RSVP SINGAPORE
THE ORGANISATION OF SENIOR VOLUNTEERS

e-NetWork

www.rsvp.org.sg

Sept 2014

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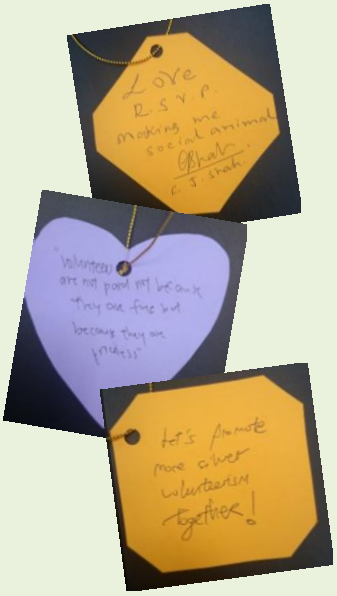
WELCOME NEW MEMBERS (Aug 2014)

NG Soon Hock
YEO Kim Neo
LOO Teong Heng James
TAN Lai Hok
SIEW Kam Yong Annie

PLEDGES IN SUPPORT OF SENIOR VOLUNTEERISM



President's Message

I was moved by Ngiam Tong Yuen's message in the last issue of e-Network. He said it simply and personally. The heart of our volunteering spirit is giving and sharing and making a commitment to "just do it". When more members come forward to man our programmes, it will lead us to new paths and growth. With more creativity in our membership recruitment, we can avoid a situation of finding replacements for volunteers who leave after a brief period of service.

On 15 September, my Board members and I will discuss a paper I have tabled on our volunteer management process. We will look at putting in place stricter criteria for new members so that they realise their obligation as a member is to be an active volunteer. We will place emphasis on new and interesting programmes and most importantly, share ideas to make us a closely knit community of not just volunteers but friends. As always, I value members' feedback. I am keen to hear your views on how best active volunteerism should be measured. For example, should it be based on the number of hours a year a member spends on volunteering or the number of programmes one volunteers in?

I wish to thank all members who helped make our Senior Volunteer Week a huge success again. I believe our future lies in a greater inter-generational approach to volunteerism and a stronger voice in society in new ways such as the RSVP On-line podcast project.

Friends, this is an exciting journey which you and I will make together.

会 长 致 词

我深深地被 Mr Ngiam Tong Yuen 在上一期出版的 E-network 中的 一番话所打动。他提到了，义工的核心价值在于付出与分享而建立起一种“坐言起行”的精神。当更多 RSVP 会员参与我们的活动时，这将会促使我们的成长和发展。除此之外，凭借我们招募新会员的创新方案，我深信不会发生义工短缺的问题。

於 9 月 15 日的会议中，我和 RSVP 委员们将会讨论一个有关义工管理的计划。对于招募新会员的标准，我们将会更严格，目的是为了使他们明白作为活跃义工会员的责任。

我们将会把焦点放在新设立以及具趣味性的活动，而更重要的是鼓励大家分享意见，共同建立一个义工兼朋友的紧密关系。

一如既往，我非常重视会员们的意见和想法，尤其是如何去衡量义工的服务品质。比如说，到底是根据会员每年的义工服务时间，还是以每年参加活动的次数为依归？

我再次衷心感谢所有在乐龄义工周给予帮助的会员们。我相信我们的前景有赖于两代之间更进一步的合作，以及在社群中更强大的发声，例如 RSVP 网络连线服务的 “播客” 计划。

朋友们，这将会是你我共同创造的一个振奋人心的旅程。

Yours sincerely,
Koh Juay Meng, President
Mandarin Translation by Mr Stephen Shea, RSVP Volunteer

U LIVE SYMPOSIUM 2014

On 16 August, RSVP was present at the 5th U Live Symposium organised by NTUC U Live to empower, educate and engage seniors in leading a healthy, active and more enriching lifestyle.

This year, it was held at the Employment & Employability Institute, e2i located in Jurong East and was well attended by 1,500 seniors.

We were there for the entire day under the IDA booth to promote Silver Infocomm Day (SID) courses to senior participants. The response was encouraging.

We are still accepting registration for SID courses starting from 20-27 Sept 2014.

For registration and enquiries, please call 6259 0802.

Senior Volunteer Week – Open House

"BE NEEDED, BE VALUED, BE ACTIVE...BE A VOLUNTEER!" This phrase neatly sums up RSVP's aims for seniors. This iconic event of RSVP – Senior Volunteer Week - commenced with an Open House on 5 September. The importance of having trained volunteers and for seniors to incorporate healthy ageing through volunteerism underlined the talks, activities, programmes and training which took place in the course of the week.

Minister of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY), Mr Lawrence Wong, the Guest of Honour for the open house, was very supportive of RSVP's cause. In his speech, he said that his ministry was ***"looking at ways to improve the volunteer experience for our seniors"***. He also said that MCCY wants to make volunteering activities more accessible. With the government's support and RSVP's efforts the task to get seniors to embrace volunteerism would be easier.

Besides the five talks that were conducted by partnering VWOs and NPOs, all other activities were run by RSVP senior volunteers. The Open House was a great way to showcase to seniors - by peers of their generation - that volunteerism and learning new skills are not impossible. RSVP President Koh Juay Meng was heartened by the huge turnout and he commented, ***"To witness seniors filled with zest and giving back to the community selflessly is a reaffirmation that RSVP is on track to make SVW a national event".***

Apart from encouraging seniors to engage in volunteerism, RSVP hopes to bring forth the essence of the commitment required when one signs up as a volunteer. ***"When one makes a decision to volunteer, one has to accept that inconvenience and sacrifice are part and parcel of that commitment,"*** observed Edmund Song, RSVP's Executive Director. He added that ***"seniors themselves have changed the definition of volunteerism by expanding the parameters traditional volunteering encompasses."*** RSVP has not shied away from taking the lead - a podcast on senior volunteerism and other ageing issues led predominantly by senior volunteers was launched during the Open House and a Pioneer Generation (PG) Event will take place a week after the Open House.

Why wait to start giving back to the community you have grown in? Take the next step and volunteer now!

乐龄义工周 - 开放日

乐龄朋友们，大家好！我们需要您，活跃的您，请加入我们 RSVP 的大家庭！以上措词正符合了 RSVP 以乐龄人士为对象，并以开放日的形式在 9 月 5 日隆重登场的 - 乐龄义工周 - ，一个由 RSVP 主办的盛事。关于义工训练的重要性，和领导乐龄人士透

过在乐龄义工周的各类讲座，活动，计划和训练项目程序中，藉着义工精神的发挥，融入乐龄健康的元素。

青年文化及社区部长，暨“乐龄义工周开放日”贵宾 Mr Lawrence Wong，非常赞赏 RSVP 的宗旨，在 Mr Wong 的演说中，他提到了他的相关部门将为乐龄人士研究并改善义工经验的方法。他也提及 MCCY 在寻求方法使义工活动更为普及。有了我们国家的支持，连同 RSVP 的努力，义工精神将为社会大众广泛接纳，当能指日可待。

除了由我们工作伙伴 VWO's 和 NPO's 主持的 5 场讲座，所有其他的活动都是由 RSVP 的义工们全力包办。开放日是一个向乐龄同辈人士展示义工服务和学习新技能并非难事的好机会。乐龄义工周的人潮使 RSVP 的许会长感到振奋，他说道：“乐龄人士在这次乐龄义工周开放日所展现出的热情和回馈社会的精神足以证明 RSVP 已步入正轨，并将”乐龄义工周“演化成为国家级活动。

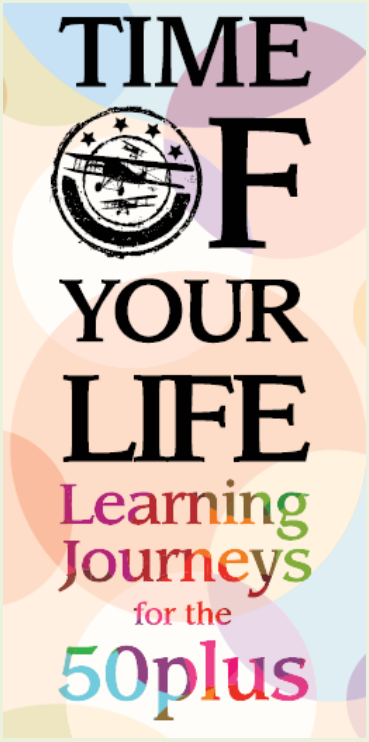
除了鼓励乐龄人士积极参与义工服务，当他们正式成为会员时，RSVP 也希望他们明白成为一名义工的重要性。一旦成为义工，会员便得接受义工服务可能会造成的不便并得作出一定牺牲，现任 RSVP 执行主任 Mr Edmund Song 表示：”许多乐龄人士改变了对义工性质的观念而扩大了传统义工的含意”。在乐龄义工开放日，RSVP 带领了由大多数乐龄义工和少数非乐龄者携手主持名为”播客 （Podcast）“的活动。而乐龄义工开放日的一个星期后，“建国一代（PG）“ 活动将紧接着登场。

朋友们，别再犹豫了，快来回馈伴随你们成长的社区，马上就报名加入我们的义工大家庭吧！

To view more photos, visit our Facebook page—click here

Nazreen Muntaj, Asst Manager, Corporate & Marketing Communications
Mandarin Translation by Mr Stephen Shea, RSVP Volunteer

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES



Time of Your Life – Learning Journeys for the 50plus

Date: 1 Oct 2014 (Wed)
Time: 9 am to 4 pm
Venue: NLB (Victoria St)

We will be present at the upcoming opening ceremony for the month-long “Time of Your Life – Learning Journeys for the 50plus” organised by Council for Third Age (C3A) on 1 October at the National Library.

Our Senior Volunteers will be actively promoting volunteering opportunities to fellow seniors.

Our Cyberguide Trainers and Assistant Trainers will also be kept busy while demonstrating the interactive iPads and smartphones to senior participants.

Neo Hong Hong,
Asst Manager, Programmes

RSVP launches its first internet radio podcast

Known for introducing first-to-market niche ideas, RSVP Singapore recently launched its very own first internet radio - “RSVP Gift of Age.”

The idea of the radio podcast was first introduced to interested RSVP members by Dr Kalinga Seneviratne, a member volunteer of RSVP Singapore. Kalinga has wide experience in setting up community radio broadcasts and in recent years has done a number of consultancies for UNESCO on community radio in India, Indonesia, Philippines, Bangladesh and Laos.

The RSVP Gift of Age podcast brings interviews, news and views for seniors by seniors. The first podcast was officially launched by Mr Lawrence Wong, Minister of Culture, Community and Youth at our Open House on 5 September. The theme is “Living Life and Volunteerism”. The podcast team is made up of 9 RSVP member volunteers- Dr Kalinga Seneviratne, Sakina Hoosenally, Dora Lim, Richard Cheong, Lesley Ong, Lisa Banwell, Cyril Ong, William Tan and Mary Ong. We are looking for a few more to join the team.

This internet radio will bring a new style of broadcasting to Singapore based on community radio principles and it is hoped that these broadcasts will ultimately find a window within an existing radio station here.

For subsequent podcasts, the team will be working with Rediffusion. This partnership has the potential to grow our podcast project as Rediffusion offers a much bigger internet platform for widening our listenership and thus making the RSVP Gift of Age podcast the main voice of senior volunteerism.

To listen to our podcast, click here

Fawziah Mattar, Snr Manager
Corporate Partnership & Fund Development, Corporate & Marketing Communications

Mind Stretcher Education Group donates to RSVP Singapore

Ms Kristie Lim, Founder Principal, Mind Stretcher Education Group presented a cheque of $12,000 to Mr Koh Juay Meng, President, RSVP Singapore during the Opening celebrations of Senior Volunteer Week 2014. The donation goes towards supporting our cause that promotes senior volunteerism and engaging seniors in volunteer work benefitting over 50,000 beneficiaries. Our heartfelt thanks for your kind generosity.

Fawziah Mattar, Snr Manager
Corporate Partnership & Fund Development, Corporate & Marketing Communications

Mooncakes and Cookies by RSVP GAC

In conjunction with Senior Volunteer Week, RSVP-Gourmet Activity Circle (GAC) prepared two lovely items for the tea reception- Snow Skin Moon Cakes and Osmanthus Cookies. Led by Elaine Teng and assisted by June Low (RSVP Art Teacher) , the members of the GAC gathered at the kitchen of Down Syndrome Association (DSA) on Wednesday, 3rd September 2014, to make 250 pieces of the mooncakes to be given as a token to the VIP guests and placed at the GOH's reception respectively. These soft non-baked, sugar-free red bean paste mooncakes were made in vibrant colours to reflect the kaleidoscope of positive personalities of the RSVP members. The ever-popular Osmanthus Cookies, exclusively baked for the reception, represent the energetic spirits of our senior volunteers. (Baked by Chef Rowena Chin)

You have to admire the tenacity of the members and DSA students to complete their task in this short time frame. Their efforts not only created great camaraderie but the final product was commendable. During the Open House, a workshop on making the Snow Skin Moon Cakes was conducted with 10 DSA students where Minister Lawrence Wong interacted with the students and joined in the hands-on activity.

Members of GAC involved: Nancy Choo, Sam Liu, Rowena Chin, Ed Coll and Elaine Teng

Elaine Teng, RSVP Volunteer

RSVP SINGAPORE
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About RSVP Singapore

RSVP Singapore The Organisation of Senior Volunteers is a non-profit organisation launched by the then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong in October 1998 and approved as an Institution of Public Character in 1999. Its mission is to provide opportunities for seniors to serve the community with their talent and experience through purpose-driven volunteerism. Its major programmes are Cyberguide, Mentally Disadvantaged Outreach, Mentoring, Changi Service Ambassadors, My Buddy, Enriching Lives of Seniors, Learning Journey and Senior Guiding.

Follow us on FACEBOOK or visit our Website www.rsvp.org.sg

How to Remain "YOUNG" at Heart

Age is only a number. You are as old as you think you are. It's all in the mind though physically you cannot help but feel you are not as energetic as you were years ago. Fatigue, aches and pain come naturally as the years go by. There are things that you can still do, and there are those that you should not even try to attempt at this stage of your life. Though your body has weakened, your mind has been enriched with a wealth of skills and experience that can only come with time.

I never realized how rich I was in terms of skills and knowledge till I started doing volunteer work in 2005 after my retirement. I thought volunteer work was only meant for people who have big hearts and are generous with their money. How wrong I was! Very often we think that when we volunteer our time and service, we are helping others who are less privileged or disadvantaged. In actual fact, we benefit too. To put it simply, we help others to help ourselves. This is what I term a change of mindset.

You'll be surprised that what you once thought you could not possibly do has now become a reality. You begin to discover your strength and hidden talents. My burning passion for teaching suddenly came to life when I started teaching conversational English to a group of senior volunteers at RSVP Singapore-The Organisation of Senior Volunteers. These groups of seniors have gone through thick and thin over the long 8 years that they have been studying under me. It is not how much of the English Language that they have mastered but the precious time and moments they spend with their peers that really matters.

Like me, they are enjoying a more meaningful and purposeful life when they join me on many occasions in serenading in their limited English songs to the old folks in the nursing home. This is often reciprocated by the old folks with their toothless smiles. Dances and songs in various dialects are introduced to spice up the events. The old folks are also given opportunity to bellow out songs that brought back those beautiful memories of yesteryears. To most people this may be simple fun, but the impact on those being left to live out their remaining years in the nursing homes is awesome.

I have made a difference in the life of others as well as mine.

HOW ABOUT YOU?

P S Chan, RSVP Volunteer

Ageing in Place (AIP) Forum

As a partner of Alexandra Health Group's Ageing-In-Place (AIP) programme, RSVP was invited to make a presentation at its public Forum on 27th August. Our Executive Director, Edmund Song shared the special appeal AIP Programme had for RSVP and the intrinsic value our volunteers found in providing service in the healthcare sector. In working closely with people who had health problems, our volunteers became more aware of the need to exercise greater self-responsibility in caring for their own wellbeing and to be more appreciative of life's gifts, big or small. Following Edmund's presentation, RSVP member, Ron Pereira gave a personal account of his befriending experience. The people he served were friends and not "beneficiaries.", Ron emphasized.

Little acts of courtesy and kindness could go in long way to bring joy to the daily lives of people who otherwise were lonely and at times, lacked family support.

During the refreshment break, participants approached Edmund and Ron with questions on RSVP. Some enquired about collaboration and volunteering opportunities. In taking part in the

Forum, Edmund summed it up by saying, "We are of course pleased to support our partner, Alexandra Health, in the Forum. At the same time, it was also an opportunity to create greater awareness of RSVP and our role in community service, in the public eye."

Rachel Foo, Programme Executive

Volunteers at HDB Family Carnival 2014

At the invitation of the Housing Development Board, RSVP Singapore took up a booth at the recent HDB Family Carnival 2014 on Saturday, 16 August 2014. The carnival, which was held at Toa Payoh Stadium, presented a useful platform for RSVP Singapore to raise awareness of its social mission and community programmes to about 1,000 participants, including HDB's staff, family members and friends.

In addition our volunteers, including three seniors from the balloon activity circle, took the opportunity to recruit prospective senior volunteers from among the visitors and sell copies of RSVP's joke book and balloon sculptures to raise funds for RSVP.

Yeo Ando, Manager, Corporate Partnership and Fund Development