

MEDIA RELEASE

Pre-school children to pen and post their thoughts on co-operative activities



SINGAPORE, 5 July 2012 — More than 1,700 pre-school children will pen their thoughts on postcards on what they have experienced from co-operative activities – and they will revitalise the diminishing practice of using stamps by mailing these postcards using the recently launched Co-operative stamps to the Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF), the apex body of Singapore's co-operative movement

The children from My First Skool [MFS] are doing this to mark Singapore's celebration of the International Day of Co-operatives 2012 on July 7 – as well as the International Year of Co-operatives 2012 (IYC)

The postcards will each be mailed using specially-commissioned commemorative stamps on co-operatives issued to celebrate the IYC. Commissioned by SNCF, SingPost issued five limited edition stamps, depicting the major milestones of the co-operative movement in Singapore.

The general public will get to view the more than 1,700 postcards – and the children's first thoughts and drawings on cooperation - from the pre-school children at various events like the Regional Conference to be held on 3 October 2012 and the IYC Closing Dinner in Jan 2013. Talks with the Singapore Philatelic Museum are underway to explore further exhibition channels.

The International Day of Co-operatives 2012, falls on July 7 this year.

As part of the year-long national celebrations of IYC 2012 in Singapore, SNCF spearheaded, on June 9, Singapore's largest gathering of more than 15,000 co-operators, their families and members of public to celebrate IYC at Marina Barrage. At this gathering, more than 2,000 preschool children took part in a mass chorus reading of 'A Very Big Storm', a co-operative book published by SNCF.

Prior to the mass reading, there has been a line-up of activities teaching the children co-operative values like mutual-help and co-operation, organised by My First Skool, spun off from the co-operative book, A Very Big Storm. These were one of the children's first seeding of the concept of co-operative values.

Preman Komala, Principle Curriculum Specialist, MFS said, 'The whole exercise will be both rewarding and memorable to our pre-school children as they will get to express their thoughts in words or drawings about their experience with the co-operative activities, as well as get to stick the specially-designed co-operative stamps on their postcards and to afterwards, mail these'.

Joey Chan, parent of Tan Yong Jun (a student in My First Skool) said, "We do read A Very Big Storm to my child even at home."

Ms Dolly Goh, Chief Executive Officer of SNCF said: "We hope the activities will help instil in them the value of co-operation, mutual-help and self-help – qualities and values – so important to these young children who are our future.

The widespread use of emails, texting and smart phones, have diminished the use of personal stamps usage. But we wish to highlight that much information, stories and learning experience can be extracted from a single small stamp. This is why SNCF embarked on a partnership with SingPost to produce a set of legal tender commemorative co-operative stamps on the International Year of Co-operatives 2012 to forever imprint the co-operative history in philatelic history. We hope children will not lose touch with the experience of sticking a stamp, writing a postcard personally and the excitement of anticipating when the other party will receive their piece of handiwork in the mail."

#

Note to Editors

International Day of Co-operatives

The United Nations International Day of Co-operatives is celebrated annually on the first Saturday of July. The aim of the day is to increase awareness of co-operatives and promote the movement's successes and ideals of international solidarity, economic efficiency, equality, and world peace. This year's theme for the International Co-operatives Day is "Co-operative enterprises build a better world", which links to the observance of the United Nations International Year of Co-operatives. It seeks to encourage the growth and establishment of co-operatives all over the world, and to recognize the actions of co-operatives in helping to achieve internationally agreed upon development goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals.

About Singapore National Co-operative Federation

The Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) is the apex body of Singapore's Co-operative Movement, and secretariat of the Central Co-operative Fund (CCF). Formed in 1980 with the aim of championing Singapore's co-operative movement, the apex body represents 99% of co-operative members in Singapore through its 67 affiliated co-operatives. Today, the Movement boasts a base of more than 1 million members.

SNCF aims to promote and develop co-operatives as sustainable enterprises that address social and economic needs through the co-operative principle of self and mutual help, so as to foster a more resilient society. SNCF is a member of the International Co-operative Alliance (ICA) and the World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU). It enjoys co-operative relationship with the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and other international and regional bodies.

For more information on SNCF and the Singapore Co-op movement, visit: www.sncf.coop

For more information on the International Year of Co-operatives, visit: www.singapore.2012.coop

About My First Skool

My First Skool (MFS) is the pioneer childcare arm of NTUC First Campus Co-operative Limited. We were established as NTUC Childcare in 1977 and became a co-operative in 1992. Operating mainly at void decks of housing estates, we aim to provide quality and affordable childcare service that is accessible to parents. This is in line with our tagline, "Cherish Each Child", where no child should be denied the opportunity of early childhood care and education.

The MFS curriculum subscribes to experiential learning whereby the natural curiosity of the child is supported by a holistic process-oriented approach that will help young children develop positive dispositions that will put them in good stead for lifelong learning. MFS currently offers more than 7,500 childcare places in over 93 centres island-wide.

Media Contacts

Jacke Chye

Singapore National Co-operative Federation

+65 9678 6761

jackechye@sncf.org.sg