



Health Department choir reaches for a second victory

As Christmas rounds the corner and the national Office Choir competition approaches, the Health Department Choir enhances practice sessions to secure yet another win. Staff of the Sheikh Kalifah Diagnostic Centre and Red Roof Building cannot deny the sweet and warm Christmas spirit that wafts through the air, especially with choir practice donning their ears almost every afternoon.

The Health Department Christmas Choir consist of 24 cheerful members; 4 men and 20 women from various sections of the Department including, laboratory, physiotherapy, occupational health, mortuary and others.

Practice for the Office Choir competition, organised by the Seychelles Broadcasting Corporation, started since September and is directed by Mrs Marie-Ange Denis, a retired nurse and now choir



Health Department Choir on the front steps of the Red Roof Building before the competition


manager. This year the choir has drawn the song “Rudolph the red-nosed reindeer”, a song written by Johnny Marks, inspired by the short story from Robert L. May, with which they hope to achieve a second win.

After careful deliberations, members of the choir have decided to adopt the Centre D’Accueil De La Rosiere (CAR) as the organisation to receive the winning prize

should they be victorious this year. “We have chosen this organisation because drugs is an issue that the society continues to struggle with.” Mrs Denis explains. “Almost every family has a member addicted to drugs and if we win, we can further move a step forward towards ending this infliction.”

The Health Department won the last Office Choir Competition organised in 2014 with the song “Petit Papa Noel”, written by Raymond Vincy and Henri Martinet in 1946. The prize money was used to purchase wheelchairs for residents at the North East Point Home for the Elderly, their chosen organisation for that year.

Mrs Denis, along with other members of the Health Department Choir extend an invitation for other staff to join the choir.



In this issue

- pg.2 Urging better prevention efforts to stop AIDS
- pg.3 Staff Resolutions
- pg.3 Every drop counts: Public Health Authority to ensure appropriate bottled-water standards
- pg.4 Health Department starts the New Year with new Calendar
- pg.5 Celebrating a warm Christmas with bright decorations

Urging better prevention efforts to stop AIDS



'Hands Up for Prevention' is the theme for World AIDS Day 2016

Commemorated under the theme "Hands up for Prevention", World AIDS Day 2016 was launched earlier this month on Thursday 1st December with a solidarity walk to show support for people living with the disease as well as remember those who have died from AIDS. The walk started at the Red Roof Building where participants gathered in red and white, then proceed along 5th June and Independence Avenues, to the St Paul's Cathedral in Victoria where a praise and worship ceremony was organised in memory of those who have passed away from AIDS.

At the cathedral, participants were addressed by the Minister for Health and Social Affairs, Mr Jean Paul Adam who vibrantly congratulated organisers and participants on a successful walk to reinforce the belief that the set goals towards the eradication of AIDS will be possible.

In line with his message for this day, Minister Adam urged those present as well other members of our society, towards proper practices to reduce the risk of infection. He further emphasised the provision of suitable

care and support for individuals who are living with the disease. "We all have to raise our hands up high to show support," Minister Adam incited the crowd. "Let's raise our hands up to acknowledge that we are ready to do our test. Through this, we set an example for others to follow and we reinforce efforts towards prevention. And, we showcase our solidarity towards those who are living with HIV/AIDS." The Minister said before cutting the ribbon, leading those gathered at the cathedral into the church where they each lit a candle for victims of the disease.

Activities to mark this day continued throughout the week with a mini-symposium organised on Friday 2nd December at the Sheikh Kalifah Diagnostic Centre, for Health Department staff. Staff from the AIDS Prevention and Control Programme in the Public Health Authority, gave various presentations on the prevalence of HIV and AIDS in Seychelles as well as globally. Those present were urged to practice effective prevention methods and benefited from a demonstration on the proper use of condoms from Dr Anne Gabriel, CEO of the National AIDS Council.



Minister Adam lights the first candle in memory of those who have passed away from AIDS





Staff Resolutions



My resolution is to keep learning, and live up to challenges.

Monique Cadeau, Health Department

This year my resolution is to keep on giving my best for the Ministry and at the same time keep being strong as a mother.

Virginie Moustache, PS' Secretary

My goal for 2017 is to adapt a healthier diet, get in some more hours of exercise and why not learn a new language.

Joel Edmond, Health Promotion Officer Nutrition

Every drop counts: Public Health Authority to ensure appropriate bottled-water standards

Water is a vital part of human life. Increasingly, a lifestyle change can be noted as people move from the consumption of tap water to the regular purchase of stylishly packaged water. How much information are people given about the water they buy and how much to these product meet required standards?

Inspired from his 15 years of practice as a Public Health Officer as well as some weaknesses noted during his long service, in the manufacturing of bottled water, Mr Andrew Richard with the assistance of other Public Health Officers, coordinated a forum on Wednesday 23rd November 2016 with the aim of improving standards of bottled water retailed in Seychelles.

The meeting grouped various stakeholders, including the Fair Trading Commission, Licensing Authority

and the Public Health Laboratory who participated in an intense open discussion. The aim of the day was to enlighten and educate manufacturers as well as distributors on proper standards to comply with during manufacturing. Laws and regulations that govern the production of bottled water was also addressed.

Participants openly voiced their thoughts and concerns. "We had a good turn-out," says Mr Richard. "The discussion was fruitful and everybody present had something they wished to discuss, which has given us enough information to go on. In addition, we've been able to effectively communicate our own messages."

Topics discussed include the proper labelling of water bottles and the increase in illegal manufacturing of this commodity. Mr Richard

says that his team has set a proper timeframe to reach their set objectives which appropriately accommodate stakeholders.



Various types of bottles used in the retailing of water

Health Department starts the New Year with new Calendar



Mr Jean Paul Adam, Health & Social Affairs Minister, Mrs Stephanie Desnousse, Dietitian and HOON Chairman and Mr Eugene Vidot, Director of Woodworks Unlimited display the beautiful design of the new calendars.

The Health Department unveiled its calendar for 2017 in a short gathering held in the Minister's Conference Room on the 19th December 2016. The calendars were sponsored by Mr Eugene Vidot, the Director of Woodworks Unlimited Pty Ltd at Providence, in collaboration with the Health of

Our Nation Committee (HOON).

Mr Victor presented the calendars to the Minister for Health and Social Affairs, Mr Jean Paul Adam in the presence of Dr Bernard Valentin, Principal Secretary for Health, Dr Danny Louange, the Deputy CEO of the Health Care Agency

and various high management staff from the Health Department, who also received a copy of the calendars at the end of the ceremony.

Several staff of the Department aided the unfolding of the calendars, primarily those within the HOON committee. Photographs use in the design were contributed by Dr Susan Fock-Tave, Chief Medical Officer, Mrs Patricia Rene, Chief Allied Health Officer, Dr Conrad Shamlaye, Senior Policy Advisor, Mr Nicholas Shamlaye, and Mrs Barathi Viswanathan, Programme Manager in the Public Health Authority. The health messages featured on the different pages were further prepared by members of the Health of the Nation Committee.

It is the second time that Mr Vidot sponsors the annual Health Department calendar and this after the Healthy Home Project featured in the National Show last year. The calendars are already being distributed amongst staff and will also serve as gifts to external partners.



Staff view the calendars, admiring photos taken by fellow colleagues

Celebrating a warm Christmas with bright decorations

As is customary every year, the Health Department is slowly, but surely being garnished in pretty and bright Christmas decorations. From the front steps of the Red Roof Building the Seychelles Hospital, attractively adorned Christmas trees deck hallways, offices and cubicles. Bright gold, green and red colours, those most associated with this season, don various sections including,

boards above their desks, adding a little desktop tree onto side tables, diffusing pine cone scented fragrances into air or playing a little carol in the background as the day's work unfolds. Amongst those who have taken to small table trees, are Virginie Moustache and Jessie Joubert, secretaries in the Principal Secretary's Office, who already have under their tree, a carefully golden-paper-wrapped gift.

However, various staff find themselves quite disappointed in the amount of decorations compared to previous years. Hallways that would usually be draped in bright red fabrics are almost bare and Christmas trees just lack that little bit more decoration to keep attention.

On a small tour around the medical wards of the Seychelles Hospital, staff express their disappointment at the lack of decorations in that area. "Decorating this year is going a bit slow. We are not receiving any help and have to do everything ourselves." Mrs Marie Josée Dang-Kow, Nurse Manager of the Maternity Ward, answers when asked about decorations on the wards. "However, with help from SCAA and one of our patients, we've been able to decorate the Maternity Ward." She gestures to the garlands and trees lining the hallway and the crèche at the front door. "Furthermore the staff contributed funds to buy the Christmas tree."



Beautifully decorated Hermitte Ward

the Blue Roof Building and the new paediatric ward, which is expected to open before 2017 knocks on our doors.

This year staff have taken it upon themselves to add their own little touch to the sharing of some season's greetings; hanging cards on

The ground floor of the Blue Roof Building is one that twinkles exceptionally bright. Sparkly garlands line the stairs leading to the first floor and right at the entrance stands a large Christmas tree which is always shimmering blue lights to welcome passers-by.

Many amongst the staff understand that decorating will take a little longer this year and hope that next year the Health Department is as splendidly decorated for Christmas as the years before with a lot more decorations to properly put the staff and patients in the holiday mood.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year...

