

LABOUR NEWSweek

17 DECEMBER 2017

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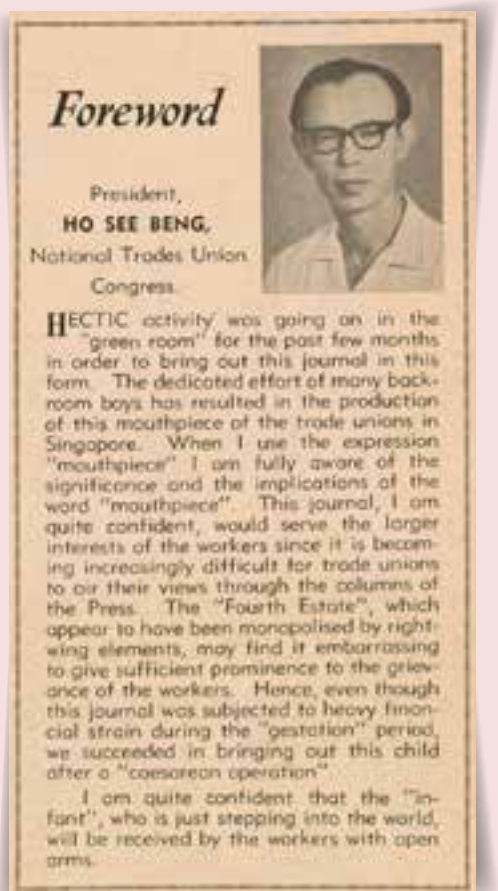


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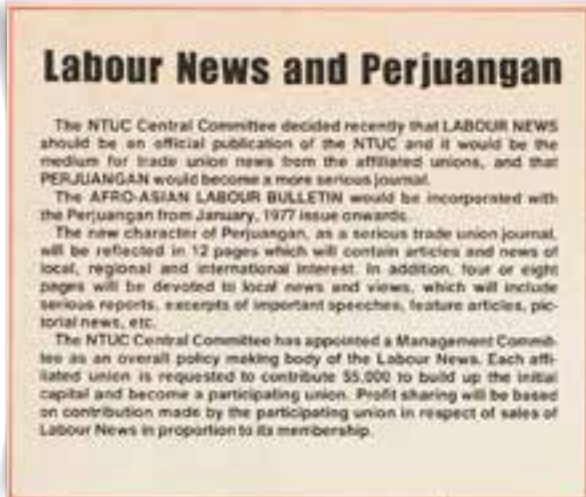
NOVEMBER, 1964

A foreword by then NTUC President Ho See Beng on the first issue of *Perjuangan* sheds light on the challenges in finding a voice for the workers.



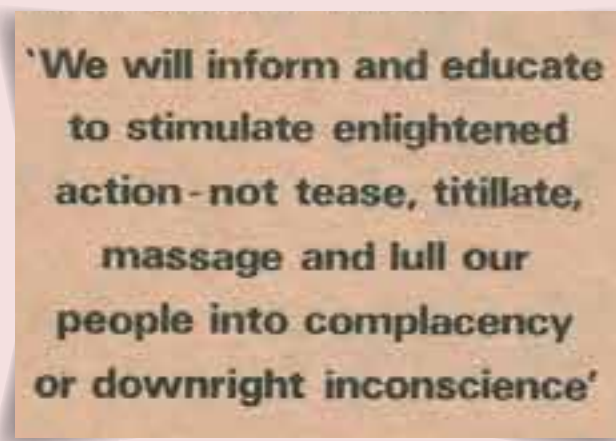
12 DECEMBER 1976

The NTUC Central Committee makes a decision to reposition *Perjuangan* as an all-encompassing, serious trade union journal and introduce *Labour News* as an exclusive medium for the affiliated unions.



1 MAY 1980

In a three-quarter-page note, then NTUC President C.V Devan Nair explains that *The Singaporean* is an effort to extend the coverage to non-trade union Singaporeans and “fulfil a larger and more useful social role”.



- NTUC President C.V Devan Nair



1 NOVEMBER 1986

A snippet in this issue explains that the new masthead gives the publication “a more direct and clearer identity”.



27 JANUARY 2006



2 JANUARY 2009

ntuc THIS WEEK
1 FEBRUARY 2013

“thisweek”

3 JANUARY 2014 TO NOW

THE PRESENT

NTUC *This Week* refreshes its masthead through the years to align with the change of NTUC’s logo and the paper’s direction.

Snippets from the Past

As B.J. Neblett describes, “we are the sum total of our experiences”. Over the years, we experimented with various design and writing styles. We look at some initial inspirations that brought us here today.

By Avelyn Ng

The Year 1965

Independence
Joy or Sorrow?

ON 9th August 1965 over ten million people living in the two-year-old states of Malaysia were jolted with the news that one-fifth of them living in Singapore were cut-off from the other four-fifths living in the thirteen states of Malaysia. The news came as a shock when it was announced just after 10 a.m. when most of the people were busily engaged in their daily chores, either in the office, factories, shops or other places of work, and housewives were in their homes. The odd hour in which the news was announced helped to a certain extent to cause rumors to fly. Very few people then had their radios tuned on with the exception of shops, coffee stalls and other eating places. Thus, the very few who were able to receive the news firsthand had great difficulty to convince their other friends and relations of the news which was heard over the air. The final separation of Singapore was received with mixed feelings. For a few minutes after hearing the news, many were left dumbfounded. Many more required more convincing before they could believe that Singapore was actually severed from the newly formed Malaysia.



message

from the Singapore Prime Minister

THIS is the first year in which we celebrate the May Day jointly with our N.T.U.C. This decision is symbolic of the adjustment that have to be made by all in Malaysia. We have now a public holiday for the birthday of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and several others which we did not celebrate before. It means that we had to give up part of June as our State National Day. We have



First May Day celebration in May 1965



Article extract describing how the news of independence was broken and received on 9 August 1965

#Throwback: Ads by NTUC Social Enterprises

You and your Card

Save \$60 a year on your child-care bill

Where and how to use it

NTUC Child Care Centres

AN INCOME UMBRELLA

60% more in value at a lower cost

INCOME

Engaging Readers

QUIZ ON LOGOS

ANSWER TO THE QUIZ ON BEHAVIOUR

Identify the following logos:

Logos include: CSE, N, LST, S, and a dollar sign.

LOGO DATE COUPON

Congrats!

Down with the blues?

Letters

In love with married man. What'll I do?

Dear Andy

Your problems page

AM I DID YOU USE MANAGEMENT-WORKER PSYCHOLOGY AS IN THE TEXT BOOK?

NO,

I WAS IN A HURRY!

Coming to a Place Closer to You!

One door closes, another opens. Yes, we are going full steam ahead into the digital world to stay hip with the times to serve you better.

By **Avelyn Ng**

As electronic devices gain popularity, it only makes logical sense for us to go fully digital to fit the way content is consumed. The cyberspace – with its ability to connect to social platforms, embed multimedia, and reach a limitless audience – undoubtedly empowers us to do more as well.

Starting 2018, we will be pushing our content out on **LabourBeat.org**, which may sound familiar to some of you. We started *LabourBeat* in 2015 to underscore the softer aspects of the Labour Movement, the voices, aspirations and experiences of workers in Singapore.

Our mission to inform, inspire and engage does not change, but with more

freedom at our hands without the restriction of space and cost, we will be expanding the scope of our content.

Going forward, *LabourBeat* will operate as a user-friendly news site, packing in everything you as a worker needs to know about Singapore's labour scene, plus many other useful resources. From news to human interest stories and useful resources, there will be something for every worker type. Expect timely coverage with breadth and depth, peppered with captivating graphics and videos.

LabourBeat is also going through a facelift currently – stay tuned to the relaunch in January 2018 and let us know what you think!



NEW YEAR, NEW BEGINNINGS!

Dear Readers,

Times are changing fast, and the team at *NTUC This Week* is also entering an era of new possibilities and exciting times. Against that background, we wanted to let you know that we will be shifting *NTUC This Week* to an online platform under the *LabourBeat* banner from the beginning of 2018.

But we still want to keep in touch with you! We've thought of a few ways we can do that. We've ramped up **MyNTUC app**, packing it with new features such as eCoupons, where you can download and redeem giveaways or discounts, eTickets for events, and exclusive privileges for members! (Download on **App Store** or **Google Play**).

We would also like to invite you to join our growing mailing list for *LabourBeat*, an EDM that is sent directly to your inbox containing news meant just for you. Be sure to drop us a line at labourbeat@ntuc.org.sg.

You can also log on to www.labourbeat.org to catch up on Labour Movement news.

Thank you once again for all your valuable support and see you all on new grounds in 2018!

Yours sincerely,

The *NTUC This Week* Editorial team

"thisweek" 01 OCTOBER 2017

Bringing the Spark Back

FROM COMBATIVE TO COLLABORATIVE. FIND OUT HOW MUCH WORKER-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS HAS BRIGHTENED THE WAY FOR WORKERS IN SINGAPORE.

Strengthening trust between NEU and National Healthcare Group

Capland and SREUs strong partnership

New initiative by NEU and U-Associate to raise awareness on mental wellness for healthcare workers

"thisweek" 08 OCTOBER 2017

More to Smile About

From staggered working hours to part-time work, and even telecommuting, flexible work arrangements have helped working Singaporeans achieve the prize of work-life balance.

\$11 million raised to continue the Labour Movement's efforts to help members in need

Yati and Enqi illuminate the way for other women in the audio, visual and lighting industry

HSEU Vice-President Wilson Ong shares what fuels his passion to help fellow healthcare workers

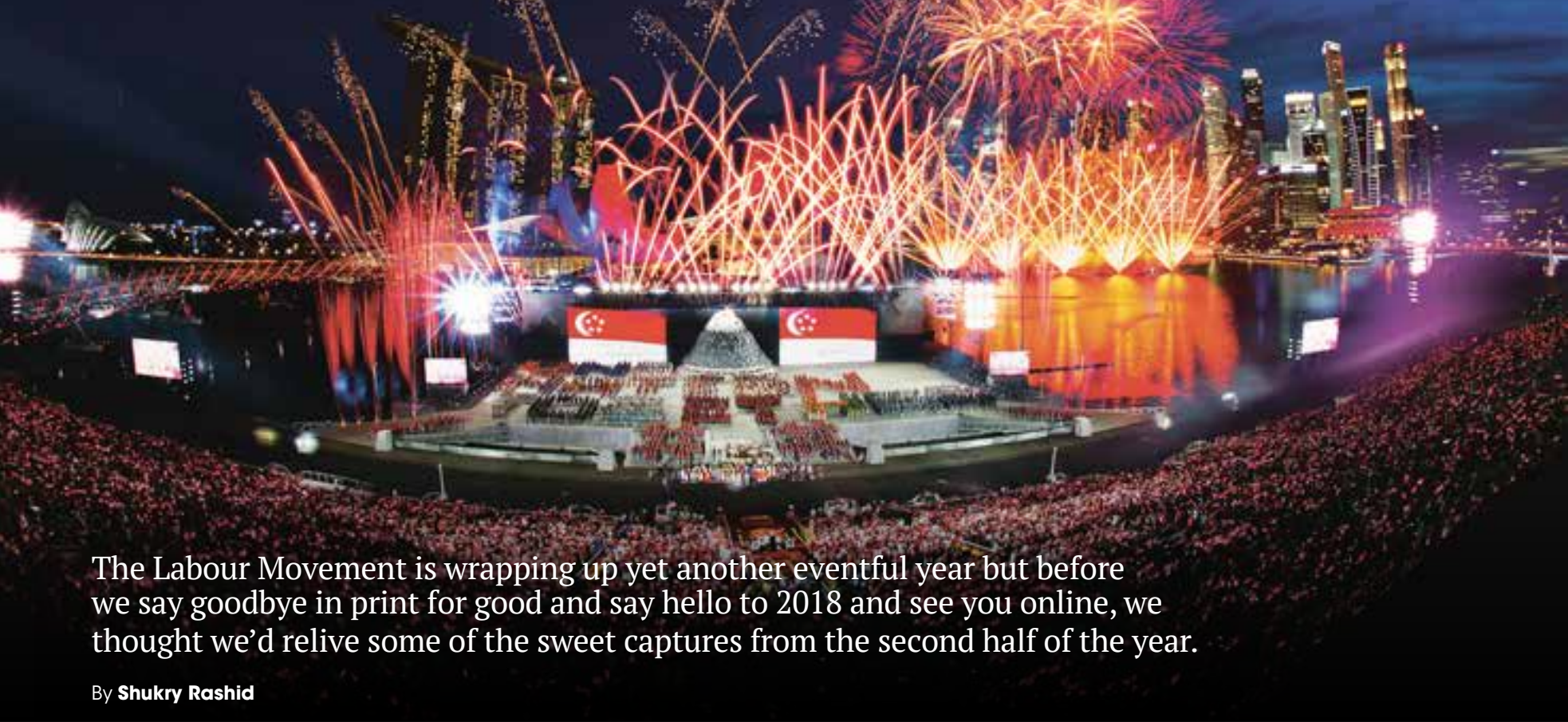
"thisweek" 5 NOVEMBER 2017

SKILLS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

It's now that easy to upgrade yourself with new SkillsFuture modules. They have thought it all out for you.



The Best Moments



The Labour Movement is wrapping up yet another eventful year but before we say goodbye in print for good and say hello to 2018 and see you online, we thought we'd relive some of the sweet captures from the second half of the year.

By **Shukry Rashid**



Members of the public and tripartite partners during the NTUC National Day Observance Ceremony.



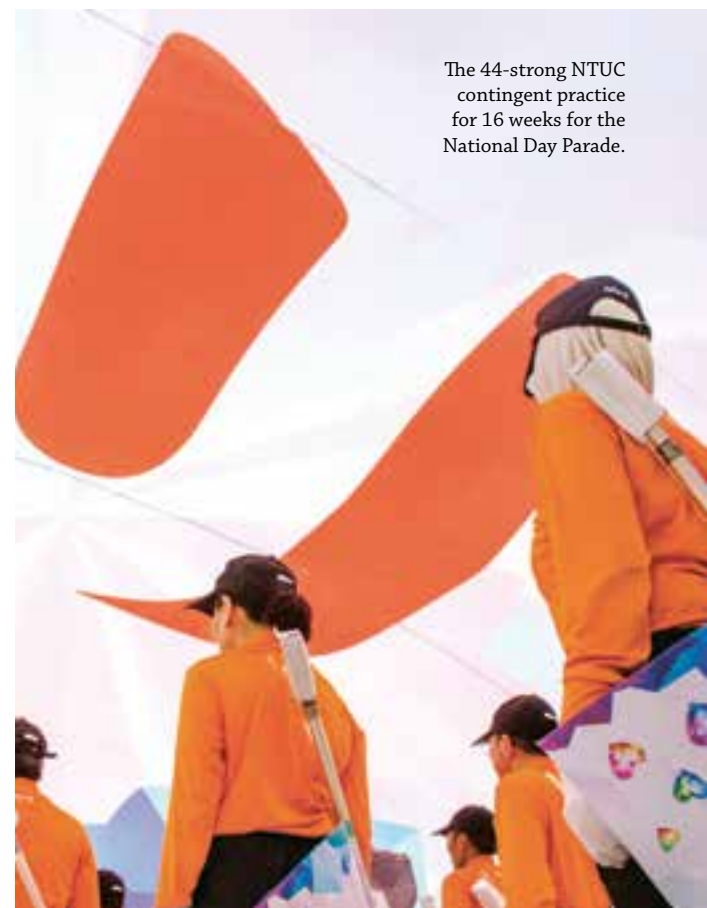
Singapore elects former Speaker of Parliament and veteran unionist Halimah Yacob as the first female President of Singapore on 13 September 2017.



Singapore President Tony Tan during the National Day Parade.



The days of low pay and long working hours for security officers are over thanks to changes to the law to ramp up the security industry.



The 44-strong NTUC contingent practice for 16 weeks for the National Day Parade.

Doing her part for the community, 86-year-old Mdm Puvanadevi Sivagnanam, or Joanna as she prefers to be called, volunteers with NTUC Health's Cluster Support in Bukit Merah. She spends her mornings checking in on vulnerable seniors who need intervention care.



Adopting technology: Senior engineer Victor Lim gets a bird's-eye view of the factory's machines through the smart dashboards at Yamazaki Mazak Singapore's control centre.

Psychologist Shaen Yeo, with her 8-year-old daughter, shares the importance of work-life balance and its impact on workers.



NTUC Foodfare's Rice Garden initiative has given hawkers like Mdm Diep Phuong Mai an opportunity to earn a better living with her own economy rice stall.



Singapore Maritime Officers' Union steps up to help 26 seafarers get their rightful dues totalling to some USD\$320,000.



Mdm Kashlyn Teo, a 70-year-old UberEATS delivery driver, finds her feet through poverty and a broken marriage.



Unusual jobs: Leticia Anne Dragon, whose family is renowned in Singapore's horse racing scene.



HDBSU: Building on from 50 years!

By **Ramesh Subbaraman** and **Shukry Rashid**

Members in this union play a big role in ensuring the success of Singapore's public housing programme. They belong to the Housing and Development Board Staff Union (HDBSU) which celebrated its 50th anniversary this year.

HDBSU has its roots as a branch of the Amalgamated Union of Public Employees (AUPE) in the early 1960s.

In late 1967, a separate entity was established under the name Singapore Housing & Development Board Workers' Union (SHDBWU), and it worked with the support of AUPE.

SHDBWU made a complete departure from AUPE in the late 70s.

The union changed its name to HDBSU in 1987. As at August 2017, HDBSU had 4,348 union members.

Here's a walk down time to see where the union has been and the events surrounding its journey.



Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, then Minister for Trade and Industry in 1988, attends HDBSU's 20th anniversary dinner.



Singapore's old guard and then Minister for Labour late S Rajaratnam attends the union's first annual dinner in 1968.



NTUC Secretary-General Chan Chun Sing graces the 50th anniversary dinner of HDBSU on 11 November 2017.



HDBSU members who have gone through the old ways of field work and upskilled to keep up with today's challenges.



Mr Tan Soo Khoon (middle) joins HDB management and union leaders in their 50th birthday bash at the HDB Hub.

Valuing Close Ties

Close ties between the Housing and Development Board management and the union have helped towards national housing goals, says union advisor Tan Soo Khoon.

He has served as an honorary advisor to the Housing and Development Board Staff Union (HDBSU) since 1977, a position he still holds today.

Former Speaker of Parliament Tan Soo Khoon, who is the longest serving HDBSU advisor and in touch with different generations of leaders of the union, shares his thoughts about the union's journey.

NTUC This Week: Tell us about your involvement with HDBSU.

Tan Soo Khoon: I was sent to the Amalgamated Union of Public Employees (AUPE). At that time the People's Action Party and the Labour Movement wanted to further strengthen their symbiotic relationship and a decision was taken to send Members of Parliament to be involved in trade unions as advisors. There, I met the leaders of the HDBSU (then known as the HDB Workers' Union), which had been first formed as an affiliated branch of AUPE. I became their advisor as well. Soon after I got to know them, the leaders of the HDB Workers' Union decided to end their affiliation with the AUPE and strike out on their own to become the HDBSU. I made the move to follow them as their advisor.

How would you describe the union's ties with the HDB management?

Fortunately for me, being their advisor has been a relatively problem-free one. The leaders of HDBSU have cooperated well with the HDB management. Over the years, the HDBSU leaders and HDB management have valued the close relationship they have with one another. The result can be seen in HDB's resounding success in providing quality homes as well as building vibrant communities for our people. Working closely together has contributed to a national goal.

What lies ahead for HDBSU as it celebrates its 50th birthday?

Over the years, there has been a constant infusion of new and young leaders into various levels of leadership in HDBSU. This speaks well for its process of leadership renewal and for its future. However, HDBSU must continue to encourage more staff to join the union. About 61 per cent of HDB staff are union members, so there is certainly scope to increase the membership figure.

Reflections...

HDBSU members take a trip down memory lane and share what their jobs were like in the early years.

“Those days we had to put on the uniform, and we would look like an army officer. Very often, people mistook us for being a traffic police officer. During that time, everything was manual entry. We carried a pocketbook, and we would enter all the details of the parking offenders into it. The most challenging shift was the third shift, the midnight shift. When we received complaints from residents in HDB estates, we had to check every vehicle as to whether they had displayed the parking coupon. And sometimes some residents from the higher floors would start throwing things at us like ice cubes, rotten eggs and even small bottles when they saw us doing our checks.”

Tan Hock Hai, 62, senior estate manager, joined as a parking enforcement officer 44 years ago



“As a resettlement inspector, my main role was to do a census survey and find out the assets owned by someone before they were rehoused to a HDB flat. These assets included land and property such as chicken coop and pigsty. These would all be compensated to the owner. Resettlement in Singapore's history played an important role as, without it, we could not have built all these HDB flats, schools and even areas used by the army such as Lim Chu Kang.”

Ng Liang Tat, 65, land inspector, joined as a resettlement inspector in 1975



“Back then, HDB needed the group of technicians to do the routine maintenance of water pumps. Every month, we had to check and maintain the blocks' water pumps. In 1989, after the formation of Town Councils, they took over the maintenance. My job scope was then moved to the testing of new water pumps, and it went into new areas such as checking of gas piping installation. In 2002, I became a technical officer in the branch and attended to residents' feedbacks and complaints. I joined HDB with an ITE certificate, and obtained a diploma through attending evening classes. Skills upgrading is important, and I would always tell my members that we have to take on new skills to remain employable.”

Tay Peck Kiang, 57, senior estate manager, joined as a technician in 1982



Serving up Great Service

What does it take to be in the service line and keep customers smiling? We find out from two finalists of the Excellent Service Awards (EXSA) 2017's highest honour, Superstar Award.

Story and Photos by **Avelyn Ng**

Launched in 1994, the EXSA is a national award that recognises individuals who have delivered quality service. There were 2,641 recipients from 74 companies across the star, gold and silver award categories this year, marking a 121 increase in awardees from 2016.

EXSA is managed by six industry bodies – Association of Singapore Attractions, Land Transport Authority, Restaurant Association of Singapore, Singapore Hotel Association, Singapore Retailers Association, Association of Banks in Singapore, and supported by SPRING Singapore.

“I’m lovin’ it”

Surina Ismail, 52, is a mother of five, a proud employee at McDonald’s, and a winner of EXSA 2017’s Star Award. She was also one of the five finalists for the Superstar Award category.

As the store activities representative, Surina comes up with ideas to engage children at the outlet during special occasions and festivities. She regularly participates in brainstorming sessions to improve the experience for the patrons. Going beyond, she also personally handles small orders to reduce waiting time and customises orders to her customers’ preferences where possible.

She shared: “I came to McDonald’s by chance. After I was retrenched from the factory line, I stayed home for five years. I wanted to keep my mind active but was unsure of what to venture into, so my daughter recommended me this job, which has flexible working hours. I tried and have never looked back. As our slogan says, I’m lovin’ it!”

McDonald’s is unionised under the Food, Drinks and Allied Workers Union.

FOOTPRINTS IN PEOPLE’S LIVES

Over the past 10 years, Surina has accumulated a fair share of loyal customers, whom she



remembers by name. Surina makes it a point to gather feedback and build emotional connections. In her conversations with other parents, she has exchanged personal experiences, home remedies and even recipes.

“There will be misunderstandings and complaints but no matter who is at fault, we have to remain calm and restore the customers’ confidence in us. We are trained to listen, apologise, resolve and thank them,” added

Surina, who has attained several Singapore Workforce Skills Qualifications.

Earlier in May 2017, Surina received a hamper from her supervisor after a customer sent in a testimonial for her excellent service.

“It was just small gestures on my part, I was not expecting anything in return. When I heard the news, I was jumping for joy. I still keep the hamper wrapper and basket for memories!”



Every Scoop Matters

Senior Restaurant Manager Joanne Choong, 48, has been working in Soup Restaurant for 15 years. This year, she was awarded the EXSA Star Award and appointed by the panel of judges among 24 nominations as the sole Superstar Award recipient. Her secret ingredient? Serving from the heart.

“We have a family culture within the organisation and that’s how I treat customers too, like family. I recommend them the right soups to drink when they are ill, and the best seats to take if they are not as mobile.

“For regular customers who order take-out but cannot find a place to park their cars, I bring their food to the taxi stand if manpower allows and they can make payment on the spot. There is a lot of mutual trust,” shared Joanne, in Mandarin.

About 80 per cent of her outlet’s clientele are repeat customers.

NOT AN EASY ROAD

Joanne now manages a team of 16 and is a crowd favourite, but there was a time she had to make some adjustments at work. Not used to spending hours on her feet and interacting with strangers, Joanne was stressed out when she first joined as a waitress. However, she persevered and thrived with the help from her supervisor and with in-house training.

When asked about the challenges at work, Joanne recalled an incident when one of the staff accidentally spilled hot beverage on a child. In response, she applied first aid on the child and helped to dry her clothes. According to her, quick reaction and attentiveness are of essence during service recovery.

While more food establishments are rolling out e-menus, including Soup Restaurant, Joanne believes there is nothing like what personal touch and empathy have to offer.

Snapshots

A quick roundup of what went on in and around the Labour Movement recently.

By **NTUC This Week Team**



SISEU Turns 36

Close to 900 members and partners joined Singapore Industrial & Services Employees' Union (SISEU) at the Mandarin Orchard Hotel for their 36th anniversary dinner on 10 November 2017. Guest-of-Honour and SISEU Advisor Ong Ye Kung presented awards to six companies and 19 long service branch officials in recognition of their strong support and contributions to the Labour Movement.

Linens For Life

Some 12 seniors from NTUC Health's Silver Circle and 15 pre-schoolers from My First Skool in Jurong West recently came together to revel in the year-end festive spirit. Used linen from the Shangri-La Hotel was given a second lease of life as Christmas stockings which were sewn together by the seniors after being decorated by the children. The activity was a collaboration with Linens For Life, a corporate social responsibility initiative by Diversey Singapore Pte Ltd that aims to help local communities through recycling used hotel linen.



e2i Helps Company to Sharpen Business Set-up

What does the Labour Movement have to do with a company operating a bungee jump on Sentosa Island? Quite a bit actually.

NTUC's e2i (Employment and Employability Institute) helped Bungy Holdings Singapore Private Limited (also known as AJ Hackett Sentosa) hire workers and provided them with productivity improvement solutions.

The company also tapped on the Inclusive Growth Programme (IGP) for three projects.

These included the purchase and installation

of equipment for the integrated safety and lighting system, the automated queue and order system and the automated imaging system which captures photos and films, scripts and edited footage of a guest's entire visit.

Spreading Festive Cheer

Some 25 leaders from the National Taxi Association and National Private Hire Vehicles Association came together recently to brighten up the day for the residents of the Red Cross Home for the Disabled. The drivers donated and transported essential items. They topped off the effort with a few songs to entertain the residents.



MyNTUC

Missing out on the latest news, privileges and events from NTUC? Download MyNTUC app now, plus be privy to everything meant just for U!



Reasons to download now!

- 1 eCoupons**
A special feature, just for U – Download and redeem exclusive giveaways and discounts online or in-store.
- 2 Exclusive Privileges**
Membership certainly comes with perks – look out for birthday treats, special offers and promotions, brought to you on the go.
- 3 eTickets for Events**
Register and purchase tickets for events anytime, anywhere and save them in your eWallet for simple and fast retrieval!
- 4 Exclusive News**
Catch up on the latest Labour Movement-related news, on an enhanced interface.
- 5 eWallet**
Other useful features – Check LinkPoints and UTAP balances.
- 6 Workplace Advisory**
Union members, get advice and assistance on workplace issues and employment-related matters.

Coming Soon!

Look out for more exciting new features in our next upgrade!





Transforming the Environmental Services Industry

Some 30,000 cleaning and waste management workers are set to benefit from better jobs through upskilling and technology adoption by 2025.

Story and Photos by **Fawwaz Baktee**

The environmental services industry, which includes cleaning and waste management, will soon be getting a spruce up with the launch of the Environmental Services (ES) Industry Transformation Map (ITM) on 11 December 2017 at Changi Airport Terminal 3.

The initiative will help companies to drive innovation, train workers and improve procurement practices.

According to the National Environment Agency (NEA), the ES ITM aims to help about 30,000 workers achieve higher-value-added jobs through upskilling and technology adoption by 2025.

ZERO WASTE NATION

Speaking at the launch, Environment and Water Resources Minister Masagos Zulkifli said: “In sustaining a clean and liveable environment, Singapore is also working towards the vision of being a Zero Waste nation – where waste is re-defined and innovative technologies would be deployed in waste reduction, separation, recycling and treatment to enable us to close the waste loop. Jobs will be enhanced as the future of delivering services via system-level infrastructure calls for new skillsets.”

The NEA worked with various government agencies, the Labour Movement and industry partners to develop the ITM.

NTUC Assistant Secretary-General Zainal Sapari said: “We held focus group discussions to hear and get feedback from companies and workers on the ground on the challenges they were facing. NTUC’s focus was mainly to ensure that our workers upgrade their skills to earn better jobs and pay.

“The profile of the workers in the industry varies. In the cleaning sector, they are more elderly. As such, we need to instil a mindset change where they are more comfortable to use technology. I encourage companies to send their workers for training for them to be more familiar with technology.”

SOME INITIATIVES

One of the new initiatives under the ITM is a programme called INCUBATE, where seven organisations, one of which is NTUC Club, agreed to introduce technology trials for cleaning and waste management systems on their premises.

Through the ITM, the Government also hopes to push for a broader adoption of outcome-based contracts with the use of technology, rather than contracts based on manpower headcount.

A new Skills Framework was also launched at the event. It was jointly developed by SkillsFuture Singapore, Workforce Singapore, NEA, the Labour Movement, and training institutions.

The framework provides employers with information on the skills that are needed for jobs in the cleaning and waste management sectors.

i For more information on the Environmental Services Industry Transformation Map, visit www.nea.gov.sg/industry-transformation-map.

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