

FAST FOOD IN NP?

Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) might soon become the third polytechnic in Singapore to incorporate a fast food outlet. By BRENDAN ANG.

Fast food on campus might finally be a reality in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) by the start of the new semester in December. Currently, two out of five polytechnics in Singapore have fast food outlets.

Speaking to Tribune, Mr Tan Hang Cheong, 50, Deputy Principal, said there are two reasons why fast food is being considered in campus at this time, despite the suggestion being shot down many times on health grounds.

"Recently when we talked to students a lot more at feedback sessions, quite a lot of students expressed that we should have a fast food [outlet] here," said Mr Tan.

Another reason is that the Net restaurant's lease at Block 15 is up for renewal then. The site will be ideal for NP's first fast food outlet, "because it's like a student hub," said Mr Tan. He added that the Atrium is already very congested.

However Mr Mui Cheng Hock, 52, Director of Estate Management Office (EM) stressed that the option of having a fast food outlet is still open and depends on students' responses.

"There are people against fast food," said Mr Mui, declining to reveal who they were.

One or many?

"If it is just only fast food then it doesn't make sense... maybe one fast food vendor and then to make us feel less guilty, maybe someone who can offer salad or sandwiches... and a couple [of] other local food [choices]," said Mr Tan.

There may even be a few fast food outlets in NP "if the vendors think that there is enough business in the campus". Singapore Polytechnic has KFC, Pizza Hut and McDonald's, catering to its 16,000 students. NP has 14,000 students.

However, Mr Tan said these are just ideas.

Although an in-campus outlet may seem profitable due to its captive market, operators must consider not only the lower pricing but the long term breaks that add up to about four months of lower sales activity.

Which fast food outlet?

"What do the students want?" asked Mr Tan, "Do they prefer another McDonald's now that there is a McDonald's nearby?"

During the first two weeks of this semester, the EM polled over 1,000 NP students for their ranking of McDonald's, Burger King, KFC, Pizza Hut and Long John Silver's. They could also state a fast food operator not included.

Tendering will then be open to the top few choices, said Mr Mui, based both on the poll and the general student consensus that EM is looking forward to obtain. But while students' responses are noted, other factors have to be considered.

The fast food outlet should preferably have experience operating in a school environment and must be able to offer a "good deal" to our students, said Mr Tan.

In fact, the biggest consideration will be



the price offered by the fast food outlet to NP students, said Mr Mui.

This is why the eventual choice might not necessarily be a *halal* one. For example, Subway®, which some students named in the poll for supposedly being a healthier alternative is not certified as *halal*, according to the Majlis Ugama Islam Singapura (MUIS) website.

Mr Mui said that while the ideal outlet will be *halal*, this is one of many food options in NP. "In every of the four canteens in NP, there is at least one *halal* food stall. Canteen one has two."

Health concerns

With the recent documentary *Super Size Me* making waves, the spotlight has been on the nutritional value of fast food [see sidebar]. Mr Mui said it will not influence NP's decision since, unlike cigarettes, it is debatable if fast food is really harmful to health.

"Our students are old enough to decide and it's not like there is no other choice [of food] on campus," said Mr Tan.

The Price is right?

One big draw of an in-campus fast food outlet is the discounted pricing of its food [see sidebar for comparison].

"If they want to come to [our] campus, they must offer the same as what they offer to the other polytechnics," said Mr Tan.

"Our students' interest is our prime concern," said Mr Mui, adding that pricing will depend on "how we 'twist' them [suppliers]".

As an example of how EM has worked for best prices for NP students, he cited how a canned drink that costs 60 cents to 70 cents from school vending machines costs about \$1 in machines outside.

Food fight?

Mr Mui feels a fast food outlet will encourage "healthy competition" and because "our campus is quite isolated from anywhere else... students will probably eat here [in campus]".

Canteen operators and stall vendors are taking a wait-and-see approach.

"Our base clientele are students, so the entry of fast food outlets in NP is sure to affect us," said Ms Susan Low, operator of Canteen one, speaking in Mandarin. Depending on the location of the fast food outlet, she estimates a 30 percent to 50 percent drop in business.

While steps will be taken to win back customers, Ms Low added, "we cannot afford to cut prices... we aren't making much as it is". Because of Canteen one's ever-changing menu and large variety, "We are confident of our future, therefore we are not overreacting to this possibility yet," she said.

What we think

"It's actually quite a good thing as we can buy it at a cheaper price... It could also be an attraction to secondary school students after graduation to come to NP," said Lim Wei Bin, 18, a second-year student from the School of Business & Accountancy (BA), who also liked

Poly vs. public prices

McDonald's at Singapore Polytechnic & Nanyang Polytechnic
\$4.30 vs. \$5.60 - \$5.90 U.P. for:

- Filet-O-Fish™ Meal
- Big Mac™ Meal
- McNuggets™ Meal
- McChicken™ Meal

KFC at Singapore Polytechnic:

- 2-piece chicken meal - \$5.40 vs. \$6.45 U.P.
- Zinger meal - \$4.95 vs. \$5.70 - \$5.90 U.P.

Calorie count

Fast Food vs. Local Fare
(Calorie comparison given by www.nutrition.com.sg based on average)

McDonald's

- McChicken™ vs. Chicken Rice 510 kcal vs. 618 kcal
- Filet-O-Fish™ vs. Fish Porridge 470 kcal vs. 258 kcal
- 6-pc Chicken Nuggets™ vs. 3pc Chicken Curry Puffs 290 kcal vs. 213 kcal

KFC

- 1-pc Chicken Original Recipe vs. Barbequed Chicken Wing 178 kcal vs. 154 kcal
- Zinger vs. Curry Chicken 680 kcal vs. 450 kcal

having more available seating in canteens during lunch hours.

Shaun Lim, 19, a final-year student from Electronic & Computer Engineering (ECE), feels that health is not an issue as long as students are able to "moderate [their] intake of fast food".

Staff in NP, while more mobile, also tend to be on campus the entire year, unlike students, and could be the outlet's main customer base for nearly four months in a year.

"It is not a bad idea...because sometimes if we want something quick then we can go to the fast food outlet," said Ms Lua Seu Kea, in her 40s, a lecturer from the School of Engineering, glad for "more choices for the students and staff". ■

Online Poll

Get a chance to influence the decision on fast food in NP. Log on to <http://www.nptribune.com> and be heard through our poll.

IN CAMPUS

PG 3

TEACHING 'HUB'
RUNNING

IN CAMPUS

PG 4

SAFE BY 30 MINUTES

IN CHINESE

PG 9

DJ DANNY YEO
TURNS LECTURER

Are We Ready for Change?



BY BRENDAN ANG
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With a new academic year comes a renewed commitment to bring you more into the picture at Tribune.

You'll see more profiles of people on campus, starting with a staff member who shares her key chain collection with the school, and a collection of first-year responses with regards to how they feel towards Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), a totally new and, at times, exhilarating environment for them.

This internal change, however, is dwarfed by bigger ones, some already implemented

and others in the pipeline, affecting us in NP and our nation at large.

For the first time, our academic term has started its backward shift towards its opening in April in 2006, cutting down the holidays for students and lecturers as well as the new cohort of year one students. While I have heard my fair share of mumblings and grumblings, let's save it for when we have to spend the Christmas break in school.

The long-awaited Ngee Ann Alumni Clubhouse is now partially open and with it a new café. Opportunities abound for students and graduates to network. With universities Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and Singapore Management University (SMU) bickering over who produces the best, most employable graduates, this strengthening of bonds will help establish the strength of our diplomas, already proven by how well NP students and graduates have been doing, whether locally, in Africa or Portugal.

With the opening of Galileo café and the possibility of fast food in campus by the end of the year, we will probably see a change in the eating habits of our students. The latter is a hard-

won victory after years of fighting for fast food. Will we use our voices to get us the best operator? Will this be the start of super-sized health problems? We at Tribune want your feedback on this, as well as the type of fast food outlet you would like since it will affect your life on campus [drop us an email at nptribune@yahoo.com.sg or poll online at www.nptribune.com].

Speaking of changes, even on a national level, we've just cheered the shortening of our National Service (NS) liability to two years, a great boon for many of NP's pre-NS students. We also are watching as major political leadership changes are made in Singapore on 12 August, accompanied by cabinet changes. While it's easy to dismiss this and concentrate on school or the latest computer game, these are the kinds of changes that will affect our lives and Tribune wants to hear your take on it.

A few hours before writing this editorial, my laptop took an unplanned trip around Singapore in the boot of a taxi.

30 minutes later, it found its way home to me via the very honest taxi driver. The dishonest taxi driver stereotype? I am ready for this change. Thank you, Mr Taxi Uncle! ☺

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

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Tribune, 2004

First Impressions of NP

BY BRENDAN ANG
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It's about a month into the new semester and Tribune finds out what year ones feel about life (or the lack of it) in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP). ☐

"I think it is quite fun so far...it's hard to decide because there are a lot of choices for Co-Curricular Activities (CCA)... quite shocking because I had the perception that poly is quite slack... but it is not."

Kwan Jie Ling, 17, Aerospace Technology (AT)

"I feel that NP is a place with great potential for people with diverse talents to excel...it's also a place of new and old."

Gerald Goh Zhiyong, 20, Mass Communication (MCM)

"I don't like lectures starting at 8 am. It is too early! During lunch hours the canteen is too packed."

Nurul Ain, 17, Banking & Financial Services (BFS)

"I find that the blocks are very far apart and that we should have a feeder service in campus... Lecturers and tutors are not very strict...which is good."

Kerrie Ng Hui Shan, 17, Business Studies (BS)

"Environment is quiet and the classrooms are great especially the new Block 56... the food is nice and reasonably priced."

Alex Moey Jun Ming, 17, Logistics Engineering & Management (LEN)

"I like the environment... facilities and food is quite good except for canteen four... lecturers are not so strict and are understanding."

Joe Lee, 17, Engineering Informatics (EI)

"I think the curriculum is manageable... the labs are quite good and the food is not bad either."

Samuel Gan Tien Wei, 18, Electrical Engineering (EE)

"It is a very good environment compared to the other polytechnics, people here are very friendly especially the seniors... so far my teachers have been very hyper and it suits the class and way we communicate with them."

Liu Lijia, 17, Accountancy (ACC)

"Overall [the] study environment is not bad... there is a lot of freedom...but [we] need to be self-disciplined."

Jephthah Ang, 17, Business Studies (BS)

NPSU Fun Fair in the Name of Charity

BY REHANA JAFIR
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At press time, two weeks before the Ngee Ann Polytechnic Students' Union (NPSU) Fun Fair in aid of the Assisi Home and Hospice, the organisers were more than \$60,000 short of the \$100,000 they hoped to raise.

This after the Human Resource department had bought \$8,500 worth of tickets. HR Deputy Director Ms Ivy Liu said they were mostly given to staff for the NP Family Day.

Preparations for the event on 6 and 7 August in NP began in April. But the event's timing close to NP's Common Assessment (CA) week and the three-day long National Day weekend when many families head out of Singapore was expected to result in a poor turnout.

Mariam Osman, 20, a final-year Business Student (BS), who lives in nearby Jurong, said she will not bother to stop by the fun fair. "I already have a limited break time on Friday... Then at the end of the day we would all be rushing home or heading out... it is quite a waste of time to stop by school on Saturday just for a fun fair."

However, Sear Hock Rong, 19, the Organising Chairman of the Fun Fair, was optimistic the event would be popular with the student body and public. The event was held in conjunction with the National Day Observance Ceremony on 6 August and NP Family Day, the following day.

Hock Rong, a second-year Early Childhood Education (ECH) student said, "We decided to start the event on a Friday so our own students can enjoy the fair themselves for a day before the

larger crowd turns up on Saturday. It's also a way for those NP students who have never been part of any big event to help out."

On top of 25 students going out every weekend since early July to sell tickets in HDB estates, over 200 NP students have signed up and volunteered to run the Fun Fair, which was expected to draw 20,000 people. Hock Rong said at least four park rides, 12 games stalls, five novelty game stalls, and various food and drink stalls would be at the fair.

As an initiative to get all of NP involved in the event, each booth was to be manned by students from various academic societies, such as the Life Sciences & Chemical Technology Society and the Film & Media Studies Society.

Other NP bodies said to participate included NP Taekwondo Club and Magnum Force. Another draw was the live band performances, including one by Press Play, which rocked NP's Musik Art festival last year.

The fun fair ran from 11 am to 6.30 pm on both days, with an option to extend to 7 pm depending on the crowd's demand. It was to be held at the Admin Field (facing Block 1) with some activities slated to take place in the Atrium as well. One highlight at the fun fair was to have been the 'Dunking Machine', where students and lecturers sign up their friends to be placed under the dunking machine.

Books of \$5 coupons for the event were on sale at the NPSU office (Blk 73, #02-10), through NP student volunteers or by contacting Hock Rong at searhockrong@pacific.net.sg. ☐

Teaching 'Hub' and Running

BY TEO KAI WUN
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The newly constructed Teaching Hub, which replaces the dilapidated Block 56, Lecture Theatres 64, 65 and 66, has opened to students and lecturers.

About 15 percent of the entire Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) student population can be housed in the 41 classrooms here, which can accommodate up to 50 students each, while the 13 tutorial rooms each can take up to 25 students. The pastel J-shaped building is also furnished with 14 study benches located on the ground floor.

The centrally-located hub creates a welcoming and conducive learning environment for students with its spacious classrooms and closer proximity to other amenities like the library, the Atrium, Canteen one and the Convention Centre. The Centre for Professional Development, which offers a spectrum of affordable courses for professional upgrading and re-training, is also housed in the building.

The hub also increases accessibility as there will be a sheltered walkway leading from it to Block 27 and LT 63. An underground passageway is also in the works and will connect Canteen one to the Convention Centre.

According to Mr Mui Cheng Hock, 52, Director of Estate Management Office (EM), \$11 million was pumped in to construct the Teaching Hub, underground passage and eco-pond.

The eco-pond, which is expected to be ready by early September, will "flow through the building [the Teaching Hub]," said Mr Teo Hin Chuan, 50, manager of development for the project.

Flanked by trees and connected to the building by three bridges, the pond is designed to be "as natural as possible," said Mr Mui. He said



BLOCK 56: Down with the old, up with the new. (Picture: Leonard Goh)

that the hub "softens the landscape" and is part of the NP 'green lung' which strives to improve the aesthetics and learning environment in NP.

"I like the structure, it's very clean," said Murniarah Bre Mo-Ridwan, 18, a second-year Civil & Environmental Engineering (CEE) student.

However, not everyone has received the new Teaching Hub with open arms.

Seah Mei Wei, 19, a final-year Business Studies (BS) student thinks that the three lifts,

standing side by side in the centre of the building, are badly situated.

"I feel that the lifts and classrooms are on opposite ends," said Mei Wei.

"[The central location] allows greater capacity as, during peak times, students can use the lifts at the same time," explained Mr Mui.

Students also griped about the location of the toilets, on opposite ends of the sixth floor, which stretches about 100 metres. Lecturers and students have to walk a long distance if their

toilet is at the other end.

However, the Estate Management Office clarified that this was due to space constraints as classrooms needed to be on that floor too.

The EM is also mindful of the inconvenience and noise generated by the project, due to be completed by the end of the year. "In the building of the Teaching Hub, we had to ensure the rest of Ngee Ann was not affected," said Mr Teo. "We will take all steps to minimise the noise." ■

Engineering Synergy

BY GOH SZE HUA
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The School of Engineering, Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) largest school, underwent a major revamp in the structure of their academic courses over the semestral break.

Three divisions, Marine & Offshore Technology (MOT), Mathematics, Science & Computing (MSC) and Quality Assurance Engineering (QAE), were merged with other divisions in the school.

Where there used to be seven, only five divisions remain. They are Building & Environment (BE), Electrical Engineering (EE), Electronic & Computer Engineering (ECE), Mechanical Engineering (ME) and the newly-added, Multidiscipline Engineering (MDE).

With MDE's entry in June, changes were made to the combination of the different diploma courses in the divisions of the School of Engineering.

As cited in the School's website, this major shuffle was done to "produce graduates with engineering management and IT knowledge and skills" who can meet industry requirements.

Students from MDE can anticipate a greater variety of choices in their course of study in NP.

They will get a chance to acquire skills from



THREE-IN-ONE BBQ: Gathering of potential student leaders of the new Multidiscipline Engineering Society. (Picture: Goh Sze Hua)

the other disciplines of engineering as there would be opportunities given to them to take up modules which might not be in their core diploma course.

By the next academic year, final-year students of MDE will get more options for their specialisations from the other diploma courses. These choices have yet to be made available and will only take effect next July.

Mr Wang Chin Chong, the new director of MDE, sees great potential in the change. The former BE director believes that with this new division, there will be "greater synergy and things can be done better" when the different diploma courses come together under a brand new umbrella of engineering.

Contrary to what some might think, the students will not lose out by being generalists. Mr Wang points out that "there are needs in the industry for people with multidiscipline knowledge [in engineering]".

Mr David Lim, a former MSC lecturer teaching programming in MDE division, sees that the students will have an edge with their knowledge from more disciplines of engineering. He dubs the advantage as "Survival". He added, "It is a bit tough to be too narrow," saying that students who graduate might not survive in the industry if they have too specialised a skill or knowledge.

Lam Weichen, 19, a second-year student from Logistics Engineering & Management (LEM) welcomed this change, "It is interesting to use skills from different [branches of] knowledge that we have."

There will also be more opportunities for the students from the three different diploma courses (see sidebar) to interact in activities outside of the main curriculum.

The recent Freshmen Orientation Programme, for example, was co-hosted by student leaders from all three divisions.

Ng Chang Chong, 18, a second-year student from Quality Management & Engineering (QME), felt that the combination was "interesting because we [can] make more new friends".

School of Engineering changes

Mechanical Engineering (ME) now offers full-time diploma courses in:

- Mechanical Engineering (ME)
- Aerospace Technology (AT)
- Marine & Offshore Technology (MOT)
- Mechatronic Engineering (MTE)

Multidiscipline Engineering (MDE) offers three full-time diploma courses in:

- Engineering Informatics (EI)
- Logistics Engineering & Management (LEM)
- Quality Management & Engineering (QME)

A Multidiscipline Engineering Society (MDES) has also been formed. On 19 July, the potential student leaders came together for a time of fun and interaction in a barbecue organised by the lecturers.

Still, students tended to hang out with others from their own diploma course during the barbecue. Lowena Loh, 18, a second-year LEM student remarked that everyone is at "the beginning stage" of knowing one another, and so it is difficult to gauge just yet. ■

Log on to <http://portal.np.edu.sg/portal/eng> for more information.

Safe by 30 Minutes

BY YVONNE TEO
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When is a student considered late and when absent, were questions that used to attract different answers within Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), but no more.

Under a new Code of Practice for attendance and punctuality, students who turn up after the class has begun are marked late and those who arrive 30 minutes or later after the scheduled time are considered absent.

Mr Lee Tuck Seng, 52, Deputy Principal of NP, cited an example of a student being half an hour late for an hour-long tutorial. As the student would be "missing a lot", he thinks, "it's a fair figure... to consider" a student as absent.

He also noted that to be late for half an hour without valid reason is "something that shouldn't happen".

Yu Si Jia, 20, a second-year Marine & Offshore Technology (MOT) agrees, "... if we're late for the class... we don't learn anything in the class".

Mr Lee added that discrepancies in attendance-taking policies are most obvious during Inter-disciplinary Studies (IS) modules, where [a] lecturer faces the students from different schools" and becomes aware of the lack of consistency across the campus.

In the past, students in some schools arrive 15 minutes past class time were considered

absent, while other schools gave 30 minutes of grace time. Certain schools did not mark students absent unless they did not turn up at all.

Kelvin Tan, 20, a final-year Business Studies (BS) student said, "I think it's actually better this way. Although it seems a bit strict... if you don't implement something uniform... most of the students will take advantage."

According to Mr Yam Weng Wah, 51, Director of the Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC), the TLC circulated a document to all the directors of the various schools and sought their input. Then, the feedback was considered before the Code of Practice and the 30-minute 'cut-off point' was decided.

Mr Yam said, "I think when we're developing our students, it's not just from [an] academic perspective but the overall total development. So being punctual is actually one of the very important values that we're trying to instil in the students."

Mr Lee also shares the same sentiments. "As an employer... we look at everything. You could have good grades, you can go to a company but if your character is flawed, then very soon your grades wouldn't count anymore," said Mr Lee.

Students who plan to buy themselves half an hour off each class should think twice. Mr Yam said, "...we do not want to give the mistaken idea that this is a grace period that we are giving to the students... It's just that if you're late from let's say zero to 30 minutes, we're asking the lecturer

to sort of handle this separately because this is an attitude problem."

According to Mr Yam, late students may get a record of lateness into the NPAL System and face counselling. Constant lateness will be taken into account when it comes to the assessment of attitude.

Priscilla Poh, 18, a second-year Biotechnology (BIO) student said, "I think maybe it's quite unfair... because along this road [in front of NP] there's always traffic jam... I mean it's better late than not coming, right? So I think they should just take it away."

Those who have genuine reasons for being late should not be afraid of this new Code of Practice, however, as the lecturer will still have the discretion to decide if the reason is valid.

According to Mr Mun Kwok On, 50, Deputy Director of the School of Business & Accountancy (BA), the School of BA had "no formal documentation" of such practices before, but finds this Code of Practice timely.

"We were also doing an Academic Excellence Scheme project which focus[ed] on our concern on students' punctuality and also discipline in classroom," said Mr Mun. The change will also ensure that "we don't have a problem where one [lecturer] is more lenient than another... and then the students may feel confuse[d]," he said.

However, the practice is not set in stone. "We'll be reviewing this probably at the end of this academic year... if we need to... tighten to 15 minutes, we will do so," Mr Yam said.

Anti-Plagiarism Software on Trial in NP

BY TAN BEI ZHEN
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Giving in to the temptation to lift something off a website or a classmate's paper for your homework will get you in hot soup in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) if a trial of anti-plagiarism software proves successful.

Between 26 July to 4 October, some 15 lecturers from Electronic & Computer Engineering (ECE), the School of Film & Media Studies (FMS), School of Inter-disciplinary Studies (IS) and School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology (LSCT) will submit their students' assignments for checking through Turnitin.com, a leading software for detecting academic cheating.

Although there are no statistics of increase in student offences, the use of the software will send a strong message on the importance NP places on academic integrity.

Turnitin has been in the National University of Singapore (NUS) for two years. In a phone interview, Ms Leong Miew Cheng, programme coordinator for the use of Turnitin on NUS said, "(the cost) is quite reasonable compared to other software we are using and it is very well received by the lecturers."

Mr Murray Bourne, Educational Development Officer of the Teaching & Learning Centre (TLC), who is spearheading the NP trial, said that although there is an official policy for plagiarism in the student guide, detecting peer-to-peer copying across a whole level of students is difficult. This is especially true if several teachers are involved in teaching and marking the scripts.

"When a lecturer suspects things, it is difficult to check," said Mr Bourne, who has been an educator of almost 30 years. When hundreds of scripts are involved, it is also very time consuming for lecturers to check for peer-to-peer copying.

The Turnitin system matches student work in soft copy against millions of documents on the internet, other submitted work, past students' papers, electronic journals, books and archives around the world. Phrasing that is very similar to archived sources are highlighted for lecturers, who then decide what actions should be taken.

Mr Robin Yee, 37, an FMS lecturer who failed four final-year students last year for their first plagiarism offence, said that better than just catching students, "It will be a great deterrent, I hope."

Students like, Audrey Ng, 19, a final-year Biomedical Science (BMS) student, agreed that she would be "more conscious" when referring from others' work to prevent herself from committing a similar offence.

Depending on response from the lecturers, Turnitin, which will be integrated into the Blackboard system, might be implemented in particular schools or even campus-wide.

Mr Bourne thinks the majority of students should probably welcome this, rather than be apprehensive. "It is unfair to the other students who put in [more] effort," for those who are riding on them to score an equivalent grade.

For more information on the plagiarism policy please see NP Student Guide 2004, page 68 - 70.

Plane Heaven for Aerospace Students

BY DANIEL ZHANG
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Aerospace Technology (AT) students can "catch" a plane anytime on campus, since the start of the semester.

That is because Block 46 has started this school term functioning as a 'hangar' by housing two planes that will be used as teaching aids for these students.

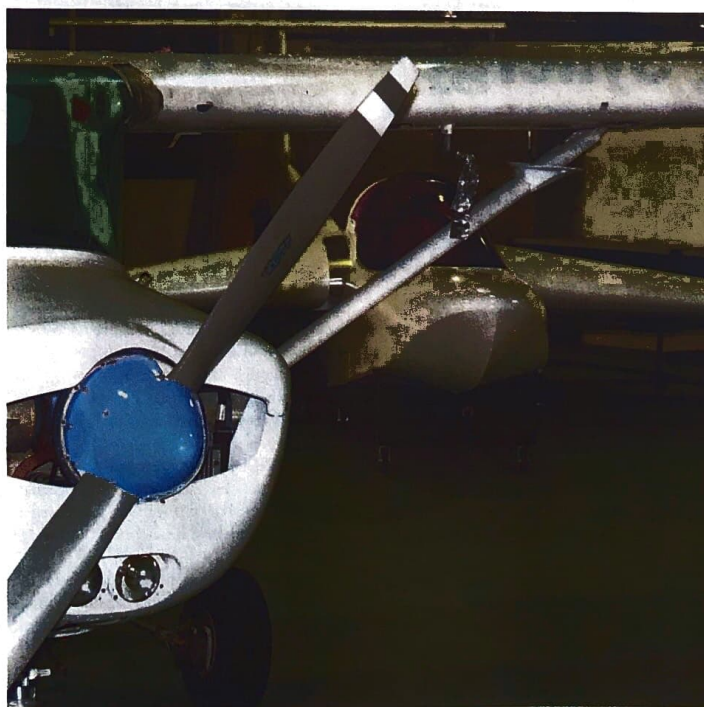
Only one of the two, the Chestnut 152 propeller plane, was bought by the Mechanical Engineering division (ME), Mr Teo Joo Peck, 46, the division's technical support officer told Tribune. It was fully assembled in July and cost "less than 40K".

WigetWorks Pte Ltd, a company that specialises in Wing-In-Ground (WIG) crafts, donated the WIG craft X113, a cross between a plane and a hovercraft, which flies close to the water surface. It was brought from Cairns, Australia, in May, according to the company's website.

AT students can barely contain their excitement at their latest teaching aids. Mr Teo said jokingly, "Once [the students] arrive, they come here and touch here and touch there."

"Actually, this WIG craft is catered for students to study the plane structure; that is why we don't want to really [go] into full assembly of the WIG craft, so that when students want to view the structure, we can just easily shift the wing out and show it to the students," he added.

The planes are expected to require some maintenance, but "since it is used for ground training [it does not need as much]... if you are



PLANE SIGHT: Chestnut 152 (blue) and WIG craft X113. (Picture: Daniel Zhang)

going to fly [the plane], it's a different story," said Mr Teo Bak Hoe, 46, another technical support officer of the division.

Besides being used for teaching, the planes

will be housed as permanent displays at Block 46 for the public. A third plane is also expected in the near future and the Block 46 'hangar' will be widened to accommodate all three planes.

BA Students Pitch Their Way up

BY SHAIFULNIZAM ABDUL RASHID
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Imagine your grades not being decided by what happens when you go to class, but even before you get there, in the ride up the lift.

That is the reality facing second-year students from Business Studies (BS), who must pitch their business ideas to their "client" while riding up to the top floor of Block 72.

This "client" is Mr See Khay Soh, who is in his early 50s, the lecturer teaching Enterprise Creation & Development.

The Academic Manager for BS instructed all 10 tutorial groups to come up with a business idea for a product or service to market for the first assignment.

The students make an appointment with Mr See for the pitch. At the agreed time in the fifth week, Mr See will board the lift on the first floor of Block 72, with the group of five students, whom he will treat only as entrepreneurs once they step into the lift.

At the end of the ride to the ninth floor, which takes about a minute, Mr See will decide whether he has been sold on the idea.

Mr See said, "In the Silicon Valley, entrepreneurs stake out high-rise buildings to get hold of CEOs [Chief Executive Officers] of the company. Then they board the elevator together

with the CEO and make use of the time to pitch their ideas. In this case, the entrepreneurs have more time because the buildings are usually 50 to 60 stories high."

Mr See advises students to pick a good time to avoid the lunch crowd. He said, "The lucky groups are the ones that get to board an empty lift. At least there is less 'tension'."

Said Mr See of the benefits of this exercise, "This elevator pitch is intended for the students to extract the important parts of the business ideas. They only have a minute or so to sell their idea to me so they have to utilise their time. It helps them [to] hone their thinking skills."

Norisa Dahim, 18, a second-year student taking the module said, "It's helpful because in a sense it helps the students who are not so outspoken... Each of us has an opportunity to speak."

Although all the lecturers in the School of Business & Accountancy (BA) could include the elevator pitch as part of their curriculum, Mr See is the only lecturer who does. This is the fourth semester that he has been using it and student response has been good.

Norisa said, "I am rather excited. It's a new thing for me [because] in the first year, we usually do it [pitch] in class, but now we do it in the lift. We did ask Mr See jokingly if we could use the stairs instead so we'd have more time then, and he said that it was fine by him if we don't mind panting while pitching the idea." ■

Poor Response for Enhancement Modules

BY JACQUINE CHOW
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The take-up rate of enhancement modules offered by the School of Electrical Engineering (EE) has dropped 70 percent in the last two years.

Around 1,800 students from all three levels were notified on 12 July that five out of seven of the modules offered had to be withdrawn due to insufficient number of students signing up.

Only Virtual Instrumentation (VI) and Industrial Control Systems by Programmable Controller (ICSPC), offered to first and second-year students respectively, managed to enrol about 20 students each.

Industrial Automation Software (IAS), Network Management and Troubleshooting (NMT), Web Programming for e-Commerce (WPEC), Electrical Engineering Contract Management (EECM) and Power System Economics and Energy Markets (PSEEM), however, had few takers.

These modules, offered at the first week of every semester, are meant to complement the students' studies and better equip them in their field of knowledge.

This is unlike compulsory modules offered by the School of Inter-disciplinary Studies (IS), which allow students to have a feel of courses more

typically taken by students of other schools.

Mdm Choi Mong Ping, coordinator of enhancement modules, said, "The directors of Electrical Engineering have made special efforts in deciding what modules would be suitable to offer as well as the lecturers teaching them. Unfortunately in the past two years, the responses to these Enhancement modules have dropped rapidly."

Mdm Choi believes the lower popularity is a result of Co-Curricular Activities (CCA) points or credit points not being awarded for taking the modules, starting from this year. Only certificates will be given upon completion of the module.

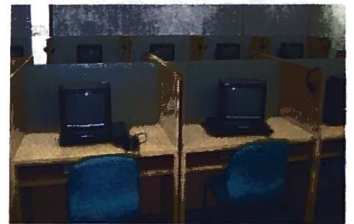
Nicholas Wong, 20, a final-year EE student, feels that taking an enhancement module may pose a problem to certain students because of the extra workload.

Mdm Choi is aware that students often dropped out of the enhancement modules because they could not cope. The statistics she cited showed that "four out of 18 students would have dropped the module by the third week in previous years."

Nicholas feels that students might also think that, "The modules that are good [for us] are already offered to us [in our course]."

He added, "Engineering students have a lot of subjects to cope with already, but if the work [could comprise of] mostly projects [rather] than examinations, I would join the enhancement modules." ■

Library has More to Offer After its "Facelift"



FROM TOP LEFT CLOCKWISE: Media section, laptop area, media viewing room and reference counter are new additions users can enjoy. (Picture: Tan Bei Zhen)

BY SHAIFULNIZAM ABDUL RASHID
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Students will be looking at a fresher and better-equipped library as soon as the refurbishment work on the third, fourth and fifth floors are completed in early August.

Library users can enjoy new features like plush sofas for easy reading. Single and double seaters as well as custom-fit sofas, reminiscent of Pacific Coffee Company in CitiLink, were added for the comfort of about 180 users.

Despite this, the library will be noticeably more spacious because about four full shelves worth of less-frequently used materials were shifted to the library office at Block 4. Students can still access these materials by requesting for them at the Circulation counter. The items will be ready for collection in half a day, or for urgent items, in two hours.

As many as 39 Project Rooms were also constructed specially for group meetings and project discussions. The third level of the Academic Library will have four rooms; the fourth level will have 20, and fifth level, 15. These rooms are equipped with individual study stations for students to use their laptops.

Now that more courses require students to own laptops, a new "laptop area" has been added on the third level to allow more students to bring in and use them. 61 study carrels have been equipped with power outlets to support laptop use. In addition, a custom-fit laptop counter providing seating for 14 users will be available.

In a move to be even more user-centred, the Reference and Information Counter has been relocated from the far corner of the Reference section to the entrance of the third floor. This will allow easier access to library users. The counter will answer all queries pertaining to library resources.

Mrs Lim Bee Ang, who is in her 30s, Reference Manager for the Academic Library, said in an e-mail reply that though plans for the refurbishment started a year ago, work began only after the semester break from 10 May to minimise disturbances to the environment as far as possible.

"[There was] a problem of time. Despite the

workers working till almost midnight daily, the seven weeks of vacation was inadequate for the extent of renovation works required," said Mrs Lim the renovation project co-ordinator.

"Most of the hacking works were taken care of during the vacation. Despite this, some intermittent noise throughout the renovation is bound to be inevitable," she added, remarking on the remaining work on the fourth and fifth floors that spilled into the new semester.

The refurbishment at an undisclosed cost resulted from feedback from students regarding the library's facilities, services and resources. In their research, the team visited other libraries and read up literature reviews of the international library scene.

Students had mixed reviews about the upgrading of the library. Juni Amanina Suradi, 18, a second-year student from Logistics Engineering & Management (LEM), said that she prefers the new spaciousness of the third level of the Academic Library. She said, "I come to the library every day. [Now that] it looks better, maybe I'll stay longer."

Other students felt otherwise. Pauline Phay, 18, a second-year student from Early Childhood Education (ECH), felt that there was a "waste of space". She said, "I like the design and layout but it [the space] could have been put to better use."

Yoslin Sin, 18, another second-year ECH student, agreed. She said, "They should have included more of the Project Rooms. [The current ones are] not enough."

Mrs Lim hopes that with the refurbishment, the library will be able to meet the students' needs.

She said, "... if this translates into increased usage and loans from the Academic Library Collection, we would have achieved our objectives and this would help towards building up the reputation of our library."

In mid-August, students can look forward to a new virtual reference service called "Ask A Librarian" where reference librarians can be reached via the Intranet on campus. This allows for queries regarding the use of online resources without having to go all the way to the Information Counter. ■

Soccer win in Portugal!

BY TAN BEI ZHEN
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Amid the buzz of the Euro Cup 2004, a team of four Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) graduates won the second runner-up position at another prestigious soccer event in Portugal - the RoboCup 2004.

Representing the Alpha Centre, LuckyStar, composed of fresh Electronic & Computer Engineering (ECE) graduates Ker Young, Liew Chong Boon, Huang Jun Jie, all 19, and Lee Zi Hui, 21, took part in the mini soccer league from 27 June to 5 July.

The RoboCup is an international competition cum project set to promote the research and development of robotics. Since 1999, the Alpha Centre started to participate in this event annually in the medium-sized robot league.

Subsequently, it moved students to join the small-sized league, where the robots are better controlled. All 10 of the Alpha Centre's robots are financed by NP. Each robot costs \$800.

According to Chong Boon, the high-end robots that some teams used cost close to \$2,000.

Though Alpha Centre students have actively been involved in local competitions like the



WORTHY GOAL: LuckyStar with Mr Ng (bottom left) and Mr Hui (top right) were second runner up in Portugal for Robocup 2004, posing. [Photo courtesy of Alpha Centre]

Singapore Robotic Games, this international competition was an eye opener for the team. Jun Jie enjoyed the "exchange of ideas" among competitors as the "share and gain" approach was very beneficial to "students who are always learning", he felt.

The team was full of praise for their lecturers Mr Hui Tin Fat, manager of the Alpha Centre, and senior lecturer Mr Ng Beng Kiat for their

continuous support and valuable suggestions based on their previous competition experience. Ker Young recalled, "[T]he lecturers were so willing to play many matches with me, and [in] helping me to polish up my software."

Mr Ng was dubbed "software genius" by the students because he provided nearly all the robotic software and guided them in making full use of it.

LuckyStar encountered many tough competitors like the FU fighters, from Freie University of Berlin, Germany. The eventual champion of the small-sized league category beat LuckyStar in the semi-final 1-0 with fantastic features like doubly fast speed and attacking capabilities, the result of components that Mr Hui considered too expensive to invest in.

Despite the Euro Cup being held concurrently with their game and Portugal, the home team, making their way to the finals, Jun Jie said that the team was completely "grounded" to the competition area and had many things to do like "setting up the equipments and calibrating [of] the robots".

Nevertheless, they managed to catch the semi-finals on a large screen at the competition area, which was near the Euro Cup Fan Park.

Photos and videos were captured to help next year's RoboCup team study and incorporate better hardware into their robots. This may include a more powerful kicking mechanism and faster moving wheels.

After all, "[c]ontinuous effort towards engineering excellence" is required in robotics, said Chong Boon who is considering further development in this field of study. ■

LSCT Lecturer Gets Prestigious Award

BY ALICIA CHUA
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Mr Gregory Chow Kheong Keat, a lecturer from the School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology (LSCT), was presented the 2004 Urban Agriculture Achievement Award on 25 June at a two-day conference in Brisbane, Australia. The regional award was jointly received by Changi General Hospital (CGH).

Bestowed by the Urban Agriculture Network-Western Pacific, a regional agriculture group that aids the development of food growth in urban environments, the award acknowledges Mr Chow's horticulture education community services for hospitals, various primary and secondary schools, Chao Yang Special School and the Christian Home for the Aged.

It also recognises his zealous work for Singapore's first aeroponics farm, Aero-Green Technology (Singapore) Pte Ltd, Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), his involvement in the Singapore Society for Soil-less Culture and his input in the development of air-dynaponics. This innovative system, which uses an air pump to grow vegetables won two NP LSCT Biotechnology (BIO) graduates the bronze medal in the Young Investors Award 2003.

Despite liking "to help people", Mr Chow admitted that, "It also gets difficult at times as most of the people we meet are not familiar with horticulture at all and we have to guide them every step of the way."

He cited the big project with CGH as an example of the commitment and patience it takes to teach nurses and doctors plant propagation and how to manage a roof-top hydroponics system. All this is part of public education, one of Mr Chow's biggest aims.

"Since the industry here for hydroponics is so small, the next logical step is to tackle the homes and people," commented Mr Chow,



URBAN GREEN: (Left to right) Professor David Midmore, Mr Geoff Wilson, Mr Gregory Chow, Mr Larry Khoo. [Photo Courtesy of Mr Gregory Chow]

obviously eager to educate the general public on hydroponics.

Mr Chow has been involved with these projects since 1997, when he joined NP. He credits his passion for horticulture to his farming childhood in Penang where plants have always been a natural love for him.

When informed of his award in April, Mr Chow was extremely surprised. "When I do things like these, I don't aim for prizes," he said. But he is pleased with the recognition as it helps build "a good network" of people to possibly collaborate with or offer services to.

Mr Chow hopes that this award will give NP already good reputation in soil-less culture and hydroponics a greater boost.

His main concentration is on improving the Air-Dynaponics System, which he and his students are working on, to make it user-friendly so that even "non-agricultural" people can use it. They are also trying to make it aesthetically pleasing in the hopes that people will not only view it as a system to grow plants, but as a landscape feature as well.

Previous winners of the Urban Agriculture Achievement Award include Aero-Green (Singapore) and Silwood Microfarm, (Auckland, New Zealand). ■

New Café Opens in Ngee Ann Alumni Clubhouse

BY TANG PIN-JI
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Students and staff of Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) have another dining option on top of the school's five canteens, campus deli, Splash café and the food outlets of neighbour, Singapore Institute of Management (SIM).

New eatery Café Galileo, in the newly Alumni Clubhouse, has seen capacity crowds with its local, Western and Japanese fare, with patrons drawn not only by the novelty but the ambience of the place as well. Minimalist dark wood furniture lit by ample sunlight from floor-to-ceiling glass windows gives it a trendy Zen vibe.

The long opening hours from 9 am to 11 pm daily also caters to the busy students and staff.

Charissa Ngai, 17, a first-year Business Information Technology (BIT) student said, "Its operating hours are definitely good for those of us staying back late due to projects or CCAs."

She added, "Café Galileo is an ideal place for studying, just that there might not be enough seats during lunch hours."

The seating capacity of 64 is a constraint during lunch hours, but Mr Gordon La Faber, 46, one of the café's four co-owners, has big expansion plans for the café. He plans to convert the "outdoor space into an alfresco type of dining area" and hopes to "make the café become a part of the student lifestyle here in Ngee Ann Poly".

Mr La Faber, a Singaporean, said pricing was also carefully researched, considering students' budgets and competitiveness with similar items sold elsewhere in school. Expect to pay between \$2.50 to \$4 for rice or noodle-based *a la carte* meals, and \$4 to \$6.50 for complete set meals here. Ice-cream and drinks start at \$1.20, with specialties like ice-blended drinks going up to as much as \$3.50.

Mr La Faber takes pride in running the café on values like "service", "a lot of public relations skills" and "making customers feel comfortable"



GALILEO CAFÉ: Its zen vibe draws both students and staff for meals here [Picture: Jacqueline Chua]

— speaking possibly from the experience of running a restaurant in Manila, the Philippines, selling Singaporean dishes.

He added, "I want to create something closer to students since this is part of a Ngee Ann Alumni Clubhouse after all, and most of them would be coming back to use its facilities after graduation."

Student Liesl Ng, 18, who was spotted eating at Café Galileo with her second-year course mates from Accountancy (ACC) said, "What I like about Café Galileo is the atmosphere, the service and the general feeling I get by dining in there. However, there is room for improvement where food quality is concerned." ■

NP Students Clinch Gold

Two of three Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) students who bagged gold medals in the WorldSkills Singapore 2004 will represent Singapore next year. DIYANA ALAN and REHANA JAFIR chat with them.

Three NP students trounced other tertiary institutions to emerge victorious in the WorldSkills Competition from 1 to 3 July at Balesier Institute of Technical Education (ITE).

To add icing to the cake, two of them were chosen to represent Singapore for the 38th WorldSkills Competition to be held in Helsinki, Finland, in May 2005.

Web Design Category

Fresh graduate, Aaron Tan Wei Cheng, 19, from the School of InfoComm Technology (ICT) emerged National Champion at the bi-annual competition.

He clinched the Gold medal of the new Web Design category on the 3 July.

Every competitor had to prepare a full program, a proposal and a completed website in only 18 hours spanning three days. "It was no joke, 18 hours to complete everything; it was not easy," Aaron said.

At Secondary One he had already started dabbling with computers and IT design, so it was no surprise that he was selected to represent NP and will soon be representing Singapore.

Aaron admitted being on the brink of giving up many times. "They really had to push me. There were many times where I wanted to just give up," he said, "[but] they definitely inspired me. I could not have done it without them."

One of his lecturers, Mr Melvin Tan said, "We trained him for over a year. We knew that he had the potential so we coached him as hard as possible."

Aaron claimed that he was not nervous about winning the competition, but "was nervous about the competitors who were possibly from design schools such as Temasek Polytechnic (TP). I did not know any of them so I had no idea how good

I am so excited to be representing Ngee Ann and Singapore next year. It's always been my dream to represent Singapore [since I was young]. I just hope that I can make both my school and country proud.

Muraliraj s/o Rajoo, 19, Electrical Engineering student

they were," said Aaron.

Despite this, Aaron managed to keep a cool head throughout.

The training and competition may not have been an easy feat but it was well worth it as he will go on to compete on an international level. Next May, NP will be sponsoring his trip to Helsinki.

Industrial Control Category

Tan De Hao and Muraliraj s/o Rajoo, both 19-year-old final-year Electrical Engineering (EE) students did not expect to win the Gold Award in the Industrial Control category.

Muraliraj recalled "At the start of the first day, I [had] already made a few mistakes with the wiring component of the project and had to start all over again three hours into the competition. And when they announced the leaders at the second day of the event, De Hao and I weren't in the top three and we were quite disheartened."

"But we just gave it our best and we just did what we knew best and it paid off," De Hao added.

Since being selected by their Technical Support Officers (TSOs) in their first year, the students have been training for this event for over two years, sacrificing most of their weekends and term holidays to prepare for the bi-annual event.

"The directors and lecturers were very supportive [of] us and we had a lot of help dealing with the pressures [of training and school]. The only thing we had to give up was our social life. We had no life for over two years!" Muraliraj commented.

Muraliraj was chosen to fly Singapore's flag in Helsinki.

"I am so excited to be representing Ngee Ann and Singapore next year. It's always been my dream to represent Singapore [since I was young]. I just hope that I can make both my school and country proud."

Besides winning \$3,000 each, Aaron, De Hao and Muraliraj felt that the competition offered them a priceless experience.

"I think the best part about the competition is that I have learnt skills that normal[ly] students won't get to learn," said Muraliraj.

WorldSkills Singapore 2004

The WorldSkills Singapore (WSS) is organised by the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) with the support of five polytechnics, Singapore Hotel and Tourism Education Centre (SHATEC) and the Singapore Labour Foundation. Going into the sixth competition since its inaugural competition in 1994, WSS hopes to select talented individuals to represent Singapore for the International WorldSkills Competition.

There are 48 categories in the competition, from web design to cooking.

May the Best Bloom Win

BY ALICIA CHUA
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Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) might see its sunniest day in September, when about 250 stalks of cultivated sunflowers go on display.

The floral spectacle will be the result of 123 teams of lower secondary school students submitting their two best blooms for a competition organised by the School of Life Sciences & Chemical Technology (LSCT).

The competition, which began on 3 July, coined as the Sunflower Festival 2004, invited students from 35 secondary schools to grow their own sunflowers.

"This competition aims to introduce the world of horticulture to students in an interesting manner," said Dr Hedy Goh, the festival's organiser and the course manager of Horticulture & Landscape Management (HLM).

The competition kicked off with an instructional talk for the participants.

13-year-old Phua Fan Li from Ahmad Ibrahim Secondary School was already gunning for "the biggest sunflower".

Mr Goh Yan Yih, the teacher-in-charge of the team from the Chinese High School, said that it was "quite an interesting experience" for all the students involved.

Weekly photographic records of the sunflower's progress have to be taken and each team will submit their two best sunflowers of at least 60 cm in height in September for displaying and judging.

A talk on HLM will be given before the unveiling of the champion bloom. The cash prize for the winning bloom is \$500.

Dr Goh hopes that students will have fun and she assures that it is a very satisfying experience.

"Hopefully through this competition, they will learn more about horticulture and be interested in taking it further."

Smart Vending Machine Goes Commercial

BY DANIEL ZHANG
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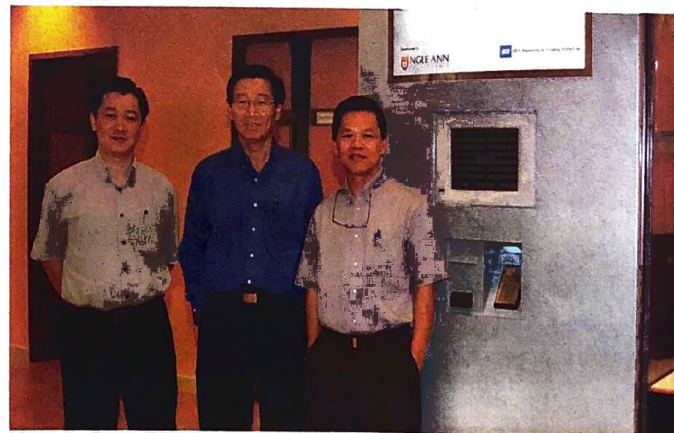
Shoppers in Holland Village and China Square can buy inkjet cartridges and office supplies from newly-installed 'smart' vending machines developed by Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) staff.

The Smart Vending System (SVS) vending machine is intelligent enough to recommend to customers the type of inkjet cartridges to purchase once a printer model is keyed into the machine. It can also sell 36 other kinds of products and has a web-cam to deter vandalism and theft.

Some 10 NP staff from the School of Engineering, the School of InfoComm Technology (ICT) and the Alpha Centre collaborated on it as a consultancy project for QCS Marketing Pte Ltd, a local company that sells inkjet cartridges and office supplies. The project started officially last March and was completed in 28 February.

According to Mr Tan Ah Kat, the breakthrough is in the way the SVS machine uses wireless technology to send encrypted information to the company's central mainframe. Mr Tan is a lecturer from the Mechanical Engineering [ME] division of the School of Engineering and the SVS project leader.

SVS works in the same way as the Short



THE SMART CHOICE: (Left to right) Part of the NP staff team, Mr Toh Kok Hua and Mr Tan Ah Kat with client Mr Billy Heng. [Picture: Daniel Zhang]

Message System (SMS) mobile phone technology but on a more sophisticated scale, allowing the company to track transactions and inventory flow. Companies can thus customise their restocking schedules to suit the buying habits of customers from each SVS machine.

"I think this smart system... is very new. Even the U.S. machine[s], as far as our research shows,

they haven't really applied [it] successfully," said Mr Tan. "This [is] probably... one of the biggest consultancy project[s] Ngee Ann has ever done for companies outside," added Mr Tan.

Managing Director of QCS Marketing & Trading Pte Ltd, Mr Billy Heng, said his company had approached NP for the project because the polytechnic had previously worked on similar

projects, and thus had professional expertise.

Said Mr Tan, "In the past three, four years, we had students' projects [where] we have done similar things... We worked on battery vending machine[s] and those tissue [paper] vending machines. But for students, it's academic."

Despite the SVS being a commercial project, it did not divert the NP staff from the aim of educating their students. The SVS also became a real-life example for students to learn from in their project-work.

"I brought them [students] to see this project, [although] they are not involved, but we use it as a teaching [aid]," said Mr Tan.

Juggling the daily work at NP with the SVS project was not easy. Mr Toh Kok Hua, the Alpha Centre's technical support officer who was part of the Product Design team, said he "took about half a year" by squeezing in time outside of his "daily work for technical support for Alpha Centre. [In the] initial stage, I stayed back quite late, as well as Saturday and Sunday, I also come back [for the project]."

Said Mr Tan, "They [QCS Marketing Pte Ltd]... have just started talking to us about making another three to five sets, but they won't confirm now... maybe in three to six months' time when they have decided. They might even modify the machine to sell something else."

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- **Bachelor of International Hotel & Tourism Management** (2 yrs)

Admission Requirements

(Four intakes in January, April, July, October)

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杨君伟离开 UFM1003 加盟义安理工学院

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曾 经是YES933当红DJ以及担任UFM1003创艺兼音乐总监的君伟,如今已离开了广播界,并加入义安理工学院(NP),开始了他的教学生涯。时常收听YES933以及UFM1003的听众,绝对不会对“杨君伟”这个名字感到陌生。目前担任大众传媒系(MCM)讲师一职的君伟,教的正是他的强项-电台广播学科。

早在一月份就已离开了UFM1003的他,其实是为了能够有更多的时间去考取他的硕士学位,才做出了如此选择。

32岁的君伟提到:“其实我一直对教学蛮感兴趣的,加上义安[理工学院]有空缺,我便决定做新的尝试。”

决定离开UFM1003,对君伟而言是真的有些不舍;因为在UFM1003的那三年里,他以创艺兼音乐总监的身份,尝试了很多在“之前的公司”都也许做不到的一些东西。相比之下,君伟觉得在UFM里所做过的尝试与付出的努力比之前在YES933那六年还要加倍。

君伟也强调,从某个角度来看,教学让他综合了本身的几个强项-媒体、管理与辅导。



NP的播音室将会是君伟接下来经常出没的地方。(照片:陈为立)

他觉得这三方面不是各体,而是可以融合在一起。如此一来,他便有更大的发挥空间。他为何有这种看法呢?

君伟经过分析后说,过去两年在UFM1003的时候,他开始参与了许多青少年计划,还出版了一本书,名为“My Voice”,是一本收集了许多青少年心里话的书籍。再加上他也在广播节目里头与不少的年

轻朋友们有着进距离的接触,因由制作了许多的相关的节目内容。也因为这样,君伟深信以上三方面是一种顺序,自然的过程。

“在媒体一段时间后,最起码对我来说,[我]有必要呼吸一些新鲜的空气。”君伟说道。

有着九年广播经验的他也表示,既然已尝试过了[UFM1003创艺兼音乐总监一职],那

么他就可以暂时搁下他的广播生涯,往后再继续。“这不是一个终止,而是一个延续。”他说。

目前君伟正忙着筹备他的第二本书,名为“唱所欲言”。■

实现读者的梦想

再过不久便是UFM1003DJ赐馆大播台了。TRIBUNE趁与君伟专访时,请教了几个点子,好让有兴趣往广播界发展的读者参考:

1. 要有一股浓厚的热情与兴趣。
君伟说:“先天条件不足,不要紧,后天的努力更重要。以前的广播界的确注重声音,但现在却是比较注重语言和表达能力。”

2. 要有X元素。
作为一个DJ最重要的,便是能否吸引听众的注意力。他解释说:“尽管你的语言有一点‘菜市场式’,但是只要有一个生活化的沟通方式以及能够令听众感兴趣,那你便会有可能被录取。”

中国学生卡啦OK大比拼



比赛正在激烈地进行当中,评判们的脸部表情十分的严肃。(照片:陆苗)

李慧芳报道
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义 安中国学生会在主办课余活动一向都十分活跃。就如学生会的主席,何璐,21岁,所表示:“我们的宗旨就是全心全意为中国学生服务。”

7月24日,义安中国学生会在我校举行了一场卡拉OK歌唱比赛。这场初赛吸引了30位就读义安理工学院的中国学生前来展现歌喉。

这场歌唱比赛是第一次由新加坡四大理工学院而联合主办的。目的是希望能够增进来自不同理工学院中国学生之间的联系。不仅如此,何璐也提到这场歌唱比赛也是“为了丰富中国学生在课余时的文化生活”。

参加比赛除了能够结交新的朋友和吸取宝贵的经验之外,若是可以进入决赛,还可以有机会赢取丰富的奖品。例如:飞往泰国

的机票,卡拉OK馆的会员证和礼券等诱人的奖赏。

其中一名参赛者白萌,20岁,是海事离岛科技系(MOT)的三年级同学,她说道:“我参加也只是一时兴趣,不是为了赢什么奖,蛮好玩的。”这次的比赛在大家的通力合作下,进行得非常顺利的。

说到唱歌,这次前来参赛的人数当中,以女生居多,而选唱的都是些流行歌曲。经过了一连串的选拔过程后,一共有六名参赛者成功的通过初赛,准备在来临的大决赛里与其他三所理工学院的学生一较高低,来个龙争虎斗。

何璐也说:“这场初赛办得挺成功的,也蛮感谢国际学生会(ISC)的支持。虽然参赛的都是中国学生,可是只要是愿意来听的观众都可成为总决赛的一份子。”

在这一届的总决赛里,将会有大约三百人出席,算得上是一项胜举。总决赛的详细日期和地点还在谈论当中,就让我们拭目以待吧。■

有话说!

有话不怕说,就怕没得说!Tribune每期都会以街访的方式征求您对一些热门时事话题的意见和看法

由於这一期又是另一个学期的开始,义安理工学院又再多加了一些新面孔,他们就是这学期报读义安的一年级同学。这群新生们有所不知,可是相信很多“旧”生再次返回校园时,都会发现校园里的种种变化。本报决定在校内四处走走,看看同学们对于新学期的“新”校舍有着什么样的看法和评论。

“我的两个哥哥都是修读与我同样的科系,而且成绩都还不错,所以我希望自己也能够考取同样理想的成绩。”
- 刘佳佳, 17岁, 一年级工商资讯科技系

“目前我最期望的就是自己能够在毕业后出国留学,去看看外面的世界,吸取宝贵的经验。”
- 陈君赢, 22岁, 三年级生物科技系

“我的朋友忘记换MEL的密码,结果很麻烦因为他不可以进入MEL的网页。科技有时候非常恼人。”
- 吴自才, 19岁, 三年级多媒体电脑系

“我非常热爱做运动,看到义安的运动设施挺齐全的,我觉得要keep fit不难。我想毕业后我也许会申请当一名体育老师。”
- 陈炳维, 19岁, 二年级电子工程系

“我希望将来可以在医学领域里有所贡献,希望可以在医药、治疗上有新发明和突破。”
- 何慧敏, 17岁, 一年级生物医疗工程

“目前还有许多工程在校内进行,有时候要从A座走到B座必须绕一大圈,很不方便。”
- 林济讯, 17岁, 一年级生物科技

“我很喜欢小孩子,我希望将来可以开办一所托儿所。目前,我要尽力把书读好,毕业后再到国外去修读儿童心理学。”
- 王佳伊, 19岁, 三年级早期孩童教育系

“NP多了一间 Alumni Clubhouse,听说里头有一间餐厅还不错,也许我会和朋友一起到那里用餐... 我打算在毕业后去申请当一名空中小姐,因为我最大的人生愿望就是能够环游世界。”
- 陈心慧, 19岁, 三年级海事离岛科技系

“这里有很多很好吃的东西,我听我的朋友说算算canteen就有5个这么多!最好吃的就是canteen3的食物吧;尤其是它的roti prata。”
- 沈学明, 17岁, 一年级电子工程系

“我觉得目前NP的设施真的蛮齐全的,真的想不到还需要建些什么。如果校园再大一点,也许可以有shuttle bus service?”
- 侯盈吟, 21岁, 三年级电子工程系

“都读了要三年了,就算有新设施,我也快要毕业了,也没有我的份。我并不希望这么快就毕业因为毕业后就得马上开始找工作做。想到自己的下半生都得埋头在工作里,我真的有好多的不想。”
- 仁颖杰, 19岁, 三年级工商资讯科技系

FMS - Bred Musical Talents in Ngee Ann

Temasek Secondary School may be the school of celebrities, but here in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), we have a school of singers in the School of Film & Media Studies (FMS). LAURA CHONG scopes out current and alumni students and staff, many of whom were in the national musical spotlight in July.



VANESSA FERNANDEZ, 22, Mass Communication (MCM) second-year student
 Profession: Vocalist for band Urban Xchange
 Experience: MTV Asia Awards 2004, represented Singapore at the Prague International Poetry Festival, Anugerah Industri Muzik (AIM, Malaysia) "Malaysian Grammys"
 Genre of Music: R&B
 How NP has helped:
"By having the best Mass Communication (MCM) course, it has helped me know more about the industry and at least when I go out to the media industry, I [will] know what they're talking about."



LESLIE LOW, 32, Composer for TV commercials and vocalist/guitarist for the Observatory
 Course: Film, Sound & Video (FSV) graduate (class of 1997)
 Experience: The Studios: In the Studio with The Observatory at Bay Beats 2004 (17 July), Esplanade (9 - 10 July)
 Genre of Music: Folk-based mix of everything
 How NP has helped:
"[FMS taught] me most of my skills in audio because I majored in Sound Recording, which is very related to what I'm doing now. This has helped me a lot especially on my latest album Time of Rebirth where most of the records [were] done ourselves."



PATRICK WONG, 36, FMS Lecturer and singer in an *one of Singapore's cappella group "In-A-Chord"*
 Course: MCM
 Experience: A cappella Fest (30 and 31 July). Previously cut three group albums, staged a three-night concert at Jubilee Hall.
 Genre of Music: Jazz
 How NP can help current students...
"The FMS society can organise an event where the talents of Ngee Ann can come together and put up a show to help raise funds."



PATRICK CHENG, late 30s, FMS Lecturer and solo singer
 Course: Film, Sound & Video
 Year Joined: 1998
 Experience: ENCORE! Chinese Talentime Reunion (23 July). Previously Singapore Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) Talentime Winner (1991)
 Genre of Music: Slow Pop
 How NP can help current students...
"Organise with other polytechnics or tertiary institutions... a singing competition."

ALEMAY FERNANDEZ, 26
 MCM graduate (class of 2000)/singer
 Recent gig: Late Night @ Esplanade; Summer Night with Alemay (solo concert with Babes Condes 30 July)

MUHAMMAD ADLI, 20
 FSV, Year three
 Singer and drummer in pop-rock band Dharma.
 Recent gig: CHIJMES

GORDON KHOO, 28
 MCM, Year three
 Lead vocalist in the "honest indie-rock" band, Surreal for three years.
 Recent gig: Bay beats 2004 (17 July)

JOSHUA TAN, 18
 MCM, Year three
 Lead vocalist/guitarist for rock band, One Authority, and guitarist in Avacant Affair.
 Recent gig: Papestry (24 July)

The Heatwave Takes OLI

BY PRASAD NAGAS
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MediaCorp Radio's Tamil station OLI 96.8FM picked Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) as the first of several stops in educational institutions to host a live radio show.

OLI had called up the Indian Cultural Society (ICS) and invited them to take part in this show as they felt that "NP's ICS has a lot of talents" said President of ICS Junaida Bte Syed Abdul Kader, 20.

Singapore was introduced to our ICS and campus radio station Radio Heatwave (RHW) on 3 July, in the programme *Elasu Ithu Puthusu*, which translates to "Young and New".

The hour-long show from 6 pm is targeted at youths and will be hosted fortnightly at different institutions.

Final-year Mass Communication students Archanaa d/o Niruvurutha Raja, RHW news director, and Kaithri d/o Krishnaveni, RHW presenter, joined the show with host R. Poorany.

This allowed the 19-year-old, to play their station's trailers and to talk about their previous Tamil show on RHW, *Vaanavil*.

Vaanavil, which means rainbow in Tamil, conveys the spectrum of topics their lifestyle show covered, including Archanaa's description of "Bollywood and Kollywood stuff, campus happenings, where to get great food, latest movies and so on".

ICS, well known in the Indian community for their organisation of *Aaraathanaa*, a popular arts competition for schools, also got to play



OLI GOOD TIME: NP Radio Heatwave and ICS go on national radio. [Courtesy of Radio Heatwave]

their activities and showcase their many musical talents. This included a flute performance by ICS member Kummar s/o Kalimuthu Mogan, 20, a final-year Accountancy (ACC) student and vocal duets and solos by him and other members.

Junaida, a final-year Business Studies (BS) student, considers the programme, "a once in a lifetime experience".

Radio lecturer Mr Yokanathan s/o Ramakrishnan, who is also RHW's advisor, was also very pleased with the collaboration.

"RHW has gained very good mileage through the collaboration because they got their promotional events publicised over national radio, showcased their talents and most importantly, highlighted the association with a major broadcasting station that elevates their status," he said. "I think OLI 96.8 FM has started a journey that promises to rejuvenate the Indian local entertainment scene," he added.

Radio Heatwave started broadcasting from the third week of July and performed at IMM between 6 and 9 August.

Key Chain Melody

BY S. PRIYADAKSINI
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Mrs Fiona Tan Shuet Fung couldn't ask for a better display unit for her collection of key chains than the glass-fronted office she works in - the Student Service & Information Centre (SSIC) office at the Atrium.

The Assistant Student Services Officer, who is in her 50s, is the face of Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) to the public and students with questions, and she grabs the attention of many a passer-by with the riot of colours behind her counter.

"I have had people I don't know coming up to me and asking me about my key chain collection. It's funny at times because they will think I'm selling my key chains," said Mrs Tan.

She has been collecting key chains since 1988, when her American friend gave her one as a souvenir. To date, she has collected almost 200, about half of which she displays on the wall behind her; the rest are stored in two shoeboxes. All are labelled with the name of the person who gave it to her and the year she got or bought it, and she recalls details of nearly every item with a smile on her face.

Her favourite is a crystal-ball keychain from Sweden that reflects light from any direction. "I'm afraid to hang it [up] because I worry that it will fall and break. So I keep it in the boxes, but [I] take it out often to look at it," said Mrs Tan.

Mrs Tan has other unique key chains too, like the key chain-cum-lighter shaped like a



WALL ART: Mrs Fiona Tan and her collection around the world. [Picture: Tan Bei Zhen]

microphone from China. "My good friend told me that this reminded him of my love for karaoke," she quipped. "I would love to have a key chain from every country in the world one day."

Going by the help she's getting, the day may not be far off. Her friends and colleagues more often than not they usually bring back key chains from places they have visited.

"I even have students offering to bring back key chains for me either from places they [have] visit[ed] or from their native countries. Sometimes, they even get their siblings to pass the key chains to me if they have already graduated," she recalled with a smile.

When the time comes for her to retire, she will be as generous in giving them away. "There's no space to keep them all at home. At least if it is here, people might appreciate them."

TAS Scales the Highest Peak in Africa

BY EVON WONG
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Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) The Adventure Seekers (TAS) became the first club among local polytechnics to successfully conquer the highest peak in Africa.

After seven days of climbing during the term break, six of the 12 members in the expedition team reached the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa, standing at 5,895 metres.

According to MK2004 leader Tang Poh Seng, 20, an equal number of males and females reached the summit.

"At the point of reaching the summit, you don't feel it because you're really too tired; just take a photo and go down... [we were already suffering from] headache[s]... we just want[ed] to go down to base," explained Poh Seng, a graduate from Mechanical Engineering (ME).

The climb was very challenging for the team as many of them suffered from Acute Mountain Sickness (AMS), an ailment that commonly strikes mountain climbers at high altitudes.

"You'll get nauseous, headache and etcetera. [AMS] makes it difficult to walk. You'll feel like not moving. You'll just want to sit down there and rest and slack," said Chai Si Si, 20, a final-year Engineering Informatics (EI) student, one of the seven females on the team. She stopped about 100 metres short of the summit, having succumbed to AMS.

"For AMS, normally the cure is to come



PERSEVERANCE: The MK2004 team at the Karanga Valley. [Picture: MK2004 team]

down. Someone has to accompany him or her [to] go down...." said Mr Wong Chun Chong, 52, one of the two lecturers who went with the team.

Another difficulty the team encountered was the low temperature on the mountain, especially at night, which dipped to a low of -5 degree Celsius, added Mr Wong.

"These are the things they cannot train for; the coldness... and the altitude. As far as physical fitness training, they [the team members] were

well prepared, but this type of thing [weather elements] cannot [be] simulate[d] in Singapore," said Mr Wong.

The trip was open to all students of NP and applicants had to undergo an interview session with members from Student Development & Alumni Relations Office (SDAR). However, most of the applicants turned out to be TAS members.

"Most of them on that particular interview were from TAS and it's a TAS idea so the rest

didn't want to come in [for it]. We opened [it] up [to all students] but they didn't want to [participate]," said Mr Abdul Jalal Bin Mohd Tahir, 41, the lecturer-in-charge of TAS who also went for the trip.

The final 12 were selected based on their experience in outdoor activities and mountain climbing, which resulted in a team of mainly TAS members.

Like famous climbing NP alum Edwin Siew, one of the MK2004 team's main concerns was raising funds for the trip. According to Mr Abdul, although the \$3,900 expenses for each person was subsidised fully for staff and halved for students by NP, it was still a heavy financial burden on the students.

On top of sponsorship from the Lee Foundation and the National Youth Council, the students also raised \$1,225 in a car-wash programme in NP about three months before the trip.

Apart from the climb, during their trip that lasted from 9 June to 22 June, the MK2004 team also went to Uroki Secondary School in Africa to help repaint the school and to give them books collected from the different schools in NP.

Mr Abdul, elaborating on TAS's next challenge said, "Everest base camp is in the [talks], but it may not be the next one because I'm telling the president [of TAS] to seek... other things apart from mountain climbing because TAS are not climbers, okay, we are seekers. So [we will] try to look for something else apart from mountain climbing." ■

It's Fitness Time

BY JOSHUA TAN
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To improve dismal participation and performance at the National Physical Fitness Award (NAPFA) test, final-year School of InfoComm Technology (ICT) students must now take part in a compulsory fitness programme.

This programme will be conducted once every three weeks for each mentor group at the NP Sports Complex on Thursdays, from 5 pm to 6 pm. As recommended by the Student Development & Alumni Relations Office (SDAR), this frequency is likely to increase to at least three times a week as the NAPFA test date approaches.

"This is the first time we're trying this out," said Deputy Course Manager Mr Andrew Yoong, 42, who chairs the task force behind the new ICT Fitness Hour. "The idea was brought up because we want to build a better bond between the mentors and men-tees, and to encourage the students to have a healthy mind. We want them to not only study hard, but also to be relaxed and do some exercise. The third thing is to get our students geared up for the NAPFA test."

ICT hopes to achieve an 80 percent participation rate for its students, an increase from its current estimated 70 percent participation rate, and at least a 10 percent passing rate for its male students, a modest increase from their 8 percent passing rate from the previous year.

"To do it right, we must ensure that we



ON TRACK: The ICT students gear up weekly for NAPFA. [Picture: Joshua Tan]

prepare the students so that when the test comes they will be keen to participate and if possible pass it," said Mr Lee Chin Seng, 47, the school's Deputy Director.

In every session, students warm-up before proceeding to train for the NAPFA six stations and ending off with a cool down. Students will be coached by their peers alongside their mentor, possibly to the accompaniment of music, Mr Yoong added.

To show their support of the objectives, Mr Lee promised, "The ICT Fitness Hour is not only for students but also for staff... as for myself, I will be at the venue probably running with my students."

"I'll be there! I'll be there every week in my shorts and shoes running!" said Mr Yoong. ■

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Euro 2004 Comes To Campus

BY EVON WONG
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Whoops and cheers could be heard from Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) Lecture Theatre 26 on 4 July, which would not have been surprising except that it was about 2.30 am.

About 100, mostly male, Greece and Portugal fans who had come with their friends were huddled before the 4.8 metre by 3.6 metre screen in the LT to catch the live screening of the Euro 2004 finals, organised by the Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) Ambassadors.

For a first-time event, the organisers seemed to have considered a number of things for the comfort and convenience, including security, timing and stomachs, of those who came.

Temporary 'tattoos' were placed on the arms or hands at the registration booth to identify genuine fans to the school security guards.

And even though the match only started at 2.35 am, people were admitted from 10 pm to ensure that students could get to school safely and without extra expense.

Said NP Ambassador Penny Tan Yihui, 20, a final-year Biomedical Science (BMS) student, "They need to pay midnight charge if they are taking a taxi here, so at 10 pm, they can come to school, they can just sit around in the LT, they can just watch TV; at least it's safe at this time."

Despite this concession, several students still had problems convincing their parents to allow them to come.

"Actually they didn't agree, like 'How come must stay overnight?' Like 'Can watch at home right?' Then I said [that] my friends asked me along, then it's like 'Ok lah,'" said Nur Baitina Zainuddin, 18, a second-year Internetworking & Communications (INC) student who attended the event.

To keep the early birds entertained, students were asked to fill in a form to predict the winner and the score of the match, and were shown Channel 5's broadcast of One Leg Kicking



EURO MANIA: Fans cheer while others sigh at the end of the match in LT 26. (Picture: Evon Wong)

and Message in a Bottle. This was followed by the movie Bend It Like Beckham. For the more active, a PlayStation competition was held simultaneously outside LT 26.

A booth was also set up outside LT 26 selling tidbits and drinks to the students, who also had the option of going to Canteen 3. The stalls there were open at 4 am at the organisers' request to cater to the post-match hunger pangs or an early breakfast, said Adrian Low Yew Chong, 23. The final-year Information Technology (Mobile Computing) (MBC) student is one of the organisers of the event.

The idea of having such an event was brought up during a lunch between the NP Ambassadors and Deputy Principal Mr Tan Hang Cheong.

It was there Adrian suggested adopting "the Golden Village style" of screening football matches instead of movies at the school LTs.

Mr Tan showed up, even though he is not a

soccer fan, to support the NP Ambassadors. He was very pleased with how they had managed to pull this off given the time constraint.

As Adrian explained, besides the fact that school had just begun, "It's very difficult to organise in such a short period of time but fortunately the school is very open and very supportive and encouraging so everything in all channels went on very smoothly."

Mr Tan, who called the event "a good start", added, "If [the students] have an idea and it's something that we think is very creative, something very enterprising, we'll always say go ahead, just do it."

"There's nothing wrong with watching football at two-thirty in the morning [in school]. [We] may not have done it before but why not?"

The crowd was enthusiastic during kick-off, with shouts of "Greece will win!" and a clever retort from the crowd saying, "Wait till

the Olympics lah!" Due to the slow pace of the game, the hall was mostly silent with occasional bursts during near-goal situations. However, the LT came alive in the 57th minute of the match when Greece scored the only goal of the match.

After the match, some people stayed behind to sleep in until 7.30 am.

However, several complained of the lack of air-conditioning at about 6 am though it was announced that it would be left on until morning.

Several students that Tribune spoke to enjoyed the event and would like to see more of such late-night activities being held in school.

"[When] they start the World Cup, they can do this also. And then not only the finals; they should make it every single game [because they are only shown on cable channels]," suggested second-year Mechanical Engineering (ME) student Danny Lim Kanson, 24. ■

No Lucky Start for NP Wakeboarding Club

BY EVON WONG
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It was not to be beginner's luck for the eight month-old Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) Wakeboarding Club's first competition at the Inter-Varsity Wakeboarding Championships at Kallang Riverside Park on 10 July.

Not one of the seven members of the club who participated in the Novice division, made it to the finals. NP had no entries in the Intermediate and Open categories.

Chairman of the club, Brendan Ang Yit Beng, 19, said, "We didn't come to this competition with any specific objectives but to just have a great time and I think that's what we did."

"The varsity/polytechnic wakeboarding community is really tightly knit... and even though we didn't qualify, it was just fun getting to ride with everyone," added the final-year Mass Communication (MCM) student.

"I think we gave quite a good fight; I think we did our best," commented Selene Lim, 19, a final-year Accountancy (ACC) student who was one of the two females representing NP.

Due to the cost and time involved, the Wakeboarding Club could not afford to train as much as they would have liked. Even for the cheaper weekday slots, which are a challenge to



RIDING THE WAKES: Chairman Brendan Ang attempting a jump. (Picture: Leo Yong Ping)

take because of members' different time-tables, a training session can cost up to \$35 per member for just 30 minutes on the water.

"It's not very cheap to come for each trip, so you have to find means, legal means to get the source of income," said Peter Ng, 18, a Business Studies (BS) student, the only second-year NP participant.

Unlike several other varsity teams that are sponsored training sessions and equipment, the NP Wakeboarding Club had only one NP-sponsored training session prior to the competition. This training session cost the school \$35 for each team member.

According to Brendan, they are looking for sponsors but this proves difficult with the lack of

a good track history.

The captain of the Singapore Polytechnic (SP) Wakeboarding Team, Jasper Lim, 19, said, that in SP, their wakeboarding team is not even recognised as an official Co-Curricular Activity (CCA) by their school and they receive no financial support from it.

It does not help the NP team that practices need to be all the way at the Kallang Riverside Park. "If only we had a river next to NP... and no, the Bukit Timah longkang just doesn't cut it," said Brendan jokingly.

But there is no denying the sport's increasing popularity, as this year's competition saw a record number of participating schools, with all local tertiary institutions taking part except for Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) and Republic Polytechnic (RP).

There is yet another reason the NP Wakeboarding Club is recruiting new members for the club in earnest.

"Most of us are in our last year and our goal is to see the club progress... more people being able to experience and get hooked on wakeboarding... because once you start, you can't stop," added Brendan. ■

Those interested can log on to the club's website at <http://www.npwakeboarding.com> for more details.