



# VANCOUVER SINGAPORE CLUB

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2007/2008

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## VSC e-NEWS

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Issue 1/2008



The wet and cold weather has come and gone; soon we will see sunny days of spring.

The club started the year with celebrations of our Chinese New Year with a Dinner and Dance on Sat 2 February 2008 at Continental Seafood Restaurant in Richmond. We had a great turn out and guests were entertained with nice music from the lovely singers and spectacular Chinese New Year costumes competition.

Members were treated to authentic Singaporean cuisines on 23 February 2008, after a very useful and informative seminar on group dynamics. Karaoke session followed with members and guests enjoying the lively music and melodious voices of the singers.

The Executive Committee meet regularly to brainstorm on exciting activities for the members. A calendar of proposed activities is included in this issue. We request all members to register early for activities that they wish to participate.

We welcome suggestions that you may have and look forward to your participation in those activities that you are interested.

**Yee Hua Tan, Editor**



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# *President's Message & Greetings*

Spring is in the air!

A fresh new start for many of us .. new hopes and aspirations, good health, prospering business and development of good relationships within the family and making new friends.

Despite the harsh wintry snow and rains, the spirits of the Exco and members were high. There were so many activities to organise and attend.

The Club celebrated Chinese New Year on 2 February 2008 with tremendous support from members, friends, guests and community leaders. To build strong relationships with other social clubs, several Exco members reciprocated their support of our event by attending the Chinese New Year events that they host.

The Exco continues to deliver events that are refreshingly relevant to the lifestyle of our members. We not only continue to create opportunities for members to network and enjoy delicious food, we also attempted to provide brain food. Together with the Singapore Business Council, the Club organised a mini-seminar titled "When Groups Meet" on 23 February 2008. The attendees enjoyed the very informative seminar. After the seminar, members and guests were hosted to True Singapore Cuisines.

The Exco is now planning the Club's Annual General Meeting scheduled for May 2008. Despite coming to the end of our term of office, there is no scaling down of planning. You will find a planned list of activities in this newsletter.

The Club continues to attract new members. I am particularly pleased that many have joined as Life Members and several General Members have converted their membership to Life membership.

With the introduction of membership cards, the Exco is now able to negotiate with local vendors for special privileges for members.

I hope that you will enjoy the nice scenery and weather that spring brings to Vancouver.

Warmest Regards

Kwek Teong Sin  
President

## *Club Events . .*

### *2008 Chinese New Year Dinner and Dance*

This year the Club celebrated Chinese New Year on 2 February 2008 at Continental Seafood Restaurant in Richmond. 320 members and guests attended this successful and fun event.

To ensure the comfort of the attendees, the Exco decided that it would limit the number of tables to 32.

As early as 4.30 pm, a few Exco members arrived at the venue to set up and prepare for the event.

During his welcome speech, the President of SBC and VSC, Kwek Teong Sin, thank all members and guests for supporting the event. He said that all present were truly the VIPS of the evening. He also said that the Chinese New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, in welcoming spring, the Club could look forward to fresh and new initiatives and directions.

Our notable guests included the Consul General of Singapore for Vancouver, Mr & Mrs Foo Chin Kwok, Consul General of the Kingdom of Thailand, Mr Kosit Chatpaiboon, Vice Consul of US Consulate in Vancouver, Ms Hong Geok Maerkle, MLA for Surrey/Tynehead and Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism and Immigration, Mr Dave Hayer, Vice President, Canada of Singapore Airlines, Mr Campbell Wilson, President of MABC, Ms Gina Hansen, President of MSBCA, Mr John Ting and President of Thai Association of British Columbia, Ms Walaiporn Laoha.

There were so many Attendees, Members and Life Members draw prizes, courtesy of the very generous sponsors and donors.

For the first time, the Club had a Chinese New Year Chinese Costumes competition where we gave out cash prizes for the 3 top winners. The judging presided by Mrs Billy Foo, Mrs Belinda Poh and Mrs Tammy Wilson, attracted 12 lovely contestants.

The 'Live Auction' received many lively bids for the SIA Vancouver/Singapore return air ticket (donated by SIA Canada), Nokia E65 Mobile Phone (donated by Leap International of Singapore), 12 bottles of Goats do Roam wine (donated by Mr Foo Chin Kwok) and Epson printer (donated by Ms Violet Chan).

The evening's lively songs and dance music were provided by the Melody Music Group hosted by Wilson Wong.

## 2008 Chinese New Year Dinner and Dance





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# *Sharing the Joy & Celebration of Chinese New Year with MSBCA and MABC*

Vancouver Singapore Club continued to maintain good relationship with the Malaysian clubs. Exco members joined MSBCA on 9 February 2008 and MABC on 15 February 2008 in celebrating the Chinese New Year they organised.



## *Joint Singapore Business Council & Vancouver Singapore Club Mini – Seminar and Members' Gathering*

Once again, SBC and VSC jointly organised a mini-seminar for members and their guests on 23 February 2008.

This short but lively workshop conducted by Leo Valdes, a member of SBC, introduced participants to three concepts of team-based decision-making processes - group life, group thinking and group wisdom. Using a mini-case study and a game, participants experienced the pitfalls of having the wrong working conditions, and learn the remedies to those pitfalls. They were challenged about perceptions about teams and groups.

The highly interactive seminar was very fun and interesting. Attendees actively participated and found the seminar very informative. Several members requested that the Exco consider having similar educational seminar/workshop in the future.

After the brain food, about 60 members and guests enjoyed True Singapore Cuisines that include Singapore Hainanese Chicken Rice, Beef Rendang, Tahu Goreng, Mee Goreng, Tau Suan and a large DQ Buster Bar ice cream.



Members and guests were able to intermingle and met new friends.

While enjoying the scrumptious cuisines, members and guests were entertained by budding singers using the Club's karaoke system.

## *Mini – Seminar and Members' Gathering*





## Lo Hei at Prima Taste

True to Singaporean Chinese tradition, the 1<sup>st</sup> day of Chinese New Year was celebrated with a Lo Hei lunch hosted by Kiam Ang, owner of Prima Taste Restaurant.



The lunch was attended by (from left) John Ting, President, MSBCA, Kiam Ang, Prima Taste, Marjorie Woo, APL, Foo Chin Kwok, Consul General of Singapore in Vancouver, Mrs Billy Foo, Kwek Teong Sin, President, Singapore Business Council & Vancouver Singapore Club, Tan Yee Hua, Editor, VSC, Gina Hansen, President, MABC and Poh Soh Lim.

All of us armed with chopsticks tossed the raw salmon salad with a colourful blend of radish, ginger, carrots, sesame seeds, crushed peanuts and fried flour crackers, topped with a fresh-made homemade plum sauce, high above the table and simultaneously shouting auspicious phrases and wishes. There was excitement amongst us and our spirited tossing of the yu sheng attracted lots of admiring and curious stares of the other diners. This dish is a real treat and a wonderful appetizer.

In Singapore, this dish is a must have, especially amongst businessmen who hopes that the higher the toss, the higher will their business prosper.

"Yu", the fish, sounds like abundance, and "sheng" meaning raw, sounds like life, was first created by a chef of Lai Wah Restaurant in Singapore. This dish is now widely offered by Chinese restaurants of all 5-star hotels in Singapore. It is now served with elaborate sauces and ingredients, including gold dust!



## *News from Singapore..*



Members who are Singapore Citizens will find this year's budget beneficial to all Singaporeans. Below are the benefits of the Budget as it affects individuals and households:

- Growth Dividends (GD)
- Top-ups to Post-Secondary Education Accounts (PSEA)
- Top-ups to CPF Medisave Accounts
- Personal Income Tax (PIT) Rebates
- Assistance through Citizens' Consultative Committees (CCCs), Self-Help Groups and Voluntary Welfare Organisations (VWOs)
- LIFE Bonus (L-Bonus)
- Increase in Singapore Allowance (SA)
- Encouraging Voluntary Savings
- Estate Duty

If you wish to learn more about the 2008 Singapore Budget and how it will affect you, please visit the following website: <http://www.singaporebudget.gov.sg/index.html>

## *Renewing your Singapore Passport*

Many Singaporeans residing in Canada have asked about how they could renew or extend their Singapore passports On-line.

You can apply through

### **Application for Passport On-line Electronic System (APPLES)**

The website is: <https://www.psi.gov.sg/NASApp/tmf/TMFServlet?app=MHA-SIR-APPLES&isNew=true&Reload=true>

Or you can get information from the Consulate-General of the Republic of Singapore in Vancouver. The website is: <http://www.mfa.gov.sg/vancouver/>

## *Employment Conditions & Opportunities in Singapore*

Members who are interested to learn about the employment conditions and opportunities can visit the website of Contact Singapore, <http://www.contactsingapore.org.sg/home/>



## Overseas Voting

Changes announced by the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Wong Kan Seng at Parliament on 26 Feb 2008 would enable more overseas Singaporeans to vote at Singapore's General Elections.

In the past, a Singaporean must be resident in Singapore for two of the five years before election to be eligible to vote. Now the period is cut down to 30 days in the three years before an election.

This change is seen as the government recognizing the importance of overseas Singaporeans in determining the future of the country. There are about 150,000 Singaporeans working or studying overseas.

Mr Wong said the relaxed rules would let more overseas Singaporeans qualify to vote 'while maintaining the spirit of the law that only those who continue to keep their links back home should be entitled to do so'. Mr Wong also announced that Singaporeans whose names are in the register of electors in another country will no longer be disqualified from voting here.

Overseas Singapore can register online to vote using their SingPass.

## Singapore Day

The Overseas Singaporean Unit will hold this year's Singapore Day on Oct 4 at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl in Melbourne's King's Domain Gardens.

Besides the opportunity to savour Singaporean hawkers' fares, Singaporeans in Melbourne can also look up job opportunities available in Singapore, at a recruitment fair at the event.

Last April's inaugural Singapore Day was held in New York's Central Park. The event drew almost 6,000 Singaporeans.

Perhaps we can hope to have OSU consider Vancouver as the next Singapore Day venue.

## *Just Sharing Some Thoughts . .*

Very often we receive invitations and we just could not decide if we should attend. We procrastinate and towards the deadline, we decide that we wish to attend. Too late .. we take the chance. Good for you if you are able to get accepted but imagine the logistical nightmare the organiser has to endure. Out of courtesy, they usually do not protest.

A member once told me that it is a common and acceptable Canadian practice for attendees of events to just confirm over the telephone that they would attend and pay at the door. This practice may be convenient to the attendee but certainly presents a potential problem for the host or organiser. If the potential attendee does not turn up and did not honour the commitment with a payment, he will deprive others from attending and a financial loss to the host or organiser.

Then there are those who did not respond but just turn up at the door. This will present the organiser with a quandary as to whether to accept the attendee or turn him away. This is fine if the event does not require registration or catering. If there is catering, the organiser runs the risk of inadequate provision. We are fortunate that many of our members are very cooperative and they usually confirmed their attendance with cheque payments.

Organising any event for a not for profit club is never easy. It is always fraught with demands from members. VSC members can help the Exco organising any event by letting the Club know before the deadline specified for any event if they wish to attend. Members can do so by email or even just a phone call. This will make it so much more enjoyable for all and remove any possible misunderstanding.

*TS Kwek*

## *Announcements & Coming Events . .*

### 1) MEMBERSHIP CARDS

The Club's membership cards for Life and Ordinary members are now ready for collection. Members can collect their cards at the various VSC events. If you require any further information please email to: [President.VSC@Gmail.com](mailto:President.VSC@Gmail.com).

There will be an administrative charge for the replacement of lost or damaged membership card.

Membership cards will only be issued to members of good standing. Members are requested to bring along their membership cards when attending all Club's events for identification and enjoying membership privileges.

### 2) MEMBERSHIP PRIVILEGES

- |                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • Chili Padi Restaurant           | - 10% discount                  |
| • Sri Malaysia Restaurant         | - under negotiation             |
| • Winnie & Victor Florist         | - % of discount to be confirmed |
| • Northern Crown Holiday & Travel | - Special discount for members  |
| • Continental Seafood Restaurant  | - 10% discount                  |
| • Golden Summit                   | - 10% discount                  |
| • McFairview Printing             | - 10% discount                  |
| • United Security                 | - Free installation             |
| • Singapore Airlines              | - Special fare                  |

All privileges accorded by the above vendors are subject to terms and conditions that they may impose from time to time and without the obligation to give members any notice.

**The Club is not responsible for any issue that the member may have with the vendors when using the membership card for privileges.**



### 3) PLANNING AHEAD

Although the term of the Exco is now in its last quarter, our team has come up with a list of events that members may be able to participate in the coming months. Many of the events will have to be ratified by the new Exco after the AGM. There may also be changes subject to the level of participation by members.

May 2008	Annual General Meeting
June 2008	Late Spring Event (eg. Portland Rose Festival, Excursion to Seattle, WA, Tofino, Vancouver Island, Gulf Islands etc)
July 2008	Summer Outdoor Activities (eg. Camping trekking, Boating, Sailing, Fishing & Crabbing, Picnic, BBQ, Singapore Food Festival, Fruits Picking etc)
August 2008	Singapore National Day Celebration
Sep/ Oct 2008	Fall Event (Cornfield Maze for Families, Healthy Lifestyle & Family Seminars, Karaoke Night, Shopping tour to factory outlets in Seattle WA or Oregon etc)
Nov/ Dec 2008	Winter Event (Members' Networking Dinner, Christmas/New Year Eve Function, etc)
Jan/ Feb 2009	Chinese New Year Dinner & Dance
Mar/ April 2009	Early Spring Activities (eg. Tulip Festival, Visit Butchart Garden in Victoria, Karaoke & Singapore Food Festival etc.)

### *Ordinary Membership Renewal Reminder:*

If your membership had expired recently, please mail your membership renewal payment to:

**Vancouver Singapore Club,**  
2719 Main Street,  
Vancouver, B.C. V5T 3E9