



APAY NEWS

Monthly e-Newsletter of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs No. 08 / 08 ~ Oct/Nov/Dec 2008

1. YMCA Family Saddens by Yip's Passing Away

The YMCA family across the world was saddened by the untimely demise of Mr. Yip Kok Choong, General Secretary of the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs on 31 October 2008. He suffered from a motor neuron disease, a progressive neuro-degenerative disorder that destroys the motor neurons, the cells that control the voluntary muscle activity such as speaking, walking, breathing, swallowing and general movements of the body.

As we all know, Mr. Yip was a strong pillar of the YMCA and was instrumental in guiding the directions of the Area Alliance for a considerable period of time. His vision and unflinching commitment towards building community and youth/women participation resulted the emergence of significant multilateral cooperations and actions at various levels of the movement in the Region. He had endeared himself to the entire YMCA family in the world through his ever-inspiring leadership and affectionate relationship he has maintained with the lay leaders and professional colleagues alike.

Together with the family members, hundreds of people from YMCAs across the world, ecumenical partners, church members and friends from different walks of life joined in the Necrological services on 6 November in Hong Kong and on 8-10 November in Kuala Lumpur to celebrate Yip's life in this world. Several YMCA leaders, including Dr. Bart Shaha, Secretary General of the World Alliance, Dr. Park Jai Chang, President of the APAY, colleagues and friends shared eulogy and expressed their life-celebrating stories with Yip. Letters of condolences from the YMCA leaders, volunteers and staff expressing their deepest sentiments and solidarity with Yip's family and to the Area Alliance filled APAY mails.

He, who has gone, so we but cherish his memory, abides with us, more potent, more present than the living man. We thank all of you for your words of encouragements, inspirations and comforts.

2. Global Citizenship Forum Develops YMCA Responses

The Forum on Global Citizenship held on 16-19 October 2008 at AYC, Tokyo brought together 38 participants including representatives from various National Movements in the Region and experts on Global Citizenship. The forum affirms its commitment to the resolution of the 16th World Council 2006 on Global Citizenship and the Quadrennial Thrust of the APAY on Global Citizenship and Social Responsibility. It explored the concepts of Citizenship and Global Citizenship in particular in the context of the current social dynamics of Globalisation and undertook a conceptualisation process in relation to the mission imperatives of the YMCA movement. It identified Rights, Duties, Membership and Participation as key components to Citizenship integrating notions of universal human rights, environmental and planetary interests, multiculturalism and takes into account the emergence of an information society. It recognises Global Citizenship as a pragmatic response to these conditions.

The Forum made a clarion call to all YMCA movements to use global citizenship as a framework and a tool on which to educate their constituency on issues, which have a global dimension so that they may be more effective in addressing those in their own communities. The Forum also identified Environmental Interdependence, Multicultural Coexistence, Media Literacy and Information Technology, Health, Peace and Cooperation, Economic Justice and Development, Spirituality and Global Ethics, etc. as areas around which global citizenship programmes and curriculum could be developed.

The Statement of the forum called on the World Alliance to intensify the promotion of Global Citizenship programmes among all the national movements and among others, to set up a Task Force to develop an education and training Manual on Global Citizenship and make available to local /national movements, to identify and disseminate good practices of the Global Citizenship actions within/outside the YMCA as well as to mobilise resources for assisting the implementation of Global Citizenship programmes of the national movements. The forum recommended APAY to assist the National level implementation of the Global Citizenship programmes and to integrate the Global Citizenship Education in the curriculum of the proposed post Advanced study Programme. The Forum also made several recommendations to the National Movements including the initiation of coordinating system at national level and development of Global Citizenship Training Institute.

Dr. Park Jai Chang, President of the APAY inaugurated the forum and Dr. J. Alexander, Chairperson of the committee on BCGCP chaired. Dr. Darren O Byrne, Head of Social Science, Roehampton University, London, Prof. Jun-Hyeok Kwak, Political Science Department, Korea University, Kenneth Holmes, Chairman, Coventry and Warwickshire YMCA served as the key resource persons. World Alliance Executive Secretary for Advocacy and Programmes, Clarissa Balan, also took part in the event and presented case story on Global Advocacy. The Fair Trade label Japan, NCY Korea, Dr. Wasan Jombakade, NCY Japan also presented case stories on global citizenship actions.

The committee on BCGCP together with members of the working group Mr. Nam Boo Won, Dr. Pretesh R Kiran, Mr. Kohei Yamada, Ms. Hiromi Nagao, Prof. P.J. Oommen, Vice President, APAY and Mr. Takao Nishimura, APAY Treasurer assisted us in organizing the Forum. The National Council of YMCAs of Japan hosted the event.

3. Search Process begins for new General Secretary for APAY

Search process has been initiated by the APAY to fill the vacancy of the General Secretary of the Area Alliance. The search committee made the official announcement of the position to the National movements as well as ecumenical partners inviting applications from prospective candidates. Candidates who possess the relevant qualifications and experiences required for the position may apply in the prescribed format before 31 January 2009. *Please visit our website for more details of the position and procedures for applying.*

4. Training Workshop on Empowering Women

On 25-29 September, twenty-two YMCA volunteers and staff gathered together for experiential learning on addressing gender issues in a more holistic and practical approach. The training workshop engaged the participants in exposure visits on community and development programmes. Case stories shared by the participants of Japan YMCA and the Burmese Women's Union on their actions to foster gender equity and women empowerment

have raised participants' awareness as they respond to the gaps and challenges in YMCA and community as reflected in their action plans.

Interactive inputs on *Women and Poverty, Mobilising Women on Action to Equality and Advocacy for Rights of Women* were provided by Ms. Carla Santos of the Philippines Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) and Ms. Lynnsay Francis of the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD). Dr. Patcharawan Srisilapanan, Chair of the GE Committee together with Mr. Richard Kaing, former NGS of Myanmar YMCAs inspired the participants on their experiences in fostering partnership between men and women within the YMCA.

Skills workshop focused on Gender Analysis/Mainstreaming and on Advocacy and Action have provided them intervention skills and tools to bridge the gaps between policies and practices. The participants shared several affirmative actions and gender in practice programmes during the wonderful evening of cultural exchange. Participants were given leadership roles in the different components of the programmes.

Building on the recommendations made from previous assemblies and workshops, the participants emphasized to have more awareness building/education on gender sensitivity and greater participation of men in putting gender equity policy into practice in YMCA and community. This partnership of men and women will lead towards more visible gender equity practices in the region. *We thank the Working Group for assisting us in this workshop and YMCA of Chiang Mai for hosting the programme.*

5. Focus on Youth Participation and Development ~ Uni – Y Members in Action

We are inspired and happy to share the participation and engagement of Uni-Y members in YMCA's community rebuilding and international programmes that have given them opportunities to become more action-responsive global citizens in their communities:

- ▶ **Jogjakarta Love and Affection Camp, 10 - 17 September, Indonesia.** Together with the local youth volunteers of Sleman YMCA, Indonesia, Uni-Y members/staff of the YMCAs of Okayama and Wakayama, Japan organised programmes focussed on children/youth traumatised by the 2006 earthquake. The camp provided exchange and sharing of local culture, traditions, history and fellowship among the young volunteers and community.
- ▶ **Singapore YMCA International Service Programmes.** Members of Uni-Y of Singapore Management University joined other teams of volunteers that successfully built a 1.2 km concrete road in Proyouth Village in Siem Reap, Cambodia, which was officially inaugurated on 28 November. The task of rebuilding this long road was undertaken by YMCA to improve the livelihood and living conditions of the villagers as well as encourage commerce activities. The programme included YMCA English language skills to young villagers for their own self-employment.

We thank all Movements that have continuously supporting and promoting youth participation/leadership in various types of settings and situations as we all learn best through active community engagement and participation.

Let's continue providing our YMCA youth with more meaningful opportunities to experience the spirit of interconnectedness as they engage responsibly to build a better future.

6. Roundtable on Peace and Security, 11-15 February 2009, Sri Lanka

The Regional Roundtable of Peace and Security will be held on 11-15 February 2009 at YMCA International Center, Negombo Road, Katunayake, Sri Lanka. The Roundtable aims at developing strong conceptual understanding of peace and security in the backdrop of the UN declarations on Human Right. It will explore on the emerging peace and security issues and develop framework for practical responses that can be taken up at local / National / Regional level. It will also focus on training and developing core facilitators to further the thrust of peace and security. The Roundtable process will be fully participatory and it includes sharing of peace and security issues in Asia Pacific , theoretical inputs on Peace with Justice, training workshop on peace building, community exposures and sharing of significant case stories by the YMCAs / other organisations. We request all National Movements to share the information with the local YMCAs and enable the potential leaders to participate in the Roundtable. Registrations will close on 25 January 2009. *Details of the Roundtable are posted on our website.*

7. Leadership Workshop for Strengthening East Timor YMCA

A leadership workshop for the key leaders, volunteers and staff members of the emerging YMCA in East Timor was held on 3-6 December 2008. The process of the workshop includes revisiting of the YMCAs involvements in the community during the last 4 years, envisaging the plans for 2009-11 and developing strategic directions for strengthening the YMCA movement in East Timor. Special training sessions on Role of Civil Society in East Timor and Mission and Vision of YMCA were also held as part of the workshop. Dr. Park Jai Chang, President of the APAY inaugurated the workshop. Mr. Song Jin Ho, Ms. Ayano Inami and Mr. Jose Varghese participated in the workshop representing NCY Korea, NCY Japan and APAY, respectively. Mr. Hedeki Ishibashi, APAY East Timor Coordinator and Mr. Orasio Mendez, Director East Timor YMCA gave leadership for organizing the workshop.

Mr. Ishibashi has successfully completed 4 years of assignment in East Timor and will return to YMCA of Japan to take up his new assignment with Osaka YMCA. The APAY appreciates his dedicated service for the development of the East Timor YMCA.

8. 26th Advanced Studies Programme Successfully Concluded

The 26th Advanced Studies Programme on 26 October to 28 November 2008 was yet another experiential journey of learning and sharing of the participants together with the interactive exchange of inputs provided by the resource persons/facilitators on the thematic concepts and knowledge components of the programme. All the 13 participants were motivated and challenged to initiate and or enhance transformation process in their own movements and communities.

Living as one community in the YMCA Wu Kwai Sha Youth Village, they have learned several realities of the globalized society and analyzed these issues in the contemporary theological perspectives and the mission callings of the YMCA. They also witnessed different action responses by the community / civil society movements which provided them possible alternatives to these issues in their own local context. The impact of this leadership development programme on the participants was largely reflected in the presentation of their

contextual programme responses submitted towards the fulfillment of the Advanced Studies Programme.

We thank the Council of YMCAs of Hong Kong for their support to participants from the YMCAs of China and Myanmar, and the IHQ Y's Men International for their support for participants from outside the region through the Alexander Scholarship Fund. We also thank the Chinese YMCA and the YMCA of Hong Kong for their collaboration and support for the ASP and all National Movements that have sent participants.

We congratulate the graduates of the 26th Advanced Studies Programme:

Argentina	Karina Esquivel	Buenos Aires YMCA
Africa	Kwabena Nkietia Addae	Ghana YMCA
China	Zhu Qi	Beijingi YMCA
Hong Kong	Yow Yau Lan, Yvonne	Chinese YMCA
India	John Harrison	New Delhi YMCA
Korea	Roh Hoon-O	Gwangju YMCA
Korea	Kim Kee-Hyun	Bucheon YMCA
Myanmar	L. Nang Bang	Myitkyina YMCA
Philippines	Hubert Lew Magrata	Olongapo City YMCA
Philippines	Morito Tatel, Jr	Nueva Ecija YMCA
Sri Lanka	Roger Peiris	Negombo YMCA
Taiwan	Lai Tzer-Jiun, Jesselai	Taichung YMCA
Taiwan	Chiang Shih-Kai, Sky	Taipei YMCA

9. Philippine YMCA National Students Gathering

Report by Pablito A. Tabucol, Assistant Program Secretary for Movement Strengthening

About 100 young people were gathered together at the YMCA of the Philippines Building on December 5-6, 2008 in a National Students Gathering and Academic Olympics with the theme “Strengthening the Movement through Youth Active Participation in Response to Challenge 21”. The students’ gathering included seminar workshops on global citizenship, leadership, sustainable development and environmental awareness and sharing of good practices by the participants from the local movements. New learning components of the Academic Olympics were also introduced in addition to the typical literary, art and musical competitions to enhance understanding of the young participants on their roles as members of the association and to give them better directions as they are being prepared for greater responsibilities in the community they live with. The participants were members of the Red Triangle, Hi-Y and College-Y clubs.

10. Japan YMCA Staff in Hong Kong for Exposure Visit

Eight participants of the STEP II Staff Development Programme of the National Council of the YMCAs of Japan were in Hong Kong on 26 October – 2 November 2008 for exposure visits in social issues related to youth, advocacy, migration and ethnic minority inclusion. They also participated in the *Sharing of Life Moments* of the 26th Advanced Studies Programme. This session has given them more understanding of the life and stories of the YMCA executives in relation to their YMCA work and local/national situation. The trainees visited the 2 YMCAs in Hong Kong and experienced their programmes and responses to urban community realities. The session in APAY provided them learning on the thrusts and the current involvements of the YMCA movements in the region.

11. Orissa Ethnic Violence: YMCA Bhubaneswar Runs Refugee Camp

Report by Rev. Sudhansu Naik, General Secretary, Bhubaneswar YMCA, India

Responding to the needs of the people affected by the horrendous ethnic violence in Orissa (India), the Bhubaneswar YMCA has taken up a major project of relief and rehabilitation to address the various issues faced by the displaced people. The primary need of ensuring a safe haven for the refugees who have fled from their homes in Kandhamal district, the worst affected area, was addressed by initiating a Refugee Relief Camp in the premises of the YMCA itself. The refugees came all the way from Kandhamal seeking protection and safe place to live in and the YMCA started running a Relief Camp for them from 28th August 2008 onwards in the premises of the YMCA with 76 people to start with. However, the influx of refugees was beyond the expectation and the YMCA is now having 639 people from 24 villages under its care.

After running the camp for a few days, on YMCA's appeal, the government came forward providing security to the people in the YMCA camp as well as basic relief materials. The Bhubaneswar YMCA started a program to provide educational support to the children in the camp with the help of the youth volunteers. The YMCA is also planning to take up a major rehabilitation program to rebuild their lives and recover from the bitter experiences. The Governor of Orissa and other political dignitaries visited the Relief Camp run by the YMCA and all appreciated the services done by the YMCA.

12. China-Japan-Korea YMCAs Peace Forum

The 3rd China-Japan-Korea YMCAs Peace Forum was held on 20-24 November 2008 in Guangzhou, China with around 55 YMCA leaders, lay and professionals participating. Started in 2004, this biennial peace forum recognizes the role of the three National Movements in peace building in Northeast Asia and sharing of action-oriented programmes/projects on peace education. This year's forum resulted in the development of programme initiatives such as youth peace forum, global citizenship and peace education curriculum.

13. Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong Peace Carnival

As part of its Culture of Peace Campaign, the Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong organised *Peace Day Carnival* on 21 September, UN World Peace Day to engage people in "Love Trees, Low Carbon, and Live Fresh". A group of young environmentalists designed and installed a 32 x 8 feet artwork on the theme "Love of Eden" at the Victoria Park. The peace carnival included *One School One Tree* programme, selling of green products and a series of performances for creating public awareness on peace issues.

14. Updates on EASY Net

Post ASYG Celebration

Ecumenical Teams of Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and Philippines (Davao City) have planned their National Students and Youth Gatherings (NSYG) or EASY Net Week Celebration from October to December 2008 as a post event of the 4th Asia Pacific Students and Youth Gathering (ASYG) held last August.

This year, we launched the EASY Net Week, which was formerly known as the Asia Pacific Students and Youth Week (APSYW) in the context of actively promoting the network among its member movement from the national leadership to its grassroots membership. The theme of this year's celebration is focused on **“Youth Across Boundaries, Redefining the Culture of Peace”**. We encourage National Movements to work together and celebrate with your ecumenical youth groups and strengthen grassroots ecumenism and inter-faith partnership. This is our continuing thrust in building sustainable and peaceful communities.

Invitation for Application – EASY Net Coordinator

The Core Team of Ecumenical Asia Pacific Students and Youth Network (EASY Net) is now in the process of finding a new person that will take the post of its Coordinator which will commence on 15 April 2009. The concurrent EASY Net Coordinator, Mr. Wataru Arizumi, National Council of Japan YMCAs would end by March of 2009.

The EASY Net Coordinator serves as the primary representative in promoting the work of EASY Net in the region and the world. *For further information, please contact our APAY ES Cristina Dalope, Related Secretary/Core Team Member of EASY Net. Details of these updates have been sent to National Movements on 13 October 2008.*

15. Congratulations ~ New YMCA Leadership in Philippines and Myanmar

Our warm congratulations to *Judge Edilberto Claravall*, the newly elected President and to the new National Board Members of YMCA Philippines elected during the National Council Meeting on 9 November 2008. They will assume responsibilities from 1 January 2009.

We are happy to welcome *Mr. Maung Maung Win* who was appointed as the new *National General Secretary* of the National Council of YMCAs of Myanmar during the 8th Extra Ordinary Council Meeting held on 3 October 2008. He was the General Secretary of the Mandalay YMCA.

16. November 15 ~ Remembrance Day of YKC



Courtesy : Singapore YMCA

The APAY has dedicated 15 November 2008, the culmination day of the World YMCA and YWCA Week of Prayer and World Fellowship as Remembrance Day of the late Yip Kok Choong, APAY General Secretary. We are happy to note that most of the movement in the Region have observed it as a day of prayer and thanksgiving. This year's week of prayer focussed on the theme: *Born Free, Born Equal: Celebrating Human Rights*.

17. Forthcoming Events/Meetings

DATES	EVENTS	VENUE
11-15 February	Regional Roundtable on Peace and Security	Sri Lanka
18-22 March	World Alliance Executive Committee	Geneva
24-28 March	APAY Executive Committee and Related meetings	Hong Kong



IN MEMORIAM ~ YIP KOK CHOONG

Returned to the Lord on 31 October 2008

Born on 21 December 1945 as the third of six siblings to a coffee stall owner, Yip Kok Choong grew up in the small village of Kampar, Perak and graduated from University Malaya with a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Geography.

His first job was as a school teacher with a secondary school in Teluk Intan – SMK Sultan Abdul Aziz (1972-1983) – and the mission of transforming young lives became central to his being. As a young man of 29, Yip joined the YMCA of Kuala Lumpur as a Life Member – and the YMCA became the vehicle for his life purpose. In 1983, when a vacancy arose in the YMCA, he took up the position of General Secretary. He served in this position from 1983-1999. During

his term of office he initiated the YMCA Integrated Deaf Work Programme and numerous Community Development activities, as well as developed Adult Education for the elderly.

As a Methodist he upheld the principles of a strong faith. His ecumenical outlook was reflected in his willingness to learn from different expressions of faith – especially within the Asian context, and his openness to build bridges across different communities.

He was Executive Secretary for Programmes with the Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs from 2000-2002. In January 2003, he was appointed the Acting General Secretary before taking up the position of General Secretary in April the same year. He worked untiringly and selflessly for the mission of the YMCA, particularly focused on poverty alleviation, interfaith dialogue and human rights. He was a committed workhorse, known for working around the clock, right up to wee hours.

His easy-going nature and generosity of spirit enabled him to connect effortlessly with young and old. Children took to him naturally. Plants thrived under his care, and the garden in his office flourished. He was always warm and jovial, ever ready to see the better side of people he met, always listening and learning. He was gifted with an elephantine memory – as evidenced by his ready recital of individual names, their involvement within each movement, according to protocol, at every key function!

He spent countless hours with grassroots volunteers, staff, and colleagues from the YMCA fraternity and community leaders. He brought people together and created opportunities for engagement, sharing, service and leadership through formal programmes and informal suppers.

He read widely and wrote extensively. He relaxed by listening to music – mostly classical, traditional and new age. His interest in art included graphics, design and photography. He enjoyed cooking, and generations of APAY Advance Studies Programme students can testify to a mean beef curry whipped up from his kitchen. He read widely and wrote extensively. He relaxed by listening to music – mostly classical, traditional and new age. His interest in art included graphics, design and photography. He enjoyed cooking, and generations of APAY Advance Studies Programme students can testify to a mean beef curry whipped up from his kitchen.

His candle burnt brightly, up until it flickered and went out on 31 October 2008 at the age of 62, leaving behind his beloved wife Lucy Lim, and countless numbers that count him as treasured mentor and true friend.

His thoughts, his commitment, his life poured out with little spared for self, are the legacy that Yip leaves to us. What a jolly good fellow.

We give thanks to God for his life of service to the community and the YMCA.

18. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ~ Make Music of Peace in our Heart

“Glory to God in the highest and on Earth Peace.”

This was the song the angels sing in the story of Jesus' birth in Luke's Gospel and for the past 2,000 years, people have been inspired by this hymn of glory and peace. God takes on human form and puts an end to the conflict that is at the root of all conflicts: the conflict between God and humanity. "Peace on Earth" is not a mere wish but a commitment. Through the birth of Jesus, peace has been given to us. From then onwards, God's peace to all people has been reaffirmed. The peace of God is more than a written declaration or an agreement. It does not aim at tranquillity, harmony or the absence of conflict and fighting. The Bible tells us a wider conception of peace, which is about life in right relationships, the well being of all, not only human beings but also the whole of creation. Christmas is always a reaffirmation of this covenant of Peace.

How do we begin to achieve this peace in the present world of conflicts? We begin by learning how we may listen better to one another, learning how we may find what connects us in our concerns about life, and building bridges that allow us to focus upon connections. This learning will help to transcend our narrow interests and consider the future of our whole world. Then we learn to see that those around us, even those with whom we disagree, have something to tell us about their lives, something that is important and meaningful. While listening to God and listening to community we create the music of peace in our heart towards the everlasting peace and hope beyond the Christmas season.

As Howard Thurman asserts:

*When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:*

*To find the lost,
To heal the broken,
To feed the hungry,
To release the prisoner,
To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among the brothers and sisters
To make music in the heart.*

As people in the refugee camp in Orissa prayed, “Dear Lord, give us the strength to face this day, and the hope to welcome the next”.

May this Christmas be one of peace that grows deep in our spirit and makes music of peace in our heart. So be it! - throughout the New Year ahead. !!!

Cristina A. Dalope
Executive Secretary

Jose Varghese
Executive Secretary



We THANK YOU ALL for journeying together with us – to find new ways of proclaiming and doing the good news of God's reign to all creation ~ bringing light to the lives of others...looking forward to your continued support in the New Year.



NOTICE
APAY SECRETARIAT
YEAR-END HOLIDAYS

Please note that the APAY Secretariat will be closed from 24 December 2008 - 2 January 2009 for Christmas/Year-End Break

BLESSED CHRISTMAS
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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