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NANYANG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER 2016

04 issue



AS THE YEAR ENDS,
HERE ARE SOME MEMORIES
TO CHERISH

Contents

02 Strategic Educational Alliance of Southeast Asia (SEA2) 2016 04 Babble and Speak Competition 2016 05 Backyard Café Celebrates 2nd Anniversary 17 Aug & 19 Aug
08 PSG Dads for Life – Forest Adventure 2016 11 National Science Challenge Grand Final 17 September 2016 at MediaCorp Studios
13 30th YMCA Plain English Speaking Awards (PESA) 2016 14 Homecoming Funfair 2016

NEWSLETTER 2016

STRATEGIC EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA (SEA2) 2016



The Strategic Educational Alliance of Southeast Asia (SEA2) was founded by NYGH and formally launched in 2014 to bring schools from Southeast Asia together to create greater synergy between educators and students in the region.

As an alliance, the schools come together to:

- Establish a structured platform for like-minded education institutions in the Southeast Asian region to work together
- Provide extended opportunities for students from across the region to work and play together, through experiential learning programmes and student forums.
- Create platforms for member schools to further reach out to education institutions in other regions to enrich the learning experiences and development of students and educators

This year, the 3rd SEA2 conference was held in Sekolah Darma Yudha, Pekanbaru, Indonesia from 5th to 9th September. NYGH sent two teams of staff and students, comprising 4 staff members and 9 students in total, to attend this conference. Our school is committed to complete the year-long project, "Addressing Food Wastage in the Region", to be shared at the 4th conference in 2017 in Thailand.



STRATEGIC EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA (SEA2) 2016

Here are some thoughts on the experience, penned by student **participant Yi Jie (207)**

SEA2 was definitely one of the highlights of 2016 for me! It was a humbling and gratifying experience with many takeaways. It was especially touching to see how people from such diverse cultures and ethnicities came together to bond as a family in merely 5 days. I loved everything about it. On the first day, we dined and partied and took numerous selfies. On the second day we gave our presentations and prepared for the cross country project at night with new-found friends. The third day saw us at out-bound activities where we got all wet but found thrilling. We had our ASEAN Youth Festival and Closing Ceremony on the fourth day, when we performed and exchanged gifts and warm hugs. The conference closed with a visit to a mall with the students from Indonesia and a tearful farewell at the airport, with the realization that the next time we met might not be so soon. Precious memories made aside, one thing that had most impact on me was how genuinely friendly everyone was at this conference! I guess that was the reason why it was easy for everyone to bond without reservation.

Special mention for the best company I could have asked for: Wan Hsien, Elaine, Yi En, Huiqi, Jamie, Elizabeth, Rachel and Tina, as well as the teachers: Ms Agnes Ng, Ms Lena Teo and Ms Esther Cheong. Thank you for making it such a special and unique experience! Thank you to our VP, Mrs Whang Ai Lee, too for joining us at this meaningful conference.

SEA2 2016 was truly an amazing conference and I am incredibly grateful to have been part of it.



BABBLE AND SPEAK COMPETITION 2016

This annual competition is about communicating clearly in the English Language and thinking critically and creatively. This year, it was held on 15 July and featured topics like 'If children could rule the roads...', 'Freedom on my bicycle' and 'The train of tomorrow'. In keeping with the theme of public transportation, we had the tremendous support of the Land Transport Authority, with the focus on future green transportation. It was hoped that such a competition would not only promote communication in good English but also raise children's awareness of the need for responsible commuting.

Gold Award



BACKYARD CAFÉ CELEBRATES 2ND ANNIVERSARY 17 AUG & 19 AUG

On 17 August, the anniversary was marked with a slew of activities, from the sale of freshly brewed coffee and breakfast, to a garden walk. Sec 2 and Sec 4 girls sang and organised games with cafe vouchers as prizes and carnival stalls were set up by the sec 4 seniors.

On 19 August, speakers from Nparks gave a talk on butterflies and environmental awareness to a rapt audience.



“暖情花园” 情暖三周年

南洋女中的“暖情花园”项目于2013年校庆日（8月15日）正式启动，分为花园和咖啡厅两部分。“暖情咖啡厅”又称为“四度咖啡厅”，寓意是提醒大家关注环境问题，因为地球的温度一旦再因为全球暖化上升四摄氏度，地球将不再适合生物生存。如今，暖暖咖啡清香融合暖暖情谊，“暖情花园”已经度过三周岁的生日了。

这个项目由学生自主运营，开放给南洋的每一位学生参与投入，义务帮忙，共同建设花园与参与咖啡厅运作。暖情花园里种了各种各样的香料和植物，其中有些品种会吸引蝴蝶的幼虫，所以到了合适的季节里，我们的花园里就会翩翩起舞，很是诗情画意。除了以上植物，暖情花园里还种植着各类可食用的植物，如甘蔗、百香果、木薯、甘薯等。

由学生自主运营的咖啡厅出售各类甜点和冷热饮料，原材料品质优越，纯种咖啡豆和可可粉都是通过公平贸易（fairtrade）而购来的，以求种植咖啡豆的农民们都能够收获和他们的付出相应的回报。我们也坚持不用吸管和塑料制品，因为我们想为环保尽一份绵薄之力。

每周三我们出售限量的杯子蛋糕，它们由一位毕业的学姐提供，真材实料，大获学生好评。当初我们在建立这个咖啡厅时，就是为了提供给南洋的学生一个舒适的环境，让她们多跟不同年级、不同班级、不同课外活动的同学沟通交流，建立友情。我们从来不以盈利为目的，咖啡厅的全部收益都投入在了花园的建设和维持咖啡厅运作的费用上。咖啡厅在每周二到周四的午休时间开放，除了学生以外，也欢迎老师们前来享用咖啡的醇香，甜点的美味。每周三下午花园也开放给所有想来当志愿者的学生们一起来修剪植物，为花园出力。

The backyard is like a classroom

A place of discovery, friendship and learning. But what sets it apart is that the things learnt and the interactions made far surpass what can possibly be done and learnt in the classroom. The team has learnt skills such as coffee-making, weeding, identification of insects and plants. But more than that, what keeps us in the backyard is the spirit of being open, inclusive and ultimately, being yourself.

The learning in the backyard has a unique kind of beauty, it is slow and relatable. It is almost like telling me “hey, slow down a little and look around.” I’ve been trained to be fast paced for almost my entire life, taking on every possible thing and filling myself up to the brim. But the backyard has given me the environment to slow down and look around, be it just by lying in the hammock, or trying to film a time lapse of the metamorphosis of a caterpillar, I have learnt to slow down and pluck out the weeds in my life, bit by bit, uncluttering my very own activities plot and allowing myself to focus on the main plants in life.

And of course, part of the spirit of the backyard involves human interaction, because the relationships formed in the backyard are especially special and dear. I became friends with people I thought I would never even talk to, and even with members who I only see once or twice a year.

The backyard to me in Sec 2 was simply a way to get my hands dirty, but as I realised much later, I wasn’t getting dirtier, but rather, more and more enriched as I dug deeper and rooted myself. I feel like my time in the backyard team has really been a long journey of fighting for what I really want to do and because I’ve discovered myself, my weaknesses, my strengths, I know what I want and I’ll fight for it.

I’ve learnt to dream, and just like a caterpillar struggling to form a cocoon around itself, I will stay positive, in hopes of a beautiful future.

~ Nicole Lee Cher Ning (402)



My journey to Backyard Café

I was given the opportunity to join in the starting up of the backyard project way back in 2013, but I did not signed up. I didn't visit it after it started, and was indifferent to its events and activities at the very beginning. Yet half a year later, upon receiving an email from Ms Teng asking for volunteers from the school, I felt like I needed to check it out. Things went quickly from there. I was taught how to take orders, how to make coffee, and even shown the ways of the garden. And before I knew it, I was part of the Core Team.

This experience allowed me to interact with different people across all levels, bringing together people whom I may have otherwise never known. In the Core Team everyone had a chance to prove and develop herself; eventually those who stayed did so because they really cared about the café project.

There is something magical about how one can work on the same plot of land together can also link up with people in subtle ways. In our own lives, we may not be the best of friends, but in the garden we are people who share the same interests with the same goal, and so we are all connected. My best memories of those times are the simple pleasures like weeding the garden amongst the earthy smell of grass or making a cup of coffee with the aroma of the coffee beans filling the air.

For the past two years or so that I've been in the backyard, it has changed a lot — with common gardening sessions on Wednesdays and separate shifts between lower and upper secondary due to different recesses. Plants have grown, fruits have been harvested, eggs hatched and butterflies emerged. Our shelter became waterproof but much smaller, and a newly-built trellis now extends the shelter. The mango tree was once looked past and insignificant, but now it has become a popular tree-climbing spot.

These experiences are the small things, nothing extraordinary, which will stay with me forever, and I feel grateful to have been able to experience all of these in my life in Nanyang.

I'd like to think that it was fate that pushed me to open that email when I usually just 'mark as read' as my other mails. Or maybe it was pure luck that I decided to try this out, and gained so much from it. Whatever it is, I am proud to be a part of the backyard, and I'll definitely miss it. But as they say, "Don't cry because it ended. Smile because it happened".

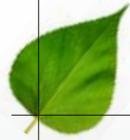
~ Lee Pui Yee Jane (410)



我从中二开始就在咖啡厅帮忙，到现在已经是第三个年头了。在暖情花园和咖啡厅里，我结交了许多朋友。若是没有这个地方，我其实很难认识到这么多不同的人。借着在咖啡厅工作的机会，我也变得开朗大方了不少，有时跟一些陌生人和长辈交流时也有种全新的感受。人和人之间真诚的交流一直都能给人带来最纯真的快乐，所以我们的负责老师丁老师一直鼓励我们不要躲在自己的世界里，多多跟他人交流。在我参与咖啡厅的运营工作时，也有一些长辈十分热心地给我建议，传授经验，让我受益匪浅。暖情花园将是我在南洋最深刻美好的回忆之一。

~ 蔡心蕊 (401)



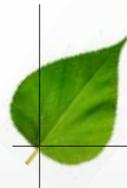


PSG DADS FOR LIFE - FOREST ADVENTURE 2016

A few days before 25 June 2016, there were thunderstorms and heavy rain in the mornings and some parents were wondering if we would still meet at Forest Adventure. The Dads-for-Life sub-committee of the PSG decided that we would still meet regardless of the weather! Fortunately, it was a cloudy and cool Saturday morning on 25 June 2016. It was an outing Dad promised, to spend time with his daughter on the trees at the Forest Adventure at Bedok Reservoir Park. It was Dads-for-Life@Forest Adventure event held annually since 2013.

The rainy season a few days before could have put off some park goers and eased the car park space. Some Father-Daughter pairs arrived as early as 8am. Soon the first group of 8 Father-Daughter pairs was registered and they proceeded for the 30 mins safety briefing at 9am as planned. Everyone was equipped with a harness and a helmet and learned the safe use of the equipment and how to move on the course.





PSG DADS FOR LIFE - FOREST ADVENTURE 2016

Soon, fathers and daughters found themselves challenged, 5m above ground, swinging, grappling, jumping, sliding and flying just over the reservoir. That was Forest Adventure!

A dad said, "My daughter made me register last minute and I'm so glad I did. It was nothing I expected. It was so tough and so much fun."

"I felt that it was really a bonding session for me and my father because we got to do everything together. I also really like sports so this was a really great experience for me," said one of girls.

17 girls and their fathers were absorbed in the challenging heights of the Grand Course. There were 35 different obstacles on 4 different sites. The girls were determined. They challenged themselves and each other and later found themselves encouraging each other, and other participants. One of the most significant tests was the fantastic big Tarzan swing which was known to many as a "leap of faith". Some overcame their fear of heights, some saw a different side to their dads. Rarely are fathers found vulnerable in front of their children, and enjoying it.



PSG DADS FOR LIFE – FOREST ADVENTURE 2016



Another dad said, "I spent quality bonding time with my daughter. I am glad to be able to see her in challenging situations and how she overcame them."

The daughter expressed that she had so much fun with her dad that she would do this again, "It was so difficult but to hear encouragement from my Dad on the trees was worth it. I must do this again."

Most completed all 4 sites over 2 hours of exhilarating fun in the trees and after concluding each site by flying across the reservoir on a wire, they returned to the base camp for some rest and Bento lunch and to collect their certificates of adventure together. We hope they will continue to have many more good bonding opportunities.



Participation in this challenge was an amazing experience for a team of four students - Jiang Nuoyi, Jovyn Tan Li Shyan, Grace Wong Ray Shian and Jenny Ma Junyi, from Secondary 301. The team made it through to the Grand Final and were placed second runner-up.



Here are some thoughts from members of the team.

Much effort and dedication was put into this as we wanted to give our all and push ourselves to a higher level. We had sacrificed our recesses to polish up our science concepts, and spent many hours studying for the challenge. The joy and exhilaration felt, when we found out that we had gotten into the final round by just a narrow margin, was beyond words. The best part was hearing our Nanyang friends and supporters cheering us on even when we had answered a question incorrectly. Personally, this experience allowed me to discover a lot about myself and also bridge close friendships with my teammates.

~ Grace Wong Ray Shian

Preparing for the quarter finals was the toughest, for me personally. Grace and I were the ones to deliver the presentation for round 1, and there was just so much to memorize in such a short span of time, we were even editing our script the day before! The semifinals were great and the final was wonderful too, especially when they gave us that lovely jacket and the buffet at the end.

Special thanks to Dr Slatter for taking most of his precious Thursday and Tuesday recesses to teach us and coach us and to Ms Yao and to all other teachers who came to support us and to our seniors too, who sent us inspirational videos!

~ Jenny Ma

The format of NSC emphasised not only scientific knowledge and accuracy, but also clarity in conveying concepts. This is extremely important though often a neglected skill. This was a skill we applied especially when we were faced with complex ideas which had to be expressed simply but not simplistically. We also learnt to think under pressure during the rapid response round where we had to answer questions outside the school syllabus, which required us to read widely on various topics.

This has been a truly memorable experience for my team and I and it has been an honour to represent the school in this event.

~ Jovyn Tan

Post-event interview with MediaCorp

Q1: What drove your team to participate in NSC 2016?

We were mainly driven by our common passion for science, but also our desire to acquire not just the knowledge but also to learn how the different scientific areas affect our daily lives. The hands-on nature of the competition was therefore really exciting to us! NSC has provided us with the rare opportunity of bringing our understanding of Science to a new level.

Q2: Do you think science is important for Singapore? Why?

Yes, science is important because it has the potential to not only save and extend lives, but also to improve the quality of life in Singapore. It can also be used to keep Singapore competitive in our increasingly globalised world. Science can also help us understand the world around us and encourage deep thinking as well as the pursuit of knowledge.

Q3: Did you go through any special training for the competition?

Our school does not have a science club nor did we have any specialised training for this competition; we mostly self-studied using the Internet and library books. We also consulted our teachers and seniors on concepts we were unsure about. Mostly, it was curiosity that spurred us on!

Q4: How confident were you of victory? And who did you think would be your greatest rival in the Grand Final?

We were not very confident as the other teams were all very strong competitors. It was the first time since 2005 that Nanyang had got into the Grand Final, so we were honoured to have made it this far. We wanted to do our best and enjoy the whole process.

We did not really view any single team as our greatest rival as every team had its strengths. Thus we did not try to beat any specific school; instead we sought to better ourselves and give it our all in the Grand Final.

Q5: How did you find the experience of competing in front of a 'live' audience?

It was a once in a lifetime experience, and wonderfully amazing. We had the subconscious awareness that we were competing in front of a large audience. It provided a sort of adrenaline rush.

It also spurred us on as we felt more determined to make our school proud. The feeling was overwhelming, but pleasantly so, and it was an honour to represent our school in this televised competition.

Q6: What is the greatest thing you gained from taking part in NSC 2016?

Other than the scientific knowledge acquired throughout this competition, we also challenged ourselves in expressing scientific concepts clearly and concisely through the various presentations and experiments. Science is not only about understanding ideas and jargon but also observing how these concepts manifest themselves in our daily lives.

Most importantly, we have bonded as a team and learnt to work with each other to achieve greater heights!



30TH YMCA PLAIN ENGLISH SPEAKING AWARDS (PESA) 2016 Inter-School Competition, Secondary Category

Amanda Ashley Woo of Secondary 302 participated in the competition this year. Here are her reflections on her experience.

PESA was a unique experience for me. At first, I was completely unprepared as to what to expect, and so tried to keep an open mind. The competition had the distinct concept of using simple, plain English to convey a message. It was a foreign concept; in many speeches we are encouraged to use complex vocabulary in our speeches to get the message across. This, however, was a refreshing change! I learnt a lot about public speaking skills; I learnt the importance of confidence in particular. However, the most memorable part of the experience came from all the new friendships I have forged. Having the opportunity to talk to people from different backgrounds and personalities allowed me to gain insights on the different voices in our society. In a way, I felt that all these opinions pointed to what our generation foresees for Singapore's future. This was an opportunity I'm very grateful for!



HOMECOMING FUNFAIR 2016

At almost a hundred years old, Nanyang has seen generations of students. And it is not every year that the school holds a homecoming funfair, so when it does have one, the homecoming funfair is indeed one to be remembered. This year's funfair, held on 6th August, was no exception. The preparation started early in the year, and pulled staff and students, alumni, board members, parents, and partners together – truly, a labour of love. Sale of coupons started early, to catch the Chinese New Year celebrations, and started the Funfair ball rolling.

Pre-funfair activities added to the hype. Project Dengzi, an art event, was both fundraiser and art showcase. Two cooking and baking workshops kept up the energy and were the lead-ups to our inaugural Great Nanyang Bake Off, more exciting than the Great British Bake Off, being both fundraiser and ground-breaker.





HOMECOMING FUNFAIR 2016

The days, weeks, and months of hard work culminated in ONE day on the 6th of August. Blessed with good weather despite the possibility of rain and the threat of haze, the show was on, and what a show it was! The school took on a carnival air, with the white tent over the quadrangle; walls, pillars and balustrades festooned with balloons in school colours; dunking machines and Uncle Ringo carnival rides; and the buzz and energy of our students, staff, alumni, parents and visitors.

The hall was transformed into an exciting shoppers' paradise. On stage, there was a range of performances, from classical Teochew opera, to a rock band, to a fashion show of jewellery, modelled by our own girls. Spectacular performances by our CCA groups enthralled audiences in the auditorium, and up in our kitchen, was the excitement of the inaugural Great Nanyang Bake Off as our budding bakers faced off each other. The quadrangle became a mass of humanity as the crowds walked along each stall run by our students, with their innovative products and services. The Gourmet Paradise in the school canteen sold an exciting range of food, from TungLok dumplings to Turkish kebabs, sponsored and managed by our Board members, NSAA, and Parent Support Group. Tucked away in the quiet of the fourth floor was the Reunion High Tea, another first of its kind for a funfair, where old friends caught up with each other.

The funfair, aptly named “家” (“Home”) indeed drew home our alumni from the different batches. It also allowed us to celebrate with our friends and partners. We had guests from Australia, Indonesia, and our partners and beneficiaries whom we have worked with for a number of years now, such as senior citizens from Sunlove SAC (North West CDC). It is this belief in and commitment to the school that led to the success of the funfair. This was a day and event when memories were created, memories and meaningfulness that form the basis for our vision for a greater Nanyang.

Homecoming Funfair 2016 – our 99th year mega event - indeed an event to remember for the Nanyang spirit, the dynamism and energy, the friendships forged and the creativity unleashed. With the tremendous support shown by the school community, stakeholders and well-wishers, Nanyang met its target of raising \$500,000, with the funds going towards our Building Extension Project as well as our adopted charities which include The President's Challenge and The Community Chest.



NANYANG GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

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