

Dear Member,

Season's Greetings from Malaysia!

Wow, what a year we have had - full of travel, welcoming new groups and individual members and generally getting to know everyone better. We can hardly call it hard work as it was so satisfying. With the New Year now very close, we begin to look forward to building on what we have started - strengthening those relationships and serving you all better.

First, we would like to thank all those we have had the opportunity to meet this year, your kind hospitality as well as the invitations to your bases and conferences are truly appreciated. We enjoyed our time together, getting to know you and your ministries, and look forward to our next meeting! After our Christmas break, my wife, Khim, and I will be joining a Mission Builders International team to Thailand in January ...being on the board, it is wonderful to play an active part as well. Then in February, this will be followed with a trip to Hong Kong where four of us will be attending the Jian Hua conference.

We find that actually meeting with our members, helps us to evaluate your needs better. We certainly have the flexibility to mould our programs to those needs, so the more involved we are, the more able we are to serve effectively. Not only that, but in many cases it has resulted in improved benefits, i.e., a wider range of Outreach Plan options (*please see our website for more details*) and the possibility of implementing group rates (*up to a 35% saving*) as groups are considered less of a risk than individuals.

Speaking of groups, we now have a "Coordinator's Guidelines" available. This document will help coordinators to understand our programs and carry out their roles more effectively. We found that so many were concerned about what was expected, that we needed to explain just how simple things were and how we could lighten their workload. We are also developing a document especially for short-term, missions' leaders going out with teams under our Outreach program to help them in the case of emergencies and such. By the way, if you believe that your home church or mission organization would like to look at the guidelines, please let us know, as we will be more than happy to send them a copy.

You should also be aware of a change that was made recently. As of December 1, 2005, both new and renewing members with TtC will receive free life cover against both natural and accidental causes. It used to be just natural causes, but our broker has been able to negotiate a new contract. This benefit applies to the main insured member, with US\$15,000 for ages 18 to 40, and US\$5,000 for ages 41 to 65.

Lastly, I would like to depart from our usual style of newsletter and relate a story that could save someone's life this Christmas. During a barbeque, a friend stumbled and took a fall. She assured everyone that she was fine (*a friend had proposed calling the paramedics*) and had just tripped over a brick, because of her new shoes. They got her cleaned up and a new plate of food, but while she appeared a bit shaken up, Ingrid (*not her real name*) went about enjoying herself the rest of the evening. However, Ingrid's husband called the next day to tell everyone that his wife had been taken to the hospital later and that at 6:00am, Ingrid had passed away - she had suffered a stroke at the barbeque. Had someone known how to identify the signs of a stroke, perhaps Ingrid would be with us today.

A neurologist says that if he can get to a stroke victim within 3 hours he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke ... totally. He said the answer lay in recognizing and getting the patient to hospital for treatment within 3 hours.

Recognizing a Stroke ("*3 Steps to Remember*").

Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer brain damage or worse, when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke.

Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions ...

1. Ask the individual to SMILE.
2. Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.
3. Ask them to SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE (*Coherently*), i.e., it is sunny out today.

If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call the emergency services immediately and describe the symptoms to the doctor or dispatcher.

After discovering that a group of non-medical volunteers could identify facial weakness, arm weakness and speech problems, researchers urged the public to learn these three questions. Widespread use of this simple test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of strokes and the prevention of brain damage.

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May you have a very Merry Christmas, filled with laughter, joy, peace, hope and most of all, our Lord's love.

Blessings, Michael and the TtC Team
TtC ... serving alongside

ps: When you stop believing in Santa Claus, is when you start getting clothes for Christmas.