

# HAPPY HANDS

Building An Endearing Home



## Changing the Game

Engineer Sharron Ng on charting a vibrant and sustainable future for our built environment sector through game-changing technologies.



Explore Tiong Bahru's rich heritage on monthly tours with URA volunteer guides from ITE College West Tourism Club

Volunteer guide turned NParks conservation officer Alan Tan on what he enjoys about working with volunteers

Vet and student volunteers help out at AVA's Free Pet Health Check in support of good pet health

Sharron Ng  
BCA-Industry Young Leader  
*Image taken at The Wave,  
Nanyang Technological University*

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## 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)!



*Chairman of the MND Family Volunteer and Alumni Network, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Home Affairs and National Development Desmond Lee (second from left), with student volunteers from Nanyang Junior College and Adviser to Bishan-Toa Payoh GRC CROs Chong Kee Hiong (rightmost) at the opening of Windsor Nature Park on 22 April 2017. The student volunteers joined 'Operation No Release' to help raise awareness about the harmful impacts of releasing animals into nature reserves.*

Dear Friends of the MND Family,

As we approach the middle of the year, I am happy to see more volunteers getting involved in meaningful causes and coming up with inspiring initiatives to shape the kind of living environment that we would like to have. From urban planning to conservation of our built and natural heritage, ensuring safe and adequate food supply to the building of our homes and other infrastructure, our MND Family's work covers a wide range of issues, and so does the work of our volunteers and partners.

For example, URA student volunteer guides Mohamad Harris Bin Mohd Hisam and Tyler Chua, who are featured in this issue, lead guided walks for members of the public to share a slice of our rich history and heritage in places like Tiong Bahru. I have also met with BCA Young Leaders from the built environment sector, including Civil Engineer Sharron Ng who is also featured in this issue. They have shared exciting ideas for charting a vibrant and sustainable future for the industry. It is heartening to see our youth and young leaders actively involved in shaping Singapore's future.

Many passionate volunteers are involved in driving various initiatives, from conception to implementation. For Car-Free Sunday SG, many cycling groups and other community groups organise tours, roadshows and other activities for participants to enjoy. During NParks' Biodiversity Week last month, citizen scientists and nature enthusiasts joined us in nationwide biodiversity surveys and sharing about our rich biodiversity at the Festival of Biodiversity. At AVA's Free Pet Health Check events, volunteer veterinarians provide free microchipping services and clinical examinations in support of good pet health. The success of these and more initiatives are due in great part to your strong support and valuable contributions.

I have had the pleasure of meeting some of you, and I am inspired to learn that for many of you, volunteering is not just a way of giving, but indeed, it is a way of living. As we develop as a society, I hope that more Singaporeans will opt to do the same. Thank you to all of you, for sharing your time, ideas and effort in working with us to make Singapore an even better home!

Yours sincerely,

Desmond Lee  
Minister, Prime Minister's Office  
Second Minister for Home Affairs and National Development  
Chairman of the MND Family Volunteer and Alumni Network

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT (BCA)

### Changing the game

Engineer and BCA-Industry Young Leader Sharron Ng talks about charting a vibrant future for the built environment sector through game-changing technology.



Meeting like-minded professionals from various disciplines and discussing issues we face gives me a better understanding of challenges across the built environment sector and provides opportunities to explore creative win-win solutions.

**Sharron Ng**  
BCA-Industry Young Leader



*Sharron Ng, 41 years old, aspired to be an engineer since she was a teenager. Today, Sharron is a director at ECAS Consultants where she leads a team of engineers on building and infrastructure projects in Singapore. Nominated by the Institution of Engineers Singapore for the Building and Construction Authority (BCA) Industry Young Leaders Programme in 2016, Sharron is a member of the Design for Manufacturing and Assembly Taskforce. Together with other young industry professionals, she is helping to chart a vibrant and sustainable future for the built environment sector in Singapore.*

#### **When did you decide to pursue Engineering?**

I had always been attracted to buildings with great architectural design. In school, I also gained interest in subjects like Physics and Mathematics. After my first year at the Nanyang Technological University (NTU), I decided on Civil Engineering as my major.

#### **Tell us about your work. What do you enjoy about it?**

As a practising engineer leading a team of engineers specialising in buildings

and bridges, I review the work of my team members and am involved in technical discussions, brainstorming solutions, and troubleshooting problems with them, our clients and fellow consultants. As part of the management team, I work with my fellow directors on the firm's operational matters. The most satisfying parts of my job are guiding my engineers and seeing them grow professionally, as well as the successful completion of a project – these are the things that keep me going.

#### **You are on the Design for Manufacturing and Assembly (DfMA) Taskforce as part of the BCA-Industry Young Leaders Programme. What is DfMA and what is your role on the Taskforce?**

DfMA is a resource-efficient design approach that focuses on the ease of manufacturing and assembly. This involves shifting on-site construction work to off-site manufacturing in factories, where wider mechanisation and automation can be adopted.

I share with other members of the DfMA Taskforce about my experiences as a practising engineer and consultant on the adoption of DfMA technology. I also learn about the challenges faced in other parts

of the industry professionals including builders, architects and developers. We discuss DfMA issues and brainstorm ways to create awareness, embrace the technology and eventually achieve wider adoption of DfMA in the industry.

#### **What was the Taskforce's recommendation?**

A key challenge for DfMA is locking in the design before the commencement of manufacturing, then assembly. Any changes made after the components have been manufactured can be very costly. To minimise abortive work downstream, we realised that DfMA requires the input of the builder or specialist right from the design stage. So we recommended a model of early contractor involvement with a fee paid to the builder for their advice early in the building process.

#### **How has your experience in the BCA-Industry Young Leaders Programme been?**

It has been fantastic! Meeting like-minded professionals from various disciplines and discussing issues we face gives me a better understanding of challenges across the built environment

sector and provides opportunities to explore creative win-win solutions. The connections I have made may develop into opportunities to work together on future projects using DfMA technology.

Another meaningful experience was getting the chance to share with Minister Desmond Lee about challenges faced in the industry and propose suggestions pertaining to DfMA to him directly during the Young Leaders Retreat.

It is encouraging that the government is helping the industry prepare and recognise the need for such productive technologies, by mandating the use of productive technologies in selected government land sales sites and including productivity as a component in the public sector tender evaluation framework. Resources like funds and grants are also available to help us move towards productivity. With the public sector taking the lead, it paves the way for private projects to follow suit.

**You lead two sub-committees at the Institution of Engineers Singapore. What initiatives have you been involved in?**

I am Deputy Chair for the Structural Division under the infrastructure cluster. Last year, we invited an Austrian specialist to conduct a 2-day technical discussion on Cross-Laminated Timber. More recently, I organised a technical discussion and site visit to NTU's Residential Halls at Nanyang Crescent which uses Prefabricated Prefinished Volumetric Construction. By creating platforms for sharing of technical knowledge in productive technologies, I hope this will eventually lead to their widespread adoption in the industry.

Since 2014, I have also been a committee member of Women in Science, Engineering and Research (WiSER), leading the Interest and Promotion sub-committee. In this role, I hope to break the stereotypes associated with technical fields such as engineering. In 2015, we held a WiSER Summit where women industry leaders shared their journeys and experiences as leaders in traditionally male-dominated fields. We also organise activities such as



Image: Sharron Ng



(Image above) Sharron leads a team of engineers specialising in buildings and bridges. (Image below) She was the Structural Design Reviewer for The Wave at NTU, which is the first building in Southeast Asia to use Mass Engineered Timber on a large scale.

a Biodiversity Trail, a study visit to the NUS Baba House and a talk on the Art of Fermentation with assistance from National Library Board. These activities aim to expose members to light-hearted and real-world applications of science and research.

**How can more youth be encouraged to consider a career in the built environment sector?**

It would be good for more industry professionals, especially female engineers, builders and architects to step forward as role models for the next generation. Recently, I agreed to be a mentor on a television programme "Yolo Pronto! Season 2" where 3 teenagers were tasked to build a cardboard bridge and test it by walking on it over a pool. The programme was

great in incorporating technical skills with important virtues like patience, commitment, teamwork and creativity. I would certainly encourage more of such programmes!

**Any advice for aspiring youth?**

Plan early. Find a mentor who can guide and support you along the way, cultivate your interests in this area and explore what your strengths and weaknesses are. The industry is very diverse, so it is important to explore and find the area that best suits you.

*Watch the episode of Sharron in "Yolo Pronto! Season 2, Episode 7" which airs on Okto on 27 June 2017.*

*For more information about the BCA-Industry Young Leaders Programme, visit [this website](#).*

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT (URA)

### Where past and present meet

Student volunteer guides from ITE College West Tourism Club conduct monthly tours to share about the rich heritage behind well-loved Tiong Bahru estate.

Since January 2017, student volunteer guides from ITE College West Tourism Club have brought members of the public on walking tours around Tiong Bahru conservation area. Two guides, Mohamad Harris Bin Mohd Hisam and Tyler Chua, share their experiences so far.

#### What is the first thing that drew you to Tiong Bahru?

**Harris:** The opportunity to become a volunteer guide for Tiong Bahru came through my Co-Curricular Activity, which is the Tourism Club in ITE College West. When we were told about this heritage trail, I was interested because I know that Tiong Bahru is one of the oldest housing estates in Singapore so I was sure there would be a lot of untold stories to learn about and share. I was also interested to give tour commentary a try.

#### How did you prepare to be a heritage guide?

**Tyler:** In total, we went through 3 to 4 months of training. During our training, we were first given an overview of URA's conservation work, one of the areas being Tiong Bahru. We were then brought for a tour to Tiong Bahru and we managed to see places like the air raid shelter at Block 78 Moh Guan Terrace which was an eye opener for all of us. After that, we went back to the classroom and URA shared more information on Tiong Bahru's history, architecture, origins of the street names, and of course the famous food found there.

When we returned to school, we scripted the tour commentary with our group members and carried out our own practice. About one month before the launch of our first public tour, we had rehearsals with our lecturers and our URA "teachers".

#### What is a lesser-known gem about Tiong Bahru that often fascinates visitors?

**Harris:** Maybe the murals of Tiong Bahru because they were only painted last year. If you walk around the estate, you will find wall murals painted



Harris (2nd from left) and his fellow student volunteer guides at the start of a Tiong Bahru Heritage Tour.



Tyler sharing on the history of Tiong Bahru.

by Mr Yip Yew Chong (<http://yipyc.com>). Many visitors could relate to murals like "Home" because it paints the typical scene of what a home looked like in the past including items like a rattan chair and an "old school" phone, television set and wall calendar. So for many participants, it was like a time travel back to the good old days.

#### Which part of the experience do you most enjoy?

**Tyler:** Tiong Bahru is a place full of history. I enjoy the many stories behind some of the landmarks. For example, how the bird corner in Tiong Bahru was started and became an icon of Tiong Bahru; why the pre-war flats in Tiong Bahru are called "aeroplane flats"; and lastly, one of my favourites, the history behind the air raid shelter at Block 78 Moh



One of the stops of the Tiong Bahru heritage tour is the air raid shelter at 78 Guan Chuan Street.



Taking a break during a training session at Hua Bee Restaurant at 78 Moh Guan Terrace.

Guan Terrace. During our training for the tour, we had the opportunity to enter the air raid shelter. Hearing stories like how a Tiong Bahru resident gave birth in the cramped conditions of the shelter during war-time has taught me that we cannot take peace for granted.

#### What were some challenges you encountered as a guide and how did you overcome them?

**Harris:** While we were very excited and honoured to participate as heritage guides, we were nervous at the beginning as it involves managing the public. Most participants are retirees with fond memories of Tiong Bahru and know quite a bit about its rich culture. Nonetheless, they were very supportive and encouraging, even sharing valuable insights on areas that we were not aware of. Over time, we became more confident and had great fun sharing and mingling with the participants.

#### After conducting several tours here, which would you say is your favourite part of Tiong Bahru?

**Tyler:** My favourite part is the Monkey God Temple. The Monkey God brings back a lot of childhood memories because he is a character that I know from my childhood cartoons and story books. I was always fascinated by his wits and his ability to do 72 transformations. I also remember visiting a temple when I was a child, where I witnessed the *Tan Kees* (mediums) doing the flesh piercing ritual to commemorate the Monkey God's birthday. I enjoy being able to share some of my stories with participants when I conduct the tour.

Updates on heritage tours conducted by URA volunteer guides from ITE College West Tourism Club will be shared [here](#).

If you would like to volunteer as a URA guide, send an email to [ura\\_gallery@ura.gov.sg](mailto:ura_gallery@ura.gov.sg).

To share your stories about Tiong Bahru and other conservation areas or to read stories shared by others, visit [URA's conservation portal](#).



Image: ITE College West Tourism Club



Image: ITE College West Tourism Club



Image: ITE College West Tourism Club

Student volunteer guides from ITE College West Tourism Club enjoy sharing interesting stories with participants on their monthly heritage tours around Tiong Bahru.

## MEET OUR VOLUNTEER MANAGER

### Working for the great outdoors

Volunteer guide turned NParks conservation officer Mr Alan Tan shares what drives him in his work on nature conservation.



Image: Alan Tan



I enjoy sharing my experiences with my volunteers, especially on guided tours, so that we can learn from each other and become better guides.

*Alan Tan*  
*Senior Manager, Conservation (Pulau Ubin)*



#### What first motivated your interest in nature conservation work?

My love for the outdoors. It's the flora and fauna that inspires my passion in nature conservation.

#### You were a Chek Jawa volunteer guide before joining NParks as a member of the conservation team for Pulau Ubin. How did this come about?

Actually I decided to join as a Chek Jawa volunteer after a few failed attempts at trying to join the Chek Jawa Wetlands Tour. I wanted to be able to visit Chek Jawa more often and do something meaningful at the same time.

I used to teach Physical Education (PE) in schools but after I underwent a major operation on my spine, teaching PE was not advisable. Then I chanced upon this National Parks Board (NParks) job opening and I am glad to have this opportunity to help others appreciate nature and the importance of conservation. I find that outreach is quite similar to teaching as they both involve imparting knowledge and appreciation to others.

#### What are some outreach activities that you conduct, and how are volunteers involved?

For primary and secondary school students, we conduct

the Young Hearts for Conservation programme, where students get involved in hands-on activities in reforestation, coastal clean-up and invasive species management. Through this programme, they pick up insights on Singapore's biodiversity and nature conservation issues.

We also conduct other outreach activities such as patrols, guided tours, surveys, roadshows and school assembly talks. Our volunteers are involved in these various programmes, and will receive relevant training before that. To be considered an active volunteer, you need to be a team player and fulfil at least 12 hours of volunteering work with us over a span of one year.

#### A major annual event for Pulau Ubin is Pesta Ubin, which will run for 10 weeks this year. How does NParks support the event?

Pesta Ubin is a community-driven project led by nature enthusiast Ria Tan, and involves many community groups and passionate volunteers. In the lead up to Pesta Ubin, we assist with the organisation of a workshop for interested volunteers to gather and brainstorm activities to organise. NParks' Ubin team also supports most of the logistics and event venue arrangements. We do our best to ensure that the logistics are well-planned so that the community groups and volunteers are able to run their events and activities smoothly throughout this period.

**What do you enjoy about working with volunteers? Are there any challenges you face?**

I enjoy sharing my experiences with my volunteers, especially on guided tours, so that we can learn from each other and become better guides. I am happy to be able to maintain very good rapport with our volunteers. The main challenge that I face is in ensuring that there are sufficient and interesting activities for all our volunteers to get involved in.

**Please share a memorable experience you had.**

In June 2016, I learnt that one of my volunteer guides, Tan Teck Chye, had taken a fall in Japan and needed an operation there. I was worried and prayed for his recovery. Teck Chye stayed in Japan for almost 2 months before he was able to come home. Then in October when I was at HortPark, I overheard a familiar voice and I saw Teck Chye guiding a group of visitors, bubbly as ever despite his recent experience. Without a word, we reached for each other and hugged like we had not met for a long time. From Teck Chye, I learnt a lot about professionalism in guiding, the importance of doing our research, and making sure that participants have an enjoyable experience. He is an inspiration to many of us.

*Find out how you can volunteer with NParks [here](#).*



**Alan (leftmost) with volunteers during a Chek Jawa guides training session.**



**The Young Hearts for Conservation programme which Alan conducts gets students involved in hands-on activities like reforestation.**



**Alan (left) enjoys sharing and learning from other guides, such as volunteer guide Tan Teck Chye (right).**

## PROGRAMME (AVA)

### Keeping our pets in the pink of health

Vets and students volunteer at the Free Pet Health Check organised by the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority at Pet Expo 2017.



Images: Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority

(From left to right) Dr Joyce Lauw from Advanced Vetcare, Dr Eric Yeoh from Mount Pleasant (Changi) with a pet owner and Dr Yeumee Song from Amber Vet with student Wong Yu Jie. They were among the volunteers who took time over the Good Friday long weekend to help out at the Free Pet Health Check organised by AVA at Pet Expo 2017.



Image: Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority

Ngee Ann Polytechnic lecturer Dr Grace Lim (2nd from left) enjoyed a rare teaching and bonding opportunity when she volunteered at the FPHC with her students to set a good example. She hoped the students would benefit from the hands-on experience to better understand their responsibilities as veterinary technicians.

From 14 to 16 April 2017, the Agri-Food and Veterinary Authority (AVA) held a Free Pet Health Check (FPHC) at Pet Expo 2017 to provide health checks and microchipping services for pets. A total of 202 pet owners participated in the event and many expressed appreciation for the services provided.

Among the volunteers who took time over the Good Friday long weekend to help out at the FPHC were 11 licensed veterinarians and 22 students. The vets provided free clinical examination, veterinary advice, and microchipping services while the student volunteers assisted the vets in their examinations and helped with registration of the pet owners and general crowd control.

One student volunteer Shirleen Kok shared, “My passion for animals and to help others motivated me to participate in the FPHC. It was great to see smiles on the faces of people who came to the FPHC, and to see the furry ones being well taken care of by the vets.”

AVA staff were on-site to provide dog licensing services after the pet dogs had been microchipped for traceability. At the same time, pet owners received useful pointers on the importance of pet health care.

The Cat Welfare Society also partnered with AVA to raise awareness on the importance of microchipping for cats. Pet owners may choose to register their microchipped cats through the [AVA website](#).

## PROGRAMME (URA)

# 6 Highlights of Car-Free Sunday SG

Embracing a car-lite lifestyle through fun-filled activities at Car-Free Sunday SG.

### 1 A Bigger and Better Car-Free Sunday SG

During the second series of Car-Free Sunday SG, held from October 2016 to April 2017, the streets were abuzz with pedestrians, joggers, cyclists and other Personal Mobility Device (PMD) users. Participants enjoyed an extended car-free route including the Telok Ayer conservation area in addition to the Civic District and Central Business District loops, which bustled with activities for everyone.



Images: Urban Redevelopment Authority

### 2 Free Rides for Everyone

The community came on board to offer free rides around the Padang and enable less mobile participants including the elderly to join the car-lite movement. The Jolly Riders trishaw fleet powered by volunteers were donated by cycling enthusiast Mr Han Jok Kwang, expanding on an initiative by Ms Pernille Bussone as part of the Cycling Without Age movement. Another popular hit, 'Mr Lee's Bike Train', was originally conceptualised by Bishan resident Mr Lee Tang Teng for his fellow residents to ride around the neighbourhood together. Bicycle sharing companies Mobike, O Bikes and OFO Bicycle also provided free bicycle rental services for participants to enjoy.



Minister for National Development and Second Minister for Finance Lawrence Wong ferrying an elderly from SASCO Senior Citizens' Home around the Civic District during the November 2016 edition of Car-Free Sunday SG.



Mr Lee Tang Teng leading a group of riders and passengers on his 'Bike Train'.



Mass workout session at Car-Free Sunday SG.

### 3 Sports and Games for Active Living

A host of sports and games were set up around the Civic District, from the ActiveSG 'Imagination Playground' and obstacle course for children to football and netball clinics, and try-out stations for archery, speedminton, tchoukball, tennis, basketball and frisbee. Community cycling groups like LoveCycling SG, Brompton Riders@SG, Anza Cycling and Joyriders organised cycling trips along the Park Connector Network from various locations in Singapore to share the experience of cycling as a means of commuting. From February 2017, the groups also came together for 'Safe Riders Sunday' to raise awareness on safe riding in various scenarios, and a Personal Mobility Roadshow gave participants a chance to test ride various types of PMDs.

### 4 Musical Performances

Open mic performances by local talents and jazz sets by 'Luke and the Dukes' accompanied participants enjoying breakfast along Telok Ayer Street and Amoy Street. For the January 2017 edition, Hok San Lion Dance troupe and Hwa Chong Chinese Orchestra performed in celebration of the upcoming Chinese New Year. Over at the Civic District, musical performances at the National Gallery Singapore and Victoria Concert Hall delighted the crowds.



Singapore Horn Sounds serenaded participants with free musical performances at the atrium of Victoria Concert Hall.



Image: Urban Redevelopment Authority

Artist Mr Yip Yew Chong (pictured) completed a 40-metre-long mural depicting the voyage of early Hokkien immigrants on the rear wall of Thian Hock Keng Temple at Telok Ayer Street.

## 5 Heritage Appreciation

With the road closures at Telok Ayer conservation area, participants got an unobstructed experience of the rich heritage of this historic space. Volunteers from the Singapore Hokkien Huay Kuan conducted free guided tours at Thian Hock Keng Temple, one of the oldest and most important temples in Singapore's history. The Pioneer Trail by NParks brought visitors to Ann Siang Hill where they learnt about the trades and life of some of Singapore's early immigrants. A special walking tour by Singapore Heritage Society with *Sgfilmhunter* Mr Toh Jun Ping showcased sites around the downtown area that form a part of Singapore's film-making history.

## 6 Food, Glorious Food

Early risers were in for a treat as eateries along Telok Ayer Street and Amoy Street opened early for business. The March 2017 edition introduced a Breakfast Concert at Telok Ayer Square for picnickers to enjoy breakfast with accompanying musical performances by local talents. And a Farmer's Market set up by Central Singapore Community Development Council offered a variety of wholesome and affordable local and organic produce for sale.



Image: Urban Redevelopment Authority

The Farmers' Market set up at Queen Elizabeth Walk.

## About Car-Free Sunday SG

A community initiative by URA, LTA, NParks, NAC, HPB, SportSG and SLA, supported by volunteers, partners and community groups, Car-Free Sunday SG has become a popular event for the community to enjoy car-free streets. Three special editions will be held in May, July and October this year. Follow the [Car-Free Sunday SG Facebook page](#) for updates.

If you would like to join as a volunteer, send an email to [URA\\_carfreezones@ura.gov.sg](mailto:URA_carfreezones@ura.gov.sg) to find out how you can be a part of making Car-Free Sunday SG a success!

## IN THE NEWS



Image: Urban Redevelopment Authority

Minister, Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Home Affairs and National Development Desmond Lee viewed the exhibition on the Documenting Serangoon Road project.

### Youth get involved in shaping our city

Youth ideation, talent and energy took centre stage at the Urban Planning Festival 2017, organised by URA from 14 to 31 March. Officiated by Minister, Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Home Affairs and National Development Desmond Lee, this year's Festival featured a more extensive programme and aimed to help students discover the significance of their role in shaping Singapore. Student volunteers from various schools took the lead and facilitated a variety of experiential learning journeys such as workshops, talks and tours. Youth creativity was also on show as students present their perspectives of our urban environment and built heritage in various exhibitions.



Image: National Parks Board

Volunteers from local nature groups shared how they are working to conserve Singapore's precious biodiversity.

### Biodiversity Week

In commemoration of the International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May, NParks organised a suite of events and activities during [Biodiversity Week](#) from 20 to 28 May for the community to explore and encounter nature in Singapore. These included [nationwide BioBlitz](#) sessions involving nearly 3,000 participants held at 84 sites across Singapore including schools, parks and community gardens; butterfly surveys at 45 parks; habitat enhancement at 15 parks and gardens; guided walks at the Southern Ridges, Fort Canning Park and other nature areas; and concerts at the Shaw Foundation Symphony Stage, Singapore Botanic Gardens. The week-long celebration culminated in the [Festival of Biodiversity](#) at NEX shopping mall on 27 and 28 May.



HDB's Good Neighbour Award recipients recognised for going the extra mile to enrich their communities through acts of care and neighbourliness.

### Launch of Friends of Our Heartlands network at HDB Community Week 2017

Volunteers with HDB's community bonding programmes now have more opportunities to deepen their volunteering experience through the new Friends of our Heartlands network announced by Minister for National Development and Second Minister for Finance Lawrence Wong at the launch of HDB Community Week 2017 on 27 May. HDB volunteers may now contribute to the community across three tracks: "Cultivate", "Activate" and "Facilitate". The "Cultivate" track offers participation in outreach events to share good neighbourly habits and eco-living tips, the "Activate" track provides support for volunteers to initiate their own community bonding projects, and the "Facilitate" track offers opportunities for volunteers to facilitate conversations and build consensus among residents on estate renewal plans to improve day-to-day living in the community. Find out more [here](#).

## EVENTS & CONTESTS

### Pesta Ubin 2017

10 May – 16 July 2017

Pulau Ubin

Admission is free\*

#### Pesta Ubin 2017 is bigger and longer!

This year's Ubin open house will span 10 weeks, culminating in a variety of activities on Ubin Day on 16 July. Organised by the same group of people who love Ubin and wish to share more about its rustic charm, Pesta Ubin features many fun community-led activities including nature walks, art sessions, kayaking, mountain biking, birdwatching and many more!

Find activities that suit your schedule and interest [here](#).

\* The bumboat ride from Changi Point Ferry Terminal to Ubin costs \$3.00/person each way.



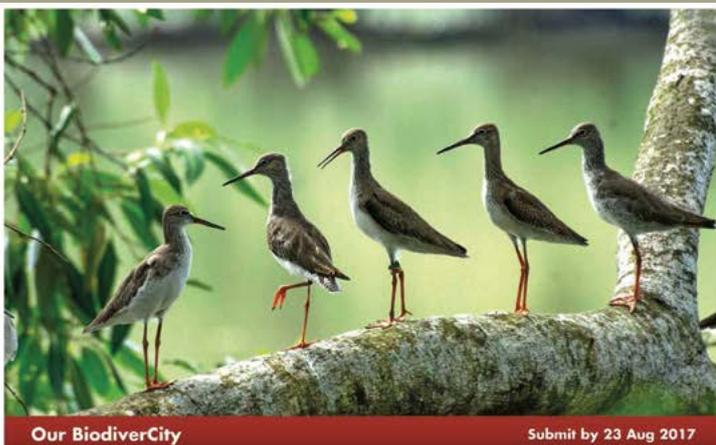
Images: Ria Tan

Pesta Ubin 2017 is packed with fun community-led activities including (clockwise from left) guided walks at Chek Jawa, kayaking at Ubin quarry and Paint a Husk art workshop.



Ubin Day 2016  
Image: National Parks Board

### Singapore Garden Photographer of the Year 2017



Our BiodiverCity

Submit by 23 Aug 2017

The 'Singapore Garden Photographer of the Year' photo competition is back! Capture and share your interpretation of the three themes through your camera lens, and show us what living in a City in a Garden is like.

Send your entries now at [www.nparks.gov.sg/SGPY](http://www.nparks.gov.sg/SGPY) for a chance to win attractive cash prizes and Nikon cameras! Winning entries that depict the activities at Fort Canning Park (under the People and Nature theme) and our underwater biodiversity (under the Our BiodiverCity theme) will receive a bonus prize.

 Attention all mobile phone users! Join our Instagram contest!  
#sgpy\_gardens • #sgpy\_people • #sgpy\_biodiverCity



Scan the QR code

Photo credits (clockwise from top left): Ng Guan Shyh, Albert Tan Chee Hiang, Sawant Abhishek Ramesh

## BiG Day Out 2017

23 June, 1 pm – 8 pm  
24 - 25 June, 11 am – 8 pm  
Bedok Town Square

Join Greco and Beco on their back-to-school adventure and embark on your own journey to live greener through interactive games and activities at BiG Day Out, an annual celebration of Singapore's efforts for a greener, more sustainable built environment!



For more MND Family News



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