional Malaysian dances. While the Korea dances were graceful, steeped with traditional meaning and even romantic the Malaysian performances were upbeat but equally graceful.

According to Liang of The Brain Truster the purpose of organizing the event was to create awareness for cultural heritage preservation to which there was an abundance of culture and art that night

At the foyer of the Town Hall where the event was held was an art exhibition featuring works by Korean artist Josh Kim Tae Hoo. Local well known artist Khor Seow

Hee displayed his works while young local artist Kenji Wong presented his ‘installation art’ abstract creations which were quite evocative.

The finale for the night was the Malaysia Joget number where both troupes danced together for a truly “Muhibbah” experience.

*Beyond Ketupat and Kimchi* held two performances, the first at Penang PAC. According to Lee of Prospect this cultural presentation will be an annual event and next year his goal is to have a performance for a full week.

JAG





## Women

## Breast Cancer Awareness Month

In conjunction with the International Breast Cancer Awareness month in October, Perak Women for Women Society (PWW), Pink Champion Society Perak and Pantai Hospital Ipoh organised the Pink October Carnival to raise awareness on the disease and women's issues. It was held at the Polo Ground recently.

One of the relevant events on the programme was the Walk-A-Hunt where teams of participants hunted for clues concerning breast cancer and women-related issues. These clues were derived from participating booths and the surroundings. Dato' Hj Abdul Rahim Md Ariff, Ipoh City Council Secretary, flagged off the hunt.

Other activities consisted of Bowling to Beat Breast Cancer, where coconuts were used as bowling balls and recycled bottles as bowling pins. Participation among the spectators was keen.

## Empowering Women



Over 70 participants made up of members of non-governmental organisations and the public attended an empowerment programme for women held at the Heritage Hotel, Ipoh recently. The one-day seminar was organised by the Perak Women for Women Society (PWW) in collaboration with Jabatan Pembangunan Wanita (JPW) Perak and the Sathya Sai Baba Central Council of Malaysia. Puan Sriharitini binti Mohd Shamsuddin, Director of JPW Perak, officiated at the event in the presence of PWW President, Dr Sharifah Halimah Jafaar and society members.

The programme named LIGHT, which stands for Love, Inner beauty, Growth, Health, and Traditions, is currently being adopted by the government and earmarked for ten communities in country.

Sathya Sai Baba Central Council of Malaysia, who formulated the programme, sent seven speakers led by their National Women leader, Madam Vijayaletchumi Ramachandran to conduct the talk. The last subject, "Embracing LIGHT", by the council's National President, Prof Dr Suresh Govind, had the audience in stitches with his many hilarious anecdotes relating to daily lives.

The participants interacted well with the speakers. The feedback was very positive. Most said it was a worthy programme which could help women improve their lives and build happier homes and families.

Ed



One other event of relevance was the *Walk-In-Her Shoes* where men wore high-heel shoes and paraded in front of the crowd. The objective was to make the male participants know how it felt to be in a woman's shoes. Some were game enough to dress themselves as women.

Pantai Hospital Ipoh provided health screening and other NGOs dispensed information on breast cancer and women's issues. Booths selling food and knick knacks enhanced the prevailing carnival atmosphere. A flash mob dubbed, "One Billion Rising" prompted the crowd to join in the dance. The message of the group dance was preventing violence to women.

Maybank presented aids to Pink Champion Resource Centre in the form of a personal computer, breast prosthesis and wigs. It will also organise a workshop for counsellors.

The finale saw the Executive Councillor for Health, Tourism and Culture, Nolee Ashilin Dato' Mohammed Radzi, giving prizes to winning participants. She then officially closed the event.

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## Business



### Peter Chan — Property Man of the Year



Three years ago, on November 30, 2010, Ipoh Echo highlighted in its editorial about a “haven not yet lost” in reference to one Peter Chan “whose love for Ipoh was second to none.” In spite of “his foreign affiliations he foresaw a demand in luxury condominiums in Ipoh” and set about to build three towers against the backdrop of a pristine tropical jungle with an imposing rock as its centerpiece. Peter Chan’s Haven Lakeside Residence in Tambun is now almost complete with over 90 per cent of apartment units taken up.

Many have underestimated the resolve of this man while some had the audacity to dismiss him as a fake. But as soon as his project began to take shape they went on a witch hunt to put him out to pasture for good.

The ugly side of business rivalry began in earnest. Rumours were being deliberately circulated to deride Peter Chan and his project. “I had so many cancellations. Some were for no apparent reasons other than a nagging



spouse who was not in favour of the locality. It’s so frivolous and also discouraging,” he lamented. Peter’s perseverance, fortunately, is his strong point. He remained unshakable.

Every cloud has a silver lining, so goes the oft-quoted proverb. Peter’s silver lining comes in various shapes and sizes, if the shape, size and colour of his awards are anything to go by. Today, after having won 18 national and international awards for his high-rise condominium project, the only one of its kind in Ipoh and, by extension, Perak; Peter Chan can no longer be taken for granted.

Adding to his growing list of awards and, probably the most prestigious and most acclaimed nationwide, is the Property Man of the Year Award. The Malaysian Reserve, a premier business daily, picked thirteen developers to grace its fourth edition of The Malaysian Reserve Property Press Award 2013 held at the glitzy ballroom of the Kuala Lumpur Ritz Carlton on Friday, November 8.

And having bagged this momentous property award, Peter Chan stands tall among the accomplished and the renowned developers in the country. In his acceptance speech, Peter rightly pronounced that the award was a timely recognition and acknowledgement for small-time players like him in the industry. A fine accomplishment for a grossly misunderstood man who had fulfilled a dream despite the staggering odds.

Kudos to you, Peter Chan. You have made Ipoh proud.

FZB



## Announcements

Announcements must be sent by fax: **05-255 2181**; or email: [announcements@ipohecho.com.my](mailto:announcements@ipohecho.com.my), by the 9<sup>th</sup> or 23<sup>rd</sup> 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.

**‘Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease. What Is It?’**, Saturday **November 23**, 2.30pm to 5pm at 5th Floor, Dewan Anugerah, KPJ Ipoh Specialist Hospital. Speaker: Dr Chin Yow Wen, Resident Chest Physician. Free admission – open to the public.

**Antenatal Class** organised by Pantai Hospital Ipoh, Saturday **November 23**, 2pm to 6.30pm at Regency 6, Level 11, Tower Regency Hotel, Ipoh. Admission is free. Limited seats. For further information or registration, call: Ms Renuka or Ms Gloria at **05 540 5712/5725**.

**National Horse Show Malaysia 2013, December 5 to 8**, 7.30am to 7pm at Perak Turf Club Ipoh. A fun-filled weekend of equestrian competitions, carnival and expo. Admission is free.

**Concert of Hope with Bells and Bows** – a classical music and Christmas carols extravaganza featuring ‘Belles & Beaus’, **December 15**, 8pm at Canning Garden Methodist Church Hall, Ipoh. Proceeds from the concert will go towards the Lighthouse Hope Society “Soup Kitchen”. Entrance by donation: RM500, RM100, RM50 & RM30. Contact: **05 546 2023, 05 545 5582, 012 523 6558** or **012 508 8818**.

**Children’s Nature Camp, November 23 & 24** at Taman Herba, Papan, Perak. A 2 days 1 night nature camp for children organised by the Malaysian Nature Society, Perak Branch. Activities include jungle trekking, bird watching and nature & recycling activities. Students between 9 and 12 years old are invited to take part. Registration closes November 3. Those interested can contact Lee Yuat Wah at **017 577 5641** or email: [leeyuatwah@yahoo.com](mailto:leeyuatwah@yahoo.com).


**Talk titled: “Are the State Eurasian Associations relevant anymore?”** by Dr Anthony Sibert, Saturday **November 30**, 2pm at YMCA, 211 Jalan Raja Musa Aziz, Ipoh. *Do the associations have no place in today’s world or are they still relevant...Have an opinion?* Lunch will be provided for those who have registered. Contact Colin at **016 412 2324** before **November 20** to register.

**General Operations Force Northern Brigade Senior Officers’ Reunion.** A reunion of former senior officers of the General Operations Force Northern Brigade will be held at the force’s brigade headquarters in Ulu Kinta on Saturday, **November 30 and Sunday, December 1**. All senior officers who had served with the brigade are cordially invited to attend. For details call Supt Rex E. Issac (Rtd) **016 568 0486** or DSP Jamil bin Dato’ Harun (Rtd) **012 502 9119** or ASP Gun (Rtd) **019 577 2808**.

**Brahma Kumaris Ipoh Public Talk – “Food as Medicine”** by Dr Ng Li Fen (General Practitioner in nutritional healing and preventive medicine) and **“Green Juicing And Raw Food Preparation”** by Shirlee Low (Health advocate and innovative cook). Sunday **December 1** at YWCA, 132 Persiaran Anderson, Ipoh, 10am to noon. Admission is free. Booking is essential: **016 746 4473** or **05 547 6069**. Register online: <http://foodmedicine.eventbrite.com>.

**YMCA of Ipoh Toastmasters Club meets every 2nd & 4th Wednesday** at 7.45pm. Contacts: Pak Peter **019 574 3572**, Cheah Tong Kim **017 487 3980** or Nur Aida Ahmad Nazeri **013 363 9490**.

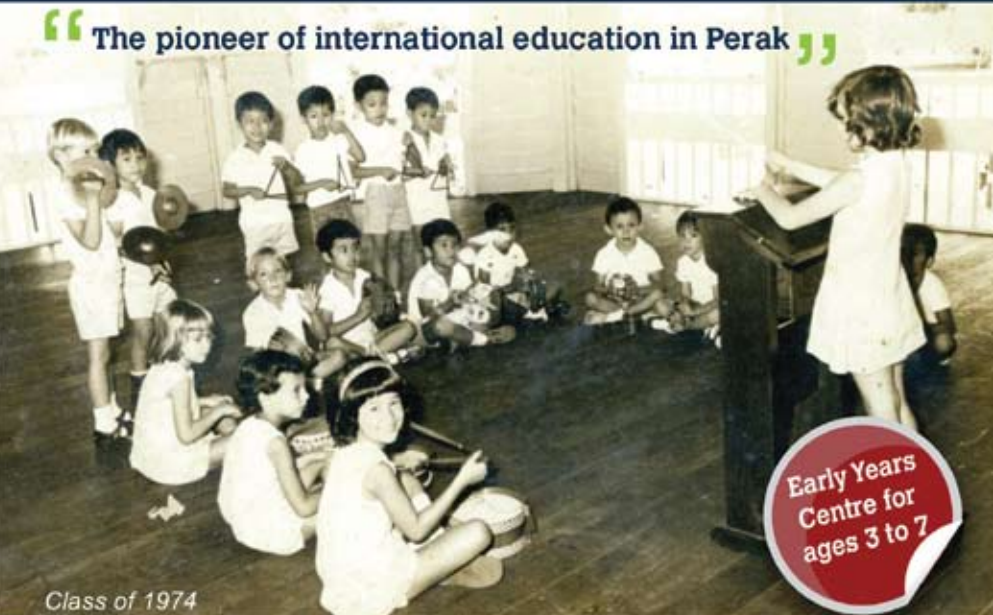
**State Budget Assembly.** The Perak State Legislative Assembly will meet from **November 25 to 29** when the state’s 2014 Budget will be tabled including the Supply Enactment 2014. Online streaming of the proceedings will begin at 10am from [peraknews.com](http://peraknews.com).



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## Sport

# Rebranding Clearwater Golf Resort

Clearwater Sanctuary Golf Resort (CWS) will be undertaking a rebranding exercise 20 years after its inception. To be undertaken by Gary Player Golf Course Design and Architecture and led by the Grand Slam winner himself, Gary Player and his team of consultants were on hand for the announcement.

CWS CEO Kenny Yap made the announcement to the media together with Player, one of the most successful international golfers who had designed over 300 golf courses since the early '80s. According to Yap, the resort, which started in 1992, is a 27-hole golf course and had received an award for 'Most Scenic Golf Course' as its fairways caress tranquil lakes of disused mining ponds and is shaded by rows of picturesque rain trees, all providing for a scenic game.

Yap said the upgrading work would start next year. He added that the resort had a natural combination of beautiful blue mountains and natural greens surrounding it and deserved an upgrade which will ultimately provide "world class services both for sports and hospitality".

The initial priority of the rebranding will be

the 18-hole golf course and subsequently will include upgrading the clubhouse, more hotel rooms than presently available and will include villas, bungalows and low-rise condominiums.

Gary Player who described the course as magnificent also "blessed the people that planted the trees". Player said he would do a total rebuild of the course with consideration given to the members and seniors.

"At 7500 yards it will be longer than Augusta but more playable for the average member. We will use the magnificent beauty of Clearwater's lakes and put greens and tees on the lake to make it a dream course. The challenge is playability and beauty."

Player, who described himself as a farmer and a golfer, emphasized that ecological practices would be a priority considering Clearwater's wetlands and biodiversity. "We respect the environment and won't over fertilize."

Yap would not indicate the full cost of the upgrade but said the amount of money to do the upgrade is a challenge and would update the members and golf enthusiasts on a regular basis.



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