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TU launches **SHINE Award** Programme

By CHIN KAH LOONG

SUBANG JAYA - Taylor's University undergraduates from the 2014 intake can receive a second transcript highlighting their extra-curricular activities upon graduation by signing up for the SHINE Award programme at its portal (shine.taylors.edu.my).

SHINE Award Centre Life Skills development specialist Dorcas Lam Yarn Pooi said, "When participants graduate, they'll receive an official document by Taylor's which will be recognised by employers."

She said by using a point system, the student's involvement in these activities are tracked, organised and managed.

"The points are given out once participants have completed an extra-curricular activity and submitted their application for the points on the SHINE portal," she said.

According to Lam, points are not simply handed out. Students will have to write a short reflection essay on what they have done during the event and what they could have done better.

After the application has been evaluated and approved, students will then have the points added to their account on the SHINE portal.

"Once they have enough points, they will receive a notification notifying them that they can apply for a SHINE Award," she said.

The SHINE Award has three tiers: the Silver award is 1,100 points, the Gold Award at 1,500 points and the Platinum Award at 2,000 points. "The programme is self-paced, with you deciding how

quickly or slow you are progressing," she said.

Participants who do not have enough points to apply for these awards before completing the programme will still receive the second transcript without the award.

Three years is the suggested length of the programme as it would give students enough time to accumulate the points.

"We recommend students to join as early as they can," Lam added.

Student Council wins best Merdeka photo



First place winners of the Merdeka Day Best Dressed Group Photo Contest. Source: Ben Lau, Photography Club

By ALIAA BINTI BAHARUDIN

SUBANG JAYA - Taylor's University Student Council plans to save their Merdeka Day Best Dressed Group Photo prize, an RM600 shopping voucher, as an award for future events or competitions organised by them.

Bernard Ow Ji Jing, campus integration director of the Student Council added that Merdeka is a significant day that celebrates the freedom that our nation's warriors have fought for and it is the day to celebrate the unity of people of this nation.

The Student Development Hub announced the winners of the Best Dressed Group Photo contest on 5 Sept.

Niranjni a/p Jayabalan coordinator of the contest said, "The objective of this competition was to create the spirit of oneness on our National Day celebration. We wanted to celebrate our cultural diversity with all students and staff at Taylor's University."



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Freshies kickstart university life with Orientation Party

By MICHELLE NG SIEW SIAN

SUBANG JAYA - Over 700 new students attended the Orientation Party (OP) themed 'Ancient Greece' organised by Taylor's University Orientation Leaders (OL) on 27 Aug here.

OP team person-in-charge Mandy Tan said, "We went with this theme as we thought the historical and cultural background would allow new students to dress up."

Another OP person-in-charge Alvin Tan Shing Yeou said, "We aim to make the next level of life experience the best one for first-year students."

Foundation in Business student Sayed Nofal, 19, added that the party was an awesome way to kickstart his university life.

Alvin said the arrangement of performances during the event was one of the essential factors that kept the crowd going.

"It also set a good ambience for interactions among freshies," Alvin added.

Student Shalinn Tan, 19, majoring in architecture, said, "The party was awesome. When is the next one?"



Freshies grab vouchers sponsored by Juice Works during OP. Source: ATAP Studios.

Mandy said, "We are glad that the freshmen responded positively to our hard work. The OL aim to surprise new students during the party."

Student Liao Jun Ye, 19, majoring in culinary arts, said the performances were amazing and suggested to have more snacks served until dinner.

The party which started around 7pm, was held at the amphitheatre with performances from music band Chocolate Animal Killers, beatboxer Demon, singer James Wong, Ace dancers and DJ Michael.

Sponsors Juice Works and Mission-Q provided vouchers for the event.

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TU Toastmasters Club wins Evaluation Contest

By GERALDINE TAN SHU WEN

SUBANG JAYA - Taylor's University's (TU) Toastmasters Club hosted the annual "Area B2 and B4 Humorous Speech and Evaluation Contest" here on 13 Sept where various Toastmasters clubs showcased their public speaking skills.

Vice president of public relations for TU's Toastmasters Club Ashikin Aidura said, "This was two contests in one; first the contestants had to deliver a humorous speech and the second to provide positive and encouraging feedback to a test speaker."

Aidura added that TU was the only university club competing among corporate Toastmasters clubs such as Service Rocket and CIMA this round.

TU's Toastmasters Club members took this contest as a platform to challenge themselves into tailoring their speeches and evaluations to meet certain criteria.

"Since Toastmasters International is an organisation focusing on self-improvement, it is a rare chance for Toastmasters to see how they rank among other speakers," Aidura said.

TU's Toastmasters representative and Evaluation Contest winner Lalitha a/p Muthathal said, "I used to have stage fright and one day I decided to do something about it."

"I saw an opportunity to face my fears through Toastmasters and it has become a platform for everyone to be better at their speech," she added.

At the end of the event, contestants and participants were awarded a certificate of appreciation each and prizes for their hard work and good effort during the contest.

TU introduces 2015 Dean's Award

By CHEW YAN-Y

SUBANG JAYA - In an effort to empower today's youth to be able to enter the workforce with makings that employers want, Taylor's University (TU) has initiated the 2015 Dean's Award.

The award comes with a scholarship of up to RM20,000 waiver of tuition fees.

TU vice chancellor and president Professor Dato' Dr Hassan Said shared that this award is part of TU's commitment to give students access to quality education that allows them to excel academically and prepare them for the job market.

"Recipients will not only learn about the industry they will move into after graduation but also learn about personal development, people and leadership, professional development, global engagement and career success," he said in a press release recently.

The award is equipped with a talent development programme that is embedded into the student's studies so that students will excel in and out of the academic world.

Scholars will have their extra-curricular involvements formally recognised

in their academic transcripts as part of their eligibility for TU's SHINE Award, giving them an advantage over their peers.

The 2015 Dean's Award is open for application until 5 Oct for current SPM/O-level students.

Interested applicants with good academic results as well as active involvement in co-curricular activities are encouraged to apply.

For more information, log on to www.taylors.edu.my/deansaward or e-mail financialaid@taylors.edu.my.

Spartans leave comfort zone at latest show

By ALIAA BINTI BAHARUDIN

SUBANG JAYA - Society of Performing Arts at Taylor's University (SPART) and their Sparties Shorties plays are the only platforms here that allow students to express themselves in a theatrical and liberated way, SPART producer Samuel Aw Wei Sen, 20 said.

An ex-Taylorian law student, Aw added that the play's message was openness as there were a lot of swearing involved and he worked a lot towards with students to be comfortable to swear on stage.

"We helped students get out of their comfort zone for Sparties Shorties," Aw said.

SPART advisor and School of Communication lecturer Philip Gan said students should be allowed a platform to express themselves and to experiment with various forms of communication, which is what SPART does.

The five short plays showcasing comedy, romance and drama were held for three nights from 10 Sept at LT20.

Ex-Taylorian and SPART director Leanne Chuan, 21, wrote *The Animal Kingdom* play and the others, *Hardboiled*, *Cover*, *Electric Roses* and *Eye To Eye* were chosen from various sources.

Sanne Evers, 20, a public relations and event management student, said she liked *Eye To Eye* and *The Animal Kingdom* because they were hilarious.

"It was better than I expected. The actors and actresses did very good," added Evers.



(From left) Rhyz Ruslan, Axam Maumoon and Ashley Debbie in *Hardboiled*. Source: Tarrant Kwok

Students not allowed to use air-con without permission

By ADY FAIZAL BIN ADLIN MURTADZA

SUBANG JAYA - Students are not allowed to use the air-conditioning system in classrooms or lecture theatres without permission said, Taylor's University Facilities, Environment, and Health Safety & Administration vice president Murali Rajoo.

Murali said practices like this are contributing to energy wastage in the Lakeside campus.

"Sometimes we see only one or two students occupying the whole classroom with air-conditioning switched on.


"These are the kind of practices we need to eliminate in the future," he said.

However, Murali added that not many students are aware that such activities are wrong.


"We are working together with the Student Council to create campaigns that can help increase the awareness level among students," he said.

These campaigns will be held early next year.

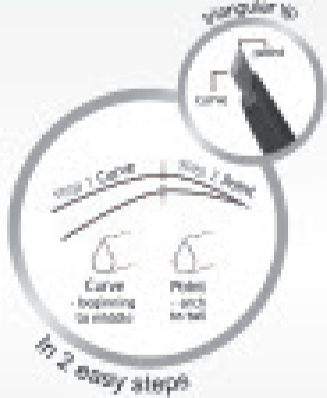
"Everybody has their role to play in supporting our initiatives to conserve energy," he added.




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TU Library offers E-books for students

By GERALDINE TAN SHU WEN

SUBANG JAYA - The recently launched E-Book Promotion on Taylor's Online Library is set to raise awareness and increase the number of students who wish to have a copy of their textbooks.

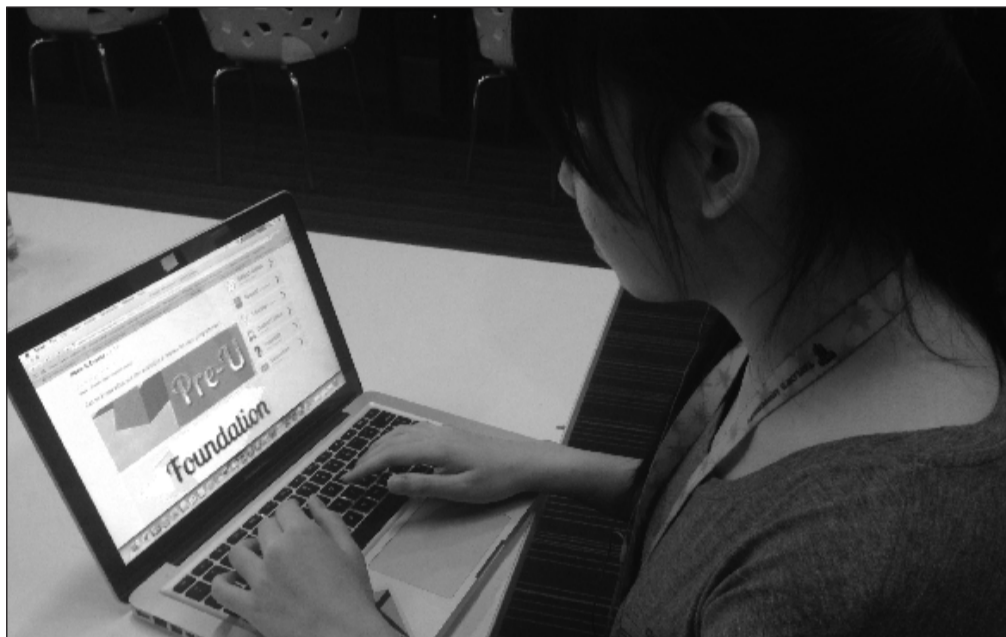
"Students come to the library hoping to get the hardcopy version of their textbooks but sometimes the library runs out of hardcopies.

"The E-Book Promotion is a big short-cut for students to get hold of those textbooks," librarian Siti Aisyah Kamaliah Mohamed said.

She added that because each textbook is listed and grouped according to specific programmes and courses, students can easily navigate their way to find their main reading sources.

"The E-Book Promotion not only boosts students' convenience but the library staff's as well.

"It saves time for the student. Rather than rushing to put back the books at their respective shelves now



Broadcasting major student Lau Jia Wen, 20, downloading E-books from the online library.

they don't have to wait until that happens," Siti Aisyah said.

She added that another way students will benefit from this promotion is that it is updated every week.

She added, "Should students find themselves in need of certain textbooks for their revision or assignments, the necessary softcopies and more are just a click away."

Mental Wellness campaign focuses on self-acceptance

By MICHELLE NG SIEW SIAN

SUBANG JAYA - More than 300 Taylorians shared their thoughts on self-acceptance at various booths set up during Taylor's University's annual Mental Wellness campaign on 3 Sept.

Hosted by Taylor's Counselling and Psychological Services Centre (CPSC), the campaign emphasised four themes: 'my dream', 'assertiveness', 'my feelings' and 'my body'.

CPSC counsellor Yap Ming Fai said, "This campaign is to reach out

to students, to promote our services and also to encourage Taylorians to adopt a healthy lifestyle; not only physically but mentally as well."

She said it is the CPSC's priority to keep all information private and confidential.

"One of the most frequent problems that students face would be relationship issues, followed by academic concerns, stress, grief, sexuality or gender issues or risk-taking behaviors," Yap added.

Yap also said the CPSC is looking into accommodating students with special needs by providing friendly services for them.

"During the campaign we handed out information regarding the CPSC giving support to students who have various disabilities such as hearing or eyesight problems and learning disabilities," she said.

CPSC is open on weekdays from 8am to 6pm at Block A Level 2.

Website provides publicity for student projects

By LEE YING JEE

KUALA LUMPUR - Students who want to promote their events may visit YouthsToday (www.youthstodays.com) for free announcement spaces.

CEO Jazz Tan Yee Mei said this will enable them to reach a bigger audience including people from outside their campus.

"We provide sponsorship opportunities for the student events listed on our website," Tan said.

Points are given to people who share, attend, volunteer or participate in the event.

These points can be used to exchange for rewards such as Starbucks cards, H&M cash vouchers and pen drives.

YouthsToday also lists events for students such as charity events, competitions workshops and concerts to advocate healthy hobbies and activities among the young.

"We encourage youths to join in the events to keep them off the streets," she added.

Previously, Taylor's University Youth to Business Forum managed to obtain 2,243 shares through YouthsToday.

Events that are posted can be viewed by close to 20,000 registered members.

Promoting student activities is free as the website is backed by major corporations such as Maybank and DiGi.

IN BRIEF

SAC set for first bubble futsal competition

SUBANG JAYA - Taylor's University Sky Adventure Club (SAC) is organising the first bubble futsal competition to be held at the Lakeside campus futsal court on 27 Sept from 10am to 6pm.

A festival will also take place that day in collaboration with Hotlink, Big Hug Burger and AIA Insurance.

The competition is a platform for SAC members to organise, participate and facilitate adventure-based activities.

TU med students organise public health screenings

SUBANG JAYA - General health checks on blood pressure, body mass index and blood glucose screening will be among activities carried out at the Joint Outreach Event on 27 Sept from 9am to 2pm.

Jointly organised by Taylor's University's School of Medicine, School of Pharmacy and School of Biosciences, the event will be held at Taman Putra Damai, Petaling Jaya.

TGC Video Competition 2014 open to TU students

SUBANG JAYA - Taylor's University students stand a chance to win up to RM1,000 by participating in the Taylor's Graduate Capabilities (TGC) Video Competition 2014.

Students can participate in the competition individually or in groups of no more than five people.

Video entries require students to demonstrate their understanding of TGC and how they can develop it inside or outside the class.

For more information, visit the Student Service Centre or e-Learning Academy, both at Block C Level 2.

Project HOME aims to raise RM40K to build home

SUBANG JAYA - Project HOME, a Community Service Initiative (CSI) by Taylor's University aims to raise RM40,000 to build a house for an *orang asli* family.

Students are encouraged to donate unwanted books, clothes, household items and accessories that are in satisfactory condition.

The CSI booth also provides fun activities for students in exchange for prizes after making a donation.

Located in front of the Student Life Center, the booth is open every Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am to 4pm until the end of October.



Tan, CEO of YouthsToday founded in 2013. Source: Signature Asia

Juwita Suwito gives songwriting and vocal masterclass

By WONG KARMEN

SUBANG JAYA - Taylor's University music enthusiasts gathered for vocal lessons from Juwita Suwito at a music workshop held here on 10 Sept.

Twenty five students attended the workshop by 440 Records and ROLAND.

They were divided into groups to perform on stage and were guided on their singing and performing skills.

Juwita said the objective of the workshop was to give the students a new perspective on the possibilities that lie before them.

She added, "Some of them here wish they could've pursued music but couldn't. It's to show that you don't have to be a music student to pursue your passion."

Public relations and marketing student Chew Wee Li, 21, said the session provided useful songwriting skills, performing tips and singing gracefully while having fun at the same time.

Chew added, "Juwita's many years of experience locally and internationally is solid evidence of what she has accomplished today."

"I will definitely apply the skills learned to my future performances," Chew added.

Engineering student Au Soung Hui, 21, said, "The workshop taught me to appreciate music compositions a lot more and to hear beyond the main melodic line."



Juwita Suwito (left) giving her thoughts on a student's performance.

Media intends to transform children's education

By WONG KARMEN

KUALA LUMPUR - Panelists from around the globe analysed the media education for children at the seventh World Summit on Media for Children at Royale Chulan Hotel on 9 Sept.

Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU) and the World Summit on Media for Children Foundation organised the summit to provide opportunities for networking, debates and workshops on content creation.

The opening ceremony included a welcoming speech by Datin Paduka Seri Rosmah Mansor and performances by Anak Permata Seni Koir, Atilia and Caprice.

A roundtable of notable individuals from UNICEF, Radio Romania, Just World and Taylor's University (TU) joined the conference moderated by Dr Michael McCluskey from International Media & Broadcast.

Ovidiu Miculescu, president director general of Radio Romania said the



Kumar M Tiku, Communication specialist of UNICEF (left) and Taylorian Karen Wan Siew Lee discussing their points before the session.

radio station airs a 10-minute weekly radio drama for children that includes short fairytales and even education programmes for parents.

He emphasised on the importance of using stories to educate children.

"Storytelling helps the children to understand more. They not only learn

of their culture but cultures from all around the world in different stories," Miculescu said.

Miculescu added that classical music is being broadcasted in every school in Romania followed by an hour of music lessons led by the National Radio Orchestra.

TU's student Karen Wan Siew Lee, an advertising major, said the media does not tell us what to think but what to think about.

"We cannot control our child's exposure to the media completely but we can supervise them," Wan said.

She added that the relationship parents have with their children is important to guide them in using the media for educational purposes.

She said, "Parents must talk to their children about what they have learnt from the media and educate them on it."

TU business students to work with deaf community

By NIKKE HO YEN MAE

SUBANG JAYA - Taylor's University (TU) business students will help run local cafe chain Deaf in Business (DIB) Coffees of Hawaii, according to DIB founder Dr Allen Teh.

DIB Coffees of Hawaii is fully operated by deaf personnel and its third outlet is set to open opposite LT1 on 1 Oct, Teh said.

"The students who are involved in the project cannot speak.

"They have to become deaf.

"I had to conduct a few classes to teach them sign language," he said.

Teh added that the gourmet coffee kiosk will provide students with real-world experience in social entrepreneurship.

Students will have to devise and execute marketing plans and aid the DIB staff in running the kiosk, he said.

"They have to get creative because they have a certain sales target to meet," he said.

He added that students are exempted from handling food unless they have acquired a medical jab for hygiene purposes.



Teh (upper row, fourth from left) with his team in DIB Damansara Perdana outlet. Source: DIB Coffees of Hawaii

Voices of Moderation urges youths to voice out



(From left) Niki Cheong, Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam, Tan Sri Razali Ismail and Syed Saddiq Bin Syed Abdul Rahman (moderator) during the Community We Want session.

By ALIAA BINTI BAHARUDIN

SUBANG JAYA - Youths should come out and demand for genuine reconciliation in this nation, former United Nations General Assembly president Tan Sri Razali Ismail said.

"If Malaysians can accept diversity, we must also accept diversity of views," Razali said during the Community We Want sharing session at the Voices of Moderation campaign at Taylor's University.

Centre for Public Policy Studies chairman Tan Sri Ramon Navaratnam said youths should speak out against extremists through voting.

Ramon said youths should know the difference between extremism and expressing their freedom of speech.

One should avoid anything that suggests unfairness and insensitivities as they are considered extremisms, he said.

Blogger, columnist and editor of RAGE Niki Cheong said Malaysia will progress if youths are more open minded.

Cheong added that a platform is needed for both sides to be heard in order to get respect for diversity.

The Global Movement of Moderates (GMM) organised the youth campaign on 11 Sept to encourage youths to speak out against extremism.

ICT now offers compiled list of software

By WONG LI YEE

SUBANG JAYA - Locating the right computer for the software you need is easier now with software compilation provided by the ICT department.

The compilation is also available on computers in Taylor's University Lakeside Campus.

ICT Helpdesk senior executive, Kelvin Kow Kok Hwa said, "The list is changed regularly as software requirements for teaching purposes are updated according to the syllabus."

"However the list is not available on the Taylor's online portal because it is constantly revised," Kow added.

Out of all the 156 software listed in the compilation, Kow shortlisted them into Adobe Creative Suite (CS), Autodesk Building Design Suite Ultimate 2014, Ansys, Buildsoft, Delphi, Encase, Final Cut Pro, JMAG-Designer 13, Microsoft Office, Matlab and Opera.

A student from the School of Computing Kuhaneswaran a/l Jamilchelvan, 18, said that he often needs javascript programmes in his class, but he finds the available ones in the computer labs difficult to be used.

As such, he said he will need to bring his own laptop to his classes.

With the list of software available to students, they can find more suitable alternatives to the ones they find difficult to use.

Students can find the software listing placed on the notice board and iPad display in ICT helpdesk, which is open from 8am to 6pm at located at Block D Level 7.

Instant feedback ensures quality customer service

By NIKKE HO YEN MAE

SUBANG JAYA - Taylor's University (TU) students have been urged to use the Instant Feedback System (IFS), a digital rating system for non-academic staff services.

TU Student Experience vice president Angela Pok said, "We want to hear more voices. Feedback tells us if we're doing the right thing."

The IFS, part of the Awesome Customer Experience (ACE) initiative,

allowed students to evaluate their experience right after being attended to by non-academic staff manning service counters, she said.

Pok said touch screen devices were set up on 18 Aug at 40 locations across Lakeside campus, Taylor's Hostel Management and Taylor's College.

Pok said counters that were not performing well would have to address their shortcomings so that

students were satisfied with the customer service.

Pok added that the management would appreciate it if supervisors and counter staff commit to serving students better.

"In order to ensure we are a world class institution, we don't just look after the quality of the programmes we offer; we would like to emphasise on the services as well," Pok said.



Student Tan Jillyan, 20, uses the IFS located at Academic Services office.

Earn extra cash right here on campus

By CHIN KAH LOONG

Students often seek shopping malls or cushy offices when looking for part-time jobs. Some are brave enough to ask for an interview on the spot while others consult websites before applying for a part-time job. Either way, if the work isn't flexible or is far from the university, it can affect your studies. If you want convenience and flexibility, consider looking for work right here at Taylor's University (TU).

Whether it's serving customers or even challenging yourself with some video production, just head over to these places and ask if they have a job for you.

Taylor's Management

Career Services assistant manager Raja Edriana Baizura stated, "Students from any course or year are welcome to apply for part-time work at the Career Services Centre."

As part of TU, they understand that students are bound to their timetables

thus the work will be structured around their personal schedules. "For instance, students can come in the morning, work for a few hours and quickly head to their afternoon class," she said.

Students will not have to deal with driving, finding parking and apologising to their lecturers for being late. Once class has finished, they can come back to work the late afternoon shift if they choose to.

Pay starts at RM5 per hour and students will learn how to liaise with customers while manning the front desk and setting up workshops among other skills. Those interested can sign up at the Career Services counter at Block A Level 2.

Next, e-Learning Academy (eLA) development specialist Andrew Ng Yew Han noted that, "eLA is not always hiring, but students are welcome to drop by our office and inquire if we need any extra help." Located at Block C

Level 5, eLA offers a variety of work such as web design and video production to those that want to expand their skill set while getting paid RM5 per hour.

Syopz Mall

For those who prefer the retail experience, Starbucks store manager Norhafizah binti Rejab is in urgent need of part-time help. "We welcome anyone who's passionate about work, people and coffee to join our team," she said.

She added that students are encouraged to apply for the position and after a successful walk-in interview, part-timers are enrolled in a three-night crash course.

Once they've learned how to handle customers and craft the famous Starbucks drinks, part-timers are allowed to choose between three shifts - morning, afternoon or night. They will be paid RM5 per hour and will get a 30% staff discount on menu items.

Backofen owner Solomon Soo is also looking for part-time workers and stated, "I understand that students need a flexible schedule." He added that shifts would cater to the student's specific timetable once they completed a walk-in interview. Paying RM5 per hour, Backofen also provides meals to part-timers.

Zhia's Kitchen and Kung-Fu restaurant manager Hong Hock Weng is open to hiring part-timers for the weekday 11am to 4pm shift. He stated that applicants should have a good command of English and Mandarin. Part-timers will receive RM5 per hour and a 15% staff discount on food.

So if you've got time and want to earn extra cash, head over to these places and ask for a part-time job. You might learn a new skill, get some free meals and even make some new friends along the way.

Merdekarya: The ultimate stepping stone

By GERALDINE TAN SHU WEN

Merdekarya, a local arts and event venue is a little tricky to get to but thankfully someone had linked the Merdekarya venue on Waze, so it's searchable on the GPS application. Decorated with discarded wooden panels and crates, some light bulbs and cardboards, this is the place for artists of all sorts to pour their hearts out.

But how exactly does one get a slot to perform? We got to speak to two ex-Taylorians who have moved from making music in their bedrooms, posting covers on Youtube to belting it out live on stage.

"Merdekarya is probably the easiest platform to start," singer, songwriter and musician Nicholas Ng, 21, said. Having performed there three times since 2013, he said it's easy because all one has to do is just sign up on the website, attend the open slot and you've got yourself some exposure.

Owners Mel and Brian Gomez will offer you a full set as a featured artist if you impress them enough. Of course, it's up to you to let the momentum carry you through.

Places like The Bee at Publika and Laundry Bar at The Curve, are slightly on the premium side in terms of these open-mic shows. Merdekarya however, offers daily shows starting from 8pm till the owners decide it's late enough to close.

Songwriter and musician Blake Kee, 23, who has performed at Merdekarya seven times, said it's more of a stepping stone.



Frontman Nicholas Ng (second from left) singing his heart out while his bandmates back him up on vocals. Source: Chui Ying

"The owners are always giving opportunities for aspiring artists to start somewhere," he added.

One main reason why Ng and Kee kept going back to Merdekarya was because of the casual vibes. They could laugh, joke and be themselves on stage and even make mistakes.

But at the end of the day, all they ever aim for is a good show where people feel the chemistry between them and their band mates and enjoy the music played.

"You basically need to give a good show," Ng said insistently, "and that doesn't mean a good voice and four chords; you need showmanship and chemistry."

Merdekarya also opened doors for Ng to launch "The Nicholas Ng Project" last month where he did a full set. That night itself, the house was packed and a number of people in the audience had to stand throughout the show. The owners applauded Ng for being able to garner that many people and help spread the spirit of Merdekarya all over. It had been a while since they've seen the house so filled with eager hearts.

Opportunity grew for Ng and Kee after having performed at Merdekarya. Ng was offered to perform at The Bee and also for the No Black Tie event. Daniel Wong, lead singer from Wanted Symphony, offered Kee and his bandmates to perform a huge gig

at Publika. So, do expect some big shows from these young and talented former Taylorians in late September and October!

For those interested in following their footsteps, Ng and Kee said to take advantage of opportunities and be brilliant but also humble. Kee knows what it's like to strive in the music scene as he's been performing since the age of 15. He admitted, "It's not easy but keep trying and you'll get there. Know the right people, work hard and all the cliché stuff." So now that you know how and where to get started, it's time to get practicing and who knows, the next feature on successful artists from Taylor's University could just be you!

Artsphere 20/8ty for art lovers

By LEE YING JEE

Climb the stairs into outer space, dine with Alice in Wonderland and swim with a mermaid in this world of fantasy at Artsphere 20/8ty. This shopping area holds the largest collection of mural arts in a single location in Malaysia. The collection boasts a total of 80 murals painted by 20 international and local artists, inspiring the name.

Mural arts have gained a sudden surge of popularity among Malaysians since the unveiling of Ernest Zacharevic's mural art on the streets of Penang. Instead of going all the way North to appreciate them, this spot is located in Seri Kembangan, Kuala Lumpur.

Several 3D murals span metres across the ground as structures and objects seemingly pop up from the flat floor. One of them is "Staircase" by Angel Ng where the steps are leading into a purple night sky clustered with stars.

Many of them combined paint and props to produce wonderfully interactive murals that allow visitors to become a part of it. Examples include wooden ladders, a jump rope, tables and even a Mini

Cooper car coated in black and white paint, giving it an illusion that it is popping out of the wall.

Some of the paintings are very realistic. Model Lisa Chow May Han, 21, was among the many people who walked past two doors without realising only one of them can be opened.

"From afar I could not see which door was the real one," she admitted.

Artsphere 20/8ty was designed by Eksons Corporation Sdn Bhd and Tempo Properties Sdn Bhd to support the striving art industry in Malaysia. Tempo Properties CEO Khoo Boo Hian added that this project would benefit the public as well.

"We want to give the people art that they can interact with and enjoy," Khoo said.

The murals are suitable for families with children as the interactive ones are easy to pose with. People were thrilled to find actual strings attached to several painted balloons as well as the life-sized snakes and ladders board game available for the public to play on.



Youngsters taking photographs with one of the murals.

Public relations and marketing major student Tan Xue Ren, 21, said, "The murals are very surreal, creative and 3D. And I love the fact that each mural has a QR code showing its description."

Entrance to The Atmosphere where Artsphere 20/8ty is located is free of charge.

Visitors are advised to bring along a camera, umbrella, sunblock and their own bottle of water even though there are food and beverage shops in the vicinity.

Address: 1-3, Jalan Prima Tropika Barat 2, Taman Prima Tropika, 43300 Kuala Lumpur.

Ice Bucket Challenge: Stop the judgement

By CHEW YAN-Y

Social media has been abuzz with videos of famous faces, your friends, your friends' brothers and sisters, dumping buckets of ice water over their heads as an awareness effort for the neurodegenerative disorder, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. And just as like all things popular, the haters have come out to play.

For a while, they controlled my perception because there was truth

to what they were saying but then I realised that I get final say in what I think is right or wrong. And what I think is that everyone needs to take a chill pill or two.

The premise of the sensation is simple: Someone challenges another person to either dump a bucket of ice water over their head or donate to the ALS Association. After the screaming is done, the soaked person can then challenge other people.

Bring in the haters.

Firstly, I do not hate on the haters. I actually agree that the challenge has its flaws - wastage of water being number one, especially since we Malaysians have just gone through major water shortages recently - but the fact remains that it was and still is one of the best charity campaigns to date. It did what a lot of campaigns fail to do; it raised awareness of ALS and raised millions of dollars for the association.

Initially, I had my feet on both sides of the fence. I wrestled with the good and the bad of the campaign but it wasn't until a friend challenged me, that I was forced to zero-in on my opinion.

So I did my research. I looked into who started the challenge - Pete Frates, just so you know - and why it was started. I searched to find out where the donations would go since reports said only 7% would fund the research efforts. I rifled through comment threads and news reports to find out all I could about this social media phenomenon.

My little investigation took two days and after looking at both sides of the argument, I was still undecided. So I asked myself one simple question: "Forget what you've read and forget what you've been told. What do you think is right?"

I accepted my challenge and made a donation, and while I was late and missed the 24-hour time frame, I did it nonetheless.

"The money won't go to research." Okay, then it might help the association with their other efforts. "What about other diseases and sicknesses?" Well, what about this one? Just because it's rare does not make it any less deadly than the next illness.

"It's so lazy. It's slacktivism!" Let me ask you this - how much work does a person have to do in order for their efforts to be considered "good enough"?

I took the challenge because that was what felt right to me. You could argue that it is just another trend that will disappear once a new one comes along but even if it is, so what? It would then be at the very least, a trend that made a difference.

As long as your heart is in the right place and you are happy with your decision, who cares if you are considered a follower of trends? After all, everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion.

Also, for those of you who have been nominated but have yet to accept the challenge because you are worried about wasting water, you can always take your cue from Matt Damon; he used toilet water.



The writer taking on her ALS Ice Bucket Challenge.

Say yes to feminism

By MELISSA BINTI MAZLAN

I don the feminist hat and am not afraid to loudly proclaim my support for feminism. Some people shy away from the term, claiming they're not feminists, but then say they're all for gender equality.

According to American author, feminist and social activist Bell Hooks, feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitations and oppression.

In short, gender equality.

Her definition is succinct and easy to comprehend for those still suspicious or unaware of the movement. Being a feminist doesn't mean murdering all men and flying flags emblazoned with a "down with men" logo. It just means advocating the rights and equality of women so they have rights equal to men.

Yes, it is as simple as that. Feminism is a commitment to achieving the equality of the sexes. The movement is not exclusive to women: men, while benefiting from being the dominant

sex, also have a stake in overcoming the restrictive roles that deprive them of full humanity.

So why is feminism so difficult for people to adopt? Why do people not understand why feminism is necessary for equality of the sexes?

Here are a few reasons why feminism helps everyone.

Victim-blaming still exists when people talk about rape. No one says the rapist should have controlled himself. No one says the rapist shouldn't have targeted the victim. In fact, the rapist hardly appears in the picture. The victim is the one that people point fingers at, with retorts such as "she shouldn't have worn that skirt", "she shouldn't have walked home alone at night", "she probably had too much of a good time at a party and was drunk", and worst of all, "she was asking for it".

If we had different conversations about rape, sexual harassment, or abuse, and re-establish the roles that the different sexes have to play, the

world could be a much safer place for all. The solution is simple enough and clear as day, but its execution would be complex as it would require dealing with those who do not understand that women are human beings too.

If feminism, the commitment to ending sexism was a universal thought, rape victims wouldn't hesitate to report the rape out of fear that they would be accused of wanting attention. Feminism would ensure the victims are treated like the human beings that they are.

"Feminism isn't just for women, it's for men too."

Feminism, when practised in the workplace, means women will not be subject to sexism. Gender inequalities are intrinsic to the capitalist system, which makes vast profits off women's unpaid labour in the home and underpaid labour in the workforce.

Like racism, homophobia and other forms of bigotry, sexism divides the working class and thereby allows

the capitalists to make super-profits, hence leaving women in an unjust predicament. Women should be given the same job opportunities as men, as well as the same pay given to a man for the same job done.

Feminism isn't just for women, it's for men too. It strives for equality, therefore men should not be subject to fulfilling the macho man of the house role. When men deviate from societal norms that dictate how a man should act, men get punished and belittled.

Feminists don't think so. Men shouldn't be expected to live up to an unrealistic ideal and bullied or ignored for being different. Men too should have the freedom to explore life beyond the rigid boundaries of traditional masculinity and choose for themselves what aligns with their own values.

This means men don't have to be afraid to cry, laugh, dance and love. Those are traits of a human being, and men and women are human.

This is why feminism is for everyone.

Unscripted with Brandon Ho

By CHEW YAN-Y

Sometime in 2009, Brandon Ho, aged 16 at the time, was working part-time at a warehouse sale when the DJ for the event fell sick. Ho's boss then asked the teenager to replace the DJ for the next day. Scared as he was, Ho still said, "Let's try it." The DJ was not called back to work for the rest of the event's days. Fast forward five years later; Ho is a regular host on the popular variety show, *The 8tv Quickie* and is slowly but surely becoming a celebrity.

Now at 21, Ho is in his final year as an accounting and finance student in Taylor's University and although he has raked up a steady following of fans through his work on *Quickie*, life for him hasn't changed much. Except for the fact that he's much busier now than 16 months ago, Ho said he is "still the exact same guy" he was before he signed up for the show.

Ho's journey to the show began when the show first aired 10 years ago. He became a fast fan. "I knew all the hosts by name and I would watch them and think, 'Hey I could really do that!'" While people usually practised their singing in the bathroom, the young Ho practised his hosting abilities instead.

When he was finally eligible to join the *8tv Quickie Search*, the eager student was more than prepared to meet the producers. "When I went for the audition, I already knew their phone number, their e-mail address

and their Facebook page! I really did my homework," he stated with a laugh.

Spending the last few years perfecting his craft by emceeing at various events was just the preparation Ho needed for what he has to do on the *Quickie* every week. On the show, hosts are not given scripts, only cue cards. Apart from that, Ho and his co-hosts depend on their own personality and prowess to get them through the 15-minute show. While just the thought of giving a presentation in class can make most people weak in the knees, Ho is unfazed by it. "I don't like scripts so I really like this."

Strong in his Christian belief, Ho has always wanted to become a pastor. "I am a Christian so a lot of what drives me and a lot of what motivates me is very much related to my faith," he said.

Although he has found success on screen, he insisted that he was not in it for the fame or the money. "I do this for Him, not for myself."

Though he may be on TV now, nothing is to stop him from achieving his dream of becoming a pastor in the future. At this moment, he is simply enjoying the fact that he gets to live out his passion of speaking to crowds. Seeing how entertained people are by him is as he says, "The beautiful part".

As to why he isn't studying for a mass communication degree, the TV host himself has yet to figure it out. Ho,



Ho splits his time between classes and the studio most days.

who is a recipient of the Taylor's World Class Scholarship, had at first chosen to study mass communication but it was his father who changed his mind. While accounting and finance is not something he hates, he does not love it either.

When asked if it was his second choice, he replied with a laugh, "It would've been my eighth, ninth or 10th choice! The more I delve deeper, the more I want to get out of it but I've got one more year to go so I'm just going to close an eye and slug it out."

"Studying accounting and finance is a single thorn in my flesh that reminds me to stay grounded. It reminds me that I still need to work hard."

As a scholar with a full-time job, he has had to make a lot of sacrifices. Since he started working on 8tv, he has had little time to socialise with friends because of his hectic schedule. With most of his days ending at 1am after classes and filming on set, Ho said, "Weekends are very precious to me. Sleep is very, very precious to me."

The past year has been a full-on effect of working and studying and it has been a difficult thing for Ho to manage but he tries hard to not let it get the best of him.

"I feel like 10 years of my life have been sucked out of me (in the past one year)! It just wears you down but it's a type of stress I enjoy," he added.

Looking at the rate Ho is moving, it is safe to say that we can expect to see more of him in the years to come. He shows what hard work, passion and courage can do.

If the scholar had not taken that step of faith on that fateful day at the warehouse sale, he would not be where he is today.

"I still remember that DJ's face and if I ever meet him again I'll definitely apologise. I won't forget him! I still do feel quite bad!"

A second chance for books



TU students crowding the Spartext booth to purchase their textbooks.

By LEE YING JEE

The thing about books is that once they start to accumulate, they take up space. Here are three alternatives to consider the next time that happens instead of throwing away.

BookUp

Chu Chin Hong founded BookUp (www.bookup.my) - an online platform that connects buyers to sellers - to help book owners gain back a portion of what they paid while allowing avid readers to gain access to affordable books.

"We are more towards helping both ends of the spectrum rather than getting every single cent out from our buyers," Chu said.

The books can be purchased at 50-70% off their retail price, making reading an inexpensive hobby. A fee of 30% is taken from the buyer only when the books are sold. This fee covers

the entire process from warehousing, marketing, sales, packaging and delivery to the buyer.

"Our business makes it easy for people to buy books at the comfort of their own house, at a price that won't hurt their wallets. At the same time, our business helps sellers get rid of their books, without them getting out of their house as well," he added.

By being online, buyers are able to purchase books from different corners of the country with a click of their mouse. They can also browse the array of books easily using the title, author or ISBN.

The collection at BookUp consists of not only academic, non-fiction and fiction books but comics, cookbooks, music books and many others as well. The books are available in English, Mandarin and Bahasa Melayu.

Subang Jaya Book Exchange Programme (SJBE)

Many people from all over Klang Valley attend the biweekly Book Exchange Programme (BEP). There are visitors from Kota Damansara, Klang and even as far as Cheras. The programme is run by volunteers such as Lim Sulyn, 29, who spends her free weekends there.

"About 100 books get exchanged at each session on average," Lim said when asked about the BEP, where people can drop off a book in exchange for another.

Lim said about 90% of the books at SJBE are in English with a bulk of them being fiction books while there are smaller sections dedicated specially for Bahasa Melayu and Mandarin books. The cabin does not contain academic books as there is little demand for them.

"We have limited space in the cabin so we can only devote shelf space to popular genres such as fiction, non-fiction and children's literature," Lim said.

The SJBE experience is unique because there are no fees, no deadlines to return books and no commitment.

"It's a great place to try different kinds of books because if you end up not liking a book, at least you didn't spend RM40 on it," Lim said.

Unlike a library or bookstore, Lim describes the SJBE as a treasure hunt because you never know what awesome books you may stumble upon at each book exchange.

The SJBE is held on the first and third Sundays of the month, from 3pm to 5pm, at USJ 12/2F, Subang Jaya. However,

their sessions may vary according to availability of volunteers so it is best to check their Facebook page (www.facebook.com/sjusjbep).

Spartext

Spartext is held by the Taylor's University Entrepreneurship and Investment Club to fulfill the demand for secondhand books. Spartext project manager Tee Yeu Sin said the project is based on their belief that entrepreneurship is meant to solve problems and contribute to the society.

"We have a consignment agreement with those who want to sell the books and sell them to juniors," Tee said as he described the process.

About 70% of the books find new owners at each session. Although they do charge RM5 for their services, Tee said they do not hike up the price just to earn money.

"We always ensure that textbooks are at a relatively lower price so that we can provide our customers with cheaper textbooks and maintain our core value of business," Tee said.

Even though Spartext is extremely convenient for students in Taylor's University, they only provide their services to students in the School of Business.

"Taylor's has a lot of business students and they need to buy a lot of textbooks," Tee said when asked why they do not cater to the other schools.

Spartext is held twice a year at the start of semesters for Taylor's University business students.

Grey but never dull: A cafe review

By GERALDINE TAN SHU WEN

Ten minutes away from Taylor's University Lakeside Campus, in between City Harvest Church and Food Industrie at SS13/4, Subang Jaya, sits Greyskymorning, an independent café that has been operating for over a month now. Five steps into the store, my friend, Michelle and I were mesmerised with the antique chandelier hanging above us, and soon realised that it was a double-storey café.

Bought over by the fresh flowers on every table and the minimalistic yet elegant setting, we took our time placing our orders. A price of a hot or cold drink is the same; it's just a matter of what type of drink. Black coffee being Americano or Long Black is RM6 whereas white coffee namely a Piccolo, Flat White, Latte or Cappuccino would be RM9.

Everything else after that is pretty standard for most cafés. In due time they will expand their menu, one

filled with more drinks and eventually food. After paying, we eagerly rushed upstairs to check the view.

The glass roof paneling made the sunlight sneak in so perfectly. However, there is no air-conditioning, only fans on the upper floor that caused the atmosphere to be humid and slightly stuffy. We decided to find a seat



Greyskymorning's minimalistic interior.

downstairs where it's cooler instead. Before long, Michelle's iced mocha and my hot latte arrived smelling amazing. Greyskymorning's house-blend of Columbian and Sumatran beans gave out a fruity and tropical aftertaste that made each sip better than the one before.

Because their chocolate sauce is homemade, beverages such as their hot chocolate and mocha do not give off a need for water after drinking them. A plus note is that no sugar or any other preservatives are added into their drinks and whatever sweetness tasted is from the beans and fresh milk itself. We were both very happy with our drinks.

Now for the part that most people deem necessary: the cakes. Having opened not too long ago, the variety of treats are still in the process of blooming. As of now, their on-counter cakes are Red Velvet, Nutella Hazelnut, Hummingbird and Banana Cinnamon

cake; all of which are not too sweet, always ready to share and perfect to go with every coffee; black or white.

Founding manager Nicholas Cheng, 23, said though his main objective is to serve the best coffee, he is always on the lookout for more cakes to bring in but till then, these are good enough.

Even though Klang Valley has been saturated with many cafes, Cheng said the Greyskymorning team hopes to give a different experience when it comes to serving coffee; one that's better yet reasonable for everyone.

The staff, most of whom are students, are incredibly friendly and would greet every person who walks through the doors with a smile. They would even take their free time to sit down with customers, new and or regular to get to know more about them.

All in all, Greyskymorning (yes, again, it's one word not three) is a place people can come back to and be enchanted with its cozy yet spacious setting.

Another sublime album from Sia



SIA-1000 FORMS OF FEAR

The Album Cover. Source: RCA Records

By CHIN KAH LOONG

Kicking off her album with her explosive lead single, *Chandelier*, Sia Furler manages to hook listeners by the first song. The Australian singer and songwriter has shown that she's one of the best in the business when it comes to penning pop songs. She has lead songwriting credits in hit singles such as *Diamonds* by Rihanna and *Titanium* by David Guetta.

For *1000 Forms of Fear's* release, Sia made the decision to focus on promoting it visually, with videos being the main source of generating buzz.

However, as the media started talking about the album before its release, Sia was nowhere to be found. Camera-shy and determined to keep her distance, the album would not be accompanied with subsequent tours or press appearances from the artist. *Chandelier's* official music video did not feature Sia; instead, reality TV star Maddie Ziegler of *Dance Moms* fame was the only character in the video.

Nevertheless, it was a tremendous success and eventually won Best Choreography at the *MTV Video Music Awards 2014*.

1000 Forms of Fear is the sixth full-length album by Sia. Unlike her previous records, it takes on a more melancholic theme while adopting the sleek production of radio-friendly electronic pop.

With the help of long-time associate Greg Kurstin, who has produced hit songs for Kelly Clarkson and many others, the duo have assembled a solid set of songs. The standard formula of typical pop album such as anthems and ballads are present on *1000 Forms* but they retain the hauntingly reflective elements of Sia's songwriting.

Themes such as addiction, love and fame are prevalent throughout the record. In particular, *Chandelier's* lyrics deal with hard-core partying, its aftermath and how one continues to justify subjecting themselves to the experience. Immediately following *Chandelier*, *Big Girls Cry* takes a slower approach to the subject of relationships.

In nearly every song, it's clear that Sia's voice and lyrics are the stars of the show. The imperfect yet genuine delivery of lines in songs like *Hostage* and *Chandelier* helps the album avoid sounding too artificial. The rasps and breaks in these vocals highlight the emotional impact of the lyrics of these songs.

Relationships are the prevailing subject of the album with nearly every song describing some aspect of it. *Straight for the Knife* and *Fire meet Gasoline* touches the volatile relationship of a couple who are both intensely in love yet toxic to each other.

Perhaps the most intense song on the record, *Free the Animal* features Sia at her loudest and the brilliance of Kurstin's production. It's a song that quickly goes from a simple beat

to an explosive chorus and then never lets up.

The chopped-up vocals in one of the verses complements the fiery electronic beat of the song. In contrast to this, a few songs like *Fair Game* diverge from the electronic pop style of the album, with Sia returning to a more acoustical slant.

Violins and xylophones stand out here with Sia's vocals carrying the song. Kurstin's production shines through with these songs as they leave the muddier sounds of Sia's earlier albums. Careful listeners will also notice every instrument is distinctly identifiable.

This might put off some of her long-time fans who could view it as Sia turning her back on the genre she came from. But it's clear that Sia is not afraid of venturing into the current pop arena that she has helped establish from her songwriting.

While some might decry it as a departure or even a stumble, the critical and commercial success that *1000 Forms of Fear* has already experienced proves that Sia has done something right. She has created one of the best albums of the year, one that manages to be both captivating and personal.

Book-to-screen adaptation: GoT

By LIYANA BINTI AHMED RASLY

"Valar Morgulis". A term recently made popular by one of HBO's most popular TV shows, *Game of Thrones* (GoT). When a popular novel series gets turned into a movie or TV show, one of the most vital things that get questioned is whether or not the adaptation lives up to the book. In this case, the best and worst critics would be avid GoT fans, who have already read the book series titled *A Song of Ice and Fire*.

When books gets turned into TV shows, we obviously do not expect the show to adapt every single detail from the book and some changes for the TV show would be expected. However, many devout readers of George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* were very much surprised at the vast alterations that were made when they watched GoT.

For starters, many were surprised at how the Red Wedding turned out. In the television series, we see Robb Stark's wife, Talisa, getting killed along with her unborn Stark child.

In the books, Robb's wife is named Jeyne Westerling and she never managed to get pregnant with a Stark child. It was also written that she survived the Red Wedding, as she was not in attendance. While the changes from page to screen may be vast, the Red Wedding scene still managed to fulfil the same plot as portrayed in the books.



Cast of Game of Thrones. Source: Vanity Fair.

Another big change that could be seen in the TV show from the books is Jaime Lannister's return to Kingslanding and his relationship with Brienne of Tarth. In the show, Jaime does not seem to be as infatuated with Brienne as how it is written in the books.

They were only seen to have a close connection with one another due to their pairing up for mutual survival. It is also written that Jaime's return to Kingslanding happened much later in the books than it does in the show.

One of the major scenes that shook fans of the show and readers of the books was the death of Oberyn Martell also known as the Red Viper. The moment Oberyn Martell stepped into the show; he instantly won hearts and became one of

the most beloved characters of the show. Readers of the book already anticipated his death, but what they did not anticipate was how brutal and visual that scene would be on screen.

In the show, Ser Gregor Clegane, also known as The Mountain, killed Oberyn Martell in the most barbaric way, where the bare hands of Gregor Clegane crushed Oberyn's head. As a fan of the show and reader of the books, that scene surpassed my expectations.

While the book-to-screen adaptation may have seen many changes, one scene that was done very well would have to be the finale of season four; the big plot twist of it all where Tyrion Lannister killed his own father, Tywin Lannister, by shooting him in the bowels with a crossbow. The

scene was delivered in a very serious and thought provoking manner, despite the dark humour behind it, where George R.R. Martin wrote in the books as Tywin dies, "But the stink that filled the privy gave ample evidence that the oft-repeated jape about his father was just another lie. Lord Tywin Lannister did not, in the end, shit gold."

Yes, we do not expect a TV show or movie to successfully adapt every little detail of a book. While the changes seen in GoT are blatantly obvious to those who read the books, many could not deny that the producers of the show have delivered the changes in ways that do not disappoint. Does GoT live up to the books well written by George R.R. Martin? It definitely seems so.

Colouring Malaysia a mile at a time



Low (centre) teaching primary school students in Lundu how to draw local fruits.
Source: Colour Malaysia+

By TAN ZHI INN

"A dream is a plan which can be accomplished, as long as you have the courage and perseverance to do the things you want," Low Ley Soon said. The 25-year-old architecture graduate from Taylor's University recently finished his eight-month bicycle trek across East Malaysia for a project he started, Colour Malaysia.

Low may not be the first person to travel across Malaysia via bicycle, but the way he toured was unique. Throughout his journey, he distributed colour pencils

to children and adults in rural areas and taught them to draw in exchange for personal stories.

"I think drawing can help children express themselves creatively."

Low was born in a small town named Ulu Yam Lama in Hulu Selangor where his parents own a small restaurant frequented by tourists. "Listening to the stories of the different

people who came to our restaurant, I realised the world is so big. That's where the thoughts of exploring the world started to enter my mind," Low said.

At 22 years old, he went to Taiwan for a backpacking trip during one of his semester breaks. He gathered his courage to cycle around Taiwan. He spent 15 days cycling around Taiwan on a budget of only RM2,000. "If I did not step out of my comfort zone, I would have missed out on this incredible experience," Low said.

"While I was in Taiwan, I figured, why not do this in Malaysia? There are many attractions at home that are just as beautiful as the ones overseas," he said. Low then embarked on his first bike ride around West Malaysia that took a total of 38 days. Despite being able to see more on a bicycle because of the slower pace, he noticed that his journey lacked human interaction and the photos he took were mostly images of food, sceneries and landmarks.

During his second trip to West Malaysia, Low stopped by towns, villages and plantations in rural areas. He aimed to interact more with locals and wanted people to share their stories with him through drawings. That's when he started trading boxes of colour pencils for drawings by people that he kept as memorabilia.

"I think drawing can help children express themselves creatively. Through their drawings, I'm able to get visual interpretations of their thoughts and emotions," he said. He spent RM5,000 in total buying colour pencils.

After graduating last year, Low felt that his Colour Malaysia project wasn't complete without taking it to East Malaysia. So he continued his cycling in Sabah and Sarawak. Throughout his excursion, he drew postcards that portrayed his impression of the places he saw and sent them home. Five hundred drawings and eight months later, Low came back to West Malaysia.

By sharing stories through the drawings, he hopes that Malaysians can have a deeper understanding about different places. Low is planning to publish a book based on his postcards and his experiences.



Low's hand drawn postcards of his journey

My Pulau Perhentian working experience

By KENNY NG CHENG HAN

Travelling is the thing to do during semester breaks. So, that is what I did by heading to Perhentian Island in Terengganu. I had this idea because my friend, Suki, was working there as a hotel receptionist. I found an RM80 promotion, which included a two-way flight ticket and free transportation between the airport, jetty and island. Accommodation was free as I could sleep in the staff room of the hotel where Suki works.

"Immediately, I knew that it was going to be three days in paradise."

It took a total of two-and-a-half hours to reach there by air, land and water combined. Upon reaching the island,



The writer on a snorkeling trip.

I was truly amazed by the vivid colour of the beach; the water was greenish blue accompanied by the swaying motion of sunbeams on the water. The island is a long stretch of buildings by the beach and that is all there is. There wasn't a vehicle in sight. Immediately, I knew that it was going to be three days in paradise.

A sudden turn of events led me to extend my stay for another seven days. Suki informed me that someone in the recreational department had taken a week off from work and asked if I was interested to fill in momentarily. I said yes instantly and was ready to work the day after.

Thus, my working adventure began as a recreational officer. I worked in a little wooden hut that had two comfortable beanbags, a few wooden chairs and a shelf full of secondhand books available for book swapping. Inside the hut, there was a small room that stored snorkelling equipment and recreational objects such as footballs, volleyballs and colourful beach toys. Also, stacks of life jackets could be seen on the floor leaning on the wall.

I had two European colleagues - Pawel, the Polish guy and Louise from Brighton, England. They'd been dating for as long as they have been working in that little hut. I learnt a lot while working with them.



The view from the writer's workplace.

On my first day, I accompanied Louise to bring 12 tourists to Baby Island for snorkelling. It was a three-stop trip where we saw a variety of aquatic life. I was having the time of my life snorkelling with fishes, baby sharks and squids while witnessing the vivid colours of live corals. I got to experience the rare sighting of a black tip reef shark (which are afraid of humans more than we are of them), a giant green turtle (second largest turtle species that is on the verge of extinction) and a napoleon fish (looked like the Godzilla version of the flowerhorn fish to me).

My seven days of working there were filled with three hours of snorkelling off another island daily and routine

works such as opening and closing of the hut, carrying kayaks to the beach for customers, promoting snorkelling trips and playing with children as we have plenty of board games on hand. I was so privileged to make friends with European and Chinese guests. I also became friends with hotel staff from the Philippines, Myanmar and East Malaysia. What a diversified number of people on such a tiny island!

I went home after 10 days there, feeling heavy hearted to leave such a heavenly place. The sight of the beach with a gentle breeze of wind will be sorely missed. On the bright side, I came back to Kuala Lumpur as a much tanner, wiser and happier man.