

## The UN congratulate St John Sri Lanka

In May Devasayagam Thomas, a driver for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), suffered a serious heart attack while at work. He was rushed to hospital when his heart stopped and his colleague H. Thushara began CPR. As a driver with UNDP, Thushara had been trained in First Aid and CPR by St John Sri Lanka. He knew it would help increase Thomas' chances of surviving the heart attack.

When they arrived at the hospital's emergency room, doctors were sceptical of Thomas's chances of survival. The next day, Thomas miraculously regained consciousness and three weeks later, he walked out of the hospital and returned home.

"The doctors who took care of me in hospital told me that I had a major attack and I had nearly died in hospital" explained Thomas, "I wish to thank St John Ambulance for the excellent



*The UNDP drivers, Anton, Thushara and Ananda, who used their training to save their colleagues life*

training given to my colleagues, they saved my life."

St John Sri Lanka have been training UNDP staff in First Aid for over 10 years and drivers have to take a refresher course every two years. "We give high priority to this training, especially as seven field offices are located in conflict zones," said Bengt Messing, Deputy Head of the UNDP office. "This is all an effort to help staff respond to crisis, and suffice it to say, it has saved a life this time."

## Hong Kong St John at Beijing 2008



Hong Kong St John Ambulance got into the Olympic spirit this summer, travelling to Beijing to provide a first aid standby service for the 2008 Games.



The 22-strong team, comprising doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, ambulance staff and firemen, were on duty at the cycling and triathlon events, held at Beijing's Shunyi Olympic Rowing-Canoeing Park in August.

"Since Beijing started to prepare for the Games, we have been taking an active role in cooperating with Beijing Emergency Medical Centre. It is a scarce opportunity and it's our honor. We will do our best to serve the Games well" explained Lung Ngai Cheung, a volunteer for Hong Kong St John Ambulance, before the Games began.

A further 600 members were also at the equestrian and paralympic events held in Hong Kong from July to September, providing first aid coverage for the competition venues, Olympic and Paralympic Villages, media hotel and public transport interchanges.



## News in brief

### Workshop fever hits the St John in the Caribbean



September is the hurricane season in the Caribbean but for two St John Associations it was workshop season! Both St John in Saint Lucia and in Dominica decided to bring together their Council members, First Aid trainers and other stakeholders for two day workshops that helped them develop strategic plans and a clear idea of where they are going over the next three years.

While the two workshops were funded through the Capacity Building Programme and designed and facilitated by Pippa Hoyland from the Order Secretariat, representatives from potential STAPLE partners from the Priory of England gave their time to be there. Bernard Ingram from St John Ambulance in Northamptonshire participated in the workshop with St Lucia and Judy Moore from St John Ambulance in Guernsey with St John Dominica. They were able to inform each Association about the work they do as well as their successes and challenges.



Each workshop generated lots of ideas, enthusiasm and clearly defined plans. The islands of Saint Lucia and Dominica present different opportunities and challenges for St John's work and these were reflected by participants in each workshop. However, there were a lot of similarities in thinking between the two Associations, especially the need to ensure that there is a strong governance structure, that they focus on trying to expand commercial First Aid training as well as develop active and imaginative programmes for young people. There is currently no Badgers programme in the Caribbean but St John in Dominica has agreed to call its young members after their national bird, the Sisserou!

### St John Zimbabwe says farewell to Dame 'Ting' Edmonstone



Members of St John Ambulance Association bade farewell to a woman, best known by friends and relatives as 'Ting', who had become something of a legend in the annals of the the Order of St John worldwide. She passed away rather suddenly on 19 August 2008 having suffered from a heart attack.

Members of St John Ambulance and members of the Order, to which she had belonged for more than 50 years, came with flags and in full uniform to take part in her funeral service and see her off in a manner befitting a woman who had given so much of her life to the St John Ambulance Association and to helping others.

Her coffin was led into Our Lady of the Wayside Catholic Church in Mount Pleasant by a lone piper playing the bagpipes flanked by the members of the Order, the Brigade and the young Cadets. They were joined by relatives, friends and residents of Pleasant Ways, where Ting was matron up until her death last week. She was buried at Warren Hills Cemetery.

### 100 years of St John Malaysia in Gold

Bank Negara Malaysia is issuing three types of commemorative coins to mark the centennial of the establishment of St John Ambulance of Malaysia (SJAM). The coins, all legal tender, were launched in August by YB Dato' Liow Tiong Lai, the Minister of Health at his office in Kuala Lumpur.

The design depicts SJAM's volunteers providing emergency medical assistance to members of the public as well as the official motto of SJAM

"Perkhidmatan Bagi Manusia" or "Service to Humanity".



# Addressing HIV and AIDS through home base care in South Africa

South Africa has one of the largest HIV positive populations in the world, almost 6 million people (18% of the total population). It is estimated around 350,000 people have died from AIDS related illnesses since 1990 leaving more than one million children as orphans.

As a key training and health care provider, St John South Africa is in an ideal position to work with communities to help them address the impact of HIV and AIDS. They have developed a comprehensive Home Based Care (HBC) training programme which not only gives people First Aid skills, but the knowledge of how to care for the terminally ill in resource poor settings.



*Left, carers at work in the home. Below; volunteers receiving their certificates after training in HBC*

Using funds from the UK's Big Lottery Fund, St John South Africa have developed community programmes from two of their centres, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. The primary outcome of the project is to improve the quality of life for people affected by HIV/AIDS through the provision of high quality, sustainable HBC in areas that otherwise have very little support.

**"The training in home base care has improved my knowledge and now I am a role model in the community"**

*Carer, Sinthemba NGO in Malmesbury, Western Cape*

Alongside this training, they are also working with communities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and local community based organisations (CBOs), providing them with community development training. This includes information on effective leadership as well as empowering people to plan and implement their own projects and to network with other organisations in the area.

The two key principles of the project are partnerships and sustainability. In the Western Cape, the project supports the creation of formal partnerships between St John and existing NGOs, who agree to jointly take responsibility for the success of the project. By working with staff and volunteers from existing community structures and organisations, St John is building their capacity to support their own communities. In areas where community structures do not exist, St John has been supporting and encouraging volunteers to develop them and providing them with the training and skills to do so, particularly in the Eastern Cape.

**"The relationship between us and the community is much stronger now, thanks to the training and support of St John"**

*Michael, Coordinator of Sophakama CBO*

In Joe Slovo, a deprived area of Port Elizabeth, St John has been working closely with the community organisation called Sophakama. Sophakama has been providing basic home support since 2003 as there is a huge need for people living with HIV and AIDS in the area, who live far from medical services. The care givers had no formal training until St John trained 17 of their volunteers in First Aid, HBC and community development. As one volunteer explained, the training has been invaluable. "Because of the training we now know what HBC is and why it is important. We learnt how to care for people with HIV and AIDS, the elderly and children."

St John South Africa hope that by continuing to run projects which try and understand the huge variety of issues which affect people with HIV/AIDS, they can not only improve the quality of life for those in need now but develop communities for the future.



# Working together - the benefit of good partnerships

## Learning from Kenya - Lawrence Dahwa, St John Zimbabwe



I was appointed as CEO of St John Zimbabwe in February 2008 and I felt I had a lot to learn about St John. I was asking myself, how could we

best serve the interests of our clients in the current environment here in Zimbabwe? When I was at the African Regional Meeting I was impressed by St John Kenya and felt St John Zimbabwe could learn something if I visited the country.

During my visit in August, which was funded by the Order Secretariat's Capacity Building Programme, I had a chance to visit the Western, Eastern and Nyanza Provinces as well as spend time at the Headquarters in Nairobi. I became to understand the structure of St John in Kenya and how they have close links with the government. I learnt how they organised their First Aid training,

peer education and home-base care programmes and visited groups which face many challenges as well as those that were successful.

At the headquarters, I learnt many things which are relevant to our work in Zimbabwe. In particular, how they advertise their work, monitor their ambulances and maintain the quality of their First Aid training. I was interested to learn more about the National and Regional Council's and how having strong and active Council is so important to guide the organisation.

I would like to thank St John Kenya most sincerely for my visit. I enjoyed every minute, learnt so much and I will remember it for a long time to come.

*Lawrence learning about the ambulance in Kenya*



## St John Zambia partners with Red Cross



St John Zambia has been working closely with the Red Cross for some years. A relationship has now developed whereby they are supporting rather than competing with each other.

When the Red Cross is working at a large event, St John Zambia have been subcontracted by them to provide vital ambulance services. St John and the Red Cross have partnered for the recent State Funeral, International Motor Rallies and the Agricultural & Commercial Show. The two organisations are also planning to deliver First Aid services side by side at the forthcoming Presidential Bye elections.



*Volunteers from St John and Red Cross working together at a demonstration event in Zambia*

### Dates for the diary

- ✓ Meeting of the Alliance of the Orders of St John: 9th-12th October, Helsinki
- ✓ Caribbean Regional Meeting: 14th & 15th November, Bermuda
- ✓ Steering Committee: 18th & 19th November, London
- ✓ Installation of the new Lord Prior, Professor Mellows: 20th November, London
- ✓ Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting: 23rd & 24th February 2009

For all the latest news and resources from the Order go to the website [www.orderofstjohn.org](http://www.orderofstjohn.org)

If you have any stories you would like to be covered in The Link or you would like any information on any of the news featured in this edition, please contact Gemma Mullick at the Order Secretariat at [gemma@orderofstjohn.org](mailto:gemma@orderofstjohn.org) or 0044 (0)207 251 3292.