From *Hobby* to *Business*

**Highlights**

p.2  A Walk into Nature

p.3  Dressed for Success/Dollars and Sense

p.5  A Glimpse of SIM’s New Annexe Building/Cross Talk in Tamil

p.8  Property Talk/Feel the pulse of the city on the topless HiPPO Bus!
Editor’s note

**Hobbies! Have you any?**

Some of you may have wondered what this issue would be about. Well, I believe that we do have an activity or interest that we engage in at leisure!

These days, conventional hobbies are rare as technology has invaded our lives. I recently realised that when someone asked me what my hobbies were, I would take a moment to respond. After a pause, I would reply by saying that I had various hobbies in the past, some of which I would still enjoy if I had time!

I have not undertaken some of these hobbies – in-line skating, scuba diving and photography – lately. I reckon that this is because my leisure time is rather limited these days. However, I still enjoy one of the hobbies I’ve had since the year 2000. I have been collecting Astroboy figurines in various sizes from various places. These figurines are kept safe as they are my prized possessions.

This issue brings you some of the most interesting and unique hobbies that our alumni have. Find out how a passion for nail art turned into a business idea and concept for one of our alumni members! Another alumni reveals the light treasures that he has amassed from as far back as 1975! An ardent photographer shares tips on capturing macro and landscape photos.

I hope that you will be inspired and entertained by the articles on these interesting hobbies! Do share with us any interesting hobbies that you may have at our Facebook page www.facebook.com/unisimalumni.

**Mohammad Noor**  Editor (Alumni Volunteer)  Newsletter Editorial Group

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**A Walk into Nature**

Learning to capture beautiful and unforgettable moments, and to transform these precious images into memories that would last a lifetime were what scores of alumni and students gathered at Unisim on March 26, did. Mr Yeo Wee Han, a photographer by profession, selflessly and avidly shared his experience and knowledge in Macro and Landscape photography with attendees of his workshop. Mr Yeo is also the president of the Nature Photographic Society, Singapore.

Useful suggestions on good photography were in abundance at the seminar. Mr Yeo commented that good photography could easily be achieved with the right amount of exposure and autofocus by using the simplest camera. Throughout the talk, he shared some wonderfully pragmatic tips on Macro and Landscape photography.

Mr Chuah, an alumni from the School of Arts and Social Sciences, enthused that the session was extremely informative, and he was pleasantly surprised to learn that lighting could contribute so tremendously to good photography. He was amazed at the divine and delightful images that Mr Yeo displayed on the slides, and how he had captured each scene at such a sublime moment, and with such consummate skill.

To learn more about photography by Mr Yeo Wee Han, please visit www.tripeaksimagery.com

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Tips on Macro photography:

1. Know the ins and outs of your gear.
2. Know what aperture priority and manual priority are, and how to use them.
3. Get familiar with the Depth of Field (DOF) and what it represents.
4. Use a tripod, whenever possible.
5. Use a remote release, whenever possible.
6. Get down to your subject’s level.
7. Use a flash, where appropriate.
8. Do not use autofocus in Macro photography.

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Tips on Landscape photography:

1. Get out there, move around and explore the landscape.
2. Exercise patience – landscape imagery takes time to compose.
3. Get familiar with High-Dynamic-Range (HDR) imaging.
4. Work a composition, and tell a story with your photographs.
5. Foul weather allows for some of the best photographs.
6. Think opposite and go opposite – some of the best photographs are taken when least expected.
Dressed for Success

Image. How important is the image you present to the world? This is what the Enhancing Professional Executive Image workshop centred around. UniSIM students and alumni had an informative afternoon soaking in skills and valuable tips from Ms Agnes Koh, Director and Founder of Etiquette & Image International. Ms Koh brought along with her years of experience gathered from being in the food and beverage, fitness and wellness industry.

So what is an image? An image is more than just skin deep. Your image invokes more than just an impression. The way you look is tagged to feelings, thoughts and judgement. It gives the onlooker subtle subconscious cues on your approachability, reliability and likeability. One’s first impression is forged in the first three seconds and is almost irreversible. Unbelievable but true. So how do we make our first impression count?

Ms Koh shared that with the right colours, it could bring out the radiance in your face, not only in making one look healthier but also in sending a more trusting message to the receiver. This was actively demonstrated on a guest, as she used various shades and colours, to show how these could affect one’s complexion, making the person look alive or dull.

Appropriate attire for the different industries was also covered in detail during the workshop. Essentials for ladies such as make-up, accessories and length of the skirt were not left out. As for the gentlemen, Ms Koh shared about men’s fashion and staples such as suits, shirts, wallets, watches, ties and pens.

The participants left the session with a wealth of information and tips on how to create a professional and executive image!

Dollars and Sense

University life is not all about hitting the books and memorising theories. On May 28, Mr Thomas Matthew, a financial guru and founder of wealth management school, ThomasTheCoach, delivered an interesting talk on foreign exchange (forex) to UniSIM alumni and students.

Mr Mathew did not dwell solely on forex during his two-and-a-half hour talk, which drew more than 100 alumni and students. Using his financial experience of 20 years in dealing with stocks, bonds, and unit trusts, he gave realistic comparisons of how forex could be a wealth-generating alternative.

Quick-witted with a good sense of humour, Mr Matthew never failed to entertain the audience with his analogies and stories. Tricia, 27, a business graduate from the Class of 2009, said: “I truly enjoyed Mr Matthew’s presentation! When I was studying the financial modules during my university days, the lecturers covered a portion on forex. But I could not fully comprehend how it worked. That was why I dared not dabble in it. But now that I have learnt the practical mechanisms of trading in foreign currencies alongside other financial products, I would say that I have gained more confidence in dealing in financial products, and will be looking into how I can generate income here.”

Patrick, 31, an IT graduate from the Class of 2010, said: “Overall, the package was informative and I hope to see more of such seminars at UniSIM.”

Information about ThomasTheCoach can be found at www.thomasthecoach.com.

Mr Thomas Matthew, trainer, ThomasTheCoach Pte Ltd, speaking to alumni and students.
Manicure and pedicure services are no longer exclusive to ladies these days. Many men now perceive such services as a form of personal grooming. Our alumna, Tracy Ng, shares her passion-turned-business adventure of nail painting and nail art.

Tracy dates her very first manicure and pedicure experience back to the days when she started work after completing her polytechnic studies. She shares: “I was 21 years old then, when my sister treated me to a wonderful session of manicure and pedicure services. After that, I was simply hooked!”

Since then, Tracy has developed a tendency to change her nail colour and nail art every fortnight. With the growing hunger to try on more adventurous colours and nail art, rising costs became a concern. That’s exactly when Tracy found her new love - nail painting and nail art. She started to do her own nail painting and nail art, experimenting with different colours and designs.

Apart from the aesthetics, Tracy feels that getting manicures and pedicures done contribute to personal hygiene and grooming. Changing nail colours also helps Tracy improve her mood and even de-stress during exam periods when she was studying at UniSIM.

Tracy shares with a gleaming smile that her then boyfriend and now husband, Chok Loon, had made it a point to pamper her by paying for the most luxurious nail package, amongst many she had signed up for. Indeed, the way to Tracy’s heart is through nail art. This good practice continues to this day.

Chok Loon also encouraged Tracy to enrol in a professional nail services course and offered to pay the fees. Besides financing Tracy’s interest, Chok Loon also supported her in other ways. On many occasions, he posed as a model for Tracy to apply the skills learnt throughout her nail services course. Cheers to Chok Loon!

Tracy’s love for nail painting and nail art did not stop there. She started her nail services home business, Pretty Inn, a year and a half ago. Business was good and she roped in a partner subsequently. Tracy often sacrificed her social life to serve her customers on weekday nights and over the weekends. As they say - no pain, no gain.

If not for her little bundle of joy arriving in July 2011, Tracy would not have divested her share of the business to her partner. All’s well, ends well too.

Below are some quick tips from our nail expert:

A Sterilise tools for manicure and pedicure thoroughly for hygiene.
B Invest in good base coats for protection of the nails against chemical infiltration.
C Never leave nail paints, especially red-based polish, on nails for more than two weeks to prevent stains.

The Newsletter Editorial Team congratulates Tracy and Chok Loon on their soon-to-be parenthood and hopes that Tracy will continue her passion in nail painting and nail art after the arrival of her little bundle of joy.
A Glimpse of SIM’s New Annexe Building

Cross Talk in Tamil

On Sunday, April 3, the School of Arts & Social Sciences hosted a cross talk in Tamil on the “Usage of Tamil in old and new movies”. The event was held in conjunction with the annual Tamil Language Festival which was launched on March 31 by Mr S Iswaran, Senior Minister of State for Trade & Industry, and Education. The event was attended by about 120 UniSIM students, alumni, faculty members and members of the public. The event featured speakers including Mr G T Mani and Mr Vishnu who are prominent media personalities, Tamil poets such as Mr Napolean and Mrs Inba, and teachers Mrs Uma Kanapathy and Mr Ravichandran. The facilitator was Mr V Kalaichelvan, a television celebrity.

The speakers explored the role of the media, particularly the movies, in maintaining minority languages. A lively debate was sparked when one of the speakers opined that standard Tamil spoken in old movies should be adopted in contemporary films as it would encourage more to speak good Tamil. However, others argued that the less formal form of Tamil, i.e., spoken Tamil used in newer movies, was more appealing to and appropriate for the younger generation. The engaging event lasted about two hours.

Globalization: Power, Authority, and Legitimacy in Late Modernity

If you are interested in understanding more about the influence of globalisation, you may like to check out the latest book written by UniSIM’s Associate Professor Antonio L. Rappa, Head of Programme for Management and Security Studies. Titled “Globalization: Power, Authority, and Legitimacy in Late Modernity”, the book analyses the new pessimism that has descended upon the globalised world. America was once the bastion of hope, optimism and progress. However, it is now showing clear signs of a superpower in decline. This enlarged and updated edition incorporates the latest developments in America vis-à-vis popular culture, capitalist wealth and the global war on terrorism. Prof Rappa is also a consultant to the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research at S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University.

The book is available at http://www.iseas.edu.sg/
I still reminisce growing up in the 70s with a smile — it meant carefree days without the hustle and bustle of life as it is today. As a teenager, my life centred around music and naturally, collecting vinyl rock records was a hobby. I also collected stamps — a collection which I started by laboriously peeling stamps off battered envelopes that my aunt who worked at Reader’s Digest had given me. However, the hobby which literally ignited my imagination was my collection of matchboxes. Matchboxes were one of the most common souvenirs found at hotels, nightclubs, restaurants and even airlines, and many other businesses back in the 70s. It might even have been one of the most used corporate gifts of those days.

I started work right after my ‘O’ levels in 1975 and payday meant patronising the latest coffee houses or “kopi how” as it was called then. Skillet’s located at Supreme House, where Park Mall sits today, was one. I recall collecting my first matchbox there and by the late 80s, my interest had spawned a big collection. However, as time progressed, my collection wittled down as some disintegrated while others were given away. The uniqueness of my collection today is that the matchbox souvenirs from the hotels and nightclubs I patronised, which are long gone from the face of Singapore, retain some interesting history.

For example, did you know that the postal codes back in the 70s were single digit? Take a look at these matchboxes.

The postal code was single digit and this was superseded by a new four-digit system in 1979.

Hotel Singapura Inter-Continental, where Forum Galleria now stands, holds fond memories for me of Pebbles Bar where one of Singapore’s well-known bands, Tania, played in the 70s.

The Tropicana Nightclub was also one for the lads. Situated at the spot on Scotts Road where Pacific Plaza now stands, it had a notorious reputation for brawls and a colourful nightlife for visiting US and ANZUK servicemen who were on R & R (rest and recreation) from the Vietnam War and of course us, the locals. My friends and I usually had fun watching the “action” at the Tropicana after trawling the other clubs.

The Hotel Summit, which is now York Hotel, had a lounge called The Aquarium which could have been where the now defunct Carriage Bar was located within the hotel. This matchbox was given to me by my uncle who worked in the hotel industry in the early 70s. It was here where I spent some time listening to the ThunderBirds, another iconic 60s pop band and long-time resident band, best known for their number one hit, My Lonely Heart, with its distinctive slide guitar sound. Derrick Fitzgerald was the guitarist and band leader, who unfortunately suffered an illness which ended his professional and legendary era.

Apart from the collection of matchboxes from coffee houses and hotels, I have also collected matchboxes from airlines and the one shown here is from the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC). BOAC was the long-haul British state airline that operated from 1946 to 1974.

The other matchbox advertised Butcher Block Meats. I could not remember who gave it to me but I googled and found that the company still exists!

Collectible matchbooks and matchboxes are something that almost all of us, at some point of time, have looked at with marvel in our eyes. From bars to restaurants, collectible matchbooks and matchboxes printed with the name of the establishment, are present everywhere, maybe not so much in Singapore but in other countries. In my opinion, these are some of the simplest items to collect. Inexpensive and almost as varied as the places you can travel to, collectible matchbooks and matchboxes are truly quite entertaining.
Flash your alumni card at Pedro’s local stores and receive:

- 10% off regular priced items
- Receive a lifetime membership with minimum spending of $160 (Usual $250)
- Valid at all Pedro stores in Singapore only from 1 May 2011 to 30 April 2012

Mint Museum of Toys  |  26 Seah Street Singapore 188382

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Valid till 30 September 2011

Mr Punch  |  26 Seah Street Singapore 188382

- 2nd Main Course at 50% discount
- Discount will be of the lower priced item, applicable for mains, pastas and pizzas only
Valid till 30 September 2011

UniSIM shall not be held responsible for any changes in the promotion or quality of the products/services offered.

CONTEST GIVEAWAYS!

We are giving away 10 UniSIM Bags. Simply SMS the answers to the two questions below to 9113 6795 in the following format:

Example: Newsletter S1234567X email@abc.com answers for Q1 and Q2

Questions:
1. What are the names of the alumni who shared about their hobbies in this issue?
2. Name the upcoming alumni event.

Closing Date: July 17, 2011

Congratulations to the Contest Winners of Issue 13!

Ang Lay Khim SXXXX397G
Foo Sue Xia SXXXX395D
Heng Soo Yeow SXXXX881C
Lee Woon Ngan SXXXX006Z
Lim Shao Ping SXXXX435H
Mak Chwee Har SXXXX086Z
Soh Shiyun SXXXX493C
Suhaimi Bin Adullah SXXXX249D
Tan Wee Leng SXXXX385F
Yong Mun Fai SXXXX068C

For advertising enquiries, call 6248 5782 or e-mail alumni@unisim.edu.sg
LTC (NS) Mohamed Ismail is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of both PropNex Realty, Singapore’s leading real estate agency, and P & N Holdings, its parent company with other property-related subsidiaries under its wing.

Ismail, who has a Bachelor of Land Economics (Hons) from the University of Technology Sydney, owned his first property at the age of 22 and made his first million at 28. He is an inveterate entrepreneur and a success coach to many Million-Dollar Club Producers in the Real Estate arena. He is also a strong believer of “Make Your Money Work Harder”.

He has appeared on various media channels across the region and speaks at various seminars, sharing his expert opinion with the public. His business efforts have led him to win the Entrepreneur of the Year Awards from Singapore Malay Chamber of Commerce and Industry (2004), Singapore Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Association of Small and Medium Enterprises (both in 2008).

**Topics: Why and How You Should Invest in Property**

**Introduction**
As the CEO of leading real estate agency PropNex, Ismail is no stranger to property investments and holds many properties under his belt. He is a strong advocate of property investments, as he feels that these are stable and well-protected “brick-and-mortar” (literally) investments. In this talk, Ismail will share and analyse recent property news and trends, focus on key areas worth investing and give some invaluable and eye-opening insights on the property market.

**Recommended Attendees:** Potential HDB upgraders and property investors

**Keynote Highlights**
- Why Invest in Property?
- Property Regulations and Implications
- Property Trend Analysis
- Is Your Property an Asset or a Hot Potato?
- Comparative Insights and Hot Tips

**Date:** July 23, 2011  
**Venue:** SIM HQ, LT4.20  
**Time:** 2.00pm to 4.30pm

**Fee:** Free for alumnus, $10.70 for alumnus’ guest  
**Registration:** Register at www.unisim.edu.sg/alumniportal

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**Feel the pulse of the city on the topless HIPPO Bus!**

**Venue:** Boarding location at Suntec City (Galleria)

**Date:** August 20, 2011 Saturday

**Time:** 6:15pm – 6:45pm (Registration)  
  * 7:00pm – 9:00pm (HIPPO Bus Tour)  
  * Route and length of tour will be confirmed in August when details of the Hari Raya Aidilfitri Light-Up is confirmed

**Fee:**  
$13.00 nett/adult / $13.00 nett/child (3-12 years old)  
FREE for toddler (below 3 years old)  
(Published Public Rate: $23.00/adult, $13.00/child)

(A UniSIM alumnus can invite up to 3 guests, including 1 toddler)

**Registration:** Register at www.unisim.edu.sg/alumniportal