

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**28 September 2016**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 28 SEPTEMBER 2016, 2:00PM**

### **Seniors Bring Joy to Other Seniors Through Merry Singing with the Elderly**

1. For Jane Rose\*, 79, life was bleak in 2013. She met with an accident and could not control her limbs. "I take a bowl, drop. I take the rice, drop. I don't know why (my hands) won't listen to me". She was subsequently hospitalised for a year.

2. It was a huge blow for Jane Rose who was an active person as she now found herself immobilised and unable to do simple chores. Previously Jane Rose would accompany friends to hospitals and recommend them therapists for their ailments. And she loved to sing. But now she could no longer participate in her church's choir group, where she found solace in teaching children to sing.

3. Fast forward to 2016, Jane Rose has now regained her cheerful personality and is able to move around the neighbourhood in her wheelchair. She does simple chores by herself and spends her most of her days at the Lions Befrienders Home at Ghim Moh Road.

4. Together with volunteers from RSVP Singapore, she learns how to make handicrafts, do simple exercises and most importantly, reignite her passion for singing by singing karaoke to Chinese and dialect songs. Volunteers from RSVP Singapore visit the Home once a week as part of its Enriching Lives of Seniors Programme (ELSP), where volunteers befriend lonely seniors in senior activity centres and the venues of residents' committees.

5. Jane Rose will also be one of 76 seniors who participate in RSVP's "Merry Singing with the Elderly" on 28 September 2016 at Teo Heng Katong KTV Karaoke Studio. Teo Heng KTV has partnered the senior volunteer organisation as a corporate sponsor of the karaoke venue.

6. Sherlynn Yap, 23, Programme Executive for ELSP, says, "I think that the ELSP programme is a great platform for our senior volunteers to have the opportunity to serve the community. By engaging in senior volunteerism, it adds meaning and brings joy into their lives as well as for those whose lives they have touched through this programme."

7. The "Merry Singing with the Elderly" event is part of RSVP's National Senior Volunteer Month (NSVM) 2016. Launched on 27 August by Dr Koh Poh Koon, Minister of State for Ministry of National Development & Ministry of Trade and Industry and MP for Ang Mo Kio GRC, at Yio Chu Kang Community Club, NSVM aims to encourage more seniors to share and serve. This is the second NSVM for RSVP Singapore. Last year's NSVM was launched by President Tony Tan at Toa Payoh HDB Hub. It reached out to 17,376 with 5,120 volunteers, of which 3,596 are seniors.

8. For Jane Rose, the “Merry Singing with the Elderly” initiative will be a chance for her to sing to an audience again. When asked if she is looking forward to it, she smiled and nodded, saying that singing would be an opportunity for her to serve again.

9. Those who are keen to learn more about ELSP may do so through RSVP Singapore’s website or its hotline at 6259 0802.

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*\*Name has been changed to protect her identity.*

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## **MEDIA FACTSHEET ON RSVP AND INITIATIVES**

### **ABOUT RSVP SINGAPORE**

RSVP Singapore - The Organisation of Senior Volunteers is a non-profit organisation and an Institution of Public Character as defined under the Charity Act. The Organisation was started in 1998 and launched by then-Prime Minister Mr Goh Chok Tong. RSVP Singapore is a registered society under the Societies Act and a member of the National Council of Social Service (NCSS).

Since its inception, RSVP has grown into one of the leading volunteer organisations in Singapore, in particular paving the trend of senior volunteerism. RSVP senior volunteers can be found all over Singapore- in hospitals, primary schools and at Changi Airport- serving the varied needs of their beneficiaries. With over 1,000 members, RSVP Singapore serves more than 150,000 beneficiaries each year, including the mentally disadvantaged, at-risk children from low income families, as well as needy seniors through its community service programmes.

### **ABOUT ENRICHING LIVES OF SENIORS PROGRAMME**

The programme reaches out to and engages underprivileged seniors with the help of age-appropriate and trained volunteers. It aims to improve these seniors' overall emotional and psychological well-being by providing companionship and befriending prospects.

The programme also provides opportunities for RSVP's senior volunteers to participate in purposeful social activities and enhance their social interaction with other seniors, staff and volunteers in the Senior Activity Centres.

The programme is currently administered at 3 Senior Activity Centres (SACs) benefiting 70 senior beneficiaries and supported by 23 senior volunteers. RSVP endeavours to reach out to at least 100 senior beneficiaries through the support of 40 senior volunteers in 5 SACs in the coming year.