

# HAPPY HANDS

Building An Endearing Home

## *Towards a* **Biophilic City**

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***To enjoy the beautiful  
butterflies, you must  
accept the caterpillars.***



MND Huddle 2015:  
Appreciating our volunteers,  
partners and pioneers

Student volunteers share their  
experiences helping shelter  
dogs find loving homes

Winning proposals reimagine  
the future of the Rail Corridor



Mr Khew Sin Khoon  
Butterfly Expert and Conservationist

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## EDITORIAL TEAM

Caroline Tan (MND)  
Jeanine Tan (MND)  
Nur Elysa Sapari (MND)

Contributors:  
Chong Poh Choo (AVA)  
Cliff Tham (AVA)  
Fharhanna Mohd Raffid (AVA)

Immanuel Lim (BCA)  
Phyllis Hong (HDB)  
Denise Chen (NParks)

Humphrey Sew (URA)

## SHARE A STORY

Share with us a story today! We would love to hear your inspiring stories and personal journeys about volunteering with the MND Family. Whether it is in the form of an article, an illustration or a photograph, we welcome your contributions. Do drop us a note at [happyhands@mnd.gov.sg](mailto:happyhands@mnd.gov.sg)!

## FEEDBACK

Tell us how we are doing! Did we meet your expectations? Do you have suggestions that could help us make this newsletter interesting and relevant to you? Let us know via [happyhands@mnd.gov.sg](mailto:happyhands@mnd.gov.sg)!



Image: National Parks Board

**Chairman of the MND Family Volunteer and Alumni Network, Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development Mr Desmond Lee, with volunteers and student ambassadors at the launch of the Zhenghua Nature Park Extension on 28 November 2015.**

Dear Friends of the MND Family,

Happy New Year!

In 2015, we celebrated SG50 - 50 years of nationhood - in a variety of ways. Although the Golden Jubilee celebrations have come to an end, 2016 will be an exciting year as we start to build on the aspirations shared by Singaporeans. In fact, this is the first year in our journey towards the next milestone - SG100. The Future of Us Exhibition, which is still ongoing at the Gardens by the Bay, sets us thinking and dreaming about what our shared future will be. Do visit if you haven't already, to explore and imagine the limitless possibilities as we co-create Singapore's future together.

Just this January, we held our *SGfuture* symposium and dialogue sessions to discuss what "A Cleaner, Greener and Smarter Home" might look like. I was heartened to see so many Singaporeans from all walks of life come together with a shared desire to play more active roles in caring for our green and blue spaces, advocating eco-friendly lifestyles and community ownership of our public spaces.

As our volunteers and partners, your work and the causes that you champion are important to us. Through strong and enduring partnerships, there is much that we can achieve together. For example, on the Rail Corridor project, URA's regular consultations with members of the Rail Corridor Partnership and the wider community enabled the design teams to come up with some inspiring and unique proposals for the Corridor. On The Ubin Project, NParks is working closely with members of the Friends of Ubin Network to realise some of their exciting ideas for Pulau Ubin in habitat enhancement, species recovery and the upcoming opening of the Ubin Living Lab, an integrated facility for biodiversity research, education and community outreach.

We have a busy year ahead, and I look forward to working together with all of you on meaningful projects that will help shape and create the kind of home and living environment that we envision for ourselves and our future generations.

Yours sincerely,

Desmond Lee  
Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development  
Chairman of the MND Family Volunteer and Alumni Network

## SPECIAL FEATURE

# MND Huddle 2015

## Recognising our valued volunteers, partners and pioneers

The Ministry of National Development recognised 59 volunteers and alumni for their dedicated service and outstanding contributions to the MND Family during the annual MND Huddle 2015 held on 20 November 2015 at the Flower Field Hall of the Gardens by the Bay.



**MND Family volunteers from diverse backgrounds and domains attended the annual MND Huddle 2015 appreciation event hosted by Minister for National Development Mr Lawrence Wong.**

It was an evening of appreciation as the MND Huddle 2015 brought together partners and volunteers who have served on MND Family boards, committees and advisory panels, as well as volunteer leaders who lead programmes for fellow volunteers in their communities, and retired Pioneer Generation officers.

Before dinner, guests enjoyed guided tours of the MND Family's SG50 Exhibition, an interactive showcase of MND Family agencies' work and contributions of our pioneering officers over 50 years of nationhood. Guests also enjoyed an exclusive preview of the Christmas Toyland floral display in the Flower Dome conservatory of Gardens by the Bay.

In his opening address, Minister for National Development Mr Lawrence Wong thanked all guests for years of dedication and contributions in various domains of MND's work. He also highlighted the need to continue working in partnership with all Singaporeans towards a sustainable and thriving future.

“ Thank you for your leadership, passion, service and dedication... I look forward to an even stronger partnership with all of you. ”

*Minister for National Development  
Mr Lawrence Wong in his opening address*



**Guests enjoying an exclusive preview of the Christmas Toyland floral display in the Flower Dome conservatory of Gardens by the Bay.**

### Musical performances and video screenings

Dinner was accompanied by musical performances by talented young musicians from The Melody Strings' Chamber Orchestra.

A video commemorating the momentous inscription of the Singapore Botanic Gardens as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in July 2015 was screened. This was followed by the premiere screening of 'I Am', a special short film that puts a spin on our usual perspective of the Singapore story and asks: *What is Singapore to each of us? What makes this place home and binds us together? Is it our history, a shared heritage of a little fishing village transformed into a thriving, bustling city within the space of a generation? Or is it the little things, memories we share with our loved ones – in our homes, neighbourhoods and parks?* Watch 'I Am' [here](#).

Finally, as a sequel to the previous year's screening of 'The Promise', the heartwarming 'The Promise 2' was screened featuring a family overcoming life's challenges through mutual care, support and help from HDB. Watch 'The Promise 2' [here](#).

### Presentation of MND Medallion for Distinguished Service and MND Dedicated Service Awards

The highlight of the evening was the MND Awards presentation ceremony. This year, we honoured 59 outstanding volunteers and recently retired alumni from the MND Family. The first award presented, the MND Medallion for Distinguished Service, recognises the contributions of volunteers who served on the MND Family boards, committees and advisory panels and stepped down in the past year, as well as recently retired staff.

Minister also presented the MND Dedicated Service Award, which honours the unwavering commitment and contributions of volunteers who have rendered at least 10 years of service across the MND Family.

Among this year's recipients were Mr Tan Lian Ker, one of MND's longest-serving board members, who received the MND Medallion for Distinguished Service, and Mr Yusof Alsagoff who received the MND Dedicated Service Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the former Primary Production Department (now the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority) and National Parks Board.

To all MND Family volunteers, partners and pioneers, thank you for your invaluable contributions. We look forward to our continued close collaboration to make Singapore a more liveable and endearing home for all.



Musical performance by The Melody Strings' Chamber Orchestra.



Mr Tan Lian Ker receiving the MND Medallion for Distinguished Service from Minister for his contributions as President of the Strata Titles Board for 22 years.



Mr Yusof Alsagoff receiving the MND Dedicated Service Award from Minister for 25 years of service within the MND Family.

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

### Towards a biophilic city

Architect and nature lover Mr Khew Sin Khoon, 57, believes in the importance of striking a balance between urban development and nature conservation.



**Most people associate with nature in a very selective way ... It takes education to help people understand that nature does not come in preferred packages that we can pick and choose from.**

**Mr Khew Sin Khoon  
Butterfly Expert and Conservationist**

*His enthusiasm for butterflies may date back to Mr Khew Sin Khoon's schoolboy days, but it was his enduring passion for nature's flying jewels that led him to form ButterflyCircle, a nature photography and interest group dedicated to the study of butterflies in our environment. An architect by profession and President and CEO of architectural, project and facilities management firm CPG Corporation, Mr Khew's twin passions for nature and architecture are reflected in many of the firm's landmark projects including Gardens by the Bay and Khoo Teck Puat Hospital. Mr Khew also works closely with the National Parks Board (NParks) on conservation and species recovery projects, and with the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) as a member of the Rail Corridor Partnership.*

#### **What are your views on the co-existence of people and nature in an urban environment like Singapore?**

Nature and people already co-exist in our urban environment! It's just that most people associate with nature in a very selective way. Birds, butterflies and dragonflies are fine but spiders, bees and snakes are not. It takes education to help people understand that nature

does not come in preferred packages that we can pick and choose from. Having said that, I am encouraged that as people interact more with biodiversity in our urban environment, they come to appreciate and respect nature for what it is. For example, the appearance of otters in our urban environment provides a learning opportunity as people are taught to keep their distance from the animals whilst watching them. This allows nature and people to co-exist without conflict.

#### **As an architect and nature lover, how do you think we can become a biophilic city - where nature is integrated within our urban landscape?**

In land-scarce Singapore, it can be extremely challenging. Some groups advocate leaving what remains of our wild greenery as it is. However, this is not tenable for Singapore as we continue to grow and develop. Architects and planners have, in recent years, made excellent strides in greening rooftops, integrating greenery with the built environment via vertical green walls, sensitive landscaping and preserving as many green spaces as possible. NParks has also shifted away from the manicured type of landscaping in public areas to

more organic and natural green spaces to better support biodiversity. In a small city-state like Singapore, we have done a lot to create our City in a Garden. But conservation of the environment does not stop at just creating more greenery and focusing purely on the flora - it requires a holistic integration of our environment that balances greenery and biodiversity with the built environment and human habitats.

#### **Which of your development projects are you especially proud of?**

I enjoyed many of the small parks projects that I worked on with NParks, which focused on how the environment can be integrated with the interventions that we created. An example is the construction of the 2km long boardwalk at Chek Jawa in Pulau Ubin. Instead of carrying out piling of the boardwalk structure and in the process damaging the intertidal environment, we designed the boardwalk to carry the piling machines on the structure itself. This minimised contact between any mechanical equipment and the sea floor.

Another project that I am particularly proud of is Khoo Teck Puat Hospital. Who would have thought that a functional



Image: Khoo Teck Puat Hospital

**Khoo Teck Puat Hospital was conceptualised as a 'hospital in a garden, and a garden in a hospital'.**

and utilitarian healthcare building could be infused with so much greenery? Today, patients and visitors can enjoy the lush greenery and see birds and butterflies within the hospital compound.

**You founded ButterflyCircle in 2006. What inspired your avid interest in butterflies?**

During my childhood, we didn't have digital entertainment devices so we created our own entertainment. Invariably, we turned to the outdoors for this. From catching longkang fishes and fighting spiders to netting butterflies, my interest in nature, and in particular butterflies, grew. I had a good mentor in my Biology teacher at school, who encouraged me to do a project on camouflage and mimicry in butterflies. It won me a prize at the Young Scientists Programme, and I have been passionate about butterflies ever since!

**What do you hope to achieve through ButterflyCircle?**

The group was set up mainly to encourage appreciation and conservation of butterflies through education and sharing of information about them. ButterflyCircle members' excellent photography has helped heighten awareness of the beauty of butterflies amongst the general public. What became more important was helping people realise that in order to enjoy the beautiful butterflies, you must accept the caterpillars which eat your plants. You can't have one without the other.

**What are some of the group's ongoing projects?**

ButterflyCircle has produced two butterfly field guides and one caterpillar field guide so far, and work has started on a second volume of the caterpillar guide. Members are also involved in species

recovery projects and biodiversity surveys with NParks. ButterflyCircle's blog has been running for about eight years now, and both the [blog](#) and [online forums](#) have become a valuable repository of information about butterflies in Singapore. We collect and share information about butterflies in our environment with organisations like NParks and community gardens to help them manage butterfly-friendly parks and gardens in Singapore.

**You are also a member of the Rail Corridor Partnership. Tell us about your role in this and how you envision the future of the Rail Corridor.\***

I have participated in the Rail Corridor Partnership since it started as a public engagement group to share views and suggestions about how the Rail Corridor could be developed sensitively. As an architect, I try to see issues from the development perspective, whilst as a nature enthusiast, I try to balance that perspective with conserving nature along the Corridor. There is much greater public interest, engagement and participation in the Rail Corridor than there was previously. The challenge is to balance the concerns of various stakeholders. There are far more competing uses involved in this project than any that I have been involved with before. At the end of the day, the Rail Corridor should be inclusive and enjoyed by as many community stakeholders as possible.

*\*Read more about the Rail Corridor on [pages 10-11](#).*



Images: Khew Sin Khoon

**(Left)** ButterflyCircle members on a photography outing.

**(Right)** A Plain Tiger butterfly photographed feeding on flowers of the Blood Flower.

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

### Loving homes for shelter dogs

Melisa Lukito and Tan Kuok Jonn share their experiences volunteering at the Pawfect Match speed-dating adoption drive for dogs during last year's Pet Expo.



It was a good opportunity for me to play a role in a happy ending, or even happy endings, by helping shelter dogs find their lifelong home.

*Melisa Lukito*  
*Veterinary Bioscience student, Ngee Ann Polytechnic*

I learned about various reasons leading the fosterers to foster a dog and the importance of ensuring that prospective adopters were prepared to be responsible dog owners.

*Tan Kuok Jonn*  
*Veterinary Bioscience student, Ngee Ann Polytechnic*

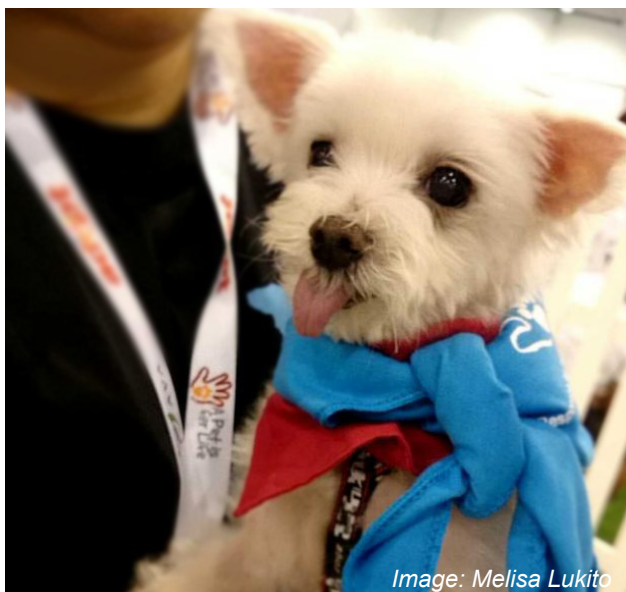


Image: Melisa Lukito

Melisa and Jonn volunteered at the Pawfect Match adoption drive to help shelter dogs like Tammy (pictured above) find loving families.

#### What motivated you to volunteer for the Pawfect Match?

**Melisa:** I simply love dogs! The Pawfect Match event sparked my curiosity as rarely would you observe people “speed-dating” with dogs. When I heard about the event, I volunteered my services immediately. It was a good opportunity for me to play a role in a happy ending, or even happy endings, by helping shelter dogs find their lifelong home.

**Jonn:** It feels good to be able to help the dogs find a family who would appreciate and love them as a family member. I do not have any pets at home, so this also presented an opportunity for me to interact with the animals.



### Please share more about your roles as 'Cupid Vollies'.

**Melisa:** 'Cupid Vollies' had to bridge the gap between the dogs and the prospective adopters. We facilitated their interactions and helped them to get to know each other as much as possible within a short time frame. We also provided information about the dogs to the prospective adopters and guided them on how to approach and behave around the animals. After the short briefing, we would accompany the prospective adopters into the pen for their interaction with the dogs - this was the fun part!

**Jonn:** As Cupid Vollies, we shared with prospective adopters the 'dos' and 'don'ts' of interacting with the dogs. We also ensured that prospective adopters kept to the 10-minute time frame for each interaction so as to give other prospective adopters a chance to meet and interact with the dogs.

### What were some memorable moments?

**Melisa:** There was a little girl who seemed rather afraid of the large dogs. I handed her some dog treats and gently coaxed her towards one of the gentler dogs. After some bonding time with the dog, she left with a beautiful grin and said to me "Thank you, jie jie (big sister)". At the end of the event, her family submitted their application to adopt that same dog!

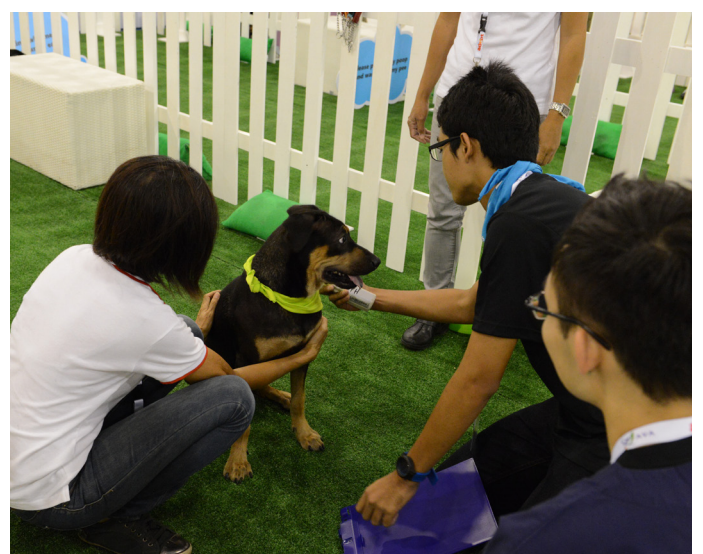
I also grew attached to a puppy named Tammy during the event. She trotted beside me whenever I entered the pen. We even played a short game of catch when the event ended. She enjoyed chasing me around the pen with her tiny tail wagging. My heart sank a little when she had to leave.

### Which was the most enjoyable part of the experience?

**Jonn:** Interacting with fosterers and their dogs was the most meaningful part for me as I noticed how attached they had become to their dogs. I learned about various reasons leading the fosterers to foster a dog and the importance of ensuring that prospective adopters were prepared to be responsible dog owners, for example, by making time to play with the dog and being able to afford the dog's medical bills.

### Any tips to share with others who may wish to volunteer?

**Melisa:** Volunteering at the Pawfect Match was a memorable and meaningful experience for me. If you have the time and opportunity to volunteer, go for it! The experiences and memories will be priceless. Put a smile on your face and enjoy every moment.



Images: Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority

*This year's Pet Expo will be held on 25 to 27 March 2016. See [page 15](#) for more information on the event.*

## PROGRAMME (URA)

# Reimagining the Rail Corridor

Winners of the Rail Corridor Request for Proposal reveal a love of man and nature in their sensitive design proposals.



Image: Nikken Sekkei

Tokyo-based Nikken Sekkei and local landscape firm Tierra Design were accorded the overall Concept Master Plan for their comprehensive and thoughtful proposal themed *Lines of Life*.

It was a moment of great anticipation for the team that emerged top among 64 respondents at the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) Rail Corridor Request for Proposal (RFP) awards on 9 November 2015.

After six months of working under high stress and suspense, design professionals from Tokyo-based Nikken Sekkei and local landscape firm Tierra Design were accorded the overall Concept Master Plan for their comprehensive and thoughtful proposal themed *Lines of Life*.

The RFP also included two special-interest sites, which were awarded to another team comprising local firm MKPL Architects and Chinese landscape firm Turenscap International for its culturally sensitive proposal to reuse the former Tanjong Pagar Railway Station as a community space and vision for a 16-hectare residential precinct at Choa Chu Kang, which features outstanding ideas such as growing a linear forest from scratch.

Present at the event was chairperson of the 12-member RFP evaluation panel and CEO of URA Ng Lang, who commended the teams for their overall “compelling vision”

that captures a community-centred experience through “seamless connectivity” of the Rail Corridor and their “respect [of] and sensitivity to the area’s rich ecology and heritage”.



Image: Nikken Sekkei

The *Lines of Life* proposal includes improving the existing landscape to create a more distinctive ‘green corridor’ experience along the Rail Corridor.

## A serene sanctuary

The idea behind *Lines of Life* is somewhat poetic. It reimagines the former railway track as a green community 'lifeline' or sanctuary away from the brouhaha of the concrete environment.

"Compared to Tokyo, Singapore is so green. But the Corridor itself is even greener, quieter, more peaceful and very different from the built-up environment. We really wanted to retain that kind of feel, so that we don't transform it into something completely different," explained Shoji Kaneko, Urban Designer and Landscape Architect at Nikken Sekkei.



Image: Nikken Sekkei

**Going beyond a jogging or cycling track, the Japan-Singapore team's proposal incorporates a complex and rich source of lifestyle activities for all to enjoy.**

## A new journey

Meanwhile, winners of the adaptive reuse of the Tanjong Pagar Railway Station offer another viewpoint on the Rail Corridor: a new journey in the history of commuting in Singapore. Proposed blueprints of the Circle Line Cantonment MRT Station will see the construction of the station at the periphery of the historic terminus. The Singapore-China team boldly proposed the integration of a new MRT station entrance or exit along the tracks of the historic Tanjong Pagar Railway Station.

The team is driven by a philosophy of a "light touch and an invisible hand". Aside from using it to retain the original charm of the terminus, this philosophy also drives their *Living in the Forest* proposal for the residential district at Choa Chu Kang.



Image: MKPL/Turenscape Team

**To the Singapore-China team, the fusion of the old and new gives birth to a fresh perspective on experiencing embarkation, departure and arrival at a destination.**

## Growing residences

To integrate the Choa Chu Kang precinct as a part of the whole railway track, the team suggests a tremendous feat of reintroducing the 'rustic feel and greenery' of the Corridor by growing a forest. In the proposal, the design of the residential blocks are positioned to engage with the varying heights of the trees, whose growth are 'timed' to follow the ascent of the proposed buildings.

From November to December 2015, an exhibition was held by URA to solicit public feedback on the winning proposals. The conversation will continue with a roving exhibition and community workshops in the coming months as URA seeks community input to further refine the plans and shape the Corridor into something unique for Singaporeans. Find out more information on the winning proposals and share your feedback [here](#).



Image: MKPL/Turenscape Team

**For the Choa Chu Kang precinct, the team proposes seamlessly integrating a linear forest with existing greenery, water bodies and future housing developments.**

*This is an abridged version of an article originally published in [Going Places Singapore](#).*

## PROGRAMME (AVA)

# Growing edibles in community gardens

The Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA)'s Master Growers programme brings gardening enthusiasts together to learn about growing edibles.



Images: Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority

A group of keen gardeners gather at AVA's Horticultural Service Centre in Sembawang every fortnight over a span of two months to learn about growing edibles.

They are participants in AVA's Master Growers programme, which aims to equip gardeners with knowledge and skills in growing edibles. Eventually, the aim is to form a network of competent vegetable growers known as "Master Growers" who are willing to share what they have learnt with other gardeners in their own communities and other community gardens.

Lessons include the correct ways of growing leafy and fruited vegetables such as Xiao Bai Cai and Kai Lan.

“

The Master Growers programme encourages a culture of sustainability and reduction of food waste by increasing awareness about food production.

**Cliff Tham**  
Facilitator, Master Growers programme

”

The programme also touches on growing other common edible plants like herbs, and vegetables such as radish and corn.

A model community garden set up at the Centre allows participants to try their hand at applying what they have learnt during the theory lessons. Often, they are surprised to learn about the types and variety of plants and vegetables that can be grown in Singapore.

AVA's Master Growers programme is open to community gardeners. Those who are keen to set up a community garden in the future are also welcome.

The next season of the Master Growers program will commence on 20 Feb 2016. Look out for updates on [AVA's Facebook page](#). Registration will open closer to the date.

## MEET OUR VOLUNTEER MANAGER

### Enabling volunteers to learn and grow

Meet Volunteer Manager Immanuel Lim who oversees the Building and Construction Authority (BCA)'s Build it Green Club.

#### Tell us about what you do as a volunteer manager.

I oversee the framework, direction and activities of our Build it Green (BiG) Club, which was started in September 2011 and has over 1,150 members from the Institutes of Technical Education, Polytechnics and Universities. I also work with building owners, industry partners and the Executive Council within the Club to organise activities for our members.

#### How has your experience working with BiG Club members been?

Working with the members has been great! They are driven and innovative in executing the tasks given to them. Many are interested and passionate about greening the built environment. I am glad that being in the Club enables them to learn more and provides opportunities to develop their interest and reach out to others.

#### A memorable experience working with BiG Club members?

Our members help out as ambassadors at BCA's Green Building Exhibitions, sharing with members of the public how they can do their part for a sustainable environment by greening their homes and offices.

Once, we had a member who wanted to overcome her timidity by volunteering as an ambassador. Before the event opened, I brought her and her friend around to provide some pointers and assured her that I would be around to assist should she face any difficulties. At first, she relied on her friend to engage the visitors. But with encouragement and support from us standing close by, she identified a visitor she felt comfortable engaging, and with



Immanuel (leftmost) and members of BiG Club Executive Council with Senior Minister of State for Home Affairs and National Development Mr Desmond Lee during the MND Family Volunteer Leaders workshop.

determination and a deep breath she approached the visitor. It turned out to be a successful sharing about choosing energy-efficient appliances at home. Though it was a short interaction, this first step boosted her confidence to approach more visitors afterwards. It was a fulfilling moment for me to see how our Club enabled a member to step out of her comfort zone and succeed in challenging herself.

#### How would you describe your volunteer management style?

I believe it is important to build close rapport with as many members as possible, as they have shown great interest in our cause and devoted their time and efforts with us. This makes them more willing to volunteer at our events and share feedback on how we can continuously enhance our activities and engagement platforms. This helps to ensure that our Club is moving in the correct direction of catering to their needs and providing them with what they want, in turn, sustaining

their participation and support in our Club's activities. In addition to building personal relationships, I think it is essential to show appreciation to our volunteer ambassadors and give them proper recognition.

#### What is your favourite part of the job?

Definitely the opportunity to interact with the members and participate in meaningful activities together with them, as it makes me feel young again! But on a serious note, my favourite part is receiving feedback that they have enjoyed our activities and benefited from being a member of our Club. It is heartwarming and satisfying to know that I have made an impact and difference.

*Find out more about BCA's BiG Club and BiG Club Junior [here](#).*

## IN THE NEWS



Image: Clarence Lee

**New CIB Ambassador Mdm Foziah Yeon (leftmost) strongly believes in the therapeutic benefits of gardening.**

### Community In Bloom Ambassador Awards 2015

Ten new CIB Ambassadors were appointed and received their awards from Prime Minister Mr Lee Hsien Loong at the Clean and Green SG50 Carnival on 31 October 2015. Among the recipients was Mdm Foziah Yeon, an Assistant Superintendent at Muhammadiyah Welfare Home who incorporates gardening into her programme for children aged 10 to 13 years old. CIB Ambassadors are selected for their contributions towards spreading the gardening culture among the community and their in-depth knowledge of gardening and greenery. For enquiries on the CIB Ambassador Award, please send an email to [communityinbloom@nparks.gov.sg](mailto:communityinbloom@nparks.gov.sg).



**Heartland Ambassadors and residents of Yishun Riverwalk interacted and bonded through the challenges and activities in Fun Quest.**

### Youth can reach out too!

In December 2015, eight Heartland Ambassadors from Republic Polytechnic organised the Yishun Riverwalk Fun Quest during the Yishun Riverwalk Welcome Party. Mr Ong Ye Kung, Acting Minister for Education (Higher Education & Skills), Senior Minister of State for Defence and Grassroots Adviser to Sembawang GRO, flagged off the activity for 62 excited residents. The residents were treated to fun activities highlighting simple messages on gracious and responsible heartland living. Find out more about the Heartland Ambassador Programme [here](#).



Image: MND

**Minister for National Development Mr Lawrence Wong joined participants during an engagement session on co-creating vibrant public spaces.**

### A Cleaner, Greener and Smarter Home

Singaporeans shared their views on what it takes to build a cleaner, greener and smarter home during a series of engagement sessions held in January 2016 as part of the SGfuture engagement series. The initiative, led by the Ministry of National Development together with the Ministry of Environment and Water Resources, Ministry of Communications and Information, and Ministry of Transport, was organised around four main themes – City in a Garden, Vibrant Community Spaces, Eco-smart Towns and Gracious Living, and A Green and Conserving Culture. Through 17 fruitful dialogue sessions and three site visits, participants shared their ideas and discussed how everyone has a role to play in creating a more liveable and sustainable future for Singapore. Find out what went on during the sessions [here](#).

## UPCOMING EVENTS & CONTESTS

### Win 'A Walk Through History: A Guide to the Singapore Botanic Gardens' book

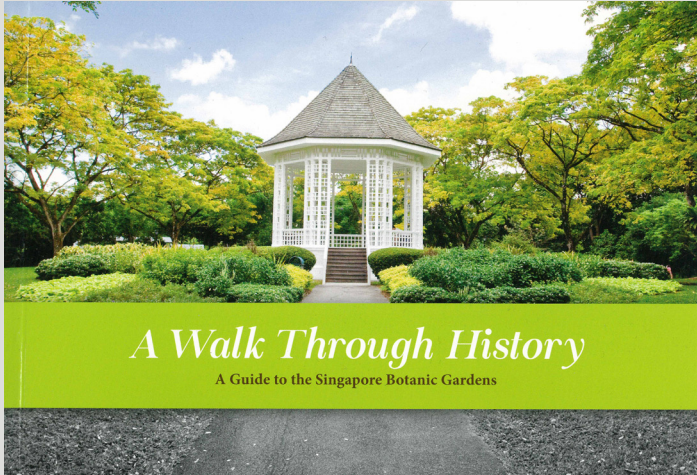


Image: National Parks Board

The Singapore Botanic Gardens at Tanglin began life in 1859, but did you know that this was not the first attempt by the British to establish gardens in Singapore? And where in the Gardens can you find the world's oldest and largest orchid specimen?

Find the answers to these questions about our very own UNESCO World Heritage Site, and more, as you travel through time in 'A Walk Through History: A Guide to the Singapore Botanic Gardens'.

Stand a chance to win a copy of this book by answering two simple questions in *My Green Space*, a quarterly e-newsletter by NParks, [here](#).

### 'Celebrating LIFE in the Heartlands' Photography Competition 2016



HDB's 'Celebrating LIFE in the Heartlands' Photography Competition is back with the theme 'friendly faces, lively places'!

Capture shots that highlight the distinctive character of HDB towns as well as memories formed in the heartlands.

Other than vibrant neighbourhoods, the friendships and ties forged with our neighbours are what make living in the heartlands endearing. Show us life in the heartlands through your lens!

Find out more about the competition [here](#) and submit your entries by 31 March 2016.

### Pet Expo 2016

25 – 27 March 2016 (Friday – Sunday)

11am to 8pm

Singapore Expo Hall 7

**Love animals? Then don't miss Singapore's largest PET-ducational fair!**



Meet lovely adoptable animals brought in by animal welfare groups in partnership with the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority. Enjoy a speed-dating experience like no other as our volunteers play Cupid to acquaint you with the loveable dogs.

Admission to Pet Expo 2016: \$4 per day / \$10 for 3-day pass

Free entry for children 12 years and below. Pets are welcome. Find out more information and get your tickets [here](#).

## The Future of Us Exhibition

**THEATRE OF GENERATIONS**  
A salute to our pioneers and the values that drive us onwards.

**HOME TOMORROW**  
Peek into the homes and communities of the future.

**THE LION**  
A playground for everyone. Watch out for the surprise!

**THE MARKET PLACE**  
A showcase of cutting-edge gizmos.

**SYMPHONY OF THE CITY**  
Experience the possibilities of tomorrow's cityscape.

**BLUE SKIES**  
Here are the dreams of Singaporeans for tomorrow. What's yours?

Join us on a sensory journey into the many exciting possibilities and shared dreams for Singapore's tomorrow. Come explore, imagine and get involved at our exhibition!

**FREE ADMISSION**  
1 Dec 2015 to 8 Mar 2016  
30 Marina Boulevard  
(in front of Bayfront MRT)  
Get your tickets at the door or [www.thefutureofus.sg](http://www.thefutureofus.sg)

**the future of us**

1 December 2015 – 8 March 2016  
9am to 9pm (last entry at 8.30pm)  
30 Marina Boulevard (near Bayfront MRT station)

**What does the future of us hold? Come explore, imagine and get involved at The Future of Us Exhibition!**  
Book your free tickets [here](#) or walk in to sign up for the earliest available time slot.

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