TPISG turns 15!

International Students Group celebrates its 15th anniversary

By: Pooja Devi

Temasek Polytechnic International Students Group (TPISG) commemorated its 15th anniversary with a celebration at the Glocal Connect Village on July 18.

The Directors of TP’s different schools, senior befrienders and TPISG’s alumni members were among those who attended the event.

Cultural performances by various ethnic groups, including exchange students from Wuchuan, China, made this celebration a lively and vibrant affair.

Many of the guests chose to wear a different culture’s costume to commemorate TPISG’s success.

The interest group was started in 1999 with the aim of helping international students integrate into the local community.

A colourful spread of food from different Asian countries was available. Local student chefs prepared sushi at the venue itself.

Norasnah Binti Bujang, a freshman from the Diploma in Consumer Science and Technology is from Brunei. She said that TPISG has allowed her to further understand different cultures.

Honandar Andry Oliver, who was part of the anniversary organising committee, sees the value in such an interest group.

“I believe that Singaporeans can understand more about different cultures such as my culture, the Indonesian culture.”

TPISG adviser, Dr Radha Ravindran, was pleased with the success of the anniversary event.

“TPISG has come a long way and has been improving with a larger number of students each year.”

“I am also very proud of my current and alumni student batches for always showing their positive support towards TPISG.”

Alumni member Sriella said: “I felt very nostalgic while watching the performances and I got reminded of the time when I emceed for International Culture Nite back in 2009.

“I feel proud to be a part of TPISG.”

By: Jeannie Sing

The Temasek Polytechnic Students’ Union (TPSU) will be collecting pre-loved toys as part of the Toys Project Starts with “U” donation drive in the first week of the October semester.

The cross-organisation community project is organised in conjunction with the Food From The Heart (FFTH) carnival Toys Buffet Drive, which will be held at Punggol Primary School on Nov 7. TPSU will have a booth at the carnival to distribute the collected toys to needy children.

“To make this project a success, we need strong publicity to reach out to the student population,” said newly-elected TPSU President Tan Wei Zhe, a final-year Logistics & Operations Management student.

Flyers will be distributed to residents staying near the polytechnic and the event will also be listed in TP Happenings through Temasek Polytechnic’s email system. There will also be banners on campus.

A five-day road show will be held at the Plaza outside the Library and students will also go door-to-door to collect donations from residents near TP.
Marketing grad shares tips on entrepreneurship

By: Xavier Khoo

A design to be free from rules inspired Temasek Polytechnic Alumnus Ranford Neo to blaze his own trail, the 23-year-old shared himself involved in many sales activities and was one of the founders of the TP Entrepreneurship Club.

His first success was a flea market venture in 2009, and he used his profits to launch his next venture. As part of the EcoBuzz event at Century Square, Mr Neo trained interested participants to produce and sell wall-hangers made out of recycled drink cartons.

Mr Neo graduated from TP in 2011 and founded the Entrepreneurship Hub two years later.

The Chief Visionary Officer (CVO) of Entrepreneurship Hub also shared with students what he feels is the difference between a business owner and an entrepreneur.

“Entrepreneurs and business owners are not the same. An entrepreneur solves problems and/or adds value to the lives of others for profit,” he said.

Mr Neo’s book, The Instant Entrepreneur, gives strategies and attitudes that will help young entrepreneurs succeed in their start-ups.

Institute of PR S’pore student chapter gets first male president

By: Jonathan Goh

Second-year Communications & Media Management student Phillage Rajan has become the first male president of the Temasek Polytechnic Institute of Public Relations Singapore (IPRS) student chapter.

The TP-IPRS student chapter, the first such interest group, was launched in 2012 to raise awareness and interest in the field of public relations.

“I joined IPRS because of the opportunities I will get from it. It isn’t your typical interest group. Joining this will help me reach my goal of working in the PR industry,” said Phillage.

Phillage leads an executive committee comprising students from the Diploma in Communications & Media Management, Diploma in Business, and Diploma in Marketing. The committee includes Vice-President Vanessa Yee and Fundraising Chairman Chester Choy.

“Working with the other members has been really enjoyable,” said Vanessa, who is also from the Communications & Media Management diploma. “We all get along, especially the exco members. It’s like working on a project with friends.”

Phillage added that the lecturers in-charge of the interest group also gel well with the team.

Toastmaster trophies for bringing on the laughs

By: Nicole Tan

His message was serious: Life is what you make of it. You are not going to be tied down to the circumstances that you are facing. His delivery was hilarious. And so third-year Financial Business Informatics student Levin Poon won the TP Next Top Humorous Speaker title.

The first runner-up, freshman Chan E Hueen from Communications & Media Management, shared humorous tips on coping with stress.

The second runner-up was first-year student Pearly Poh from Business Studies Grouping, who gave a funny take on her sister.

The school-wide competition organised by the Temasek Polytechnic Toastmasters Club, with the aim of promoting public speaking skills, was held over two evenings on July 11 and 18.

Students were tasked to give a five-to-seven-minute speech on any topic, as long as it was engaging and humorous.

To better prepare the contestants for the actual event, the executive committee organised a Toastmasters Humorous Workshop, which was held on July 4. The free workshop was conducted by invited speaker, Mr Biman Roy, a former Toastmasters humorous speech champion.

Amiral Adli, a second-year Design student, felt that the contest was an enriching experience for him.

He added that the workshop enabled him to learn about different humour techniques like puns.

It also provided him with adequate knowledge of “how to use sarcasm in comedy” and “physical comedy that involves the use of any actions or making faces”.

Stop Press :: October 2014
Starting own company, learning on the job

Ms Teo Hui Zhen, who graduated in 2009 with a Diploma in Moving Images, is the co-founder of Waesome Productions. Her partner in the video production company is her classmate, Ms Chin Meimei.

“We knew that if we became an entrepreneur, one day we will be instilled with the value of hard work, ownership, and self-sustainability,” said Ms Teo.

She felt that by going out to start her own business she would get opportunities to learn and practise different skills that are not specifically taught in school.

As the job of producing videos is hands-on, she believed that the experience she would gain from it would outweigh everything else that she might come across. She adds that the first-hand experience and the freedom that comes with founding one’s own company have helped her to learn better, both as a team and as a company.

Ms Teo also gives credit to Temasek Polytechnic (TP) for providing her with relevant skills that have helped her so far in the working world.

“This actually helped us because while in TP was how to deal with harsh criticism during project work. “During my poly education, we were taught how to think out of the box and how to communicate our ideas to others. It is extremely helpful because in the working environment, people need new ideas and need people who know how to execute them.”

Another thing that Ms Teo learnt was how to set high expectations on the quality of our own work before our clients set them. Therefore, to our clients, we always turn out to be better than expected.

Her advice to poly students on how to succeed: “Think you can and you will; always do things with a purpose.”

“We knew that if we became an entrepreneur, one day we will be instilled with the value of hard work, ownership and sustainability.”

Working first to decide career

Ms Esther Chua topped her cohort in Early Childhood Studies with an impressive GPA of 3.97. But instead of continuing her studies after graduation, she decided to work for two years.

“I chose to take up a scholarship which I knew had two years of bond because I thought it will be beneficial if I have some experience as a teacher in the field of early childhood education before taking up a degree.”

Ms Chua is now working in the same childcare centre branch where she interned – NTUC My First Skool in Geylang East.

“The experience I can gain in these two years may aid me in my degree education, it can also shape my character and help me in the decision of which further education or speciality I would like to major in the future.”

This change in education path is the main thrust of the ASPIRE committee, encouraging poly graduates to develop deeper and relevant skills in the industry.

“Poly education provided me with much knowledge about the field of early childhood which helps me to relate to the experiences and difficulties that I face now. Internship also gave me a glimpse of what working would be like and helped me build social connections within the industry,” said Ms Chua.

“The lecturers at TP, especially the early childhood lecturers are especially inspiring as they give willingly out of their time and heart to teach and guide us,” she added.

Her advice to current students: “Passion is important because we need to love what we do study. Perseverance is also important because difficulties may come as we study a new subject or enter into a new field.”

“One thing that Ms Teo learnt was how to set high expectations on the quality of our own work before our clients set them. Therefore, to our clients, we always turn out to be better than expected.”

Her advice to poly students on how to succeed: “Think you can and you will; always do things with a purpose.”
A clear flight path

By: Nicole Tan

It’s really up to you what you want to do with your life. This statement resonates with many but it seems to be the motto for Samuel Fok’s life.

Samuel, a third-year student from the Diploma in Aviation Management and Services (AMS), is currently doing his internship at the two-year old budget carrier Scoot.

His job at Changi Airport consists of tasks such as charting flight routes for the planes.

In his course, he is taught various aspects of the airline industry, such as economic prospects and financial viability, as well as the technical aspects of charting flight routes.

Samuel has also charted a clear path in life – where he wants to go and what he wants to be after completing his diploma studies.

He has his heart set on becoming a pilot and he is definitely working hard for it.

As a member of the Singapore Youth Flying Club, he hopes to eventually sign on with the Air Force.

In May, Samuel was among four other students from his cohort who obtained the Wings, a badge that certified that he was allowed to fly a plane.

Most of his time on the weekend is spent on schoolwork or participating in activities organised by the Singapore Youth Flying Club.

In his own words: “Eat, sleep, work and repeat.”

But Samuel has no regrets as this is the path that he has chosen to take and he is determined to excel in it.

Samuel was introduced to his diploma course by his elder sister, a former Temasek Polytechnic Business student who felt that the course would be a perfect fit for him.

Samuel was also keen to share an anecdote. Back in his secondary school days, he actually dissuaded his friends from joining this particular course as he had the misconception that it was for future “air stewards and stewardess only”.

But, ironically, he ended up joining the course himself.

The Geylang Methodist Secondary alumnus is knowledgeable and passionate about the airline industry.

Samuel is also up to date with the latest news such as Project Jewel – the upcoming shopping mall at Changi Airport, Terminal 4, and various other initiatives in the industry.

Eat, sleep, work and repeat.

Fighting to the top

By: Ainslyn Lim

Saravanan Rajendran, a third-year student from the school of Humanities and Social Sciences is a fighter.

He is an overcomer with a positive attitude. He had to attend ITE after secondary school as his results were not as ideal but instead of feeling beaten and defeated, he worked doubly hard in order to retake his O Levels and apply to enter Temasek Polytechnic.

He succeeded in doing so and is now pursuing his Diploma in Gerontology Management Studies.

Despite having to work part-time to support himself, he is still able to excel in his studies. “We should not let any problem come in the way of us pursuing our studies and securing a bright future for ourselves,” he says.

Due to all his consistent hard-work since his first year in the poly, he has managed to secure a place on the Director’s List. He has also been active in his campus life, with a long record of CCA participation.

He has been involved in countless school events ever since he entered TP, such as the HSS Freshmen Orientation in 2012, ITE-TP Experience in 2013 and TP Week Zero Orientation in 2014.

When asked how he copes with both work and studies at the same time, his answer was time-management. “I plan out what I want to do and adhere to it strictly.”

In addition, he has plenty of self-discipline as it helps to push him further to reach his goals.

Creative online, offline

By: Ainslyn Lim

Amanda Chan, a third-year student is extremely passionate about doing the things she loves.

The Diploma in Interactive Media Informatics student says she loves to learn new things so that she can constantly upgrade herself.

“I like to create websites,” says Amanda.

In fact, Amanda clinched the gold medal in the Web Design Skill category at the 43rd Worldskills Singapore Competition which was held at the ITE college Central.

“I have gathered more knowledge and learned the value of perseverance. I have also learned better ways to cope with problems and challenges,” she said.

Amanda will go on to represent Singapore at the World Final - dubbed the Olympics of Skills - in Sao Paulo, Brazil, next year. At this competition, representatives from different countries who are considered to be the best in their vocational fields are given the chance to pit their skills against each other.

Amanda is an individual who is very in touch with her creative side and is able to put her creative talents to use by translating her ideas and imagination into products.

Besides creating websites, Amanda does crafting and drawing.

She makes 3D cards, does bead-stringing of bears, sews pouches and also produces crafts with aluminium cans.

When asked to tell us an interesting fact about herself, Amanda happily shared: “I have a great love for pets like fishes and dogs.”
Standing apart in a family of designers

By: Nicole Tan

Cellyn Tan, a third-year Visual Communication student, emerged as the Champion in Graphic Design Technology during the Worldskills Competition 2014. Apart from having winning design skills, she excels in her studies too.

She graduated from Chung Cheng High School (Main) with an impressive L1R5 score of 5.

Her motivation: “I wanted to get O-levels over and done with quickly so that I could move on to what I am interested in and not waste any time in the process.”

Cellyn takes on various freelance projects in her free time. Her clients usually approach her after seeing her portfolio on Adobe Behance. Her works are proudly displayed on her website: www.cellyntan.com.

Most of her freelance projects with clients are bound by confidentiality clauses or are confidential as the work is still in progress and not finalised yet.

However, Cellyn revealed one client whose name she was allowed to give: The Singapore Symphony Orchestra (SSO).

She roped in a fellow schoolmate to help with the project which consists of creating flyers and an eight-page programme outline which was distributed to the public.

Visual Communication, in her opinion, was the design course which she found to be the most flexible in terms of job scope.

For example, her skills could be used in various settings and she is not confined to any particular medium such as film or interior design.

The design genes run in the family as Cellyn is born into a family of designers.

While grateful for their influence, she makes it a point not to ask her parents for any design inspirations or ideas because, as she puts it: “It’s about yourself, not your parents.”

Cellyn’s dad is an illustrator and his works at home exposed her to the various softwares such as Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop much earlier than her peers. However, Cellyn points out that her father’s works are geared more towards the fine arts.

“My dad’s artworks can be Picasso and he is free to do so, but I can’t as it does not suit what I am currently doing and studying right now.”

Although she’s made it to the Director’s List, Cellyn isn’t quick to bring down anyone’s works or ideas.

Instead, she believes that grades are not everything. “Perhaps, just that one’s talent may not be as refined as their peers do not mean they do not have talent. It takes time.”

Presentable chef, dishes

By: Lena Lim & Nicole Tan

Applied Science student Nixon Heng did TP proud in the 2014 Young Chefs Chinese Culinary Competition held in April.

The recipe that brought home a silver award was Nixon’s own creation – a two-crab dish using different cooking styles. The first was a soft-shell crab coated and fried with batter that was infused with curry and kaffir lime leaf essence, and covered with egg foam.

The second was a braised crab, coated with a unique tomato garlic essence, and covered with egg foam.

The dish might seem to be really simple, but Nixon only managed to come up with his winning dish after several months of gruelling kitchen work and consultations with his instructors, on top of his usual work in school.

The final year Baking and Culinary Sciences student explains that for any dish, one has to take into consideration the flavours of the different ingredients.

The ingredients must complement each other perfectly without any ingredient overpowering the other.

However, Nixon credits the win to his mentor, Chef Michael Lau, who taught him everything he knew, starting from the basics. “Without him, I would not be able to do this,” he said.

The love of cooking also comes from his family. His maternal grandmother once owned a Teochew porridge food stall.

Without resting on his laurels, Nixon has already signed up as part of the reserve team for an upcoming culinary contest that is hosted by City Gas.

Apart from dishing out creations that many would envy and covet over, the Deyi Secondary School alumna believes in presenting a neat and tidy look in his smart chef uniform.

“Would you rather let your food be handled by someone who is messy or someone who is clean and neat?” he asks.

Nixon is definitely relishing the time and experiences that he had gained in the kitchen.

He speaks fondly about his internship at Select Catering and the opportunities that it will bring for him to grow and improve.

Flying on the sidelines

By: Ainslyn Lim

Logistics and Operations Management student Samuel Tan is not only in the TP floorball team; he is also training to be a pilot at the Singapore Youth Flying Club.

Samuel has been playing floorball, ever since he was eight. He has many friends who are in TP’s floorball team as well, and he entered TP via the Direct Polytechnic Licence after several tests. After completing his training at Select Catering and the op-
The Business Studies Club (BSC) held its annual Sub-Committee Camp once again from Aug 1 to 3. This year, it was called Camp Kegan, representing the bright shining flame. Some 200 students were selected for the camp and many new friendships were created along the way.

With this bonding, the students are ready to take on events such as Open House, Freshmen orientation, TP Rawks and the annual BSC charity programme called Smile a Wish.

The three-day-two-night Camp Kegan was a success. Members were grouped into “empires” and had to work together to complete missions and games.

Facilitator Gwen Lee shows off her best moves up on stage for her empire, Grezel.

One group piecing together a message during a treasure hunt challenge.

A Grezel programmer splashes water onto camp participants as they wash each others’ hair and walk around in a circle.

Raphael Soh and Kenny Ong race while squatted with pencils tied to their backs which they have to dunk in bottles.

Photos, Text & Layout: Carina Lim, Jeremy Lim, Kameshwaran, Regine Teo
Vlogging is the new black

There’s no better way to share experiences than through video blogging.

It’s the new black, I daresay. There are many ways that one can vlog. The most common way is when someone carries a camera around and records all the activities that he or she takes part in and compiles them into a video.

You could even just share your thoughts on camera about a certain topic and it will still be considered a vlog.

Personally, my favourite vloggers include Lilly Singh (iiSuperwomanii), Marcus Butler and Zoe Elizabeth Sugg (ZoeLa). You can find them all on YouTube.

What I find extremely fascinating is how vloggers fully use new media to put their opinions out there.

I try to vlog myself. When I go for overseas trips, camps and even when I’m out with my friends, I will always bring along a video camera.

What I enjoy about the process is that the moment never dies and you are able to watch it over and over again. You can even share them with many others.

I have an uncle who lives in Australia and rarely visits Singapore. Thanks to vlogging, I am able to share family moments with him.

Vlogs record experiences better than a simple blog post.

They are more than just a verbal depiction of your story and show more than a single picture frame.

Vlogs record experiences better than photographs or a simple blog post. They are more than just a verbal depiction of your story and show more than a single picture frame.

Isn’t it much better when you can see everything that’s happening rather than just hear or read about it?

One of my favourite vlogging trips was when I went to the Maldives.

The Ice Bucket Challenge

It’s time to get iced.

The Ice Bucket Challenge has its three others to take part in the challenge, and those who refuse will have made a donation to an ALS charity of their choice.

This challenge is not about solving the disease. It’s about raising awareness that there are people out there who are suffering from this disease.

People often choose to do both just for the fun of getting drenched in ice water while raising awareness for the association.

The Ice Bucket Challenge has its fair share of detractors who are keen to pour cold water on the idea, despite all the support and millions of dollars in donations the campaign has generated.

“The ALS Challenge is such a waste of water,” they gripe.

“Don’t you know that people in Africa are dying from the lack of water?” others moan.

Water wastage is the number one complaint I’ve seen on social media.

Personally, I don’t get all the hate the challenge has received, and I don’t think any charitable initiative should be treated like this.

Yes, we all know that dumping a pail of ice water over your head does not solve the problem of ALS, and that there are people all over the world who don’t have enough water.

I get it and I know that many others do.

This challenge is not about solving the disease. It’s about raising awareness that there are people out there who are suffering from this disease.

Pouring the bucket of icy-cold water on yourself will help you relate to how ALS sufferers feel each and every day.

They have no control over their muscles and are eventually paralysed by the disease. Being doused with ice water simulates the paralysis, albeit for a few seconds.

As a healthy human being, this movement has opened my eyes. If you asked me before the challenge became viral, I wouldn’t have known anything about ALS.

I have even done the Ice Bucket Challenge twice; once by myself and another with my diploma mates. Fun aside, we felt great when we donated and were able to tell our peers more about ALS.

This movement has also made me realise how powerful social media really is, how it can be harnessed for a worthy cause such as this.

The support from local and international celebrities, like Jade Seah and Lady Gaga, has boosted the movement.

People of different races, ages, religions and countries have come together due to this movement and it is truly a heartwarming sight.

Since I get to nominate people to take part in this challenge, I guess my very last nomination would be you.
Mac vs PC: Which one suits you best?

Lily: Aakash Rama

Choosing between a Mac and a PC isn’t as easy as you might think, but neither is it a decision worth losing sleep over. It’s a simple matter of figuring out your needs and priorities.

Both the PC, which runs on a Windows operating system, and the Macintosh, better known as a Mac, have their own dedicated followings, as well as their own strengths and weaknesses.

Most Windows operating systems are also defined as IBM-compatible computers, meaning that their architecture is based on the IBM microprocessor. A number of different operating systems are compatible with PCs, the most popular of which is Microsoft Windows. Some others are the UNIX variants, such as Linux, FreeBSD and Solaris.

On the other hand, the Mac is the only computer in the world that can run all the major operating systems, including Mac OS X, Windows XP and Vista.

With software like Parallels Desktop or VMware Fusion they can be run side by side.

The Mac is manufactured by Apple and is one of the most efficient systems in the world. Cost-wise, the Mac is rather expensive. Computers start at $599 for the Mac Mini and can go up to $2,000, depending on screen size and configuration.

Both the Mac and the PC have their pros and cons, and it is really up to the user to choose which system suits his or her expectations.

All in all, both these systems are amazing in their own ways and honestly, if one chooses properly, neither is going to disappoint as long as you take care of your computer.

Stressed out? Take it out on these games

Lily: Tan Yong Ting

There will be times during the semester when, with numerous assignments looming, the idea of dishing out knuckle sandwiches during tutorials might sound like an appealing idea. Don’t do it. Take it out on these beat-em-up games.

Super Smash Bros for Nintendo 3DS / Wii U

It’s been over five years since Brawl, and fans of the popular Super Smash Bros franchise will get to revisit the series, with new and old characters making a return.

Like previous games in the series, up to four players use a variety of attacks based on their respective characters to knock opponents out of the playing field. There are also new features, such as the ability to customise your Nintendo favourites and maybe brace for a new challenge.

Super Smash Bros will soon be available on the Nintendo 3DS and Wii U.

Persona 4 Arena Ultimax

This latest sequel in the best-selling RPG Persona series is a new 2D fighting game which picks up from where the previous game left off, with the Midnight Channel making a return and hosting a fighting tournament called the P1 Climax.

Persona 4 Arena Ultimax is a standard two-player fighting game in which players get to summon Personas, which are manifestations of the character’s personality that can assist them in battle.

Characters from Persona 4 Arena also return in Ultimax, as well as a mysterious new character named Sho Minazuki.

Some existing characters from the Persona series that did not appear in the original game also make appearances.

They include Yukari Takeboshi and Junpei Iori from Persona 3 and Marie from Persona 4 Golden.

This is a must-have for fans of the Persona series who want more of the story, or just the fun of summoning Personas and setting things on which is the best.

It is available now on PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360.

Nidhogg

If punching, kicking and elaborate combo moves are getting old for you, there’s Nidhogg, a two-player sword-fighting game.

The tricky thing about this twisted game is that there is also no health bar and you’ll die from a single stab, although there is the ability to respawn limitlessly.

So what is the point of the game when both players are immortal?

The goal is to reach your opponent’s end the screen, like a reverse tug-of-war Simple.

After all the stabbing and occasional pitfalls, the player that reaches the other end of the screen will be greeted by Nidhogg, a serpent-like worm from Norse mythology.

The winner then gets eaten by Nidhogg, and a congratulatory message follows. It’s dark humour at its best.

Nidhogg is available on Windows and Mac OS X, on the PlayStation 4 and Vita.

Stop Press :: October 2014
Old school Pokémon classics Ruby and Sapphire get a reboot

By: Yeo Yi Wei & Tan Yong Ting

Pokémon fans, be prepared for the return of the old-school Ruby and Sapphire games.

Omega Ruby and Alpha Sapphire (ORAS), the remakes of 2003 Pokémon classics Ruby and Sapphire, will be released in November on the Nintendo 3DS platform.

The core mechanics of the game remains unchanged. You explore a world called Hoenn with your Pokémon companions, with the same old turn-based Rock-Paper-Scissors type combat system that fans already know.

The new games will also introduce fans to a plethora of new features. The first is the concept of Primal Reversion, which reverts the legendary Pokémon Groudon and Kyogre to their prehistoric states.

With the new features, fans can expect a deeper and more comprehensive story revolving around the two as they battle it out for dominion over land and sea, respectively.

Besides Primal Reversion, Mega Evolutions and Fairy-type, two features that were introduced in Pokémon X and Y, are also being added to ORAS.

Pokémon like the Grass-type Sceptile will turn into part Dragon-type with strong resistance to Electric attacks, as well as the Dark and Ghost-type Sableye.

The latter gets a massive boost in defense and even reflect certain attacks back to its opponents.

And who can forget the Fairy-type Pokémon, a set of Pokémon that are immune and super effective to the strong Dragon-type, giving them the upper hand in certain match-ups.

With Mega Evolutions and Fairy-type providing more depth and strategy to battles, you can be sure that the old battles you once experienced are about to become more intense.

The fun does not stop there. Pokémon Contests, a huge side-game feature in the original games, are set to return bigger and better.

Unlike normal battles, winning a contest is all about appeal. In ORAS, you will be given special clothes to dress up in for contests, as well as a Cosplay Pikachu.

Cosplay Pikachu can dress in five different styles – Rock Star, Belle, Pop Star, PhD and Libre. These styles represent the Cool, Beauty, Cute, Smart and Tough contests respectively, as well as granting Pikachu with a special move dependent on outfit. Talk about practicality.

Other features that are making a comeback are the popular Secret Bases. Renamed as Super-Secret Bases, the upgraded feature allows connectivity with other devices making use of the 3DS hardware.

Like before, it’s not hard to create your very own Secret Base. All you need are certain Pokémon that know the Secret Power move. After doing so, the Secret Base is yours to decorate in any way you like. Unlike the old games, mini-games have been introduced to make Secret Bases even more engaging.

After sharing your Secret Base with your friends, you can partake in mini-games such as Capture the Flag and mini-gym battles.

Along with these are even more unannounced features that promise fans a refreshing experience on the game they grew up with.

It’s Shovelling time

By: Tan Yong Ting

Platform games have given us many memorable heroes, from the handsome protagonists of the Castlevania series to the blue android Mega Man – and who can forget that famous moustached plumber Mario.

Shovel Knight is set to join their ranks, in a game packed with all the fun nostalgic features of its processors.

It’s all buried deep within the game, and the only way to dig them up is with a shovel.

Shovel Knight looks like an 8-bit action-adventure platformer based on popular retro games, but it’s much more when you get beneath the surface.

It’s a redesign of the old platform game genre, with fresh ideas and features that were not possible to implement back in the mid-80s, when Castlevania and the first Super Mario Bros debuted.

Developed by Yacht Club Games, Shovel Knight was first announced in March last year, alongside a Kickstarter campaign to help fund the development with a minimum funding goal of $75,000.

They raised a whopping $300,000 around the middle of April last year, allowing developers to add new stretched goals like additional game modes and characters. Shovel Knight was officially released on Steam and the Nintendo eShop in June.

The game opens with Shovel Knight retired, after losing his closest companion, Shield Knight, in the Tower of Fate.

During his absence, an evil Enchantress has risen to power and taken over the land, and so Shovel Knight comes out of retirement to stop her by defeating her eight members of The Order of No Quarter, while also seeking redemption and a possible way to rescue Shield Knight.

The basic gameplay is essentially that of a classic platformer, in which players explore two-dimensional levels by moving left to right. They occasionally jump, duck and climb to reach new areas.

There are, of course, the traps and enemy monsters to avoid and defeat, bosses to fight at the end of each level.

What makes this game unique is that the player controls a knight, whose main weapon is not a sword or a gun, and he doesn’t stomp on enemies like Mario. It is just a plain old shovel.

Of course, there are numerous power ups later in the game, but the player mostly uses a shovel to clear enemies by whacking them like a sword slash, grabbing items further away like an extended hand and, obviously, digging up gold and treasures.

The game sounds simple enough, but the enemies range from large dragons to exploding mice, and not to forget the bosses from The Order of No Quarter, who are a terrible force to be reckoned with.

Each level is also vastly different from the preceding ones. You may be jumping from tower to tower in one level, and in another you will be expected to go for a swim.

The 8-bit style music accompanying you on your journey, will also help you immerse yourself in the game’s old-school nostalgia.

Shovel Knight is available on Windows, Mac OS X, Linux, Nintendo 3DS and Wii U. This game is a must-have for the avid platform and retro gamers, with both old and new quality contents as well as frequent updates that will keep the player curious to uncover new secrets and explore hidden levels to explore.

So arm yourself with your trusty shovel and prepare to face strong opponents, because “It’s Shovelling time!”
Tennis wins double medals for POL-ITE

By: Jeremy Lim

Despite being labelled underdogs, Temasek Polytechnic’s women’s team snatched bronze at the 2014 POL-ITE (Polytechnics and ITE) games, while the men’s team took silver after failing to defend their title.

“The success of the women’s team was all the more satisfying as they left last year’s games empty-handed,” said Ethan. “The team were beaten in their first match by rivals Nanyang Polytechnic, but the setback spurred the duo to train harder for their following games. It paid off with a victory over Singapore Polytechnic.”

Clea’s passion and perseverance saw her through her match, together with doubles partner Andrea Goh, against ITE. “With that, I think the way forward is for us to train harder and maintain a high team morale.”

The team suffered a setback at the games as they were unable to defend their title, after losing to Nanyang Polytechnic. “It was the chemistry between us and how we listened and helped each other to focus,” said Clea, 18. “We had trust and confidence in one another.”

The men’s team, meanwhile, played at the Tennismate Doubles Open Tournament in Kuala Lumpur, affording them the experience of facing seasoned players. The season may have come to an end but it is a start of a new journey for the TP tennis team.

“Although we did not defend our title, we played our best. We enjoyed ourselves and we will be claiming our title back next year,” said Ethan.

Passion for perfection

I am really happy to have been selected for the Singapore Wushu team, now I can get a chance to represent Singapore and do her proud.

- Fung Hui Xin

“Balancing wushu and my studies is always a struggle for me,” she said. “But I think self discipline is very important since I force myself to study or train even though I am really tired. Planning out a timetable helps me to focus and let’s me know what I need to do.”

When asked if she plans to pursue wushu full-time, Hui Xin’s reply was a firm “no”, but she remains focused on scaling achieving more in the sport while she’s still competing.

“My wushu career has not been very satisfying up until now, and my goal is to get selected for South-East Asia (SEA) Games 2015,” she said. Hui Xin has already started preparing for the SEA Games wushu competition, which will be held at the Singapore Expo next June.

She intends to work on improving her movements, which she said is her weakest area, and plans to emphasise her strengths – sword routines and jumps – at the SEA Games. Hui Xin has already gone through the Singapore squad trials on Sept 6 and is looking forward to securing a place in the final 15 at the final trial in December.

The men’s team won the majority of their games, losing only to Nanyang Poly, and the highlight of their campaign was a 3-2 victory over Singapore Polytechnic.

“Singapore Polytechnic is well known for their loud and fierce cheers,” said Ethan. “Many of us, especially the Year Ones, were intimidated at the start but we worked together and out-cheered the SP team when we were tied at two matches. It was intense, but we won.”

Ethan said team spirit played a big part in their success, with the team bonding through exhausting training sessions and late suppers.

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Today’s smartphones offer image quality as good as that of a basic compact camera, but that does not mean that the pictures we take with them cannot do without some enhancement before sharing them on Instagram or Facebook.

Editing photos before posting them online has become the norm amongst youngsters these days. The always-with-you nature of smartphones and the editing software that is readily available for download allows one to edit their photos anytime, anywhere.

A must-have photo editing app on your smartphone would be the highly rated Afterlight, a paid photo editing application that’s available on iOS platforms. The app’s simple, intuitive interface and its wide array of tools make it a perfect photo editor for both quick touch-ups and precise edits.

The user-friendly app comes with a total of 27 original filters and 30 guest filters for users to play with. The filters have all been created from scratch using its very own adjustment tools, so you can expect more than your typical Lomo or sepia-tone filters.

When applying a particular filter to your photo, you can easily adjust the strength of the filter with the help of a slider and the changes are applied in real-time.

The app also comes with a unique feature that allows you to add light leaks and high-resolution dust scratches to a photo and was one of the first apps to allow such features when it was released in 2012.

Afterlight is an amazing photo-editing app for beginners. Despite having to pay to enjoy the features of the app, it has proved to be worth more than the 99 cents paid for it, which is a good reason why it’s still a bestseller in the App Store.

One of the best films of 2014

It’s everything a Marvel film should be: Thrilling, hilarious, heartfelt, with great special effects and perfect casting.

Guardians of the Galaxy is all that, and it could well be the best blockbuster of this year.

Guardians is the latest film from Marvel Studios, which brought us the global blockbuster franchises of Iron Man, Thor, Captain America and The Avengers.

The film has energy and zaniness to spare, and while it tries a bit too hard and is rather over-stuffed with special effects, it is endearing as the story is simple at heart and still feels fresh.

Peter (Chris Pratt) is the leader of a pack of misfit space adventurers in possession of a mysterious orb wanted by the evil Ronan the Accuser (Lee Pace), who pursues them across the galaxy.

Peter’s gang includes Gamora (Zoe Saldana), Drax (Dave Bautista), wood-creature Groot and the raccoon Rocket (voiced by Vin Diesel and Bradley Cooper, respectively).

Much of what makes up Guardians has been done before, but the film feels fresh and original.

The best parallel one can make would be to the original Star Wars trilogy.

Aesthetically, there’s really nothing like this film.

It relies heavily on visual appeal with its lavish planets, surprisingly frightening villains and extraordinary costumes.

The casting is excellent. Pratt has demonstrated his witiness on many occasions, but here he really shines as an action star and his charisma carries the film, making it the most fun-filled, laugh-filled blockbuster in years.

The story’s reliance on love, humour and understanding make it easy to empathise with characters, making viewers feel emotionally invested in the journey.

Pratt and Saldana also give the romantic subplot, which begins with some hearty hand-to-hand combat, more weight than the dialogue allows for.

Saldana holds her own opposite Pratt and makes Gamora more than the hero’s love interest.

Guardians of the Galaxy – directed by James Gunn, who wrote the screenplay with Nicole Perlman – is great entertainment and the best blockbuster of the year.

Who would have guessed that a movie that featured a talking tree and an anthropomorphic raccoon would be one of the best blockbusters of the year?

You won’t want it to end.
After a two-year hiatus, Taylor Swift made a comeback in August, hitting No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart with her new single "Shake It Off." Co-written with Max Martin and Johan Schuster, the new single is a preview of Swift's upcoming fifth album, 1989. The album, which will be released on Oct 27, was inspired by Taylor's own birth year and her love for late 80s music. Surprisingly, Taylor announced that 1989 would be her first pop album. Being well known as a country artiste, the singer-songwriter is in a hurry to drop her country image and show the world that she's now a pop artiste.

Taylor made a breakthrough into the pop scene back in 2012, with hit songs from her album Red, including "We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together." For two years, Taylor has been working hard to show her fans her pop side. With this transformation, Taylor has won the hearts of fans with "Shake It Off." It has a different pop feeling as compared to her pop songs in Red. "Shake It Off" has a really catchy beat, with orchestral instruments such as the trumpets coming into play. The song's message is not about her past relationships but it's about how people's opinions get to you and how you overcome it.

Either let it get to you and make you bitter ... or you can just shake it off.

- Taylor Swift

Shaking off her country singer image

Despite numerous hiccups, Temasek Polytechnic Chorale wowed the audience at The Arts House on July 13.

The one-and-a-half hour concert EVOS III: Purpose, the third in the Everlasting Voices, One Sound series, featured songs from a variety of genres including traditional folksongs sung in their native languages and modern pop.

It ended with a 20-minute medley of the most popular songs from the Broadway musical Les Misérables, leaving many in the crowd spellbound.

Alto Section Leader Ashlyn Wong said she felt exhilarated to have been on stage. Having initially failed the audition in her freshman year, the junior had a solo in EVOS III, which she said was unexpected. "I feel blessed to have performed on stage at such an amazing venue," said Ashlyn. "On stage, I felt strong and untouchable, especially when we were able to sing together as one."

The 40-strong chorale, consisting of soprano, alto, tenor and bass sections, practised for hours, and it showed during the concert.

"I feel blessed to have performed on stage ... I felt strong and untouchable, especially when we were able to sing together as one."

- Ashlyn Wong

They both looked and sounded like they had really bonded," said TP student Wesley Chen, who went to the concert to support his friend. Added fellow TP student Favian Chua: "You could feel the emotion and energy the choir exuded. The inclusion of familiar pop songs helped liven the atmosphere even more."

According to Ashlyn, the intensive rehearsals prior to the concert, during which chorale members helped each other, brought a sense of camaraderie to the group. As the practices coincided with school project submission deadlines, many members had fallen sick during the run-up to the concert.

President of TP Chorale, Leong Jun Li, was pleased that the concert went smoothly after the minor setbacks experienced during the planning. "I’m thankful the concert was successful with the help of everyone around us," she said. "Even more so, I’m thankful to the members for all their time and effort. I’ve really enjoyed everything – the concert, practices, and not forgetting the chorale."