



NEWS LETTER

January - March 2019

Quarterly magazine of the Malaysian-German Society • for members only

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Singing in a Choir

Family Matters
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New Year's Message from the President



Dear Members and Friends,

The ending of an old year and the beginning of a new one is always the time when you pause for a moment from your usual hustle and bustle, to review and rethink.

2018 was quite an exciting year for the society and its board of management. Achim Lauermann announced early in the year that he would not be standing for re-election, as did a number of board members, such as Ino Quass, Jochen Holst, Syafeeq Mohamed and Yvonne Touby.

Not many people are willing to put their time and effort into a volunteer job, serving a society. But after promoting the vacancies for a few weeks, we found a number of candidates to stand for election at the AGM in May. Alireza Soleimankhani, Christiane Lange, Clement Liang, Gerlinde Krupp, Hanns-Philip Wurster, Karena Kamaruzaman, Nicholas Tan, Teoh Seng Aun, Tamara Spandl, Dr Wolfgang Mark and myself were duly elected. Andreas Förster was appointed at the first board meeting, to join as twelfth member. Half of the people were new to the board so, even before we held the first board meeting, we started with a team-building event. There is a lot of energy in this new team and I both appreciate their dedication and love working with them.

The first thing we did was to implement a **professional facebook page** to reach more people with our announcements and promotions of events and courses. This has paid off, especially for Oktoberfest, the art workshop and the Christmas bazaar, but also for the new intake for the German courses. We are now able to reach out to many more people than before.

After the summer break, our biggest event in the year, the **Oktoberfest** was approaching fast and the celebration turned out to be very successful again (see Flashback). Wolfgang as chairman of the Oktoberfest committee had also added some new members, so the committee was bigger than ever, with 13 members. This paid off well and the burden of volunteering turned out to be a lot of fun and the event ran smoothly.

Our marketing committee, with chairman Philip, was kept busy preparing a **logo contest** for a new face for the MGS. If you are interested in taking part, please have a look at our website for more information and the conditions. Submission deadline will be 1 March 2019.

There are quite a few more projects on the way which are not yet finalised – watch out: we will let you know more, soon!

In 2018 we also organised the following regular events (in no particular order):

- a Japanese Tea Ceremony, prepared by our friends from the Japanese Society
- the opening of an art exhibition, with paintings by Penang artist Lee Jee Yuan
- 5 German breakfasts
- 6 movie nights
- the Open Day
- the famous MaiBall, organised by Achim Lauermann
- an interesting talk by Ralf Touby
- a highly successful Oktoberfest
- an art workshop for teenagers, followed by an exhibition by German artists Barbara Auer and Gabriele Bürger
- the Christmas Celebration and Bazaar

The end of the year sees us also saying good-bye: to our office manager Jascha, and three of our board members who will not be able to serve any longer. We wish them well with all of their new endeavours and hope they will keep in touch!

Denise Khoo is our new lady in the office and **Judy Mok** was recently appointed to the board of management. Please have a look at the “Our Society” section for more information. Welcome to the MGS, Denise and Judy!

I hope you will all have a great start to 2019, or to the year of the earth pig, as our Chinese friends will call their new year, starting on 5 February.

Wishing you and your loved ones peace, health, happiness and prosperity.

Yours truly,

Petra Müller

Editorial

Board of Management

President

Ms Petra Müller

Newsletter & Publications

Vice-President

Dr Wolfgang Mark

Oktoberfest

Honorary Secretary

Mr Clement Liang

Clubhouse

Honorary Assistant Secretary

Mr Nicholas Tan

Honorary Treasurer

Mr Andreas Förster

Honorary Assistant Treasurer

TBA

Ms Karena Kamaruzaman

Movie Nights

Mr Teoh Seng Aun

German Classes

Mr Alireza Soleimankhani

Cultural Events

Mr Hanns-Philip Wurster

Marketing

Ms Judy Mok

Staff

Project Manager

Ms Denise Khoo

Office Manager

Ms Elena Mah

Teachers

Ms Nina Todorova

Ms Waltraud Mayr

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Malaysia

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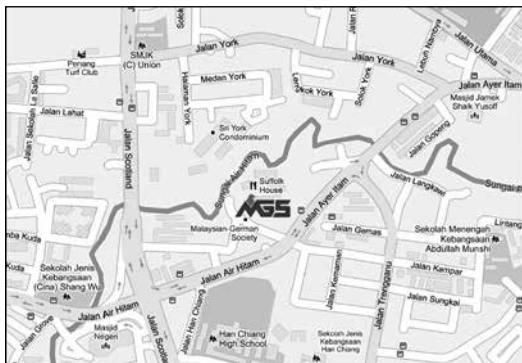
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2:00pm - 7:00pm



MGS Newsletter

Issue January - March 2019

Cover picture

Star Clipper © Richard Perry

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Institute, Warrior Bootcamp

Printer

Pen'Ads (M) Sdn. Bhd.



- 42 Do you know that singing makes you happy?



- 48 Find out how you can influence your child in a positive way!



- 69 Have you ever dreamt of a different kind of a cruise...?

4-5 New Year's Message & Editorial

Coming Up

9 Calendar, Logo Contest & Events

Our Society

19 Library, Vacancy & Members

22 Staff & Board

German Language Courses

29 Overview

31 From the Classroom

Flashback

33 Oktoberfest

39 Art Workshop & Exhibition

40 Christmas Celebration & Bazaar

Penang Active

42 Singing in a Choir

Beyond our Society

46 Interview Sally Alexander

Family Matters

48 Connect before You Correct

Penang Monthly Article

51 Agents of Change

Corporate Corner

55 Bosch Car Multimedia

Food

57 Recipe: Danish Cinnamon Rolls

59 Restaurant Tips

Fitness

65 The Person You Will Spend the Rest of Your Life With

Travel

69 A Cruise for Those Who...

Ralf's Ramblings

74 Einstein



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Auxiliary Service
- Cancer Centre - Radiotherapy, Chemotherapy,
PET-CT Scan & Intraoperative Radiotherapy (IORT)
- Cancer Wellness Centre
- Cardiac Services:
 - Cardiac Lab: Echocardiography, ECG &
Stress Test (Treadmill) and Executive
Cardiac Assessment
 - Cathlab: Cardiac Catheterization (Angiogram),
PTCA, Pacemaker (Temporary/Permanent),
Heart Studies, Interventional Electrophysiology
and Biplane Angiography System
- Cardiovascular Imaging Laboratory
- Child Development & Assessment
- Critical Care Unit
- Day Surgery
- Delivery Suites
- Dental Centre - Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery
- Ear, Nose, Throat, Head & Neck Surgery and
Cochlear Implant Surgery
- ENT Laboratory - Rhinometry & Ultrasound
- Electroencephalogram (EEG) & Neurophysiology
Laboratory
- Endocrinology
- Endoscopy, ERCP, Endoscopic &
Endogastroscopic Surgery
- Eye Surgery (including small incision Cataract
Surgery - Phacoemulsification) & Glaucoma
- Gastroenterology, Hepatology & Therapeutic
Endoscopy
- General Surgery, Colorectal Surgery, Chest
Surgery & Hepatopancreatobiliary Surgery
- Haemodialysis Centre
- Heart Centre - Cardiology & Cardiothoracic Surgery
- Histopathology
- Infectious Diseases & Travel Medicine
- Intensive Care Medicine
- Internal Medicine
- International Desk
- Interventional Radiology
- Laboratory & Blood Bank
- Laparoscopic Surgery
- Laser Surgery
- Low Dose Radio-iodine Therapy for
Thyrotoxicosis (Hyperactive Thyroid)
- Maternity Packages & Antenatal Classes
- Medical Officer Services
- Neonatal Intensive Care
- Nephrology
- Neurology & Neurosurgery
- Nursery
- Operating Theatre
- Obstetrics & Gynaecology and Fertility Centre (ivf)
- Orthopaedic, Arthroscopy Surgery, Spine Surgery,
Sports Injury, Trauma, Bone Transportation and
Joint Reconstruction
- Paediatrics
- Patient Education Unit
- Percutaneous Laser Disc Decompression
(PLDD)
- Pharmacy
- Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery
- Psychology (Clinical, Educational & Counseling) &
Neurofeedback Therapy
- Psychiatry
- Radiology & Imaging Dept:
 - PET-CT Scan
 - 3T MRI (Upgraded from MRI)
 - CT Scan
 - Fluoroscopy
 - General X-ray
 - Mammogram
 - 3D Automated Breast Ultrasound (ABUS)
 - Cone Beam Computed Tomography (CBCT)
 - Ultrasound Imaging
 - X-ray Bone Densitometry (Dexa Scan)
- Rehabilitation Centre:
 - Audiology (including Newborn Hearing Screening,
Treatment for Vertigo, Imbalance & Tinnitus)
 - Nutrition & Dietetics Unit
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Sports Injury, Rehabilitation & Gymnasium
 - Speech- Language Therapy, Auditory
Verbal Therapy & Swallowing Therapy
- Respiratory Medicine
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Lithotripsy & GreenLight Laser Therapy)
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• CT Scan



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January

01
TUE *New Year's Day*

21
MON *Thaipussam*

25
FRI **Breakfast**

25
FRI **Movie Night**

February

05
TUE *Chinese New Year*

06
WED *Chinese New Year*

March

21
THU **Breakfast**

29
FRI **Movie Night**

30
SAT **Open Day**

Please note in your diary:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| MaiBall | 11 May |
| AGM | 16 June |
| Oktoberfest | 18 & 19 October |



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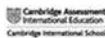
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Got an Eye for Design?

Create a new logo for the Malaysian-German Society! Stand a chance to win RM1,500 if your design is picked to be our new logo. To enter, send your entry to contest@mgs.org.my

Files submitted are not to exceed 5 MB and entries are to include a rationale in pdf



LOGO DESIGN CONTEST

Create a **new** Logo for the
Malaysian-German Society

The winning entry will receive RM **1,500**
Submission deadline is 1 March, 2019

Please visit www.mgs.org.my for official guidelines

Coming Up

German Breakfast / Deutsches Frühstück

Five times a year our members and friends meet for German and international breakfasts held at our premises. There are always new people to meet and old friends to greet – not to forget the delicious food which is always prepared by a few of our ladies. Everybody is most welcome, especially those new to Penang.

Members RM 25,
non-members RM 30,
starts at 9:30am

Friday, 25 January

Thursday, 21 March



Creatively inspiring – together



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Über uns das All (Above us only Sky)

Drama, Germany 2012, FSK 12, 88 min



| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| On | Friday, 25 January |
| Mingle & chat | 8:00pm |
| Start movie | 8:30pm |
| Language | German with English subtitles |
| Director | Jan Schomburg |
| Actors | Sandra Hüller, Georg Friedrich, Felix Schmidt-Knopp |

Martha is in a happy relationship with Paul. She shares her life with him, and she trusts him and feels she knows him inside out. But one day two policewomen appear at her door and suddenly everything changes. The man with whom Martha has lived for many years is nothing but a phantom. Her life is no longer what it was and the future is unknown.

The film for the movie night on **29 March** will be announced soon, please check our web-site or Facebook

„Der Schöne und das Biest“

Mit Eva-Maria Fastenau & Michael Seeboth
Kabarett „Fettnäppchen“ Gera

Sonntag, 10.02.2019, 18:00 Uhr
E&O Hotel, Cornwallis Suite, Heritage Wing



Anmeldungen an: info@bmcmcd.com.my
Eintritt, Getränke und Fingerfood sind frei. Reservierungen werden chronologisch nach Eingang bestätigt.

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A vibrant poster for a Luau Fun-Raiser Party. The background is a bright blue sky with green palm fronds and tropical flowers like red hibiscus and yellow plumeria. A large red parrot with yellow and green wings is perched on a branch on the right. The word 'LUAU' is written in large, bold, red letters with a white outline. Above it, 'LU-W ♥ W!' is written in white. Below 'LUAU', 'Fun-Raiser Party 2019' is written in white. Further down, 'IN SUPPORT OF TENAGANITA PENANG WOMEN'S SHELTER' and 'CELEBRATING 4 YEARS OF SERVICE' are written in white. The date 'SATURDAY FEB. 16TH, 2019' is in large red letters. A red starburst on the left says 'TICKETS 150 RM'. A red heart on the right says '7:00 TO 11:00 PM'. At the bottom, a list of activities is on the left, and the venue and contact information are on the right. The Tenaganita logo is also present.

LU-W ♥ W!

LUAU

Fun-Raiser Party 2019

IN SUPPORT OF TENAGANITA PENANG WOMEN'S SHELTER
CELEBRATING 4 YEARS OF SERVICE

SATURDAY FEB. 16TH, 2019

TICKETS 150 RM

7:00 TO 11:00 PM

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- ♥ DANCE TO THE GREAT MUSIC OF THE "DE LEON JAZZ EXPERIENCE"
- ♥ HULA DANCE AND "ONE BILLION RISING-BREAK THE CHAIN" LED BY "DANCE FOR A CAUSE" COMMUNITY DANCERS
- ♥ RAFFLE AND LIVE AUCTION WITH FABULOUS PRIZES!
- ♥ AGE 16 AND OVER
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Samstag, 30. März 2019 um 11:00 Uhr

im Nebengebäude der Wesley Methodist Church, 136 Jalan Burma,
Zufahrt über Jalan Clove Hall, gehalten vom evangelischen Pfarrer
Happel aus Singapur.

www.ek-malaysia.org



Visit the MGS on the Open Day!



On Saturday, 30 March 2019 the MGS will open its doors again for an exciting Open Day.

Everyone is welcome to join us from **3pm onwards** for German delicacies, fun activities and information on our German language courses.

Enjoy delicious cakes and sausages, games for the children and live music later on.

Malaysian guest speakers will share their experience about studying and living in Germany. Additionally, we will offer brief talks with general information on studying in Germany and the cost of living.

The programme of the day will be released a few weeks before the event.

Watch out for the circulating exhibition of 40 years of the German School Kuala Lumpur.

Looking forward to seeing you all there!





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Wir hoffen, dass wir wieder gut gemischt und quer durch den Gemüsegarten bestellt haben. Von historischen Büchern (Der Hase mit den Bernsteinaugen von Edmund de Waal), über Thriller (Flucht in die Schären von Viveca Stern), bis zur leichten Unterhaltung (Mondscheintarif von Ildiko von Kürthay), und natürlich auch Nachdenklichem (Hannes von Rita Falk als Hörbuch) ist hoffentlich für jeden etwas dabei.

Wir wünschen Euch, dass ihr im neuen Jahr viele gute Bücher lesen könnt,

Eure

Cordi und Sandra

Aushilfe gesucht | **Vacancy**

Zur Unterstützung des Lehrers für den **Deutschklub** an der **Wesley Methodist International School Penang** suchen wir von **April bis Juli 2019** eine Assistenz, um zwei Mal wöchentlich einen spielerischen Unterricht zu halten.

Der Stunden werden vom jeweiligen Lehrer vorbereitet, und Ziel dieses Wahlfaches ist es, die Schüler spielerisch in Kontakt mit der deutschen Sprache und Kultur zu bringen.

Es werden keine Lehrbücher verwendet und auch keine Tests geschrieben.

Dienstags von 14:00-15:30 Uhr (13-15 Jährige)

Mittwochs von 14:00-15:00 Uhr (10-12 Jährige)

Erfahrung im Unterrichten von Kindern ist von Vorteil, aber nicht Voraussetzung.

Wer Interesse hat, wendet sich bitte an **Denise**, die genauere Informationen zum Ablauf und zur Bezahlung geben kann:

manager@mgs.org.my / 04-218 9435

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

SINGLE MEMBERS

Helga Dentzer

COUPLE MEMBERS

Judy & Philip Mok

Jessy & Alexander Wenzel

Cheah Sook Yien & Steven Neoh

Brigitte & Matthias Sabathil

Claudia & Stephan Arnulf Knecht

CORPORATE MEMBERS

Tropical Spice Garden

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Benefits of your membership

- Free use of our extensive German library (not only books, but also audio books and DVDs)
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- Membership discount on tickets and fees for our events and activities

As a member, you may use the MGS premises for your own functions. Come here for your birthday parties and other celebrations. A small donation applies. Please contact the office for further information and booking.

The MGS expects a minimum donation for the usage of:

- Outside area and bar
- per day RM 150
- Outside area and bar, ground floor hall and kitchen - per day RM 250
- Hall 1st floor - per hour RM 50
- Classroom - per hour RM 50
- Classroom with use of SMART board - per hour RM 75

For private use at home:

- Festzeltgarnituren (tables and benches) - per set RM 20
- Plates, bowls, cups, glasses, cutlery - per 20 pcs. RM5

The used facilities and items have to be returned in the same condition as before the usage. If cleaning is required, RM 20 per hour will be charged. Any loss or damage to premises or items will be charged according to the lost/broken items list or according to the actual cost for repair or replacement.

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Having been life members of our society since the 1980ies, **Karin and Theo Werner** usually visit Penang and the MGS at least one time per year. When they are around, we always meet them at one of our events. This time they proudly showed us their – meanwhile really old-fashioned – life member cards* at the opening of the art exhibition!

Due to Theo's work for B.Braun, they lived in Penang for the first time from 1983 - 87, then from 2000 - 2005 and again from 2009 - 2010.

**to sign up for a life membership, you pay a tenfold of the yearly membership fee.*

Year-End-Dinner of MGS Staff and Board Members



Front left to right: Karena Kamaruzaman, Judy Mok, Siti Waltraud Mayr, Nina Todorova
Middle left to right: Dr Wolfgang Mark, Gerlinde Krupp, Denise Khoo, Alireza Soleimankhani, Jascha bin Yazit
Dickmann, Nicholas Tan
Back left to right: Petra Müller, Clement Liang, Teoh Seng Aun
Absent: Andreas Förster, Christiane Lange, Elena Mah, Hanns-Philipp Wurster, Tamara Spandl

Employees of Bosch Power Tools Help to Take Measurements of the MGS Club House



Petra Müller, Rinna Yeoh, Andrew Tan, Ong Ewe Lay, Thorsten Track and Dr Wolfgang Mark (From left to right).



A few weeks ago, Bosch Power Tools sent four of their employees to take measurements of the inside rooms of the MGS club house. They applied their Laser Range Finder and Thermal Detector, which are part of the range of products made in the Penang factory. These measuring tools were connected via Bluetooth to the Bosch Measuring App on a tablet where a layout plan was created.

A big THANK YOU goes to Ralf Beetz and Bosch Power Tools for their support.

Goodbye to our Board Members Christiane, Tamara and Gerlinde

Life – and especially expat life – is full of surprises, and this is why we have to say goodbye to our board members **Christiane, Tamara and Gerlinde**. We are very sad to see them leaving our board, due to either new postings for their husbands or for personal reasons.



Christiane Lange has been serving the MGS board as our diligent and accurate treasurer for 2 ½ years and meticulously watched our finances. She was also a member of the Newsletter team, the Oktoberfest committee for the last two years and was involved in the organisation of the recent art workshop and exhibition.

Gerlinde Krupp was very active in organising breakfasts in the society, even before she joined the board in May 2018 and took over the responsibilities for our social events. Her recent project was the organisation of the Christmas Bazaar and Celebration, which turned out to be another great afternoon for our society.



Being an accountant by profession, **Tamara Spandl** joined our board as assistant treasurer in May 2018 and was already a member of the Oktoberfest committee before that, where she was responsible for the children's games.

Thank you for contributing your time and effort for the affairs of the society! We wish you well and hope to see you around or keep in contact in one or the other way.

Judy Mok

Judy Mok is from Taiwan and has lived in Germany for 27 years. Due to her husband's work, she has been living in Penang since August 2018.

Before moving to Penang, the family stayed in Milan, Italy, for three years and in Beijing, China, for two. She worked as project manager in the automotive industry and was focusing on supply chain management and logistics as well as intercultural cooperation projects in the metallurgy industry.

Judy is happy to be part of the MGS and is looking forward to being able to contribute to the society in her role as board member.



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Goodbye Jascha



By the end of December, our Office Manager, Jascha bin Yatzit Dickmann left our society and Penang for some new endeavours. He was with us for the whole year of 2018 and we are sad to see this quiet and friendly man in our office leave after just twelve months.

Jascha and his family move on to Kuala Lumpur and his plan is to start a restaurant and food delivery business in Shah Alam.

We wish him all the best with the new business and a lot of hungry customers.

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Hi there!

I'm Denise Khoo. I recently joined the MGS as their project manager, as Jascha bid us farewell. He has done such a wonderful job and has kindly imparted his knowledge to me. Thanks, Jascha, and I wish you all the best in your future endeavours!

I recently moved back to the island after being away for a few years. I came back just in time for this year's Oktoberfest at the MGS and was proud to see what a successful event it was – hats off to Wolfgang and his team!

Being a Penangite, searching for good food is naturally in my DNA. I also like travelling and supporting the local arts and crafts scene. Petra and all of us at MGS are working hard to have another successful year. We are always brainstorming for ideas and fun activities that MGS could do. If you have any ideas or feedback, do share with us!

I look forward to meeting each and every one of you. If there's anything I could help with, drop me an e-mail at manager@mgs.org.my or, if you want to pop by and say hello, you're more than welcome to.

Here's wishing all of you a Happy New Year!

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|--------------|--|--|--|
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| Intake | January | March | April |
| Level | A1 Intensive Evening | A1 Intensive Afternoon | A2 Intensive Evening |
| Day | Tues - Fri | | |
| Time | 7pm – 10pm | 3.30pm – 6.30pm | 7pm – 10pm |
| Duration | Tue, 8 Jan to Thu, 21 Mar | Tue, 19 Mar to Thu, 13 June | Tue, 2 Apr to Thu, 13 June |
| Exam | Fri, 22 Mar | Fri, 14 June | Fri, 14 June |
| Course Fee | RM 1,970 Course RM 1790 Exam RM 160 Membership RM 20 | RM 1,999 Course RM 1790 Exam RM 189 Membership RM 20 | RM 1,970 Course RM 1790 Exam RM 160 Membership RM 20 |
| TWICE A WEEK | | | |
| Intake | January | | |
| Level | A2 Twice Afternoon | A2.2 Twice Evening | |
| Day | Tue & Thu | Tue & Wed | |
| Time | 3.30pm – 6.30pm | 7pm – 10pm | |
| Duration | Tue, 8 Jan to Thu, 12 Jun | Tue, 8 Jan to Tue, 2 Apr | |
| Exam | Fri, 14 Jun | Wed, 3 Apr | |
| Course Fee | RM 1,999 Course RM 1790 Exam RM 189 Membership RM 20 | RM 1,104 Course RM 895 Exam RM 189 Membership RM 20 | |
| SATURDAY | | | |
| Intake | January | | |
| Level | A2.2 Morning | B1.1 Morning | A1.1 & 2.1 Afternoon |
| Time | 9.30am –12.30pm | 9.30am – 12.30pm | 1pm - 4pm |
| Duration | Sat, 12 Jan to Sat 8 Jun | | |
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MGS Oktoberfest 2018 – O‘zapft is!

by Wolfgang Mark



The annual MGS Oktoberfest has become known as the biggest traditional Oktoberfest in Penang and is now in a class of its own – easily the most popular and authentic version of the world famous Munich Oktoberfest, both in Malaysia and the whole of South-East Asia.

On 19th and 20th October, “O‘zapft is” was called out and the Malaysian-German Society was opening its gates and was ready to receive all the happy guests. As it is good tradition, the visitors were able to enjoy a uniquely and beautifully decorated tent, with the festive opening ceremony

of tapping the first Barrel of Beer, authentic Bavarian Oompah music, a wide portfolio of very drinkable imported German beer brands, a variety of tasty food, fun games and challenging entertainment, and most of all the wonderful atmosphere of the singing and dancing crowd, till late evening.



Many of our local and international visitors dressed up in typical Oktoberfest costumes: Lederhosen for men and charming Dirndls for ladies. Wonderful Bavarian-style items could also be purchased from the nicely decorated merchandise stall within the tent.

We had the great honour and pleasure of welcoming respected VIP guests and MGS honorary members, especially YAB Chow Kon Yeow, the right honourable Chief Minister of Penang, and YAB Lim Guan Eng, the honourable Finance Minister of Malaysia. On behalf of the Malaysian-

German Society I would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to the Chief Minister and Finance Minister for their long and ongoing support.

The Frankenräuber - a newly-introduced six-piece German Band flown in from Schweinfurt in Bavaria - performed brilliantly during the two-day event. Another highlight of the Oktoberfest 2018 was the wide range of light and sweet draught and bottled beers. This year we were able to offer famous German brands such as Löwenbräu, Erdinger, Franziskaner and König Ludwig.



To keep visitors and guests entertained, several exciting activities were organised as the evening progressed: Group dancing, traditional contests in beer-drinking, arm-wrestling and mug-lifting with a specially-designed 3-litre beer glass. Children and their parents hugely enjoyed the fun kids' games stalls.

Overall the MGS Oktoberfest 2018 was again a highly successful and very well-run event. We were honoured to welcome around 3000 happy guests from Penang, Malaysia and around the world.





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Many and special thanks go to our main sponsors Carlsberg, the E&O Hotel and Lufthansa as well as to all supporters, advertisers, volunteers, suppliers, caterers, the MGS office and especially the Oktoberfest organising committee. It was only their dedicated support and team-oriented contribution that made the 2018 Oktoberfest such an outstanding event.

The Malaysian-German Society looks forward to welcoming all of you back for the Penang Oktoberfest 2019 when, on 18th and 19th October, it will be exclaimed once again, "O'zapft is"!



Art Workshop “Express Yourself” & Exhibition “!Content Received?”

by Dr Joachim Dirks

At the end of November, two artists from the south of Germany, Gabriele Bürger and Barbara Auer, visited Penang and the MGS, to conduct an art workshop with teenagers and to exhibit some of their art work.



The title of the workshop was “Express Yourself”. It took place on two consecutive days and was quickly fully booked, with 13 children attending. The children learned to apply various techniques like painting, collage or even sculpting and, of course, were given tips and tricks by Gabriele and Barbara. The best part was that their art work became part of the subsequent art exhibition. This opportunity was well received by the children and their parents. It is not every day that you can display your art work to the public, at your very own exhibition!

The title of the exhibition was “!Content Received?”. Gabriele and Barbara showed some of their own

original art, which they had created by visualising the dynamics between parents and their children while they grow up together. Phrases like: “Eat faster or your rice will turn cold...” or “As long as your feet are under my table...” found their way into various graphic expressions and even into an audio art installation.

The opening of the exhibition attracted dozens of visitors from various countries. Petra Müller, the President of the MGS, pointed out during the opening, that both the exhibition and the art workshop had been made possible thanks to the generous support of the Goethe Institut, Kuala Lumpur. From what I could see, it had all been well worth the effort.



Christmas Celebration & Bazaar

by Steve Allinson

And so, another year has nearly passed and with it another MGS Christmas celebration and bazaar and what a good one it was. Luckily the weather held up until after Santa had come and given out the goodie bags for the children.

The day started with craft sessions for the children while their parents could browse the Christmas stalls and start to indulge in the lovely food with appropriate background music courtesy of Spotify and Bose. What food there was! MGS members outdid each other in the cakes and pastries that were on sale and the 'savoury stalls' provided the obligatory bratwurst, sauerkraut and pretzels. The International Community Choir kindly volunteered their time to provide some real time X-mas music and well appreciated it was indeed.

After the children had finished at their craft session, they were herded upstairs for a Christmas movie. This gave Santa the opportunity to slip out of the building under the cover of a table cloth and make his way to his mechanised sleigh. As the children returned, the reindeer (who had been practicing all year) gave a throaty cough with



the distinct sound of a Harley Davidson and lumbered through the MSG gate before stretching their legs and scooting around the sports field. Eventually the children caught Santa and Reindeer and were duly rewarded.

So a good and lively afternoon was had by everyone... and then the rain came.

Finally a big thank you to all those many helpers who selflessly donated their time to making this event such a success.

The Joy and Wellness Impacts of Singing with a Choir

by Nancy Jenster, a happy chorister



Ever since I was a young child, I remember my mother singing with the church choir. Today, at the age of 82, she still sings a beautiful soprano every week with her church choir, in the tiny town of Onancock, Virginia. She says, “singing has kept my heart alive through thick and thin.”

Mom taught me well. I too am a happy chorister! I have formed several choirs—in Copenhagen, Shanghai, Chengdu and now here in Penang. I have found such joy and camaraderie in the midst of our small gathering of eager singers, that indeed, as for Mom, singing has “kept my heart alive” especially, when times are rough. When the world situation looks grim, or personal challenges wear down your spirit; that is the time when singing with a choir has come to my emotional rescue.

Berkeley School of Medicine at the University of California has published findings of researchers in Japan who found that choral singing improves immunity function, reducing the level of stress hormone cortisol in the blood, with the side effect of improving mood

and reducing tension. Other researchers in the UK showed improved cognitive function in Alzheimer's patients from group singing: the singers had improved memory, social functioning, and improved mood. Singers in choirs regularly report an improved social confidence and experience greater connection with others, leading to better self-esteem and happiness. There are even physical benefits: To produce a good vocal sound requires deep diaphragmatic breathing, which works all the muscles of the abdomen and throat. In my gospel choir, The Penang Lights, we also MOVE ourselves in time to the music, clap our hands and stomp our feet—all of this activates not only the voice, but the body and mind in harmony!

And for me, harmony is the ultimate aim. To hear all parts of a beautiful harmonic chord, with combined merged voices of others is pure bliss—to touch heaven for a moment. And in this world of disharmony, conflict, strife and constant bad news arriving via the social and public media, who wouldn't benefit from an hour or two of pure harmony in the company of amicable others?

So, dear nomadic, transplanted friends in Penang: if you want to do yourself some good, both for your heart and mind and even your soul, join a choir! There are several choirs open to

new members from the international community. Lastly, in the immortal words of Karen Carpenter: “Don’t worry that (your voice) is not good enough for anyone else to hear— just sing, sing a song.”

Nancy Jenster is a semi-retired professor of organisational behaviour, currently coaching others in career and life skills, as well as composing and producing musical theatre shows as a “third chapter” of her career. She is American by birth, European by choice and Asian in spirit



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The Actors Studio Chorus

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contact: Martin Rutherford 04-8180149 or 014-907 8101

The International Community Choir or IWA Choir

practice: Tuesday mornings 10.30 am - 12.30 pm, 48-E Taman Jesselton, Penang

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contact: Marlene Fox 04 228 5692 or 016 491 1658, e-mail : marlenefox8@gmail.com



IWA choir at the MGS Christmas Celebration and Bazaar 2017



The Penang Lights at Phoenix Rising charity event, Macalister Mansion

Penang Chamber Singers (secular and sacred music) are part of **The Messengers** (sacred music)

practice: 2:45 - 4:45 pm at Fettes Park Baptist Church

performances: George Town Festival, concerts and private events, charity organisations, during Christmas season in several hotels, hospitals and old folks homes. No audition, training provided during rehearsal

contact: Khoo Hooi Lay, 012-4219738, penangcc@gmail.com

Penang Lights Contemporary Gospel Choir

practice: Wednesday evenings at Gurney Paragon

performances: charity fund-raisers, weddings, anniversaries and celebrations

contact: Nancy Jenster 019-488 6486, nancy.jenster@gmail.com

Information gathered by Petra Müller, pictures by MGS and Sally Alexander

Sally Alexander about Tenaganita (Women's Force)

Interview by Penang Passion

I cannot believe it has been 4 years since we set up our shelter in an attempt to battle the outcome and effects of "Modern Day Slavery". It's been a long and rewarding journey and has been heartbreaking and painful as well. During this time we have sheltered almost 150 survivors from S.E Asia and Asian countries and have done this primarily on the generosity of a few in our community, for which we are extremely grateful. Some funding was secured from the Prime Minister's Office and the International Labour Organisation for a 12 month period from mid-2017 until mid-2018 but presently we have to rely solely on the generosity of friends and members of the community in order to keep our shelter doors open.

Each woman we help has her own unique story but so often there are marked similarities in so many cases.



One survivor, Mon (not her real name) worked in Malaysia for about 8 months. She worked 16 hours a day with no pay and no time off. A friendly neighbour gave her a phone so she could call her family. She asked her family for help and they contacted an NGO in Cambodia who then contacted Tenaganita. When Mon contacted us, she had left her employer's house and was taking shelter in a temple. Tenaganita had to find out which temple in Malaysia she was referring to as she did not know where she was. Fortunately the survivor was able to give the phone number to a member of the public and we were able to narrow the search to Butterworth area. Tenaganita managed to find Mon. She knew the house number of her employer but not the address but with the help of Google Maps searching addresses near the temple, she was able to find her employer's address. Tenaganita helped her make a police report and labour complaint and she received her unpaid salary, her passport and plane ticket home.

We are very honoured to be able to serve those in need and to give them a beacon of hope for the future. We are relying on the generosity of individuals and businesses for support.



How can you help:

We are looking for volunteers who can come to the shelter to teach certain tasks to the women, like English, sewing, or other useful skills.

In order to keep our shelter doors open, we need to raise RM25,000 each month. Your generosity will make a difference by allowing us to continue our work. If you would like to make a donation, you can transfer to Tenaganita Sdn Bhd at HSBC Kuala Lumpur, account-no. 301-723870-102. Please drop an e-mail with the payment details to tnitapenang@tenaganita.net

For more information, drop us an e-mail or call Sally at 011-36181360.

How to identify a victim of human trafficking

Ask: Does the foreign migrant worker seem to have...

- Safety?
- Adequate nutrition and rest?
- One day off/week?
- Payment as per contract?

If the answer is "NO", this worker may need help.

Tenaganita helplines (24/7)

012 335 0512

012 339 5350

Tenaganita office 011 3618 1360



Handbags of Penang Passion, embroidered by survivors of the Tenaganita shelter

Connect Before You Correct

by Evgenia Videnmaier-Zink

If you are a parent, no matter how old your children are, you will always have to deal with their behaviour. Every parent wants to raise their children so, that they respect others, are respected by others and are able to find their right place in society. This sounds easy and yet can also be far away from the child's behaviour. There is an explosion of resources from books, blogs, theories and technique, all about how parents can do better in teaching discipline to their children.



As parents, we talk to our children. We explain to them over and over again, we give them restrictions, take things away. We feel bad for being so repetitive and yet it still seems like it is not enough. How can we maintain or enforce discipline in our children at home and outside?

First of all I would like to point out the difference between a punishment and a consequence.

Punishments are about controlling behaviour, and they teach children what they shouldn't do but not what they should do. They don't learn skills from them, but instead make them think about what they could do next, to take revenge. And here starts the circle of negative attention. Being punished makes children feel angry and stubborn and causes emotional or physical pain. Children need our attention, they even prefer negative attention rather than no attention at all. So when we punish them (we are angry and upset at time and they receive our full attention) it is like rewarding them for their misbehaviour. Recent studies have demonstrated

that punishment only works for a very short time. It doesn't change the behaviour and actually reinforces misbehaviour in the future.

Consequences on the other hand are experiences of the effects of children's actions and behaviour. They help them to learn and grow. There are two types of consequences: natural and logical.

A **natural consequence** is a result of the child's behaviour. For example, if the angry child throws his new toy on the floor and breaks it, voila! We, as parents, don't have to do anything to create consequences from the child's behaviour.

Logical consequences are imposed by the parent. For example, a teenager that misuses the internet, faces the consequence of losing his freedom to use the internet. Maybe now the parents will demand the password, or that the internet will be used only in the living room, or that the door of the room will stay open, etc. If a teenager loses internet use because he fights or teases his sibling, this is not a logical consequence.

One day, a close friend told me that she would not allow her son to go to his friend's birthday party, because he did something wrong at school. I asked her, "What about the birthday boy? He will miss his friend, too". The birthday boy will not have his friend at his party. Imagine that two more of his friends do not attend because they are being punished for some reason. The birthday boy's family has probably already booked tickets, so it is now letting more than one person down. See how much power the "punished boy" is actually gaining?

When we use consequences, we have to have a plan. We have to stay calm, take our time to think, we can always say: "I have to think about it, I am upset right now".

We have to regulate our own emotions first. Consequences have to be related to the misbehaviour and have to be communicated in advance. Parents have to establish the rules so that children know what to expect. If your child rides his bike without a helmet, you can say: "You are very important to me, if you don't wear your helmet, I can't let you go out on your bicycle". Is your child continuously leaving toys outside in the garden? You can say: "I feel that next time you leave your toys like this, I have to put them in a bag in a secure place so they can't get damaged. It is up to you, if you want to keep playing with them, then you have to collect them up afterwards".

Now, this works most of the time, but it could be that your child is not that bothered. The key is to do what you said you would do, and it will definitely help you the next time you face such a challenging situation.

It is also true that sometimes it is difficult to find a logical consequence and then it can be dangerous or impractical to wait for the natural consequence. There

is not one method that we can use for every situation.

An effective concept to work with, is asking your teenager to "repair" what happened. Is she/he mean? He/she will need to repeat the situation finding a way not to be mean. Did he/she break something because of a bad mood? Let him/her pay to replace it. Showing them that there is always a way to make it better, adds something positive to each situation. The most important thing is for us parents to have a sense of humour and, if we don't, then we have to find one!

I have had good experiences with writing down the rules or "contracts" between children/teenagers and their parents, so there are no misunderstandings or cries of "When did you say that?", "We never agreed to that!" and many other excuses.

Research has shown, that only with connection we can influence our kids positively. It is a brain and heart thing. Staying connected creates a sense of safety and at the same time gives a sense of openness. Punishment, lecturing, nagging, blaming or shaming can create fights or freeze.

Misbehaviour stops in children only when they feel a connection and a feeling of belonging and significance.

We also make mistakes as adults, and so do our children. The key is to see these mistakes as opportunities to grow.

Evgenia Videnmaier-Zink was born in Athens and has studied communication science, social education and familial therapy in Italy and Germany. She has been a social education worker in kindergartens and secondary schools in Berlin and worked as a freelance family therapist.





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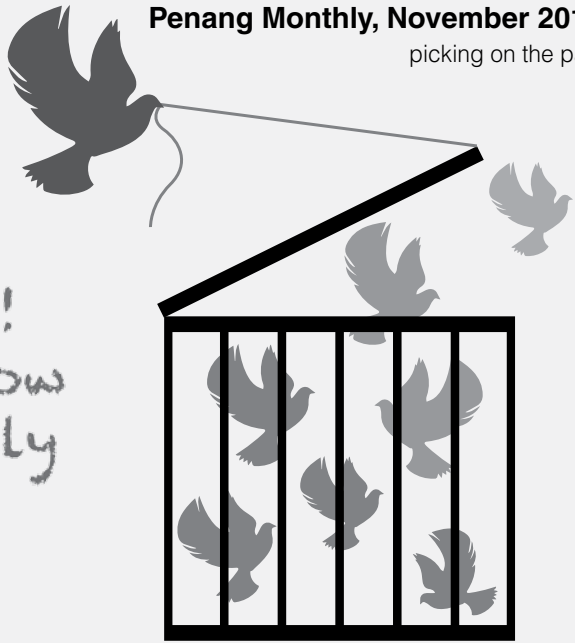
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Listen Up, Malaysians! You Are Now Individually the Agents of Change

by Ooi Kee Beng



One of the greatest challenges that faces a society coming out of a period of authoritarian rule and bad governance is the need to break away from looking to political initiatives and to politicians as the way to fix all national – and even individual – dilemmas.

While it is true that the right policy and the right political stance can do a lot for an issue, it is nevertheless important for members of a society to remember that they are – or should be – masters of their own fate.

Once upon a time, when the rule of law was not properly respected and Malaysia's racist dictatorship justified abuse and misuse of power, society was understandably politicised. Now, a politicised society is one where most, if not all, issues are twisted to serve the immediate or short-term needs of a politician or a party.

The delayed effect of this is that the country's citizens become fearful

and cautious, and they learn to think reticently. The only people assumed to be proactive and empowered are the politicians, especially those in power, and politics becomes the only arena where issues are formulated and sorted out. The universities and the fourth estate of journalism are sidelined.

In such a situation, citizens see themselves as victims in one way or another – victims of an environment where legality is unreliable, punishment is unexpected and power is in someone else's hands.

The Reformasi movement in Malaysia that began in September 1998 captured the imagination of a whole new generation across ethnic boundaries, and although much credit must be given to Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for being the lightning rod that ignited the movement, the awakened longing for change went far beyond that.



Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed holding a press conference on May 10, 2018, at Sheraton Hotel in Petaling Jaya, a day after the Pakatan Harapan coalition won the 14th General Election.

But if we look at how this deep demand for change was expressed politically, we should realise that a key in the element in the movement was soon overshadowed in the process – the goal of freedom itself, especially from fear. “Reformasi” was of course adopted from Indonesia’s revolutionary fervour that pushed Suharto out of power.

Thus, when Tun Abdullah Badawi succeeded Tun Dr Mahathir in 2003, he and his advisers were insightful enough to realise the need to ride this wave, and so his administration went to the polls in 2004 with a reform agenda. This reform agenda even included Islam, and Abdullah came up with his now-forgotten Islam Hadhari. The reformist spirit was clearly still strong and a force to be reckoned with, six years after Anwar was incarcerated.

In fact, even Datuk Seri Najib Razak, when he replaced Abdullah in 2009, still felt the necessity to appear as a champion for change. “Reform” was overused by then, and he chose “transformation” instead.

When the 2013 election results convinced him that his sloganeering was in vain, he decided to drop the pretence of being a reformist prime minister. Five years down the road, he had to pay the price for ignoring the popular uprising that had been dragging on since 1998. One can understand that the Malaysian government, like all governments, would realise the need to champion a popular movement in name, if not in spirit, in order to dissipate its strength and capture its language. That was what Abdullah and Najib did.



In response to these governments' pirating of "reform", the opposition parties were by 2008, using the vague though promising term, "Change" (Ubah).

It was now about changing the government, pure and simple, and not about reform alone. Reform is a means to an end, after all. The goal is always freedom under good governance. There was no longer any reason to hope that any BN government would bring change. Change now had to come via change in government.

This was a powerful message, especially when Najib's administration decided to move more and more away from the middle ground. In 2013 the cry of "Ini kali-lah" (Now, finally!) resonated well with the population.

And so it made sense that the opposition coalition that finally succeeded in changing the government in 2018 calls itself Pakatan Harapan (The Alliance of Hope; I would have preferred The Fellowship of Hope myself), and that Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad joined that coalition only after he himself had also lost all hope for change from within BN.

What should not be forgotten today, and what should continue to give hope to Malaysians – who, as is their habit by now, are already feeling disappointed – is that the last 20 years were about liberation from an ideological cul-de-sac. And that cul-de-sac had always involved the ridiculous propaganda that the government is the sole fixer, the only effective agent, and that all good things flow from it, especially cash.

This is the silent logic of the authoritarianism of the last 60 years.



Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim

Only the politicians are real actors, whether as defenders of the status quo or as champions of change. And the people learned to think that they are but the supporting cast.

After May 9, 2018, Malaysians should realise that a large share of the responsibility of making Malaysia a happy country lies with each of them, and with their recapturing of individual agency and self-confidence. They lead, politicians follow. Not necessarily the other way around.

The Reformasi Movement, in the final analysis, has always been about freedom, and a people who have just succeeded in liberating themselves should not wait upon politicians to bring change. They should take the spirit of freedom unto themselves.

The rebuilding of Malaysia must come as much from below as from above, and the social passivism of the past should be buried along with the BN.

Dato' Dr Ooi Kee Beng is the executive director of Penang Institute. His forthcoming book is *Catharsis: A Second Chance for Malaysian Democracy* (SIRD, Penang Institute and ISEAS Publishing).





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Opening Ceremony of New Building B112 Bosch Car Multimedia Penang



As a token of appreciation, Mr. Peter Tyroller presents Yang Amat Berhormat Mr. Chow with 'Bosch: History of a Global Enterprise' books as contribution to the Penang State Library.

Bosch Malaysia expanded the facility of its car multimedia plant in Penang with a new office building on 29th October 2018, reaffirming the company's confidence in Malaysia as a preferred investment destination.

Gracing the event was Yang Amat Berhormat Mr. Chow Kon Yeow, Chief Minister of Penang, Mr. Peter Tyroller, Member of the Board of Management Robert Bosch GmbH and Dato' Hans Peter Brenner, Honorary Consul of the Federal Republic of Germany in Penang, among other guests.

The consistent investments by the Bosch Group in Malaysia is a strong testament of the country's attraction and conduciveness for business, especially in the manufacturing and research and development sector. In his speech, Mr. Tyroller said, "In 2017, we invested RM

236 million in our operations in Malaysia to support these efforts. The expansion is an example of this determination. We strive to continuously improve our capabilities. This enables us to push our capabilities and competencies to greater heights as well as boost our competitive edge in the long run."

Chief Minister of Penang, Mr. Chow Kon Yeow, said German investors were the second largest manufacturing foreign direct investment (FDI) contributors in Penang from 2008 to 2018, with a total investment value of RM5.15 billion.

"The domestic manufacturing investment also grew by 92% year-on-year to reach RM2.3 billion last year (2017). Penang's encouraging records in investments will not be possible without the support by corporations such as Bosch," Mr. Chow said in his speech.



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Danish Cinnamon Rolls

by Helle Sriver

If you are looking for a yummy recipe, then you should definitely try to make these Danish cinnamon rolls. The dough is easy to make and the rolls will be a perfect bring-along for a potluck or birthday party. Traditionally they are served with a cup of coffee - and I promise, these cinnamon rolls will be gobbled down in minutes.

Ingredients

Dough

150 ml warm milk
 1 tbsp instant dry yeast
 1 tbsp sugar
 2 eggs (room temperature)
 150 g butter (room temperature)
 450 - 500 g flour

Filling

100 g butter
 50 g sugar
 2 tsp cinnamon

Icing

150 g icing sugar
 3 tbsp water

Method

1. Stir together the warm milk, yeast and sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer. Let the mixture sit for a few minutes until it is puffy and foamy.
2. Combine the eggs, butter and salt beat shortly.
3. Add the flour and beat the dough with the dough hook on a medium speed until the dough is elastic and smooth, this will take around 5 - 7 minutes. The dough will then still be tacky and might still be sticking to the sides of the bowl, but that's ok!
4. Place the dough in a large greased bowl. Cover the bowl and let it rise until it has doubled in size.
5. Then roll it into a large rectangle of 70 x 30 cm.
6. For the filling: Spread the butter on the dough and sprinkle sugar and cinnamon on top.

Roll up the dough, starting on the long end and cut into 16 slices.

7. Place the rolls on a baking sheet and let them rise for about 15 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 200 degrees and bake for about 10-15 minutes

Mix icing sugar and water and spread on the cinnamon rolls, when they have cooled slightly.

Enjoy, or Velbekomme, as we say in Danish!



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Two Frenchies Cafe & Bistrot

by Eva Rothmeier

In the mood for French food? Then don't wait any longer and book your table at Two Frenchies Cafe & Bistrot. You will find it in Lebuh Bishop, where the restaurant will greet you with its friendly, cheerful service and its menu which offers a great selection of food and beverages. We can highly recommend the Classic French Onion Soup as a starter and then the Roast Duck with Orange Sauce or the Two Frenchies Signature Burger as a main course. If you're looking for a healthy option, try their Quinoa Bowl. And of course, you won't want to miss their great desserts such as Crème Brûlée or Mousse au Chocolat.



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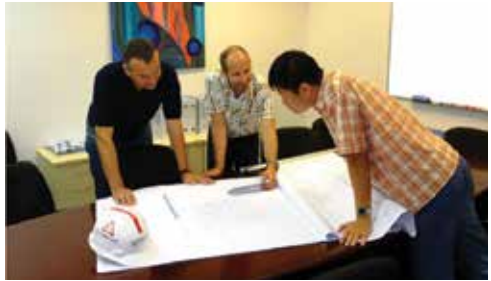
Chin Chin Gastropub - Tapas and Wine

by Christiane Lange and Allison Beh

If you are looking for a chill-out environment with a good range of wine, sake and nice tapas, this is a place to go. Sitting at the long counter will ensure that you can watch the chef preparing your food. It's a creative cuisine. We had some homemade Pasta topped with a generous amount of Truffles, Australian Asparagus Broccolini, Iberico Pork Chop and Clams with Serrano white wine. The service is friendly and attentive.

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For dessert we went to

Passion Heart Café

The latest creation by Passion Heart Café - cheesecake inspired by the classic *Peranakan* sweet snack, *Pulut Inti* (glutinous rice with a sweet coconut topping). This is considered a daring and novel attempt by the baker to combine cheesecake with a layer of glutinous rice, topped with sweet grated coconut (it sounds over the top, doesn't it?) But the taste is surprisingly good and you almost don't feel like you're eating a cake. Giving an extra excitement to the taste bud is the cooling vanilla ice-cream. The tip is to eat the cake together with the ice cream.



Sorry, but we couldn't wait to try until pics were done. *Glutinous Rice Cheesecake*

Another novel attempt by the baker that also sounds over the top, but is not at all. At first bite it almost feels like the coconut filling of a good ol' fashion coconut tart. Just as you wonder where the yam is, the subtle flavour of yam starts to kick in. It's interesting to have the yam as the cake base, where you actually do taste the yam but it's still a cake made with flour. Give it a try, if you feel adventurous.



Yam Coconut Cake

A perfect sweet treat for the mango fan, in which you get a generous amount of sweet mango on top of the cake. This is coupled with fluffy, melt-in-the-mouth cheesecake. It's a real indulgence, but hopefully you have an active lifestyle to help burn off the calories. :-))



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1. Stop trying to be perfect

The mistake, many people make in training and life in general, is that they try to achieve perfection. Do you want to know what the problem with this is? No one is perfect. It's an illusion. By aiming for perfection, you set goals so unrealistic that they become impossible to reach and you never feel satisfied. Instead, strive for excellence. Be brilliant, be bold, be

somebody who reminds everybody of nobody. Be the best version of yourself, strive for more but don't demand perfection from yourself.

2. Focus on what you have already achieved

We often tend to focus on what we haven't achieved yet, rather than rewarding ourselves for what we have. Instead of just looking for

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what's next, pause for a minute and think of how far you've come. What have you accomplished? Where were you six months ago? You've overcome obstacles, outperformed, failed, got up again, achieved. Of course there are many things you haven't done yet. But they are nothing compared to what you already have.

3. Forgive yourself for mistakes

Mistakes are there to learn from. You're never going to be the best at something first time round. It's not possible. It takes practice and a lot of learning. So be ok with failing. With struggle. With not winning every time. Then, take control of the situation and change it. Because it is not our mistakes in life that define us, but instead how we correct them. Accept your mistakes, learn from them and start fresh. Because a mistake is only a mistake if you keep repeating it.

4. Don't compare yourself to others

Never look at someone else and think you aren't good enough compared to them. You never know how they once started off. You never know what they're struggling with. Instead of comparing yourself to others, use their success as motivation. Not as something that makes you feel inadequate. If someone is further ahead at something than you are, look at this person and tell yourself

that you too can achieve what they have. And then go ahead and work for it. Reward yourself for your effort. Only compare yourself to the person you were yesterday. Don't try to achieve someone else's success. Work on your own. You were born an original, so don't try to be a copy.

5. Realize that you are unique

Value your personality, your life, your achievements. Remind yourself that there is no one else in the world with the same experiences as you. No one looks, acts and feels like you do. Whenever you start doubting yourself, stop it and look at your achievements, your friends, your good sides. Being unique is always better than being perfect. Be the best friend, training partner, companion to yourself and accept every flaw.

6. It's time to become who you've always wanted to be

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Conor Mc Manus is a Health & Fitness Coach and co-founder of Warrior Fitness & Adventure. He can be contacted at conor@warriorfitnessadventure.com or +6 012 459 4728.



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A Cruise for Those Who Don't Want to Do a Cruise

by Richard Parry



Are you one of those people who absolutely not, no way, not under any circumstances would be seen within five hundred metres of even a docked cruise ship? If you are, the mere mention of a cruise will probably induce nightmares involving hoardes of overweight, lycra-wearing cruise passengers waiting with frayed hangover-induced tempers in long lines at the breakfast buffet, the lunch buffet, the pool buffet, the afternoon tea buffet, the dinner buffet, and yes, the infamous “Midnight Buffet”. Not to mention the interminable lines to disembark the ship to get on one of fifty waiting coaches to be taken to an awful shop selling tacky souvenirs, or a frightfully contrived “cultural show”. And then returning to the ship laden with your stuffed donkey toy or “genuine fake Polo shirts”, only to line up sweatily once more in the blazing sun to get back aboard! And of course, trying to avoid Elmer and Cindy from a small town eighty miles out of Boise, Idaho, who persistently regard you as their new best friends, and from whom there is mysteriously no escape, even on a ship with a population bigger than their home-town. Well, I agree entirely – this picture is the stuff of nightmare!



But I have good news for you. Put aside your prejudice for a short while, and ask yourself these few questions. Do you enjoy silence as a tropical breeze wafts over the water gently lapping close by? Have you ever fantasised about island hopping, or maybe wondered how Jack Sparrow may actually have felt as he scaled the rigging of a tall ship? Would you like to find out what it's like to haul on the sheets and actually raise the mainsail of a four masted schooner as she heels into a gentle trade wind, but then retire not for a single tot of rum and a hammock, but a chilled glass of something suitable and a comfortable air conditioned cabin?

We'd been thinking along those lines for a few years and were vaguely aware that there were tall ship type passenger vessels operating around the world. In fact we'd once seen one docked in Phuket and made a loose commitment to ourselves to try it "one day", though how we'd fit it in amongst all the other

things we were going to do that day, we weren't quite sure. Anyway, fast forward about ten years and sitting on our balcony at Tanjung Bungah one stunning Penang evening, we saw a pristine looking white schooner pass seaward under half sail. Two days later and a little research (www.starclippers.com) had turned up the Star Clipper company – the ship sailing past Kedah Peak was the original vessel in the company, the Star Clipper – which was operating seven day cruises between Phuket and Singapore and vice versa. Technically, The Star Clipper is a four masted Barquentine, 112 metres long, purpose built to carry a maximum of 170 passengers. A couple of emails and phone calls to an agent in UK, and we'd booked our trip from Singapore up the Malacca Strait, concluding in Phuket, and scheduled to anchor off several small Thai islands on the way, as well as Port Klang and Langkawi.

So it was in May this year we boarded the Star Clipper in Singapore, full of romantic ideas of glorious tropical sunsets at sea under sail, while bravely trying to suppress any negative thoughts of violent squalls and the much publicised Malacca Strait equivalents of Jack Sparrow and his band of rascals.





Our fellow 140 or so passengers turned out to be mostly German and French, with a smattering of British, Australian and other assorted nationalities, with the majority in the 40 to 65 age group, and about a dozen children. While English seemed to be very commonly spoken on board, all Safety and other briefings by the crew were carried out in English, German and French, with additional linguistic capability among the crew for passengers who understood none of these. The ship is everything you'd expect, furnished with polished and varnished wood and gleaming polished brass, but is also clearly very much a "working" sailing vessel, with care required at times to avoid tripping over various bits of equipment and ropes. Our cabin, which opened on to the main deck proved to be compact, but perfectly adequate for two with a

very comfortable double bed, plenty of cunningly organised stowages, and a very well arranged bathroom and shower. So much for the hammock and bucket approach to seafaring! And on the subject of stowages, the whole ethos of this ship is casual, and as we'd been told beforehand, jackets, formal dresses and tiaras were definitely not required! There are some limits though - shorts and sandals are not allowed in the dining room in the evening. We could live with that.

Sailing out of Singapore on the first night was a taste of good things to come, with the sails being raised very soon after we left the immediate area of the harbour. And then life slipped into a very pleasant relaxed routine. Wandering around the open deck under the sails on a clear and balmy tropical night can



only be described as magical, and coming from a seafaring family which goes back many generations, I confess to goose-bumps as I finally understood what it was that drew my ancestors to venture on sailing ships to far flung places. Other than the weather, that is. As the days passed languidly and we approached the southernmost Thai islands, the ship anchored as planned in turquoise waters and we were able to take a tender ashore to, well, do more “nothing” on the beach, although snorkelling instruction was available, along with jungle trekking. For the real adventure junkies on board, on calm days while at anchor, the crew arranged the opportunity for guests to climb the rigging to the first “crows nest” on one of the main masts. Several did, including several young children, who proved to be much braver than me, or possibly were just suffering the complete lack of consequence awareness that comes with age! The high spot for me was crawling out along the bowsprit

netting while under sail, which is bit disconcerting at first, but well worth the effort. For my wife, who is much more energetic, I think the high spot was hauling on the sheets with about twenty other guests and raising the sails as we departed another stunning island. We were under sail for about two thirds of our total time aboard, the remainder under either engine power or a combination of sail and power. Oh, and if you wish, the Captain and crew are very happy for guests to wander into the wheelhouse at sea, and I believe they'll even let you steer the ship. There are also sunbeds dotted around the deck, and two small pools, which are excellent to cool off in.

But I've not yet mentioned that essential ingredient of any cruise-type experience – food! The food on Star Clipper is of a good standard, but has no pretensions to a Michelin Star. Breakfast and lunch are buffet style, very well done and we never experienced any of the dreaded line-ups which I mentioned earlier. Dinner is served by waiters with a choice from three of each course.





Best of all though, tables for two are available, so its perfectly possible to avoid any “Elmer and Cindy’s” should you not wish to hear about life in Leeds, Boise, Idaho or a suburb of Coonabarabran or anywhere else for that matter! But if you’re compelled to endure a long and tedious tale or two and need a sedative or three, a good selection of wine is available at reasonable duty free prices, as are the usual variety of spirits. The open air bar is a pleasant place to sit with a sundowner, but we preferred to find a quiet place out on deck.

The million dollar question with any experience is “would we want do it again?” In the case of Star Clipper, the answer is most definitely a resounding yes, we would, without hesitation, and would recommend it to the most ardent cruise-phobe. It was overall an amazing experience, and at risk of

repeating myself, I think the most appropriate word to describe it is indeed, “magical”. Our only negative experience was some night time noise caused by the crew resetting the sails for course changes and the associated mechanical equipment. After a few nights aboard we grew used to this to some extent, but in fairness, on a sailing ship under sail this noise is only to be expected. Finally, a personal apology to those passengers who sailed past us on one of the leviathan cruise ships one evening in the Malacca Strait. As it sailed past, I was feeling so smug on our very much smaller and prettier schooner, that I made an offensive gesture towards them, which was completely uncalled for, especially as they were probably heading off to their buffet line-ups. I really should have had more empathy. But I guarantee that you, dear reader, would have done exactly the same after a week on board this lovely small ship!

And I don’t think anyone aboard the bigger ship actually took offence. I swear that as it disappeared into the distance I could hear a loud voice from the stern hailing us “Hi, y’all, where y’all from, I’m Elmer, this is my wife Cindy...”

Richard Parry is a retired long-term expat airline pilot originally from north Wales, happily living in Penang with wife Terry since 2014. Both are dedicated small ship cruise-aholics.”



Ralf's Ramblings

For years I tried to grasp the concept of Einstein's laws of relativity, this mystical perspective on space and time being somehow "relative".

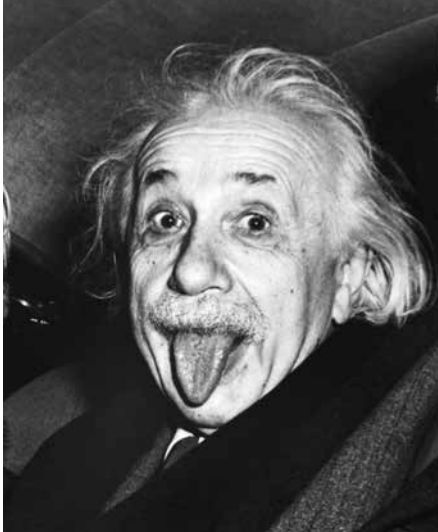
But then I found out that space-time is not only warped and twisted by the planet's gravitational forces. It also happens in my very own bathroom and it's caused by a mysterious force called "woman".

Ok, I am talking about my wife, to be precise, although I suspect that many more fine specimens of that gender are experts in warping time.

In my house, for starters, all clocks are set ten minutes ahead of time. What's the purpose of that? I mean who should get fooled by fake time if everybody knows that the time is set ten minutes ahead?? It's not that my wife looks at the clock and says "gosh, it's already 3pm, I have to rush to make that appointment". Quite the opposite! She looks at the clock, 3pm, and thinks "ah, I still have time because it's not the real time", resulting in her being late after all. I don't get it.

But time warps most in bathrooms, I've found. If my wife is getting ready for our night out, she often says something like "Honey, five more minutes". After 35 minutes, however, while the hair dryer is still happily humming away, it becomes clear that time has lost all its meaning and the time continuum has been most seriously warped.

And when that happens it becomes actually quite dangerous for men to enter that twisted time zone. Should



Einstein

one dare to enquire the current state of affairs, the chances are you will find yourself in a cosmic storm of epic proportions.

Have you ever noticed how time slows down when a woman stands in front of an overcrowded wardrobe and declares "I have nothing to wear"? That brings time to a complete standstill. If you have dinner

plans and you are hungry, now is the time to grab a sandwich from the fridge! I mean seriously, it could still be hours (unaltered earth time) before you get something to eat.

To stay within Einstein's context here: A black hole's gravitational forces pale in comparison to the forces exerted by women to warp time. And if you ever wondered how Einstein came up with that crazy theory, it's clear to me: He was sitting in his living room, waiting for his wife to get ready and contemplating the meaning of "honey, I'll be ready in five minutes". Faced with a mystery that not even Einstein could decipher, he went for the easier question of space time relativity and solved that instead! Isn't it great how women inspire men to do great things?

So one word of advice to my dear fellow male readers: If you can't figure out $e=mc^2$ don't even try to understand your wife's time perception!

Cheers,
Yvonne's Husband



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