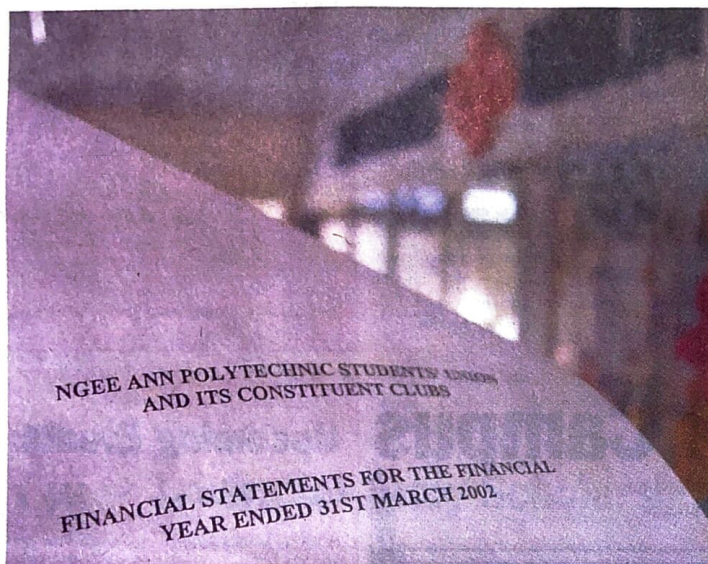


## \$1,318,958 and Growing



**IT'S ALL ABOUT THE MONEY:** Every year, you pay \$18 as a member of the NP Student Union. Do you know what your money is used for? (Picture: Timothy Fernandez)

In a Tribune exclusive, **TIMOTHY FERNANDEZ** and **ZA'ID KHAN** delve into the Ngee Ann Polytechnic Students Union's (NPSU) finances in order to find out where our annual NPSU fees go and what the NPSU does with its million-dollar surplus.

Just above \$1.3 million. This is the amount of surplus the Ngee Ann Polytechnic Students' Union (NPSU) held in its coffers at the end of financial year 2002, Tribune discovered only after great difficulty.

This has been partially accumulated from years of compulsory annual dues that all Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students pay to NPSU, as automatic members when they enrol in school.

But for the majority of NP's about 14,000 students, many who don't even realise they pay \$18 every year to NPSU, how the approximately quarter of a million dollars collected every year is spent and how big the surplus is are something of a mystery.

Some students, though, feel that this information should be readily available.

"I think it is necessary to disclose such information because [to me,] \$18 is a substantial

amount," said Bala Subramaniam, 19, a final-year Accountancy (ACC) student.

A check with the school library and the NPSU revealed that the student body had stopped sending them the annual reports and accounts since 1990, and hence the information relating to students' NPSU dues are not in the public domain.

Even repeated queries by Tribune to the office bearers of the NPSU and its supervisor Mrs Fanny Tay yielded no figures and were initially rebuffed because the numbers are, according to NPSU Vice-President Phylcia Yang, "private and confidential".

A spokesperson from the Corporate Governance Interest Group of the School of Business and Accountancy (BA), Mrs Anna Wong, explained that while the NPSU is not mandated to place such information in the library, it is good industry practice to have it made readily available to the public at all times.

If these are not placed in the library, then they could be on the Internet.

### Finance Department

The Finance officer-in-charge of the NPSU's accounts, Mr Lim Ming Siong, was the only one who would produce an NPSU financial statement.

Tribune understands, from an accountancy lecturer who interpreted the balance sheet and from Mr Lim, that \$400,000 of the surplus is put aside in a fixed deposit account.

Mr Lim added that the interest earned from this account goes into the several scholarships that the NPSU gives away every year.

He also added in his e-mail that due to the continuing economic crisis in the region, "interest rates had been relatively low", and hence NPSU is not able to increase the number of scholarships.

Looking at the NPSU's financial statement of the previous financial year, this translates into only about \$30,000 worth of annual scholarships, which is awarded to five to six students.

The statement also shows that the amount set aside for this purpose has not increased at least for two financial years.

This is despite the growing surplus, currently low interest rates and the possibly increasing need for financial support given the current economic situation.

### About the surpluses

During an earlier interview, Vice-President Phylcia, 20, a final-year Horticulture & Landscape Management student acknowledged that the NPSU had surpluses every year and that they have been accumulating.

She also added, "In case of any crisis [NPSU] may lend or give a part of our funds to other departments in the school."

She explained that such gestures are necessary, as even a student body would need to do its share in difficult times.

Although she declined to give an approximate figure of surpluses, she invited students to the NPSU's Annual General Meeting (AGM), scheduled on 18 September (please see page 3), where she promised such figures would be made public.

According to the financial report Tribune obtained, the net surplus for financial year ending 2002 was \$116,772 and the accumulated surplus carried forward from previous years exceeded \$1.3 million.

### The Director of Finance Speaks

Although the EXCO seemed stunned at the suggestion to increase the funds in surpluses set aside for scholarships, NP's Director of Finance, Mrs Ang-Choo Beng Wah revealed that in a recent meeting with the new EXCO, they had discussed plans to do so.

But she noted that, "These are the Union's funds, not the polytechnic's. We have to distinguish between the two... We advise them [the NPSU], but the decision is made by the EXCO."

On whether the NPSU's annual subscription fee will change, Mrs Ang said it was better to keep it consistent since they have not changed for a long time.

"The surpluses are due to the efforts taken by the Union to work within their normal collection," she added.

### Student Union Activities

Phylcia refused to give a detailed breakdown of how the NPSU funds are used, but consented to explain that "For the year-one students, about \$10 goes to their FOC (Freshman Orientation Convention) packages."

"CCA guidebooks also take up quite a considerable amount - \$6 to \$8, depending on the quality of the printouts."

For the sake of comparison, a 68-page full-colour A5-sized magazine that other NP students produce costs less than \$1.50 a copy.

"Organising annual events, such as the blood donation drives and other events like the Arts Festival will need money as well."

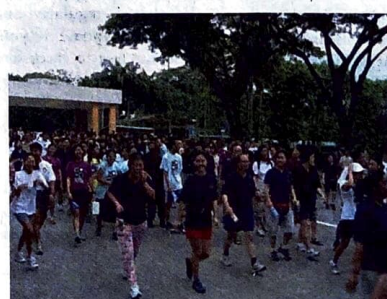
Citing the blood donation drive as another example, Phylcia said, "When students come for these events, it is totally free as the union pays for it and provides souvenirs and food, amongst other things."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



**Mooncake Festival Fiesta**

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**NP Walks Through 40 Years**

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**In Chinese: UFM Concert in NP**

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# Looking Past 40



BY MUGILAN R.  
mugilan\_tribune@mail2world.com

I am trying to be less cynical these days. 40 is an ominous number for most, it marks the onset of middle age; of greying follicles, of financial insecurities; of plain paranoia at the uncertainties that lie ahead.

It would be safe to say, however, that a certain dame has blossomed after 40 years of renewal, upgrading and rethinking: Ngee Ann Polytechnic has come a long way from being a technical college once offering only business and commerce courses to a full-fledged Polytechnic offering a quality education via a variety of courses across several disciplines, and visionary in Singapore in its efforts to engage students in interdisciplinary studies.

The prospect of a Polytechnic education was ill-considered at one point, with a Junior College (JC) education considered far superior

in most quarters. As a post-JC student myself, I admit to having had such a bias previously, not too convinced that a Polytechnic diploma course could help me much. After having enrolled in NP, I concur with my lecturers that the Polytechnic curriculum is in no way lesser than a JC or even University education.

Even so, are we perhaps lacking in the spirit that many of these institutions show?

This academic year has seen overwhelming enthusiasm and support from students for campus based events thus far, rather surprising considering how students have been accused of being unresponsive to campus events over the years. August's record-breaking paper heart folders were certainly not found wanting of enthusiasm; they raised \$48,315 in just half an hour for various children's charities, setting a world record while they were at it (see our August issue or nptribune.com for more details).

The show of support raised more than a few eyebrows; many commented that it was unprecedented, at least in recent years. I, for one, was greatly surprised at the turnout and enthusiasm of the students and found my initial cynicism replaced by genuine admiration. Kudos

to Club Alliance for rallying the school together for a good cause.

More recently, the Heritage Walk, which raised \$202,557 for the President's Challenge, also saw immense support from staff and students who massed at the Ngee Ann Kongsi building to start a 12-km trek back to NP. The colourful procession yet again hit home the fact that there are people who really feel for our institution.

Tribune got in on the act as well. We laid out a 40-foot-long congratulatory banner at the NP Orchard Road and the Convention Centre for well-wishers to sign their tributes to NP. An overwhelming response from students and staff alike saw our banner being scribbled right to the edges with signatures within two days.

But...is the school spirit very much alive? Or is the current scheme of things just due to a transient wave washing through our ranks with NP's 40th Anniversary?

Tough questions to ask of oneself. The past year has undoubtedly shown a unity in NP that has not been evident in my last two years of study. Here's hoping that we do carry this cohesion forward into the next decade and beyond. I am supposed to be less cynical, remember? **U**

Tribune is a publication by third-year print journalism students of the Diploma in Mass Communication course in Ngee Ann Polytechnic

**TRIBUNE**  
Ngee Ann Polytechnic's campus newspaper

**Advisors:** Robin Yee  
Choy Kok Kee (Design)  
Kwek Chin Ling (Chinese)

**Editors:** Candice Chan  
Melody Tan  
Mugilan Rajasegeran

**Staff Writer:** Matthew Au (Chinese)

**Designer:** Valerie Chen

**Promotions & Publicity:** Za'id Khan  
Joanne Stephen

School of Film & Media Studies  
Blk 52, #08-00, Ngee Ann Polytechnic  
535 Clementi Road  
Singapore 599489

E-mail: nptribune@hotmail.com  
Letters should include your full name, contact number and school. The editorial team reserves the right to edit all letters where necessary.

For more stories: <http://www.nptribune.com>

Tribune, 2003

# NP Blasts Worm from Campus

BY JUANITA DINO  
juanita\_tribune@mail2world.com

Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) technical support staff responded swiftly to the threat of the W32/Blaster.Worm virus. "I started panicking because I didn't know what was going on. Luckily it gave me one minute to save my work, but afterwards I couldn't use my computer at all," said Amanda Ng, 18, a second-year student from the Biotechnology course.

Fortunately for students like her and NP staff, the various schools' IT Helpdesks and the Support@CC (Communications Centre) department put up the repair patch on the school website within a day. This immunises the computers and removes the virus from those that are infected.

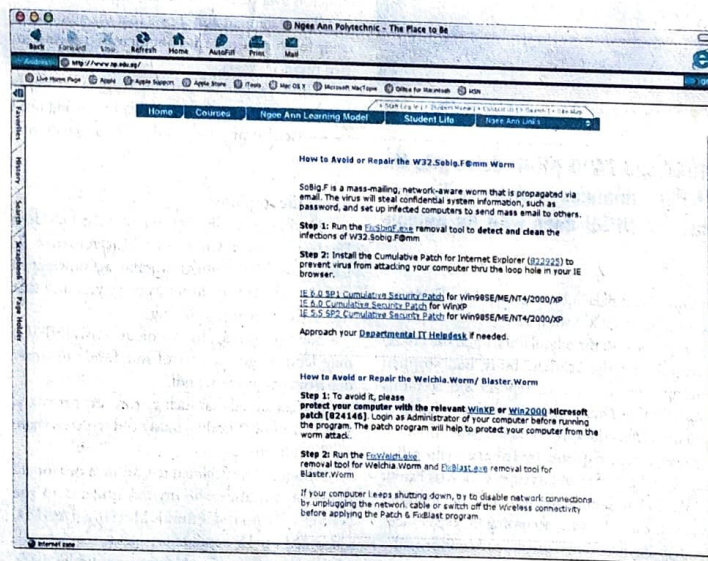
Students could download the patch because fortunately, the virus does not shut down computers immediately after users log in.

Ms Angela Wong, the Manager for Support Services, said, "We received the information regarding the virus from various sources - students, different IT Helpdesks, as well as the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA). We were able to react fast because it was a distributed effort."

Even though the virus created several disruptions on Tuesday itself, according to Ms Wong, it did not make too big an impact on campus as only approximately seven percent of students and staff computers in NP are using the Windows XP or Windows 2000 operating systems targeted by this virus.

The virus spread rapidly around the world within 24 hours of its release, causing tens of thousands of computers, especially at home, to crash in America alone.

In an attempt to prevent users from accessing the curative patch from Microsoft, the virus also engaged in a Denial of Service attack on <http://www.windowsupdate.com>.



**WARNING:** Students can check for virus alerts on the NP website. (Screenshot of <http://np.edu.sg/studenthome.html>)

According to CNN.com, despite earlier warnings and a patch released in July, many users were still unprepared for the attack. People were just not taking it seriously.

19-year-old Rachel Chia from the Biotechnology course agreed it was why she ignored the warning.

"There seems to be warnings of viruses all the time - you always get such nonsense in your email, so I just thought it was no big deal."

Possibly one benefit of the attack was that it made the computer community more aware of a more destructive virus - the W32/Sobig.A@mm worm, which leaves infected computers vulnerable to hacker attacks.

There was also a warning mirroring those on popular sites like Yahoo.com posted on the NP Student Home Page that kept students updated, and minimised the spread of the virus. **U**

## More Attacks to Come

While the danger posed by the W32/Blaster.Worm may have died down, no one should be letting down their guard. Do update your virus definitions regularly and visit Windows Update if you are a Windows user to check for critical updates that could save you a great deal of grief.

*In the event of future attacks and to receive timely prevention tips, students can check the school's website at <http://www.np.edu.sg> or go to the Support Services Centre at Block 27 #03-01 for assistance.*

## Upcoming Events:

BY HANIS HALIM  
hanis\_tribune@mail2world.com

### POD Incredible Race

3 October

Grab a friend and form a team in a match testing your mobile phone skills. Prizes include \$3,000 in cash, mobile phones and free subscriptions. Prelim rounds at the above date with finals on 11 October at hello! Orchard.

Each participant gets a \$40 goodie bag after successfully completing the prelims. Register at [www.pod.com.sg](http://www.pod.com.sg)

### The China Experience: "Tips on Venturing into the Chinese Market"

4 October

NP graduate Mr Mok Boon Poh will share his experiences, insights and practical tips on starting a business in China at 2 pm, LT 73A. Registration ends noon of 1 October.

Mr Mok is the Consul (Infocomm) Consulate General of Singapore in Shanghai as well as Country Director of the China Office of Infocomm Development of Singapore (IDA). He promotes bilateral infocomm business exchange between the two countries. For details, log on to [www2.ngeecann.com](http://www2.ngeecann.com)

### NP Strings and Choir - Asian Civilisations Museum lunchtime performance

10 October

Noon to 1 pm

The NP Strings and Choir will perform at the Asian Civilisations Museum at Empress Place. Entrance is free.

### Blood Donation Drive

15 to 17 October

10 am to 5 pm

Our Students' Union's (NPSU) final blood drive of the year hopes to build on its July rate of over 165 litres of blood collected. The three-day drive will be at the Convention Centre.

*All details accurate at press time.*



# NP Staff Go Over the Moon

BY MELISSA NG  
melissa\_tribune@mail2world.com

While students took a break after a week of tests, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) staff came out to play at its first Staff Mooncake Fiesta.

The 6 September celebrations got off to a glowing start as principal Mr Chia Mia Chiang rode on-stage in a small modified vehicle called the NP40 Magnificent Giant Lantern, created by the Mechanical Engineering division, which has since been on display at The Atrium.

The Mathematics, Science and Computing Division kicked off the afternoon's fun by presenting their satirical interpretation of the famous mooncake fable of Hou Yi and Chang Er, complete with jibes at the new CPF budget cuts and subtle mentions of NP's staff excellence.

Emcee Mr Patrick Wong, a Film & Media Studies lecturer was spot on when he told the audience they would be entertained by a "rich gathering of talents". For example, Electronic and Computer Engineering (ECE) lecturer Mr Chua Keng Boon gave a rousing rendition of "Si Wu De Yue Liang" (Moon on the 15th) in traditional Chinese costume.

Adventurous staff got their 15 minutes of fame in the Pomelo Peeling Contest. Everyone laughed at the contestants' merry antics.

The first contestant to present his pomelo, gung ho Mr Adam Ho of Student Development and Alumni Relations (SDAR), fiercely bit the skin off his pomelo and was left covered in juice.



LANTERN ON WHEELS: Mr Chia Mia Chiang, our principal, receiving a token of appreciation from Chang-er. (Picture: Melissa Ng)

Despite his best efforts, the first prize went to Mr Liew Hean Wah from Human Resource. Another pre-concert activity was the lantern-making contest, which brought out the creative streak in NP staff. Participant Mr Daniel Choo, one of the School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology's (LSCT) technical support staff, said he didn't mind not taking home the first prize.

He was most entertained by the management and LSCT staff rendition of "Singing in the Rain" while decked out in cheery yellow raincoats and carrying umbrellas.

Our own Line Dancers, a group of female staff, led the day's audience in mass dance to the tune of Latin pop song "Las Kerchup". The animated crowd of about 300 responded well to the session with lecturers, other staff, international fellows and exchange students trying not to step on each others' toes.

The International Fellows closed the event by getting the audience to rap along to their own NP Rap, which impressed line dancer, Ms Sharon Goh, lecturer from the School of Information & Communication Technology (ICT), who said approvingly, "I thought the Rap was interesting... They were really good."

Various departments also showcased their talents, such as Chinese tea-making using



MOULDING THE MOON: Ngee Ann staff try their hands at making traditional Chinese mooncakes for the mid-autumn festival. (Picture: Mugilan R.)

different leaves and homemade mooncakes by ECE. Not content with just providing the NP40 Magnificent Giant Lantern, the ME division displayed its staff and students' skill in Japanese origami and Chinese calligraphy. Other unconventional celebrations included Mandela drawings from ICT and a delicious sampling of Malay *kuih* from the Marine & Offshore Technology division. **E**

## Fewer Takers for Army Scholarship

BY MATTHEW AU  
matt\_tribune@mail2world.com



WELCOME TO THE ARMY: An alternative career prospect awaits NP students. (Picture: Mugilan R.)

Not even the bleak economic outlook and tales of seniors without jobs boosted the on-campus Army recruitment, which instead hit a low of less than 30.

It is not clear whether it is because Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) graduates have the best employment prospects, the school has traditionally seen the lowest response rate among polytechnics, with less than 50 applicants, compared to up to 100 in other schools each year.

Captain (CPT) John Pang Leong Heng, in charge of this year's drive, blamed this on poor timing. Held on 27 and 28 August, it coincided with the school's study week break.

Said CPT Pang, 31, "We didn't know that there was no school..."

He also implied that administrative support contributed to the scant turnout. "Singapore Polytechnic run advertisements on their campus plasma [televisions], and send mass emails to students to help publicise the recruitment drive... in Ngee Ann, there are just banners."

But Tribune's informal survey of 100 students from various courses showed more than 80 percent were aware of the drive, and over 70

percent of students expressed disinterest.

"I don't like Army life," explained Lim Junjie, 18, a second-year Electrical Engineering student. Echoing his sentiments, Bernard Kuok, a third-year Business Studies (BS) student said: "[The Army] is too regimented. Moreover, I don't think there's much career prospects and job diversity." Others felt the bond period is too long.

However, their views of the Army may be based on outdated stereotypes.

The Joint Polytechnic-SAF Diploma Scheme (JPSDS) which the Army offers to polytechnic students only requires males to serve a bond period of five years, which includes their two-and-a-half years' National Service (NS) obligation.

Female applicants serve a four-year bond. Successful applicants get a back payment of up to all of their tuition fees, depending on when they sign up with the Army. Other official school expenses are also reimbursed.

They will also receive \$1,000 monthly, plus a \$1,200 bonus for every semester they complete till graduation, without working for the Army during their studies.

Even with such benefits, many students remain sceptical about choosing the Army as a long-term career.

1st Sergeant (1SG) Philip Han Meng Deng, 25, knows first-hand these reservations.

The NP BS graduate signed up for the JPSDS in his second year, with some hesitation.

Nevertheless, after five years, he is glad to have joined the force.

"The Army is not a boring place, unlike what most people think. Most importantly, it is a financially stable and rewarding career," he said.

"Take your time. When you are ready for us, we will be ready for you." **E**

To find out more, log on to <http://www.mindef.gov.sg/armycareers>, or dial the Army hotline at 1800-THE ARMY (843 2769).

## \$1,318,958 and Growing

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

A major event that the NPSU organises is the Blood Donation Drive, one which less than 20 percent of the student population responded to last year.

Other activities include the orientation (FOC) programmes, flag day and an Arts Festival.

"What student union activities? I don't participate in them... I've never heard of any. I don't have time to take part anyway," said Faizal Sapadi, 19, a final-year Multimedia Computing (MMC) student.

Md Farhan bin Abdul Razak, 19, a third-year Electronics & Computer Engineering (ECE) student even wondered why they charged the annual fee, as he had not actually seen anything organised by the student union.

Even without considering the surpluses, parents had mixed opinions about whether it is reasonable to charge students \$18 a year, especially in these tough economic times.

"I feel the fees are fair to everyone, but I guess other people have their views as well," said Mdm Pah Siew Lian, 48, the mother of Desmond Chen, 19, a final-year Accountancy (ACC) student.

"Unless students attend those events, I don't see the point in giving the student union \$18 especially in these hard times," said 56-year-old Mdm Teo Meow Eng, mother of final-year Mass Communication (MCM) student, Tan Lili, 19.

The student unions in other polytechnics charge dues that range from \$15 (Nanyang Polytechnic) to \$25 (Temasek Polytechnic).

Singapore Polytechnic levies the same fee as the NPSU.

Students demand answers at AGM

The half-hour long Student Union's 22nd Annual General Meeting comprised introductory speeches by the members of the new Executive

Committee (EXCO) as well as a report of past and future projects organised by the NPSU.

Although it was on the agenda, the statement of the Union's finances was neither flashed on the overhead projector nor were printed copies given out to the attendees.

Instead, Finance Officer Mr Lim Ming Siong read aloud the figures briefly.

"My main objective of [attending] the AGM is the question and answer session. I think it should be done more often. Sometimes student leaders require a platform to express their views since we seldom get together," said Asyriawati Binte Mohd Hamzah, a final-year Early Childhood Education student and the president of the Ngee Ann Debating Club.

Asyriawati was one of more than 200 students at the meeting on 18 September.

The questions put to the newly-appointed EXCO members were mostly regarding the booking of facilities on campus and feedback on the various NPSU-organised activities during the past year.

Nearing the end of the session, the questions began to slant towards the finances of the union.

Andy Hum, a 17-year-old Mechanical Engineering freshman and a member of the Debating Club asked, "The student union requires us to pay a certain amount [which] is used to organise activities for the students."

"If I do not want to attend... isn't it better to use another alternative such as payment by admission to each activity?"

The student Union's reply was that the \$18 was a requirement of the constitution; an answer which Andy felt was "absolutely unsatisfactory. [as] it shows that they are quite unconcerned because they rely on the constitution so much..."

When Tribune asked how the NPSU intends to make full use of the surpluses accumulated over the years, neither the committee nor Mr Lim was able to comment. **E**



# Three Reasons To Cheer

BY TIMOTHY TEO  
timt\_tribune@mail2world.com

The packed stands turned a sea of bright red and yellow as close to 1,900 people enthusiastically waved bandanas of those colours in the Convention Centre on 8 August.

This was the climax of the first large-scale National Day observance ceremony in Ngee Ann Polytechnic, attended by almost equal numbers of staff and students, and organised by the school's Academic Staff Union (NPASU).

Making it an even bigger bash was the NP40 Concert, commemorating our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and Staff Excellence Award Presentation 2003, all in one day.

The audience was treated to performances by the NP Concert Band, fresh from their recent concert, and lecturers from the schools of Film & Media Studies (FMS), Business Administration (BA) and Interdisciplinary Studies (IS).

The celebrations started with the national anthem sung and pledge recited, to mark Singapore's 38<sup>th</sup> year of independence.

Scores of staff members received Staff Excellence Awards for their efforts in areas including innovation, sports and community service. (see sidebar, right)

Guest-of-Honour, Assistant Secretary-General for the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC), Mr Seng Han Thong, was impressed with the proceedings, noting: "You can have... [a] very routine celebration [and] even sing a national anthem."

"I see teachers, students, the principal [and] staff put in extra effort to make it a fun one, a meaningful one and, of course, a successful one. The key message is that we all play a role, so you see staff, teachers, students [and] even your principal dancing... It's a total involvement." Certainly everyone participated heartily in the fun mass dance, despite space constraints.




UNITED: Staff, students and supporters at NP's National Day Observance come together to celebrate our nation's birthday. (Picture: Timothy Teo)

NPASU President Mr Tong Shui Chong explained the decision to organise one mega-event: "All of us staff, management, government and also students [are] stakeholders in the polytechnic environment... It's good for solidarity, getting people together... to know that we really share in the achievement of all the excellent goals."

Apart from the fun dance, eight FMS lecturers put up an a cappella item, before getting the audience to sing along to local favourites such as "Stand Up for Singapore".

Hosts Ms Anita Kuan and Mr Robin Yee, headed the a cappella group, which NP Principal Mr Chia Mia Chiang praised as being close to professional.

Apart from enjoying the NDO performances, the principal reiterated his hope that the NP community would go home understanding the true meaning of the celebrations. 

## The Gem that Shone Through All

BY TIMOTHY FERNANDEZ  
timothyf\_tribune@mail2world.com


The civil service is known for staff who work only within their job scope. On any count, Mrs Kolandavelu Rajeswari is the exact opposite.

Taking this year's honours for the Best Go the Extra Mile (GEM) award, Mrs Rajeswari, the secretary to the Director of the School of Film & Media Studies (FMS), genuinely enjoys helping people.

She received an unprecedented 20 nominations for the award for her selflessness. Her boss Dr Victor Valbuena agreed her attitude was extraordinary.

"Her main work was supposed to be with the office of the Director, not taking care of administration and finance, not supervising other staff, not training the expatriate staff but she was doing that for 9 months," he affirmed.

Despite taking on most of the Administrative Manager's responsibilities all that time, often staying at her job until 8 pm and sacrificing her off days, Mrs Kolandavelu never lost her cool.

"That's what you're there for; when you are in admin support you basically support people. You have a certain responsibility and you cannot draw a line and say that this is my job, I will not go beyond this," she said. 

## Part-Time Advanced Dip

BY ESTHER YAP  
esther\_yap@hotmail.com

Beginning January 2004, the current year-long advanced diploma in Ship & Marine Technology offered by Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) and the University of Strathclyde will be available as a one-and-a-half-year part-time programme.

Interested parties have been calling in requesting for a part-time alternative since NP offered the course in 1997, according to Mr Chua Yian Hong.

The Deputy Director of Marine & Offshore Technology (MOT) explained that this is because "they need their income" and cannot stop work entirely for a year to attend the course.

The qualification allows graduates to get directly into the final year of the degree programme the Department of Ship & Marine Technology at the University of Strathclyde.

"There will be approximately three to four modules per semester," said Mr Chua. The modules offered include Marine Hydrodynamics, Resistance & Propulsion, and Marine Machinery & Systems.

Students will also be required to attend daytime lessons during certain periods.

"This is spread out over the three semesters so students don't have to apply for long periods of leave from work," said Mr Chua.

"It's encouraging that Ngee Ann Polytechnic is responsive to the needs of those in employment to upgrade their skills and knowledge," said Mr Charles Foo, Managing Director (Special Projects), Keppel Offshore & Marine Ltd.

He added, "This initiative to offer part-time advanced diploma in Ship & Marine Technology is definitely a right direction


forward. It reflects the academia's sensitivity to the industry's move to develop Singapore into a centre of excellence in offshore and marine technology."

"It's encouraging that Ngee Ann Polytechnic is responsive to the needs of those in employment to upgrade their skills and knowledge."

- Mr. Charles Foo,  
Managing Director (Special  
Projects), Keppel Offshore &  
Marine Ltd.

While some members of the industry, such as the Association of Singapore Marine Industries (ASMI), have been informed of the new accessibility of the course, NP "has yet to embark on a publicity campaign" Mr Chua said.

Indeed, there is very little information available on the part-time advanced diploma on the MOT course website, beyond a small pop-up window giving the length and time during which the course will be conducted. The MOT website is available at <http://np.edu.sg/-deptmot>. The division is still working out the finer details of the course, and the admission exercise will begin in late September, he added. Applicants must have at least a Diploma from any local Polytechnic in Marine, Nautical Studies, Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering (SOE), Civil or Mechanical Engineering.

Those without the SOE Diploma will be asked to attend a bridging course, and preference is given to applicants with relevant diplomas. Interested parties can contact the MOT division at 6460 6528 or call Mr Chua at 6460 6994. 



PROTECT YOUR INTERESTS: Innohub launches a guidebook on protecting students' intellectual property. (Picture: Mugilan R.)

## Knowing Your Rights

BY TIMOTHY FERNANDEZ  
timothyf\_tribune@mail2world.com

Students can learn the basics on protecting their Intellectual Property (IP) via a new guidebook published by the Innohub.

The six-page booklet, "How to Guard Your Inventions", will be distributed free to all on campus through a series of road shows as part of the Innohub's Enterprize! funding scheme.


According to the Director of Innohub, Mr Cheng Wee Sik, students only own full intellectual property rights for their creations when they participate in the Enterprize!

funding scheme.

Said Mr Cheng, "If you do a project for final year and it's your assignment, the intellectual property may not belong to you because you may have received input from your lecturer and used the polytechnic's equipment."

"In Enterprize!, you're doing something outside of your curriculum."

The guidebook, written and designed by the Innohub, was launched by Mr Lee Tuck Seng, Deputy Principal for Academic Planning (Engineering) on 16 August.

Students can also get copies from the Innohub office at Block 7. 



# Doors Open With Crowbar

BY EULALIA HAN  
eulalia\_han@hotmail.com

A single Mass Communication (MCM) student won two of the three bronze awards garnered by the School of Film & Media Studies (FMS) at this year's Student Creative Awards.

Third-year MCM student Nicholas Ye, 19, who won in the new "Ambient" category for his advertising works "White Seats" and "Red Carpets", credited his two clients, The Economist and Kotex, and the company he was freelancing for the past year for inspiring him.

Organised by the Association of Accredited Advertising Agents Singapore, the 4As, the Student Creative Awards recognises emerging creative talents in areas such as photography, films and advertising, and gives them a chance to network with industry experts.

This year's awards, or Crowbars, as they are popularly known, saw a doubling of entries from last year's 400 something to 841. The judging criteria were also more stringent as the panel of local and regional media chiefs appraised submissions according to high industry standards.



**TWIN TRIUMPHS:** Nicholas Ye, a 19-year-old final-year Mass Communication student, won double honours in the Crowbar Awards' "Ambient" category. (Picture: Mugilan R.)

With the awards' very strong emphasis on design, not the primary focus of FMS's curriculum, the school faced stiff competition

Erickson added, "Like the other schools, I think Ngee Ann has played... a big part in making this show a success with the number of entries

from design schools such as Temasek Polytechnic and Raffles La Salle International Design School for the 115 awards.

But Mr Ng Tian It, Co-Chairman of the awards, emphasised that FMS has a very good curriculum.

The Executive Creative Director of McCann

and even with the number of winning entries, which is very encouraging."

According to Ms Tracy De Rozario, Assistant Projects Manager of the 4As, Ngee Ann students are starting to show strengths in the other areas of advertising such as Ambient/Guerilla Design in addition to the areas where Ngee Ann has been consistently strong, such as Photography, Short Film & Documentary.

The documentary titled "Death for a Living" by final-year Film, Sound & Video (FSV) students won the other bronze award and was specially lauded for its story line and the reality of its characters. The film dealt with the daily rigours of a Muslim undertaker and the trials and tribulations she had to face especially when her own father had just passed away.

"[I'm] very proud to be participating in this award because it's a stepping stone... good exposure," said third-year student Anand Shiva, 20, director of the film.

Student-produced books "Doing a little Good" and the 40th Anniversary commemorative publication, "NP 40", also received special mention at the awards, held on 28 August at the Meritus Mandarin. ■

## Bossing about the Atrium

BY MARYAM ABDULLAH  
maryam\_tribune@mail2world.com

You might have mistaken about 160 students from the School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology (LSCT) for being from the School of Business & Accountancy (BA) as they turned entrepreneurs for two days.

The "Be my own BOSS" Entrepreneurship Drive held from 11 September at the Atrium featured 40 booths selling a wide range of products, from tarot readings and henna tattoos to ice-cream and hand-made costume jewellery.

Ang Jia Qin, a second-year Horticulture & Landscape Management (HLM) student hawked Alpha Gel, a product made of macaroni alphabets and a gel-like substance. "Now we know how difficult it is to be a boss," she said.

"We joined because the CCA points attracted us," added the 18-year-old. Each student stallholder received five Co-Curricular Activity (CCA) points.

For first-year Biotechnology (BIO) student Tay Zhi Ming, the bazaar allowed him and his friends to raise funds for an international non-profit organisation, Habitat for Humanity.

The 18-year-old philanthropist offered, "[The bazaar] is... a very good idea. We're from Biotech and who knows, we might set up a fish farm in the future!"

Deputy Director for LSCT, Dr Phang Chiew Hun, explained in an email interview the need to inculcate entrepreneurship skills in students: "Acquiring [such] skills will enable our students to be self-reliant when they enter the workforce." The chairperson of the organising committee added, "They will have the ability to spot and evaluate opportunities, pool resources required to establish and successfully manage new and small enterprises that will lead to the economic well-being of the individual and the society."

Students who needed financial assistance for this exercise were loaned \$100. Six groups of students applied for this to pay for goods to sell in the bazaar. According to Dr Phang, the



**BEATS A PASAR MALAM:** The participating LSCT students learnt the ins and outs of business, first-hand. (Picture: Mugilan R.)

participating students also attended a crash course on "stock purchase, negotiation with suppliers, marketing, goods display, stock tracking", among other skills.

Chua Wen Feng, 19, a third-year Information Technology (IT) student, impressed by the variety of goods, remarked, "This is better than a pasar malam."

According to Dr Phang, the bazaar was a "resounding success. Sales were high; many customers came and bought things. [The students] wanted a re-run in the next six months [and] we are considering it."

In fact, some of the participants, like first-year BIO student, Xia Xue'er, suggested that the bazaar "should be three days long instead of just two".

But she may have a chance to exercise her newfound skills again when the bazaar reopens at Junction 8, Bishan, from 27 to 28 September, 29 to 30 November and 27 to 28 December. ■

## Sumo-sized Victory

BY CHEONG EN MIN  
enmin\_tribune@mail2world.com

A team of Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students, the only Asian competitors, clinched the top spot in the Sumo Robot Competition 2003, held at Fort Mason on 27 July in San Francisco, USA.

But they were very close to losing it all because a technical glitch struck their 500g robot the night before the competition, crippling it. "We panicked, and the situation was quite worrying", recounts Tan Tian Soon, a third-year Mechatronic Engineering (MTE) student, "but we were able to fix [the robot] in the end."

Restoring the functionality of the robot took him and his three teammates- Li Hao, Tian Yu and Chye Connyee- a gruelling six hours of fretting and extensive troubleshooting. Naturally, the members were all relieved when the robot was fit to fight once again.

In the three categories they competed, they were champion and first runner-up for both the 3kg Sumo Robot Competition (Autonomous) and the 3kg Sumo Robot Competition (Remote Control) categories, and first runner-up in the Mini 500g Sumo Robot Competition (Autonomous). They knocked out rival teams from the USA and Canada, including the

reigning American champion.

"It was a good effort, and we're glad that we achieved this [feat]", said Mr Lim Beng Soon, Senior Lecturer at the Alpha Centre, an academic support centre within the School of Engineering, who led the expedition.

Some 10 MTE students, including the four who took part in the competition, had been working on their robots for over a year at the Alpha Centre, as part of their final-year projects. Having studied their competitors' prototypes from the year before, they were sure of scoring some

points at the Sumo Robot Competition, which was jointly organised by the Summer Robot Games and Expo 2003, in conjunction with the Robotics Society of America.

Participating in the competition was immensely advantageous as "it exposed the students to international competition, and [brought] out the best in them," said Mr Lim. "They had the chance to exchange ideas with other participants at the [event]."

He added that the team gained deeper insight into their studies, and got a better grasp of the fundamentals of robot technology.

Mr Lim notes that when NP first fielded a team last year, it did not even make it to the qualifying rounds. "We're proud of our success and what we've learnt, and hope to take part in the coming year's competition." ■



**CHILLI PADI FIGHTERS:** A victory in America. (Picture: NP Sumo Robotics)



# a Walk to Remember

## Walking to School

Over 900 Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) staff and students literally took a walk down memory lane to commemorate NP's 40th anniversary during a 12km-long Heritage Walk held on 13 September from Tank Road to NP.

Mr Foo See Meng, Director of Mechanical Engineering (ME) said, "I think the significance of the walk is that it gives us a spirit of *esprit de corps*, ...[and] teamwork; in Ngee Ann we... always work as a team."

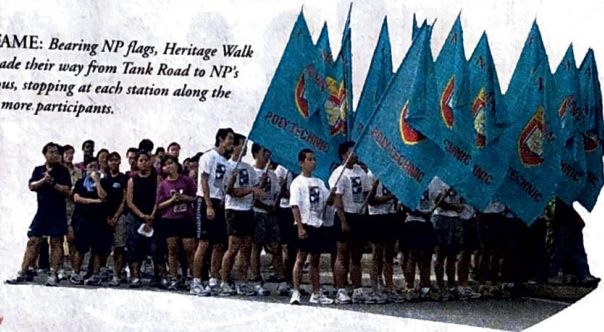
The walk flagged off at 8.20 am, following an opening ceremony graced by Mr Teo Chiang Long, President of Ngee Ann Kongsi, Mr Choo Chiau Beng, Chairman of NP Council and Mr Chia Mia Chiang, Principal of NP.

Fazuis Tahir, 19, a first-year Electrical Computer Engineering (ECE) student, said of the walk, "I heard about it from my CCA - Dragon Boat. NP is celebrating its 40th anniversary so it's fun to come along."

The walk was split into five stations - the Ngee Ann Kongsi building, Ngee Ann City, Singapore Botanic Gardens, Holland Village and Clementi Park. Dr. Lim Choo Min, 51, co-chairperson of NP40 committee said, "We invited Ngee Ann Kongsi at the very beginning to take part in this celebration because we want to remember the roots. They are [NP's] founder."

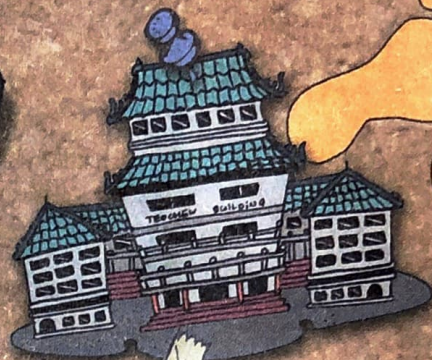
Mr Lee Tuck Seng, Deputy Principal of NP sees the school as having "40 years of achievement, success and I think ... many more glorious years in the future." - C.C.

**WALK OF FAME:** Bearing NP flags, Heritage Walk participants made their way from Tank Road to NP's Clementi campus, stopping at each station along the way to pick up more participants.



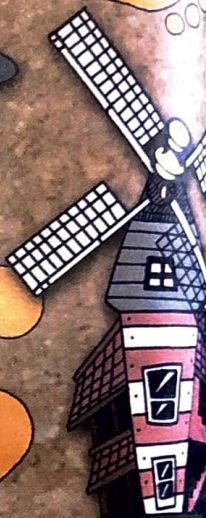
## Our Principal's NP40 Message

NP40 is about celebrating our past and setting the stage for our future. At the core of our celebrations are our students who have led and participated in the various performances and concerts; our community, which we serve through our acts of charity in the Heritage Walk; and of course, the nation, to which we pledge our loyalty during the National Day Observance. The next lap will see our staff continuing to do their best to help our students scale greater heights as we build upon our heritage and continue our work for the community and nation.



"More good years ahead! NP provided me with a great education, and I am eternally thankful to them."

- Marcus Leong, 22, broadcast journalist with SAFRA Radio, Mass Communication graduate (2001)



Illustrations by Jared Tay (email: inkdustrial@yahoo.com.sg)

## 40th Birthday Ba

As a tangible and lasting birthday gift to Ngee Ann on her turning 40, the Tribune team sought a card that saw about 800 staff, students and visitors support and regard for NP.

The 40 feet by 7 feet banner [right] was laid out at Orchard Road and the Convention Centre on 9 and encourage stakeholders to "leave their mark", which more than a day, covering the banner almost entirely. "It's a vibrant, effective and meaningful effort o



# ember

Tribune invites you to take a stroll down NP's 40-year-old memory lane with us. By **CHERYL CHIA, MARYAM ABDULLAH, JUANITA DINO, ANDREA LAU, TAN YUYUN, MELISSA NG, ZA'ID KHAN, TIMOTHY TEO, HANIS HALIM, MUGILAN RAJASEGERAN and BALRAJ S/O DEVANDRAN.**

"Every place I asked, I couldn't get a job even though I was willing to be anything. Until I came to Ngee Ann - I got a job immediately. Now I've worked here for six years, and I'll still keep going."  
- Mr Anthony Steven, 65, Cleaner

"NP is a good place for learning and teaching. Lecturers get to be in contact with creative young students and both parties learn and teach."  
- Mr Gao Hui Xing, 59, lecturer for 10 years, Marine & Offshore Technology.

## Ngee Ann Blossoms

**B**arely a month after pop Latino artist Ricky Martin, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) had an orchid named after it. The plant was cultivated by our Life Sciences & Chemical Technology (LSCT) staff as part of NP's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.



Unveiled after the Heritage Walk on 13 September at the Convention Centre, Christeara Ngee Ann [right] - a hybrid of three orchid species - is the first to be named after a tertiary institution in Singapore.

Ms Lim Soo Hoon, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Community Development and Sports, was the Guest of Honour at the unveiling event.

According to Mrs Yola Lim, a sub-committee member of NP40, the Ngee Ann Orchid "represents the synergetic alliances Ngee Ann has with many of the industry partners and institutions and the energy of the NP staff". - A.L.

## A Charitable Challenge

**D**espite the economic gloom, the Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) community had enough spare change for the less fortunate this year, exceeding its initial target of \$200,000, and collected \$202,557 in August for the President's Challenge (PC 2003).

On September 13 at the Convention Centre, NP's Principal, Mr Chia Mia Chiang, and Chairman of the NP Council, Mr Choo Chiau Beng, presented the cheque to the Chairman of the PC 2003 Steering Committee, Ms Lim Soo Hoon, in a ceremony following the Heritage Walk.

Co-organiser and co-chairman for NP's Charity Committee Dr Lim Choo Min, said, "The committee is extremely happy with the amount raised. We would like to thank the Ngee Ann community as well as our partners. Without their help I don't think we would be able to beat this target." - M.A.

"I chose NP because I like the whole emphasis on industry - the emphasis isn't only placed in theory, but on practical as well. I'll know how to handle problems that surface, and how to solve them in as quick a time, and in the most composed manner."

- Justica Phuang, first-year Chemical Engineering Student

# anner

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editorial team to bring all students together for a NP 40 celebration," said final-year Marine & Offshore Technology student Koh Shu Yong, 24.

The \$600 banner sponsored by Poster Connection was then hung up at the Convention Centre, courtesy of Estates & Management, as part of the heritage walk festivities. Director of Interdisciplinary Studies, Mrs Pee See Hua, head of the organising committee for NP 40, said the banner was a "brilliant" tribute to Ngee Ann. Mr Mui Cheng Hock, Director of Estates, plans to hang the banner at the Atrium till the end of the year, after it has served its tenure at the Convention Centre. The NP Co-Op sponsored a prize for one winner in a lucky draw held for all signatories who left their particulars with the editorial team. First-year Early Childhood Education student Esther Ho was the lucky winner of the \$40 NP Co-Op voucher. - T.Y.



# Grads' Films on TV Mobile

BY TAN YUYUN  
yuyun\_tribune@mail2world.com

The next time you're on board an SBS bus, keep a lookout for packages of six short films and five animation shorts done by former Ngee Ann students.

The TVMobile Local Talent Showcase marks the first joint project between NP's School of Film & Media Studies (FMS) and TVMobile, and has been screening award-winning works "Trishaw" and "Derman" among others, carefully chosen for their impact, value and suitability for the 1.5 million audience. The 15- to 16-minute short films are conceived and shot entirely by Film, Sound & Video students.

Bertrand Lee, director of "Trishaw" said in a press release, "I am really glad that our short films can now be screened for such a mass audience."

"Usually there are very limited opportunities for short films to be screened in cinemas or even on TV and it is just our friends, relatives, fellow students and lecturers who see it."

"This is a great opportunity to profile students' and graduates' work."

The films started their eight times a week broadcast since 29 August and can be viewed in 1,500 SBS Transit buses, ferries to Bintan resort, shopping malls and food courts till 22 October. FSV also shot a 30-second trailer depicting our

film students at work in the style of gunslinging old Westerns.

*"I am really glad that our short films can now be screened for such a mass audience... This is a great opportunity to profile students' and graduates' work."*

- Mr. Bertrand Lee,  
Director of "Trishaw"

Despite "Trishaw" being largely in Cantonese, it received "strong endorsement from the Media Development Authority (MDA)", in recognition of "the quality of student's work", said Mrs Choo Cheh Hoon, Deputy Director of the School of Film & Media Studies.

This high regard is also shared by industry, as seen by the expensive air-time and exposure being given to the works and Starhub and Giga promoting the animations online via a special voting contest, she added. [M]

Log on to <http://www.starhub.com/giga> to vote for your favourite animation and stand a chance to win one of 50 Japanese Anime video compact discs (VCD) each week till 25 October. One grand winner will walk away with a Nokia 3300 music mobile phone and a year's worth of Japanese Anime.

## Advertisement

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The magazine exists to give its target audience of 18 to 25 year olds a voice, community and engaging and relevant reading through features, style, nightlife, people, gallery, wine/dining reviews (music, movies, food events, TV and games) and sports articles written by other young adults.

<http://www.theurbanwire.com>

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SECOND PLACE AT THE TECHNOLOGICAL BATTLE: NP's representative at the NTU Computer Society-organised TechnoQuest, Codestorm, each walked away with a Sony Ericsson T68i mobile phone with Snap-On MCA-25A camera. [Picture: Caterina Poh]

# Second in TechnoQuest

BY CATERINA POH  
caterina\_tribune@mail2world.com

Three students from the School of Information & Communications Technology (ICT) showed the calibre of Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) by coming in a close second in the TechnoQuest 2003 competition on 23 August at Funan the IT Mall.

Codestorm, comprised of ICT final-year students Tan Yang Yang, 23, Ho Ming Shun, 19, and Gary Teo, 22, lost the first place by a single point, to a team from Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

The event was organised by NTU's Computer Society.

Surprised by their place in the finals, Ming Shun said, "We did badly for the programming round but we had a good website. Even though it was very rushed, we had a good concept."

In the first round, each team took turns answering questions posed by the judges. An unanswered question could be passed to the opposing team for half the points.

The third and final round was the clincher, where teams had to answer 10 questions in two minutes, from a choice of three categories: software, hardware and others.

Codestorm regretted choosing software, and thinks they could have "done better if [they] chose another category".

The team unfortunately ran into trouble with questions like "Which year did Symantec release its first anti-virus program?"

Despite this setback, they only narrowly lost out to NTU in the University, Polytechnic and Junior College Group. Hwa Chong Junior College came in third. According to the organiser's website, this competition is run to "[provide] a platform for [the] student populace of Singapore to test their technical and presentation skills and acquire knowledge of latest technologies as well as industry trends..."

NP's only representatives at this year's competition learnt of it through an email circulated by ICT.

Codestorm members each went home with a Sony Ericsson T68i mobile phone with Snap-On MCA-25A camera. Yang Yang said, "It would be more fun if more schools were involved or if there were more teams. It is a good idea that they used three different areas to see who will get into the finals."

Gary added, "I will definitely join again. It opens our eyes to standards in Singapore - it is a good gauge of national standards." [M]

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# 中国学生以善报恩

为了总统挑战慈善筹款活动2003,中国学生不遗余力,在八月份举行了一连五天的义卖会,共筹集到了\$3000多元的善款。



一名中国学生正在积极地推销商品。[照片: www.hqedu.net]

虽然数目不多,但它背后那份心意却叫人感动。

这个义卖会除了由来自中国的学生们一手包办外,也是义安理工学院(NP)有史以来第一次由海外学生所举办的大型活动。

能够有效地把义卖会搞好,这群中国同学们靠的是系统化的自我管理方式,把工作规划成会计,策划及采购,三大组别,十分专业。

但这一切若没有资金的话也不可能落实。赞助这次义卖会所有经费的善翁就是上海、广州及大连学生在NP的监护人黄怡珠小姐。本身也是中国人的黄小姐赞助这次活动除了是为了行善以外,也是想借此机会让同学们尝尝做生意的滋味。

本身是位企业家的黄小姐在数年前也曾以学生身份来我国念书。但因某些不幸的因素,结果书没念成,反倒要找工作维持生计。但凭努力和机智,她终于脱离穷境,成为今天多间公司的总裁。

因为不想后辈跟她吃一样的苦,所以黄小姐非常积极地在精神和金钱上支持及帮助中国学生。尤其是那些较聪明而又有意愿搞创业的学生,黄小姐更会花心思去帮助他们实现理想。

黄小姐说:“我不想他们兼职。我宁愿他们花多点时间念书或搞创业,希望有一天他们能自己当老板。”

但值得欣慰的是这群学生并没辜负黄小姐的一翻苦心,非常认真地对待这份计划。而这一切黄小姐都看在眼里。

“上回中国的沙斯疫情还处于高峰期时,几位同学为了采购物品,不顾生命危险飞往中国。我非常欣赏他们这种干劲”,黄小姐说道。

当然我们也不能忘记这群中国学生们这么劳心劳力可不只是为了营商经验。筹集到的款项可是完全用来帮助一些不幸的新加坡社群。

负责这次义卖会的上海学生李强受访时就说:“我们在新加坡念了几年书,有部分的校费津贴是来自新加坡纳税人的钱。在这儿也得到了不少的照顾。做点事回报新加坡社会也是应该的。”

‘总统挑战’是纳丹总统于2000年向国人发出的慈善挑战,目的是激励国人多行善,帮助一些比较不幸的国人。受益机构包括智障人协会,老人院,以及各种不同的社区援助服务。任何团体皆能以创新的方式参与。圣马格列女子学校和英华学校的‘爱心巴士’就是总统挑战的参与方法之一。

## 校园大排档歌迷喜变狂

在电视上常能看到一些台湾综艺节目播出某某签唱会或歌友会等活动时fans的激情场面。但在较为保守的新加坡,这种画面却让人难以想像。不过如果你认为本地fans‘热’不起来的话,你就大错特错了。

不久前由义安理工学院(NP)的义威电台和UFM1003联手举办的‘校园大排档’就证明了狮城fans对偶像的疯狂绝不输给海外朋友。只不过在表示热情的当儿,有些fans不受控制地涌向偶像,使现场多度陷入混乱状态;但幸好没发生任何状况。虽然这是过火了一点儿,但这也是因为来宾范范-范玮琪,和Anson胡彦斌的魅力实在太难抵挡了呀!

这次范范和Anson来新主要是参与联合早报的‘Z-POP现在NOW翻天’露天华文流行音乐演

唱会。忙于通告的他们可是在百忙中抽空与NP的fans做独家秀的哦!

当天最兴奋的fans想必就是排在人龙最前端的上海朋友了。他们可是在工作人员还未到场前已在人口处等候多时了。

Tribune后来才发现原来他们苦苦等待的就是有‘上海胡兵’之美称的人气新天王-Anson胡彦斌。

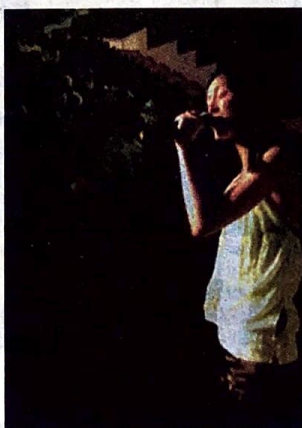
而凭Anson出场时讲堂里的尖叫声推断。当天五百余名观众中少说也有半数以上是因他慕名而来的。

虽然年仅18,Anson的台风却已有巨星般的稳健。以一首‘和尚’带动全场的气氛,接着又以与郑中基合唱的抒情歌曲‘第一次’舒缓歌迷的情绪,Anson在展现自己歌艺的同时也让观众听出了耳油。

‘校’另一来宾-范范可更不得了了。她竟然有歌迷从台湾专程

来新,为她打气。

这位范范的超级fans就是29岁的台北人许力引先生。从事金融业的他可是特地请假,自掏腰包来新追看范范的哦!



歌迷正陶醉在范范的甜美歌声中。[照片: Mugilan RJ]

许先生在接受Tribune访问时说道:“我很喜欢范范,因为她和其他艺人不一样,一点架子都没有。[范范]人很随和,给人的感觉很nice。”

范范有海外fans越洋捧场,本地fans也不甘示弱,以最热烈的歌声和欢腾伴随范范唱出两首耳熟能详的‘我们可不可以不勇敢’和‘启程’。

因为时间有限,范范原本只能唱两首歌,但在fans的苦苦哀求下,最后还是热情难拒,encore了一首‘我们之间的事’,为‘校园大排档’完美收档。

## 有话说!

有话不怕说,就怕没得说! Tribune将从这期起附设这栏‘有话说’,让您对我们提出的时事话题提供意见和看法。

这一期的话题:政府宣布调整公积金制度;消费税也将如期增加至5%。生活费有增无减,经济前景却依然暗淡。你对于毕业后的将来有何看法?

“毕业后就去当兵咯,男孩子有什么好选择的。至于将来要做什么,会在服役期间才去想,因为我相信在当兵期间会不断成熟,所以现在想将来的事会有点不切实际。现在最重要是把书念好,因为在新加坡如果没学历的话,有再棒的打算也只是纸上谈兵。”

张志伟,18岁,一年级海事离岛科技系

“自己暂时还没什么打算,但父母已经打算要把我送去国外念大学,出国几年看一看世界也是好的,因为我想在我毕业后,经济应该还没复苏。多念几年书起码是给自己一个保障。”

林思敏,17岁,一年级电子工程系

“我想创业,其实创业并不须要花上大笔资金。三、四千就够了。看到有那么多的企业家成功,自己也想搏一搏。反正自己还年轻,想尝试一些不同的东西。成功的话当然好,但如果失败就当是个经验咯。我不想一辈子都替人打工。”

陈伟杰,18岁,二年级生物医疗科学系

“很害怕会找不到工作,家里又不是很有钱,所以应该不会读大学。我不想毕业后还向父母要钱,所以现在花钱的时候会顾虑到其它的开支。总之能省则省,未雨绸缪。”

陈慧玲,18岁,二年级化学工程系

“我相信过几年后经济会慢慢好转起来。希望当我服完兵役后,市场对会计师的需求也会随着经济的复苏而相对增加。但是我应该是会在服完兵役后读多几年书才出来找工做。”

杨伟忠,20岁,三年级会计系

“没想过,走一步看一步咯。将来的事没人知道,也没可能控制。我相信船到桥头自然直。到真的需要找工作的时候,什么事情都应该能解决。”

许益荣,19岁,三年级大众传媒系

“无论在世界的哪一个地方,经济情况都和新加坡一样。但起码我们还算安定。我希望政府会带领我们走出这段阴霾的时期。他们实施的各种新政策,我觉得都做的很好。我对新加坡的将来绝对有信心。”

王佩雯,19岁,三年级电子电脑工程系

本页的设计及报道全由学生记者区相廉构思及著作。如有任何意见或建议,请电邮至: matt\_tribune@mail2world.com

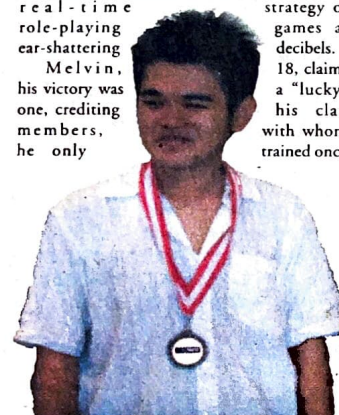


# Three NP Gamers

BY VALERIE CHEN  
valerie\_tribune@mail2world.com

**M**elvin Ooi, a first-year Electrical Computer Engineering student, beat hundreds of others to win the third prize in the Counter Strike category of the World Cyber Games (WCG) 2003.

WCG 2003 was held at Takashimaya from 28 to 31 August. According to worldcybergames.com, the WCG "is the world's first and greatest game culture festival, designed to build a E-sports ideology". Gamers are united with others around the world in this international competition, which offered first-person shooters, real-time role-playing ear-shattering games at decibels. Melvin, 18, claims a "lucky" his clan with whom trained once before that competition for his win.



He said, "My team was formed by friends all living around the west side. Every Saturday after midnight, we'll meet at some *roti prata* shop, and we'd just chat - not so much to strategise... but it was more like a bonding session for us. We didn't even think of getting into the top eight, but somehow our communication which was very good, helped us through."

"I've broken up with my girlfriends because I couldn't spread my time appropriately among my studies, my girlfriend and gaming. I bet if I had used the time that I used to game [to study], I'd probably get straight As," he adds laughingly.

However, he advises, "Just have fun, and at the same time, study hard."

Although they did not win, Calvin Leong, a first-year Information Technology student and Eric Lim, a third-year student from Info-Communication Technology were two other Ngee Ann Polytechnic students sucked in to the world of cybergaming.

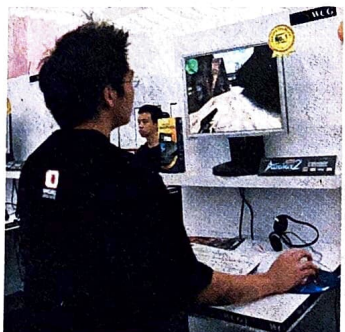
Calvin, who started playing Counter Strike (CS) four years ago, plays online every day, but he says, "when it comes to exams or tests, I will put aside my gaming to study." He cheekily adds,



"other than that, I don't study. But I do pay attention during lectures."

The 17-year-old continues, "I don't normally game with my schoolmates as they don't play on competitive levels, unlike me. CS is an addiction for me. For those who game and study at the same time too, just don't play until you fail your exams."

Eric picked up CS the same time as Calvin. The 19-year-old plays online three or four times a week, and does LAN (network) gaming with his clan on weekends. His is an example of what happens when a hobby becomes an obsession. "I play more than I study. I've failed one or two core modules."



# NP: Exposing Students to Art

BY MELISSA CHIN  
menvourneen\_cherish@hotmail.com

**F**rom a Swedish film festival in January, Pops 'N' Classics concert in July, staff and student concert in August (see pg 4) to the Rondeau XVII a classical music performance put by the NP concert band in December, Ngee Ann Polytechnic's arts calendar has been jam-packed this year.

It's all been part of a campus Arts Festival to create a greater awareness of the arts among students, organised in tandem with the NP 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

Freshmen were exposed from the start, through the June orientation camp's Convention Nite, where 15 clubs, including the Cultural Activities & Social Service Clubs (CASSC) and the Song Composing Club, put up a joint performance. Jasmine Koh, 19, a third-year Biotechnology (Bio) student said, "I... was once again reminded of the success our school's CCAs have achieved."

It wasn't all about sitting in a theatre or concert hall either. In August, the library held a mini exhibition on Singapore's Visual and Performing arts and a showcase for "Forbidden City, Portrait of an Empress", The Singapore Repertory Theatre's (SRT) Musical of the Year.

Mrs Leo-Lim Bee Ang, the SRT's Reference Manager who coordinated the display, says the posters were put up to highlight a popular performing art, "The idea was to cultivate students' interests in the arts and entice them to

read more books on the local arts scene."

Ms Charlotte Nors, 37, Venue & Marketing Manager of The SRT is very appreciative of NP for having the display. "Students are our future audience, and we have to educate them. Now they're at the right age to be exposed to the arts scene and many of them are very enthusiastic. They deserve quality theatre... but at prices that are affordable."

Said Amy Teo, 20, a second-year Accountancy (ACC) student, "I like the idea of an art's fair; it's great that the school is willing to plan such activities. We see the school in a different light."

You might have thought that there would be performer and audience fatigue, but Guo Shuhua, treasurer of the NP Concert Band is anything but tired. "We have practices twice a week, three hours each time to prepare us... Because music is my life, I'm willing to put in time and effort for the band," said the third-year Business IT student.

Audiences are not complaining either because turnout at the events, many of which were sold-out performances at the cavernous Convention Centre, was excellent. Speaking about the staff and student concert, which drew about 1,800 staff and students, co-chairperson of the arts fest committee, Mdm Ong-Long Fung, Director of the School of Business & Accountancy (BA) observed that, "Normally it would be difficult to get an audience for school performances, but you could see the convention centre was filled."



**OPEN YOUR MIND TO THE ARTS:** The NP Library held a special exhibition featuring Singapore's Visual and Performing Arts, with a showcase on "Forbidden City: Portrait of an Empress", a Dick Lee-composed musical starring Kit Chan and Hossan Leong. [Picture: Mugilan R.]

# Virtuoso X 2003: A Winning Performance

BY TAN YUYUN  
yuyun\_tribune@mail2world.com

**N**gee Ann Polytechnic Strings Ensemble Club (NP STRINGS) presented a range of classical to flamenco voices before about 400 in Lecture Theatre 26 during their annual performance, Virtuoso X.

The performance was held on 13 September. Perfidia, a short flamenco piece for three guitar parts arranged by NP STRINGS instructor Mr Alex Abishganaden, was a good example of allowing guitars "different colors in its voices" as Andres Segovia, creator of the classical guitar genre, once described.

The music, which started out expressively strong ended with a loud slick strum.

Eight violin players, including students from Singapore Polytechnic, proved their strength when they played all five technically demanding movements in the vibrant classical piece "Eine Kleine Natchtmusik". An average player can only play two movements.

But it was alumni violinist

Tyng Tyng and her fiancé Dominick, who played the piano, accompanied by a piper, who stole the limelight with their 15-minute medley of familiar tunes such as "Hymn & Hope of Glory". Said audience member, Koh Yuanshan, 19, a second-year student from Yishun Junior College, who plays the guitar, "The



**A CLASSIC SUCCESS:** NP STRINGS won applause for its beautiful performance. [Picture: Courtesy NP STRINGS]

songs played were marvellous! I love them a lot," she smiled.

The concert ended with "Romance De Amour", which accompanied an entertaining and hilarious skit. The audience clapped and whistled at the comical antics of the archetypal couple portrayed in the act. Said Ang Chewling, 19, a Temasek Polytechnic student, "The concert was excellent, especially the encore item."

The encore item was "El Campachero", a combination of guitar, violin, piano and dance performances, which brought some of the audience to their feet, clapping to the beats.

Alumnus See Hoe Pin, 22, said, "This is probably one of the best concerts NP STRINGS has done! Way to go!" he laughed.



# Where's the Field of Our Dreams?

BY ZA'ID KHAN  
zaid\_tribune@mail2world.com

**N**gee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) sports fields are in a woeful condition, putting users at risk of injuries say its sports staff and the students who make daily use of the facilities.

"The main field [at the sports complex] is not... ideal," said Mr Rohan bin Ismail one of the several lecturers of the Sports and Wellness programmes. He also has seven CCA clubs under his charge, including soccer.

"Quite a [large] portion of the field is not even. [Hence] the chances of getting minor injuries such as ankle sprains are much greater." To avert injury, "At the moment during trainings we try to make use of the left side of the field," he said.

Among serious players he said, "We have had one or two quite serious [injuries] where the knees of the players [were affected], needing long recovery periods."

## Overused

Mr Rohan believes the overuse of the main field is behind its deterioration. Under the Sports and Wellness programme, there are 10 sessions of football a week on the main field. That's before you figure in Institute-Varsity Polytechnic (IVP) team trainings, Ngee Ann Football Club (NPFC) trainings and the current NP-league

soccer tournament that will end only in October.

Explained Mr Rohan: "Because it's used for more than three sessions a day, there's not really much time to allow the grass to grow, to do seeding, to roll and to spike the field. It just doesn't allow much time for the field itself to recuperate."

NP's facilities officer, Ms Magalochi Sellaperumal said, "It became bad after last December. It was a mistake on the contractors' part, they tried to roll the field when it was wet, and had to cut grooves into the field when the ground was still wet and soft."

According to her, the school has been doing its best to try and level it since then, but this is difficult when the field is in use every day.

"The contractors do most of their work during the term breaks, but even then the weather plays a big part. No work can be done if there is heavy rain," she added.

Major repairs were made during June and planned for November, but she said there are no plans to re-lay or change the base of the field in the near future.

However, as part of regular maintenance, Tribune was told that the grounds-men do their rounds every day and the grass is trimmed every two months.

## Grass is greener on the other side

One suggestion is that fields at Block 50 and the Kismis grounds be made more playable, so



**NIGHTMARE ON KISMIS FIELD:** The dry, cracked earth at Kismis Field will turn into wet, sticky mud on rainy days making it almost impossible for a proper game of soccer among friends.  
[Picture: Mugilan R.]

the main field can be given a break.

Said Mr Rohan, "Having more playable fields would mean that during times where we need to do maintenance, we can shift the games to other venues."

Unfortunately, Ms Lachmi says this will not work, as the other fields were not designed for professional play in the first place. According to her, the two fields "are there for students to have kick-a-rounds" only.

Because of the lack of a proper drainage system and the location of the fields, it would be difficult to turn them into proper 11-a-side football pitches.

## Do we just give up?

Whatever the difficulties faced, something needs to be done to improve the situation, especially with so many groups needing the field for training and recreation.

While the current \$50,000 set aside for field maintenance seems substantial, NP cannot afford to lose out to institutions such as Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) who are already using artificial turf technology.

More needs to be done if we are to keep up with the rising standards of sports facilities in Singapore, especially as sports excellence becomes a focus of the government's attentions. ■

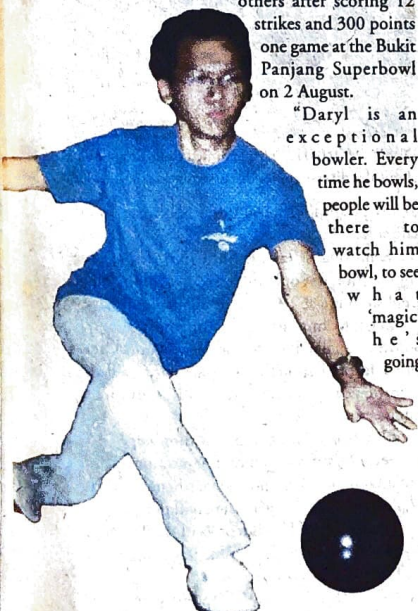
## Perfect Left-handed Game

BY LISA TAN  
lisatw@singnet.com.sg

**A** left-handed student bowled spectators and the competition over with a perfect game at the recent Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) Bowling - 8-pin tap for the second year.

Third-year Business Information Technology (BIT) student, Daryl Cheong Cheng beat 39 others after scoring 12 strikes and 300 points one game at the Bukit Panjang Superbowl on 2 August.

"Daryl is an exceptional bowler. Every time he bowls, people will be there to watch him bowl, to see what 'magic' he's going



to do on the lanes again," exclaimed fellow NP Bowling Club member Eugene Fu Tian Hui, 18, second-year Mechanical Engineering student.

The competition was termed "fun bowl"

because a strike only required one to fell eight pins, instead of the usual 10.

"It felt weird because I expected people to score the same," said the 19-year-old winner of the coveted High Game Award.

"[Nonetheless]," he continued, "It'll be a moment I'll never forget."

Left-handed bowlers are considered privileged because the left side of the bowling lane is usually in better condition due to less frequent use.

This may seem unfair to regular right-handed bowlers, but Daryl has a strong counter-argument to that accusation.

"I feel we're on equal ground," Daryl said, adding that it is the tougher mental, rather than physical, conditioning that makes a better player.

Hence, Daryl reads in order to beef up his mental muscle.

He claims he has learnt to focus better from the book "Mind Gym: An Athlete's Guide to Inner Excellence".

Learnt from a book or not, Daryl's ability to ignore pressure from opponents is very apparent to his peers.

"He never rushes his shot," said Geoffrey Chua Wei En, 19, Bowling Club President and third-year Multimedia Computing Student.

Still, Daryl's friends have criticised his unconventional style, a combination of the usual hook and spin, for hindering his progress.

Daryl, on the other hand, counters that his risk-taking has paid off.

Despite his interest in bowling since Primary One, Daryl only became serious recently.

He is determined to secure a place on the school team, which came in third at the Institute-Varsity Polytechnic (IVP) competition this year and hopes to represent Singapore in the future.

"He has the passion and the drive. He should do very well," complimented his team coach, Mr Richard Koh. ■

## Should CCAs Charge for Services?

BY TIMOTHY TEO  
tint\_tribune@mail2world.com

**C**an you actually be paid for doing co-curricular activity (CCA) work?

Yes, if you're a member of Ngee Ann's Poly Stage Production society (PSP). In fact, the club that offers audio and lighting services for staged events and rehearsals charges \$3 an hour for each working member.

The fee, introduced in 1992, three years after the society was formed, was raised from \$2 in 1995.

Many have argued that the club has gone from a CCA club to being a profit seeking society.

However, PSP club president, Ng Pei Jing, 19, a final-year Quality Management & Engineering (QME) student, refuted accusations that her club was "calculative and money-faced".

Pei Jing explained that her seniors used to be taken for granted by clubs and societies before they began charging.

She said: "People [used to] employ their services from 8am to... near midnight. These people... commanded them instead of asking them politely. Our seniors were treated as free labour!"

"Through this charging system, we can prevent clubs [and] societies from misusing our services or taking us for granted."

The funds collected by PSP have gone directly towards upgrading its current equipment, to better serve others, she said.

PSP declined to release its average annual income or upgrading expenses.

Former NP concert band president, Janice Ang, 19, agrees that there is nothing wrong with clubs raising revenue. The final-year Chemical Engineering (CE) student said: "Times are bad, the school is slashing a lot on budgets so CCA clubs should start charging small amounts of money."

*"People [used to] employ their services from 8am to near midnight. These people... commanded them instead of asking them politely. Our seniors were treated as free labour."*

- Ng Pei Jing,  
PSP Club President

Janice said that criticism would be justified only if funds were used for anything other than "club activities and maintenance of equipment".

Radio Heatwave's Chinese Promo and Publicity Manager, Zheng Xiuhui, 20, felt that the objection was more a matter of whether the service warranted the fee levied.

The final-year Mass Communication (MCM) student pointed out that during the station's concert featuring Hu Yan Bin and Fan Wei Qi at Lecture Theatre 22, PSP was paid to help out with a spotlight but almost pulled out of the concert at the eleventh hour.

This would have been difficult to explain to its clients.

Eventually, the matter was resolved and PSP helped out at the concert for three hours as previously agreed.







Despite her displeasure at PSP's "pre-concert stunt", she showed that there was no lasting harm done to their working relationship by saying: "We [Radio Heatwave] look forward to working with them again."

Other suggestions regarding the charges included one made by Amir Sapra, 19, a third-year Accountancy (ACC) student: "The charge implemented is acceptable, but it would be better if a student subsidy is approved or allowed." ■



# Pre-IVP Round Up: Will NP Do Well?

With many sports-centred Co-Curricular Activities (CCAs) about to go into battle with their Institute-Varsity-Polytechnic (IVPs) competitions lined up from September to December, TIMOTHY TEO speaks to some of the major groups to see how ready they are. For more, log on to <http://www.nptribune.com>.

CCAs	Tennis	Chinese Chess	Soccer	Badminton	Netball	Swimming
						
IVP Dates	8 Sep to 8 Oct	22 Sep onwards	22 Sep to 17	29 Sep Onwards	9 Sep to 23 Sep	Heats: 27 Sep Finals: 4 Oct
Last Year's Position	5th	5th	5th	5th	4th	5th
This Year's Target	2nd	3rd	3rd	3rd	3rd	
Club President's Quote	<p><u>Club President Wilson Tay, 19, final-year ECE student:</u></p> <p>"I would like to think of ourselves all-rounded. Suresh and Michael can play singles and doubles quite convincingly."</p>	<p><u>Club President Ng Hoe Soon, 19, final-year CEE student:</u></p> <p>"We are now two times better than last year... We have a great player whereas other schools' best players have graduated and left."</p>	<p><u>Club President Mohamed Hanafi, 20, final-year ECE student:</u></p> <p>"Our strength is our speed."</p>	<p><u>Club President Ong Beng Wei, 19, final-year ME student:</u></p> <p>"We want to win [over] all the polytechnics and ITEs and get third place."</p>	<p><u>Club President Wong Peck Hong, 19, final-year BFS student:</u></p> <p>"Winning is [important], but, it's the process and the bonds that we build that are important."</p>	<p><u>Club President Thelma Tibbsling, 19, final-year BME student:</u></p> <p>"Our confidence level is quite high, because we do have some national players in the squad."</p>

[Picture: Mugilan R.]

## Mixed Netball: The Men Do Get It

BY TIMOTHY TEO  
timteo\_tribune@mail2world.com

Despite drenching conditions and lack of practice, Team Glendy scored a 5-4 victory over team Ball in the finals of Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) second mixed netball on 16 August at the NP Sports Complex.

The victors had only practised five minutes before participating in the tournament.

Despite the lack of preparation, the team was confident about winning.

Captain Glen Chua, a Banking & Financial Services (BFS) student, said of his team's triumph, "[Our] confidence level was good, we weren't too pressured. We were just taking it like any other normal game."

Commending his team's performance and attitude in the game, Glen added: "It was a very equal group effort, because you have substitutes and all, but we always made sure that everybody played."

He added, "We won this [tournament] because of great team effort. The team was very cohesive."

The players include Eileen Ho, Wen Wei Zhen,

Ho Kah Yan, Ho Li Ming, Eldon Heng, all fellow second-year students of the School of Business & Accountancy (BA).


Final-year Mass Communication student and spectator Tan Lili, 19, said: "Mixed netball is a good idea because it proves that netball isn't just a game for girls. It was a really exciting match."

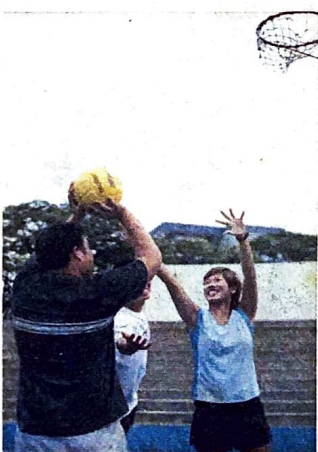
Bad weather notwithstanding, NP netball president, Wong Peck Hong, 19, a final-year BFS student, complimented the management of this year's tournament, which she considered to be a significant improvement over last year.

Peck Hong was proud to see the men putting in as much effort as the ladies in their team.

She said: "Ever since we started the mixed league, more guys [got] to know about our sport and

how the game is being played. [From what] I can see, some of the guys actually came back to play again [in] this [year's tournament], and they think that our sport is quite fun. The only thing is that NP doesn't have a guys team."

Last year's mixed street netball champion was the Student Sports Council (SSC). 



IT'S A BOY THING: In NP, boys are welcome in the traditionally female sport of netball too. [Picture: Mugilan R.]

## A War of Words: NP Students Speak Up

BY MARYAM ABDULLAH  
maryam\_tribune@mail2world.com

The Verbal War II, a public speaking competition organised by Ngee Ann Polytechnic's Debating Club (NPDC), drew a bigger, bolder crowd this year with 70 participants, more than double the 30 during the first instalment in 2001.

Apart from the turnout, participants surprised judges, who were NPDC members past and present, with current and well-researched topics ranging from an evaluation of the Singapore government to homosexuality in art.

Champion Md Shaifulbahri Bin Sawaluddin, 17, applauded the participants' freedom to choose topics outside the list compiled by the NPDC.

He said, "Sometimes the topic might be a bit sensitive, but at the end of the day, it's up to the society and the individual to accept it."

The first-year Early Childhood Education student continued, "I believe youths should have a say in things that are going on nowadays."

Some of the trivial topics, ranging from "Gossips are evil" to "My favourite reality show", were apparently intended to stimulate creativity among participants.

The organiser for this year's Verbal War was Siti Natasha Bte Md Najid, 19, a final-year student from the School of Business and Accountancy (BA).

Natasha said she felt that the Verbal War contestants' topics were on the whole interesting, mature and creative.

NPDC's former president continued, "There were no controversial topics that would [give rise]



DEEP THOUGHTS: Muhammed Fadhil is all smiles about the diverse topics discussed. [Picture: Mugilan R.]

to any political or racial unrest. So we're on the safe side."

Semi-finalist Huang Shi Chun, 17, felt the competition not only increased her command of English, but also her current affairs knowledge.

"I got to know new facts from the speeches... Somebody talked about the New World Order and I learned something from that," said the second-year Electronic and Computer Engineering student.

Others left with better self-knowledge.

Second-year Mechanical Engineering finalist, Paula Gongora, 19, said she was better "able to gauge myself... among all the good debaters".

Final-year ECH student NPDC President, Asyriawati Bte Mohd Hamzah, 19, was impressed with the standards of debating.

She said, "I thought they [participants] were going to stutter, or shake, but they were so calm and eloquent! I think it's thanks to that IS [Inter-Disciplinary Studies] module, Oral Communication." 