

More than just a library

Now we can listen to music, browse through magazines and even sip bubble tea at the new Lifestyle Library

BY MARCO WONG

The wait is over as Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) most anticipated facility was finally unveiled on 9 July.

Costing \$1.7 million to renovate, the Lifestyle Library is the first in a tertiary institution to integrate lifestyle needs into an academic environment. Mr Peter Chen, Senior Minister of State for Education and Trade and Industry - who officially opened the library - called the renovation an apt move to counter declining reading patterns.

He said, "In the past, it never crossed our minds that we could go to the library of an academic institution to relax, drink a cup of coffee, listen to music and read a book... this will provide a conducive environment which I hope, will inspire and motivate students to explore, discover and enjoy the world of books."

The Lifestyle Library was designed to match students' modern lifestyles. At the Internet Café, students can drink their bubble tea while surfing on the high speed modem computers. Amidst the usual bookshelves, students can sit at comfortable music stations reading and listening to music simultaneously.

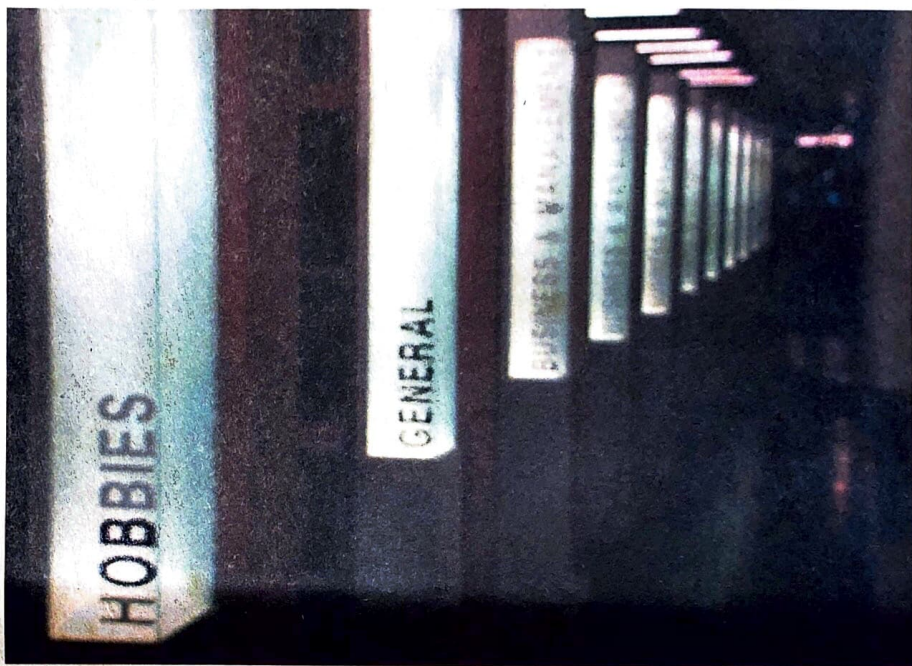
Should they seek further relaxation, there is a theatre to watch Singapore Cable Vision (SCV) broadcasts, including the Discovery Channel, ESPN and MTV Asia.

Samuel Eak, 20, a final-year Logistics Engineering and Management student said, "I definitely look forward to coming here to watch movies." He was impressed by the "zen-like" feel of the new library and felt his peers would "chill out" here more often.

At the opening ceremony, NP's Principal Mr Chia Mia Chiang, described the completion of the library as well-timed to facilitate the new School of Interdisciplinary Studies. He said the new collection of books would be geared towards supporting new interdisciplinary modules such as Media and Arts and Information and Communications.

A wider range of popular newspapers and magazines as well as more light reading such as humour, sports and comics are offered alongside audio-visual resources such as 3,200 video titles and 3,000 music CDs.

Mrs Caroline Loh, deputy librarian, explained that the library is named after its aim "to serve the lifestyle needs of students in a hip environment that will attract and appeal to them".



You want it, you got it: Costing \$1.7 million to renovate, students can now enjoy state-of-the-art facilities at the new library. (Top) The wide selection of genres at the library; (Above, from left) an example of the library's sleek minimalist architectural design; cable television; the new music and video borrowing section; new audio facilities for student use. (Right) Bubble tea and laptops: students at the Internet Café.

"Students can now visit the likes of Borders, Kinokuniya, HMV and the Internet Café all under one roof. The focus is on the lighter side of reading, to inspire students to explore, discover, read and enjoy themselves," she said.

"We invite you to come in and enrich your learning experience," said Mrs Loh, "but also, to treat the place as your second home, keeping it neat and tidy."

The opening hours of the Lifestyle Library are 8 am to 9 pm on weekdays, and 8 am to 5 pm on Saturdays.



PRESIDENTIAL VISIT

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NP MEETS WORLD

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COFFEE SAGA

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The People's President

BY SKYE TAN

Humble, pleasant, friendly – these are the common descriptions from those who met President S.R. Nathan, on his first visit in office to Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) on 24 July.

Wherever he went, the President, 77, had a ready smile and an outstretched hand. "He's really sweet," said Ms Noelene Liew, an International Liaison Officer at the visitor's center at Block 1. As the President came into the building, he went out of his way to the corner to shake hands with Ms Liew and others working on a mini laser show.

The visit – the second in a series to polytechnics and the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) headquarters – lasted around two and a half hours. According to the President's Principal Private Secretary, Mr Lim Boon Wee, the visits were initiated by President Nathan and aimed to "give him a sense of the polytechnic education system, developments and to familiarise himself".

After a presentation by NP staff led by the Principal, President Nathan proceeded to the Atrium where Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) booths were set up.

Loud cheers greeted him as he waved and smiled to the crowd while touring the booths, stopping occasionally to talk to the students there. When some students asked to take a photograph with him, the fatherly figure agreed immediately. "Of course, come come," he said.

President Nathan also stopped to chat to students using their laptops. "I was very surprised," said Yeo Wei Qi, 17, a first-year Business Information Technology student.

President Nathan visited the Film and Media Studies studios and the Technopreneurship and Design Centre before interacting and having lunch with some students and staff at the StaffHub.

"He's really very nice. I was really scared when he talked to me but he was very friendly," said Wong York Kay, 20, vice-president of the British Petroleum-NP Mentoring Scheme, who talked to the President.

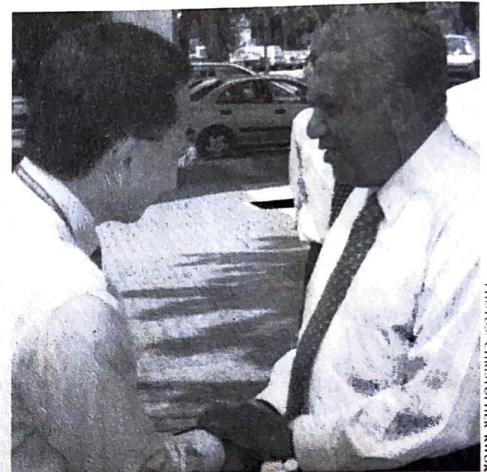
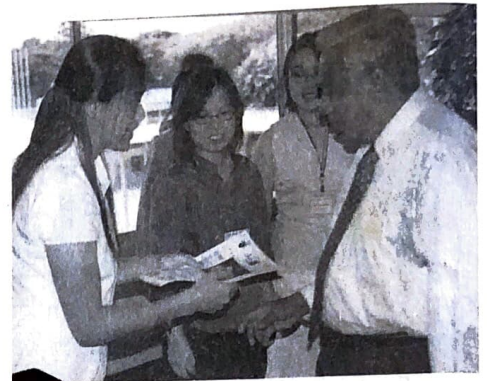
At every stop, President Nathan showed interest in the equipment and students' projects or CCA, often going up to students to ask them what they were doing,



and listening keenly.

Before leaving, President Nathan gave a short speech saying how much he enjoyed the visit and that what he saw convinced him of NP's development.

President Nathan is Singapore's second elected President and our sixth president. He is currently serving the second of his six-year term in office.



PHOTOS: CHRISTOPHER KWOK

"I'm happy to be here": President Nathan extends his warmth and affirmation to Ngee Ann. (Clockwise, from left) President Nathan delivering his closing speech at StaffHub, receiving information about the Japanese Club, and saying goodbye to Principal Chia Mia Chiang.

Stepping out of our little worlds



SKYE TAN

A lecturer's comments disturbed me greatly. His opinion that our society is generally apathetic brought me out of my own inertia.

Personally, I agree that Singaporean society is apathetic and indifferent. Like any other young idealistic student, I have dreams of changing this climate. Yet, too often, the mundane swallows me, the big picture eludes me and indifference to whatever doesn't affect me directly and instantly, claims me.

I was incensed when I read that the government has chosen not to accede to an article in an international convention to amend or remove existing laws that discriminate against women. I was saddened when I read about the depressed American mother who killed her five children. I was irritated when it seemed that our entire island was fawning over the – it seemed – arrogant Manchester United football team's presence.

But so what? In all these instances, I did nothing except to shake my head. I did voice my displeasure about Manchester United to my friends, but once again, so what? I did nothing.

The women's article affects me but because I do not experience its consequences in a more tangible way, I did not react to it in a more solid manner. There were things that I could have done – write a letter, draw up a petition and even join a like-minded organisation. Why didn't I?

It is only too easy to blame the environment I was

brought up in and the education I received, saying social conditioning made me meeker, more accepting and just less re-active. While those factors and more played a part, the fact remains that I had a choice. And I simply chose to be indifferent.

For which there is no excuse.

Singaporeans are apathetic. This is not a new topic. Newsmakers have alleged, charged and frowned over this before. In spite of this, it looks like we are not changing.

Busy lifestyles centered on work and studies are no excuse. Let us not lie. If we really start caring about something, we will, and can, make and find time. And caring does not just mean actions, it means genuinely feeling the issues. It means putting heart, time and effort into something outside our inner circle of work, studies, friends and family.

It is not for me to tell you how or what to do. If you decide to step out, I'm sure you will find your cause.

The going is not easy. Fighting against apathy in a battle that doesn't yield fast, tangible rewards needs faith – belief that we can and do make a difference keeps us away from low self-efficacy, a cause of apathy.

Life will inevitably get busier, more distracting, maybe more claustrophobic. The comfortable box we know and live in can either fall into itself – the way a star collapses inwards to become a black hole – or we can walk out, embrace a new world and try and make a difference, however small.

In this fight, just trying brings its own reward and victory. This is my consolation, and my hope.

Let us step out of our apathy.

The Ngee Ann Tribune
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Tribune

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If you have something to say, contact us and be published here in the Forum. Let your story be known.

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A Second Date with Destiny

BY CANDIDA NG



First MCM graduate to win the Lien Ying Chow Award: Yusry made good his second chance.

Passion, conviction and a second chance – these attributes define this year's winners of the top academic awards given out yearly by Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) to the most outstanding graduates.

Yusry Harfuddin, 20, an Information Technology (IT) graduate, beat top graduates from all other technology courses to win the prestigious Ngee Ann Kongsu Gold Medal. He also received the Lee Kuan Yew Award, which is given to the top three students from engineering courses.

Inspired by his Malay language teacher in primary school, Yusry developed a love for computers and programming. He had his first computer at the age of 12.

"In Secondary 4, I decided that IT would be my choice. I was confident that I would not regret it in the future," said Yusry, who is currently in National Service.

Although he had his heart set on coming to NP, his mother encouraged him to go to Raffles Junior College as he had qualified for it. However, as the academic environment did not suit him, he was quick to appeal to NP for a place in the IT course.

He duly justified this renewed opportunity by racking up an outstanding academic award (OAA), six module prizes and 20 distinctions in his three years in NP. The OAA is given out each semester to the top students in their first two years of study.

On top of his \$10,900 prize money from his two graduation prizes, Yusry also received the Gold Certificate for Achievement in Co-Curricular Activities for his active involvement in his department's activities.

He was not only chairman for special interest groups in his department but also a peer tutor and ran computer courses for

external organisations.

Yusry is also the Chief Technology Officer of All Fusion, a start-up company he launched with three NP friends. He is planning to attend Stanford University.

Kelvin Ng, 24, this year's recipient of the Lien Ying Chow Award, given to the top graduate from a non-technology course, also had an inspiring tale to share.

The first Mass Communication graduate to receive this award, Kelvin initially studied for a Diploma in Business Administration at Singapore Polytechnic for eighteen months.

But he was dismissed after failing three modules in his last semester. "I really did not like what I was doing," admitted Kelvin.

The time he spent in the police force during his National Service days offered him the much-needed opportunity to think about his future.

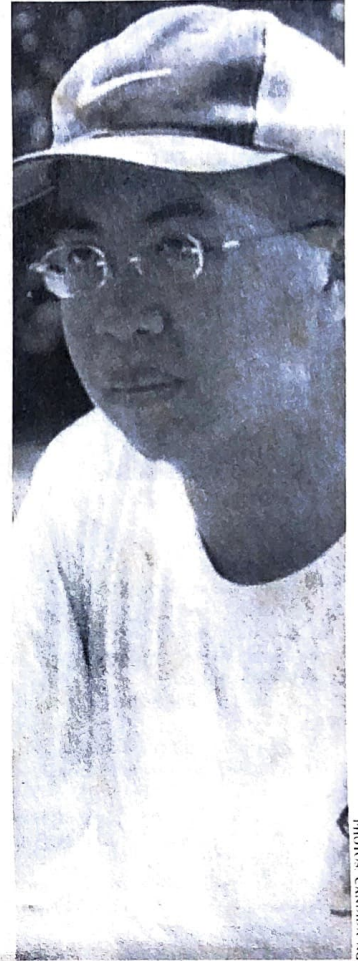
With the thought that it was his "last chance already to do something with my life", Kelvin put his best efforts into his schoolwork. It helped significantly that he was doing something that he really liked.

"Honestly, I just tried to do my best. My philosophy is to try and enjoy myself. Grades are secondary," he said.

Nevertheless, his achievements speak for themselves. Besides internships at the Business Times newspaper and in Bangkok with Inter Press Service (IPS), an international news agency, Kelvin was also a student editor of the Ngee Ann Tribune, NP's campus newspaper.

Kelvin is hoping to get a scholarship that will allow him to further his studies.

Like Yusry, Kelvin also received many departmental prizes over the years – three OAA's, six module prizes and eight distinctions. The top MCM graduate won two gold medals from MediaCorp TV and Singapore Press Holdings, among a list of subject prizes on graduating.



PHOTOS: CANDIDA NG

20 ADs: He set up his company and is planning to attend Stanford University after National Service.

NP Facilities impress Education Minister

BY S. NIRMALA

Educational facilities at Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) are among the best in the world, according to Rear Admiral (NS) Teo Chee Hean, Minister for Education.

His comments were addressed to students he met on 13 July at the StaffHub. The tour included visits at the Radio Heatwave Studio, the Centre for Aquatic Science and Technology (CAST), the Digital Audio Broadcasting Centre and the Lifestyle Library. Also present at the visit was the Senior Minister of State for Education, Mr Peter Chen.

The minister paused frequently to have informal chats with students at the computer terminals in the library's Internet Café, inquiring on how students were using the new facilities.

Throughout the visit, the minister showed an interest in the job opportunities for polytechnic students upon graduation. At CAST, he inquired about the job market for students from the School of Life Sciences and Chemical Technology (LSCT). Dr Wayne Lee Forday, acting director of LSCT, said that most students found jobs even before their final examinations and many found jobs in the research and development sectors.

New School Structure

School of Business and Accountancy

- Accountancy (ACC)
- Banking & Financial Services (BFS)
- Business Studies (BS)
- Business Information Technology (BIT)

School of Life Sciences and Chemical Technology

- Biotechnology (BIO)
- Biomedical Studies (BMS)
- Chemical Engineering (CE)
- Horticulture & Landscape Management (HLM)

School of Interdisciplinary Studies



NgeeAnn
The Polytechnic of Industry

School of Engineering

- Biomedical Engineering (BME)
- Building & Real Estate Management (BEM)
- Building Services Engineering (BSE)
- Civil & Environmental Engineering (CEE)
- Electrical Engineering (EE)
- Electronic & Computer Engineering (ECE)
- Electronic & Telecommunications Engineering (ETE)
- Engineering Informatics (EI)
- Logistics Engineering & Management (LEM)
- Marine & Offshore Technology (MOT)
- Mechanical Engineering (ME)
- Mechatronic Engineering (MTE)
- Quality Assurance Engineering (QAE)
- Ship & Marine Technology (Advanced Diploma)

School of Information and Communications Technology

- InfoComm Technology (ICT)
- Multimedia Computing (MMC)
- Data Communications and Networking (Advanced Diploma)

School of Film and Media Studies

- Film, Sound and Video (FSV)
- Mass Communication (MCM)
- Film Production (Advanced Diploma)

Early Childhood Programme

- Early Childhood Education (ECH)

Information compiled by Sharon Guan

Building a Ray of Hope

BY CANDIDA NG



No gingerbread house: Our students toiled and sweated to build a home.

For Ang Seow Yin, 18, second-year Building and Real Estate Management (BEM) student, the realisation of how well-off she was compared to her Cambodian counterparts struck her when she used mineral water to wash her hands while helping to build a Cambodian orphanage.

The villagers, she recalled, just used water from the well.

Along with 39 other Building Services Engineering (BSE), Civil and Environmental Engineering and BEM students and four lecturers, Seow Yin ventured to Cambodia in May to construct a building and a water treatment plant for the Community Outreach Service Immanuel (COSI) Orphanage.

Supported by the Singapore International Foundation, the two-week long community service trip was organised by the Ngee Ann Polytechnic Building Society. Mr Jeffrey Yang, the lecturer in charge of the project, reasoned, "When you study construction, it becomes academic, boring."

Thus, the trip offered the students not only a chance to experience life in Cambodia, but also a chance to practise the skills learnt in school.

As the COSI orphanage was not yet in operation, the students visited another orphanage so that they could picture whom they would be helping with their efforts.

The time the students spent interacting with the orphans also left a huge impact on them. "We spent time interacting with them for half a day. Even during lunch, they got quite attached. You could see after half a day the impact it made on them," said Mr Yang.

Besides spending a week to construct the building and the water treatment plant, the students also visited the infamous Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum and the Killing Fields; met Singapore's ambassador to Cambodia and talked to Singaporean businessmen on how they coped with living in a foreign land.

"You learn how to be more understanding, how the poor live and how to be more sympathetic."

- Choy Jing Horng, BSE

Many of the students, who had gone on the trip with the intention of experiencing life in a third-world country, came back humbled and more aware of how fortunate they are to live in Singapore.

The sight of numerous child beggars on the streets and the basic and simple lifestyle of the Cambodians left a lasting impression on them.

Choy Jing Horng, 18, third-year BSE student, said, "We get to see the poor. You cannot see that in Singapore. You learn how to be more understanding, how the poor live and how to be more sympathetic."

"(Work in the UK) is more slack and slow paced. In Singapore we work eight to nine hours per day. There it's only about seven and a half hours daily."

- Jay Tan Liang Tian, BD, United Kingdom

I benefited from academic senior boundaries to life is very different has such small

- Winson Zhu

Sri Lanka gets a bad reputation because when you read papers, all you hear about is the Tamil Tigers and But actually it is not like that. It has got a whole of its own.

- Winston Ng, MCM, Sri Lanka

Car-washing to Jordan

BY MUNIRAH MOHAMED

Fighting physical exhaustion, embarrassment and frustration, four Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students washed cars and raised \$1330 to finance their trip to Jordan.

Although 95 percent of the total cost was subsidised by the National Youth Achievement Award (NYAA) Council, which organised the trip, the students decided to make the trip more spiritually satisfying: by earning the remaining amount through physical labour, instead of forking out the money.

The students from Early Childhood Education (ECH), Electrical Engineering (EE) and Mass Communication (MCM), washed cars for seven hours for four days on campus during the mid-year break to raise the \$2000 needed.

The cars of the Principal and the Deputy Principal were just some of the 40-odd cars washed.

"We were all very tired. We were quite sick of washing cars. It gets quite tiring to get from one place to another place," said Eileen Lua, 19, a third-year ECH student.

To keep their spirits up, the students would sing while washing cars and that kept them from "going crazy". Songs like "I will survive" and "I'm leaving on a jet plane" helped keep team morale up, and reminded them that they would eventually reach their goal.

Charging a minimum of five dollars per car, the bulk of the amount raised came in the form of donations.

"We collected over \$170 from one person. The most embarrassing thing was to ask people for money," said Jonathan Nonis, 19, a second-year MCM student.

"It was hard to knock on the doors of the lecturers," said Eileen.

However, all their hard work paid off when they eventually made the eye-opening trip to Jordan, from 16 to 30 June.

"It's a funny place. We were expecting Rub-a-dub-dub: Getting soapy for a ticket to Jordan."

Jordan to have a conservative Arabic culture, but they were very liberal. In fact, far more liberal than Singapore. We expected the females to be covered up from head to toe, but the girls were in bikinis," recalled Desmond Chong, 20, a third-year ECH student.

Jordanian food was also a shock for the students who brought instant noodles from home in case of emergency. They were made to eat in great quantities, as it is impolite to turn away food that has been served on the table.

"Hummus, a yoghurt made from skimmed cow milk, tasted funny. It's eaten with bread. We couldn't get used to it. They don't eat spice, so we also brought chilli sauce," said Jonathan.

Jordan is one of the countries that has been visited by Singaporean youths since the NYAA cultural exchange programme was started three years ago. Australia, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland are amongst some of the countries that were visited.

Interested parties who would like to participate in future cultural exchange programmes by the NYAA may gather further information from their website at <http://www.nyaa.org> or email the students at the Ngee Ann NYAA Chapter at np_nyaa@hotmail.com.



COURTESY OF ALAN LAM

...in just a purely
[I] went out of the
...what the world is like...
...ent from Singapore which
...undaries.
...ECE, Germany

[The trip] gave me a lot of exposure to the different types of media, and it is really quite different from Singapore itself. In San Francisco, we got to see different types of film makers and it is more well rounded there as well, in terms of different types of art. And I felt that I learnt a lot from the exposure to all of this.

- Stephanie Loh Yanli, FSV, USA

Surprisingly, the people there are quite relaxed but life in general is more fast paced - people are always rushing here and there... don't know where they are rushing... Much worse than Singapore in fact.

- Eugene Thiang, ACC, Hong Kong

Overseas VTP

WORK hard enough and you might just make your way to France, Poland or Australia, just three of the nearly 20 countries in Ngee Ann Polytechnic's Overseas Vacation Training Programme (OVTP).

Run under the direction of the International Liaison Unit (ILU), students are selected by the schools to go for OVTP according to academic results and lecturers' recommendations.

OVTP aims to enable students to gain hands-on experience in their particular discipline and expose students to different cultures.

Lasting from six to eight weeks, students are sent to varied places like universities, research institutes and various companies.

According to Mr Ong Chong Kit, an international liaison officer with the ILU, there are plans to expand the programme to include countries such as Brazil and Switzerland.

Countries visited in 00/01 Semester	Number of Students
Austria	1
Australia	12
China	6
Finland	1
Germany	4
Hong Kong	10
India	3
Indonesia	1
Ireland	2
Japan	2
Netherlands	1
New Zealand	2
Poland	2
South Africa	1
Sri Lanka	1
Taiwan	2
Thailand	1
Turkey	1
United Kingdom	10
USA	20 - S. Nirmala

Students reap benefits from China Immersion Programme

BY RENE YAP

While most students were enjoying their holidays, 34 students from the School of Business and Accountancy (BA) were still attending lectures and cramming for tests, miles away in China from 25 May to 16 June.

Organised by BA, students not only visited holiday destinations, but also attended lectures and tutorials at various institutions of higher education like the Beijing University, Wuxi University and Xi An University.

According to Ms Tan Lai Wan, a lecturer at BA, the objectives of the immersion programme were to enable the students to understand the development and "rapid globalisation" of China and "learn more about the cultural aspects of China".

The China Immersion Programme (CIP) included self-defence lessons and the Singaporean visitors also learnt Chinese culture and history the hard way.

"We were tested on the Chinese culture and history on top of all the lectures and tutorials. But it was really enriching though!" said Magdalene Nguan, 19, a third-year Business Studies (BS) student.

During the trip, the Singaporean students also learnt about differences between the Singapore and Chinese education system.

"Unlike the Singapore education system, the Chinese



Learning Chinese in China: The FMS students were there to hone their Mandarin skills through three weeks of intensive training.

students actually studied philosophy! And here we are complaining when we have National Education and History lessons," said Joanne Toh, 19, a third-year BS student.

The School of Film and Media Studies (FMS) also had its first CIP during the holidays. Though both schools had similar itineraries, the 20 FMS students went for a different purpose - to hone their Mandarin speaking skills.

"The students not only managed to learn from the high language standards of the Chinese, they also experienced the Chinese way of living. It's a life experience that can never be replaced by books," said Mr Peter Yeo, the FMS lecturer who organised the trip.

Paul Miki Koh, 21, third-year FMS student agreed, "Five weeks away from the comfort of home made me learn a lot about myself."

Rugby: Glory for NP men's team, women's side suffers bizarre decision

BY MARCO WONG

It was a tale of split fortunes as the Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) men's team celebrated their win of the Oasis Touch Rugby Challenge 2001, while the women's team was left to rue a controversial decision by the referee.

The pioneer competition was held at the Padang on 29 July. The organiser, Singapore Recreation Club (SRC), had invited junior colleges and polytechnics to take part. While there were only four men's teams entered, Terence Lim, 26, SRC's Rugby Section secretary said the junior colleges, with three women's teams each, contributed to the 13 women's teams, with only one from NP.

Yet the NP women stormed through the qualifiers, consecutively trouncing the two teams from National Junior College 7-0 and 10-1, but their winning streak came to a halt in the quarter-finals.

Facing the highly rated Raffles Junior College (RJC) team 'A', NP drew first blood with a touchdown in the early half, but their celebrations were short-lived.

Team captain Radika Samy, 19, third-year Accountancy student said, "We scored a clear try. One referee allowed but another objected. He said we didn't pass the ball before the touchdown."

The RJC players argued for the foul, as the NP team appealed to the referees. But even as the crowd rallied behind NP, the final decision went against them. The match subsequently ended in a 1-1 deadlock, and RJC won through sudden death.

A disappointed Radika echoed the views of the team, "Actually we came to play for fun. But the more we played, the more we thought we could make it through. So it was quite devastating. We're still quite angry."

Things were different however for the NP men's teams. Fresh from their Institute-Varsity-Polytechnic (IVP)



This is the way we do it: NP's men's team touched their way to sweet victory.

title victory in March, they started as the favourites. Losing only one game to Singapore Polytechnic (SP) in the qualifiers, they eventually won a hard-fought 1-0 match against them in the finals.

"We slacked in the first SP game, but it didn't bother us because we were through already," said team captain Yap Boon Leong, 19, a second-year Electronic and Computer Engineering student. "Almost all our players represent an outside club, so I think we were more experienced and faster. This is not our full squad, but we came expecting to win."

Multi-award winner equates success to having fun

BY NAJIB AHMAD

For many Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students, juggling schoolwork and several Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) would seem too much to handle.

But according to Mr David Lui, director of NP's Student Development and Alumni office, "Student participation in CCA has increased from 40 percent in 1996 to 76 percent this year."

And proving that anything is possible with commitment and good time management was Melissa Ong Mae, 20, a Business Studies (BS) graduate of NP.

In her three years at NP, Melissa was the President of the BS society, the Student Director of the Ngee Ann Co-operative Society, an NP student ambassador, the co-ordinator of the NP-National Youth Achievement Award and class treasurer.

For her active involvement in CCA, Melissa won the Outstanding CCA Award, along with 11 other graduates from various courses. A presentation ceremony was held at the StaffHub on 31 July.

As top BS graduate, Melissa also received the Lee Wee Nam Gold Medal, which recognises NP students for their academic achievements. In her three years of study, she scored a staggering 20 distinctions and five As.

"Books can teach us the technical know-how of organising activities... experiencing and coping with difficulties that arise in executing plans are even more valuable," Melissa said in her speech at the awards ceremony.

Speaking to Tribune, Melissa had a piece of advice for NP students. "When you want to do something, do it all the way. And always remember to have fun."

Melissa has enrolled at the Singapore Management University to pursue a Business Management degree under a bond-free scholarship awarded to her by Cycle and Carriage, a car distributor.

Friendly Badminton Fun



All out to win: The players were undeterred by the poor court conditions.

BY WAYNE CHAN

The number of participants at the Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) Open Badminton Tournament hit the 100 mark this year, the first time since 1998.

Held from 19 to 27 July at the NP Sports Hall, the event was a feverish display of badminton skills between participants from all six schools.

Apart from the worn out slippery parquet floors and the constant draughts that blew in because of the sports hall's truss structured roof, some of the top players also had to battle backaches, fever and the aggravation of old injuries.

Last year's NP Open men's singles champion and Institute-Varsity-Polytechnic (IVP) men's doubles player,

Chye Chuan Long, 22, third-year Electronic and Telecommunication Engineering (ETE) student, attributed his second placing to fever.

"This year's just not my luck. I had fever for the past three days, but I have to say that my opponent really caught on to my game and gave me a hard time," said Chuan Long.

The men's singles champion, Junaidy Tanjung, second-year ETE student, and activity coordinator for the Badminton Club agreed that Chuan Long, who beat him last year, was not on top form this time.

Melissa Yap Hui Ling, 17, a first-year Early Childhood Education student and an IVP player for women's soccer overcame a backache aggravated by a fall during the first set of the women's single final, to win the women's singles title.

"She was really very much faster and stronger than any of us," said Lindsay Chan, 16, a first-year Banking and Finance student, about Melissa's win over her in the final. "Although sometimes she did hit too hard, which was to my advantage."

Composure and good strategy, however, was what Yeo Chua Long, a second-year Mechanical Engineering student, felt gave him dual victories in both the men's and mixed doubles events.

Lindsay and Carmen Lee, 16, first-year InfoComm Technology student, were reunited as a team for the first time since their days in Singapore Chinese Girls' Primary School.

"We had a lot of fun, because after a whole day at work, it was quite nice to play a friendly match to relax," said Carmen.

According to Vice President Jackie Lim, Carmen's sentiments tied in with NP Open's key goal - "to make friends and have fun".

Magnum Force cheers to Championship

BY THERESA WU

Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) Magnum Force won the first National Cheerleading Championship held at Bishan Sports Hall on 29 July.

The National Cheerleading Championships was organised for the first time by the Singapore Sports Council (SSC) in conjunction with the annual Fitness Fiesta.

Magnum Force's two teams clinched the top two positions, receiving a \$700 and a \$600 Nike voucher respectively.

Derek Liew Tat Onn, 19, president of Magnum Force, said that the vouchers will be spent on buying merchandise for all the members.

The cheerleading teams were judged based on cheer execution, stunt technique, dance, crowd appeal and overall performance.

According to Ms Karen Sia, secretary for the Fitness Fiesta from the SSC, Magnum Force scored the highest in cheer execution, stunt technique and crowd appeal.

Magnum Force took part in the Open Category, facing competition from schools such as Temasek Polytechnic, Nanyang Polytechnic and the Institute for Technical Education as well as teams from the public sector. Eight teams took part.

Ms Jamie Low from the SSC remarked that the team was very impressive and "managed to cheer the crowd up upon their entrance" with their performance.

Storm in a Coffee Cup

BY CANDIDA NG

Cappuccino converts and mocha maniacs in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) have had to change their main caffeine source after the abrupt closure of the campus' Coffee Club Xpress outlet.

Now replaced by Splash, students and lecturers returning in July were greeted with the sight of posters advertising products of the new outlet. Notices by the NP Consumer Co-operative Society (NP Co-op) that the Coffee Club Xpress had been closed "due to unforeseen circumstances" were also stuck on the doors.

An investigation by Tribune revealed that Beans Connection Pte Ltd, which operated NP's Coffee Club Xpress as a franchise store, had its licence with the NP Co-op terminated. According to Ms Elsie Yim, Coffee Club's franchise manager, this was because it had breached its agreement with the franchise owner, Coffee Club Pte Ltd.

Coffee Club Pte Ltd had discovered during one of its regular checks on its outlets that the NP outlet had not been using the supplied coffee beans.

This non-compliance to the company's standard operating procedures resulted in Coffee Club Pte Ltd withdrawing its franchise from Beans Connection Pte Ltd. Two days after notice was served, Coffee Club Xpress in NP closed its doors for the final time on 29 June.

"We were all caught by surprise and in a dilemma. The notice came very suddenly," said Ms Lily Wong, 50, manager of NP Co-op.

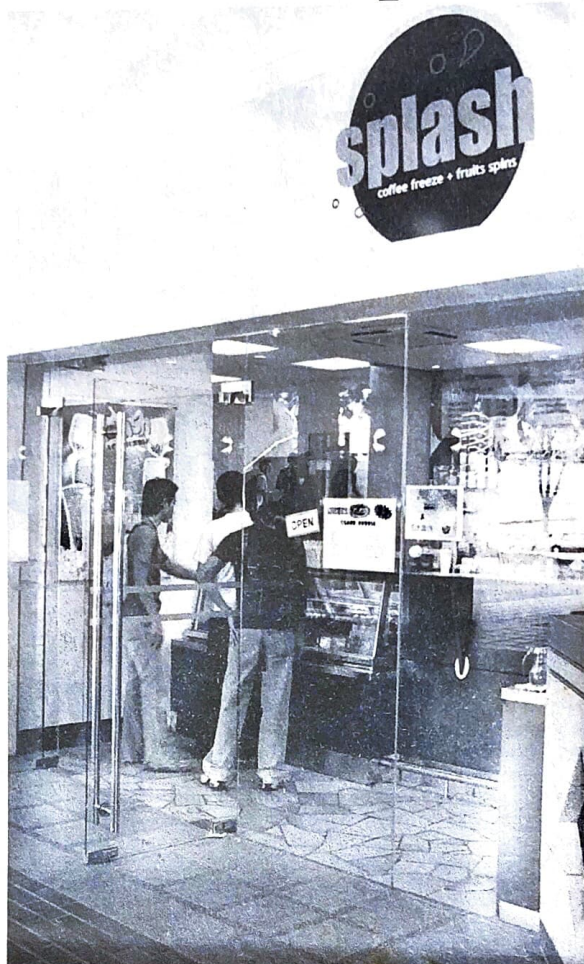
She explained that after NP Co-op, which issues licences to all vendors in NP, was told of Coffee Club Xpress' closure, it re-evaluated licensing similar coffee outlets.

"The coffee business is now declining. So we asked ourselves: Are we going to continue the same kind of products?" said Ms Wong.

After reviewing all possible candidates, including big names like Starbucks and Spinelli, the Co-op finally decided upon Caffè D'Amore, from the United States. The NP outlet, Splash, is named after one of its range of products.

Ms Wong explained that Splash was more flexible and provided a wider range of non-caffeine beverages than those offered by the bigger coffee chains. Moreover, she added that Splash's prices would be 12 percent lower than those offered by the previous Coffee Club Xpress.

Although the new outlet offers more variety and lower



12 percent lower prices and a wider range of drinks: Splash!

prices, some students still hanker for Coffee Club Xpress.

Citing its closure as being "too bad", Ang Wei Shun, 18, a third-year Mechatronic Engineering student, lamented the loss of Coffee Club Xpress, or more specifically the muffins.

Sarina Wahid, 19, first-year InfoComm Technology student, was not even aware of the new outlet initially. "I was waiting for it (Coffee Club Xpress) to reopen," she admitted.

Nevertheless, the change in tenancy meant little to others. "It will not affect me because I don't drink coffee," said Ho Mun Saau Max, 21, a third-year Electronic and Computer Engineering student.

Echoing his views was Chia Poh Choo, 17, a second-year Accountancy student. She reasoned simply, "We can always go to the canteen to buy drinks."

Make it optional?

BY CLARICE SEAH NILI

A straw poll of 25 first-year students has shown that just over half the number surveyed find the Freshman Orientation Camp (FOC) package "expensive" and "unnecessary".

Freshmen of Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) buy the compulsory package for \$15, paid out of the school fees when students first enrol.

The package this year consisted of a bag, pen, file, a pad of foolscap paper, some discount vouchers, a T-shirt and an organiser.

Amongst the 25 first-year students Tribune talked to, 14 felt that \$15 was "expensive" while the rest said that the items were worth what they paid for.

Ma Sha, 18, a first-year Mechatronic Engineering student felt the bag is useful. "[It] is big enough. It can contain a notebook computer and some books."

Some felt that the package should be made optional mainly because many students, prior to receiving the package, would already have bought stationery for themselves.

"Some people might find that it is of no usage to them," said Guo Shiyun, 17, a first-year Banking and Finance Services student.

Ronald Aung Myat Moe, 18, a first-year Electronic and Computer Engineering student, was one of five students who felt that it should be compulsory. He said, "The bag will make students feel as they are part of the Ngee Ann family."

Students also mentioned that they would like to see the package contain caps or torches that could be used at the orientation camp. Some suggested that a map of the NP campus would also come in handy.

The FOC package started back in 1983, and has been sold to the NP freshmen each year during the orientation period.

Ngee Ann's Accidental Heroes

NGEE ANN POLYTECHNIC (NP) students Clement Lye Yong Fong, 20, and Dickson Oh Di Shen, 18, third-year Biotechnology students, foiled a robbery at Fort Canning on 19 July.

The boys heard a woman scream, "We thought [the scream was] just people fooling around, maybe kids," said Dickson. "We ignored it for a while, but then it persisted, so we thought it sounded pretty serious, maybe we should take a look."

The two found a woman on the ground "with blood all over her mouth", according to Clement.

The two then ran after a man, on Fort Canning Road, which eventually led to the police detaining the suspected robber.

The boys returned a purse to the British tourist and were, at a later date, presented medals for bravery by Tanglin Division's commander, Superintendent Ng Boon Gay.

The students were modest about their involvement. "When you see something like this, you should do something, right? Otherwise, what kind of a person will you be?" said Dickson.

- Wayne Chan

Security Alert on Campus

A FEMALE staff member from the School of Life Sciences and Chemical Technology (LSCT) was physically attacked in a laboratory near Block 40.

The attack happened at night during the third week of the semester. The extent of her injuries is unknown. This is the first time such an attack has been reported on campus.

When contacted, Dr Wayne Lee Forday, acting director for LSCT said the "staff member has told [him] that she does not want to be interviewed". Dr Forday declined further comment.

However, he did say that the "Estates Department is looking into security issues and will be introducing appropriate measures".

Mr Ng Say Kiat, director of Estates and Development Office (EDO), said that "circumstances leading to this incident are unusual" and the attack seemed to be like a "pre-meditated act".

"The attacker seemed to know her activities and went to the room when the light was off," said Mr Ng.

To tighten security, EDO has circulated an advisory on basic precautions to all staff. The police have not been called in to further reinforce security on campus. Five security officers patrol the campus every night in open areas and buildings.

- Sharon Guan & Clarice Seah Nili

Fire at the Atrium

A FIRE broke out at the Atrium, near the self-service Automated machine (SAM) on 3 Aug.

"The police suspected the cigarette butts, which were thrown on a pile of rubbish, were the cause," said Mr Mui Cheng Hock, deputy director of the Estates and Development Office (EDO). Mr Mui said the area was not a dumping ground.

The fire was extinguished by EDO officers. Nobody was hurt. Police have ruled out arson.

- Windy Chan



Rising stars drop in

One after the other, celebrities arrived. Standfast, the Swedish pop duo who gave us "Carcashes", performed at The Cultural Theatre on 16 July, and Christian Wunderlich (above), who gave us the hit "So in love", graced the Heatwave studio for an interview the very next day.

The radio interview - which lasted around 20 minutes - had Justin Ang, English Music Director and Radio Heatwave presenter, grappling with German pronunciation after asking Christian for a short lesson. They also talked about Christian's debut album, *Reflections*.

While Standfast performed to close to 150 enthusiastic students, Christian Wunderlich, 22, slipped in and out of Ngee Ann Polytechnic with little fanfare. The German singer - who also acts - told Tribune later he didn't even know he was in a school. "School in Germany is horrible,

it's terrible... I really hated it all the time. I'm very happy I really done it," he said, referring to his career.

Both Christian and Standfast were in Singapore for the Radio Music Awards.

Standfast's visit to NP marked the first time they performed in a tertiary institution. The 45-minute-long showcase had Suzzanne Mosson, 29, and Patrick Tucker, 34, performing their singles, "Carcashes", "Look at me now" and "No longer".

Besides performing, they also answered questions from two girls picked by the hosts, Power 98's Jeremy Ratnam and Justin. Shuhaibah bte Suleman Syed, 16, a first-year Business Studies (BS) student was elated after the singers obliged her request for a photograph.

As Phoebe Ang, 17, first-year BS student, related, "It's the first time I have seen them, it's really exciting. The

feeling is indescribable, nobody gets to meet them up close so I'm very honoured."

"I think it's really a good effort for Radio Heatwave to be doing this. Instead of having foreigners they should bring in more local stars," said Shuhaibah.



Look at them now: Swedish pop duo Standfast graces Ngee Ann with a rousing performance.



ACADEMIC life was made less boring when singers from three countries gave a live performance on campus. Organised by Poly Stage Productions, Music Street, and Y.E.S. 93.3 FM - (from left) Jonathan Jian Te Shen from Taiwan, Juis Huang Guo Jui from Malaysia and Brenda Xing Wei from Singapore performed to a 150-strong crowd at LT 26 on 27 July. "My friends and I had a good time at the concert. I hope that there will be more concerts like this one in the future, as it makes life outside of academic studies more interesting," said Teo Kim Suah, 19, a third-year InfoComm Technology student.

Can't have paraskavedekatriaphobia to attend this party

BY RAHMALISA RAHMAT

That long, seemingly nonsensical medical term simply means a fear of Friday the 13th. The date, however, did not deter students from the School of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) from making Party 2001 happen this July.

The annual party attracted 400 students who partied the night away.

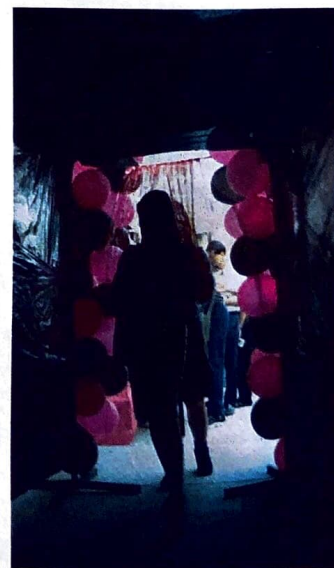
Organiser Marie Priscilla Lim, 20, said, "To us, success would be that the people who went to the party had enjoyed the party. We cannot say that it is a success in everyone's eyes, but to us, we are really happy by the turnout of the event."

Playing on the fact that it was Friday the 13th, the organisers made the entrance a dark tunnel with glow-in-the-dark skulls and eerie witch-like laughter. A few Party 2001 planning committee members attempted to scare the guests by dressing early for Halloween. One bore resemblance to Jason Voorhees from the movie, *Friday the 13th* - with a bleeding bandaged head and a hockey stick, but without the signature mask.

After a slow start to the disco, dancers started to limbo rock and body surf.

Lucky draw prizes - Swatch vouchers, Plaza Club Fitness & Spa vouchers and rolls of Kodak film - got the party-goers excited.

Held at the open space on the second level between Blocks 27 and 31, the outdoor setting gave the party a different feel from other parties. But Sharon Phang, 17, first-year Business Information Technology (BIT) student, felt that being outdoor lessened the "party atmosphere".



Tunnel through to a night of creepy fun.