



Media Contacts:

Ms Tan Ee Sze : +65-91016091, taneesze@charitybnb.com.sg
Ms Lianne Tan: +65-96897597, liannetan@charitybnb.com.sg

Up To 70 Cyclists To Brave Hills And Heat For Peacehaven Nursing Home As Charity Bike 'n' Blade Returns For Fourth Instalment

Singapore, 19 May 2009 – Two years after saying “that’s it, folks”, the organisers of Charity Bike 'n' Blade (Charity BnB) have made a U-turn and brought back the fund-raising event, this time in support of Peacehaven Nursing Home.

The two-day event – reduced from the traditional three days to pare down event costs and optimise contributions to the beneficiary organisation – will be held on 5-6 September 2009. The cyclists will be riding a total of 320km from Singapore to Mersing, Malaysia and back, under sweltering temperatures that are known to go up to 39 degree Celsius and beyond.

This will be the fourth instalment of Charity BnB. The first three Charity BnB events were held between 2005 and 2007, and raised a total of over \$800,000 for St Andrew’s Community Hospital as well as the cause Youth at Risk, represented by Ling Kwang Youth Centre, Pertapis Centre for Women and Girls, and The Salvation Army’s Children’s Homes and Youth Programmes.

Commenting on the decision to have Charity BnB Number 4, Mr Sidney Lim, Chairman of the Organising Committee and Services Director with Microsoft Singapore by day, said, “We hear many stories of people going through tough times, especially now. There are parents struggling to put food on the table, chronically ill senior citizens who do not seek medical treatment because they cannot afford to. When a few of us got together last December to reminisce over our past Charity BnB experiences, we felt that if ever there was a time to use Charity BnB again as a platform to help the community, this was it.”

On the decision to support Peacehaven Nursing Home, he said, “Even in the best of times, the elderly and the disabled tend to be a ‘forgotten’ demographic. So when we heard one of

our regular Charity BnB riders (Peacehaven chaplain Jimi Tan) talk about the difficulties Peacehaven has trying to raise funds to provide subsidised nursing care for the destitute, we decided to adopt it as the Charity BnB beneficiary for this year.”

Why Peacehaven Nursing Home

Charity BnB aims to raise \$100,000 for Peacehaven, a 388-bed nursing home that provides compassionate, individualised, holistic care for the elderly and younger people who have a physical or mental disability. The majority of its residents are wheelchair-bound, bed-bound and/or have dementia, and come from very low-income families.

About 25 per cent of Peacehaven’s residents are destitute, which means that Peacehaven has to cover the full nett expenses after government subsidies. To continue caring for the poor in ailing health, the Home needs to raise about S\$1.6 million each year, over and above the government subsidy that it receives.

“We are thrilled that Charity Bike 'n' Blade is happening again and grateful that Peacehaven is the chosen beneficiary. This event will be of considerable help in meeting our budget needs especially in this tough economic climate,” said Madam Low Mui Lang, Executive Director, The Salvation Army Peacehaven Nursing Home.

“Charities can only continue to fulfil its mission as long as there are kind souls who fill the gap. Our appreciation goes to the volunteers, participants, corporate and individual donors who share our compassion in caring for the ailing and destitute elderly,” she added.

Drumming up support

For the event organisers, what has been very heartening is the early support from corporate organisations like global data centre services provider, Equinix, which committed to a Platinum sponsorship even before Charity BnB 2009 was officially launched. Other sponsors to date include ACI Worldwide, HP Singapore and ST Electronics.

Mr Clement Goh, Managing Director, Equinix Singapore, said “Equinix Singapore had a good past few years of business growth and profits, thus what better time to take this opportunity to contribute back to our society, especially now when many charities are facing difficulties raising funds. Equinix is proud to be a Platinum sponsor for this year’s Charity BnB as it shares the same values of helping those in need.”

Mr Goh, an avid sportsman himself, will be participating in this year's event together with Mr Doug Oats, Equinix's Vice President of Sales for Asia Pacific, who will be flying in specially to support this event.

In fact, several Charity BnB stalwarts are also expected to travel thousands of kilometres back to Singapore to make the 320 km ride.

One of them is Mr Gabriel Low, Financial Services Director with Ernst & Young Vietnam, who had previously taken part in Charity BnB 2006 and 2007. "They have been enjoyable experiences. The event also provides me with an opportunity to enjoy group riding and at the same time, raise money to help the needy, so why not?" said Gabriel, who is currently based in Hanoi, Vietnam. With road conditions in Hanoi far from ideal for cycling, he is training for Charity BnB 2009 on a stationery bicycle in the gymnasium.

Also making the journey to Singapore for the September ride is Mr Alex Chong, Business Development Manager with a systems integrator in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Asked what it is about Charity BnB that warrants the trip, he said, "The Number 1 reason is that this is an opportunity to help the unfortunate regardless of race, religion and country. The second reason is being able to meet up with old friends from Singapore."

Charity BnB 2009 is encouraging individuals and corporate sponsors to assist in the fundraiser. For more details and to register, please visit www.charitybnb.com.sg.

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About Charity BnB

Charity BnB began in 2005 with the simple idea that a group of passionate people collectively participating in the sport they love can be a powerful vehicle to raise money for society's underprivileged.

The Charity BnB effort is driven purely by volunteers working closely with the beneficiary organisations to put together the entire event – from nit-picking over logistics and operations to browbeating people to participate and going out, hat-in-hand, to raise funds.

Between 2005 and 2007, Charity BnB supported St Andrew's Community Hospital, which provides subsidised step-down care for those in need; as well as The Salvation Army Children's Homes and Youth Programmes, Pertapis Centre for Women and Girls and Ling Kwang Youth Centre, which provide support for youth at risk. For more information, visit www.charitybnb.com.sg.

About Peacehaven Nursing Home

Peacehaven is a 388-bed nursing home providing compassionate, individualised, holistic care for the elderly and younger people who have a physical or mental disability.

Its vision is to

- Treat each resident with dignity and reserving their sense of self-worth at all times,
- Bring professional, family and community together for the benefit of the resident, and
- Make eldercare education a priority for residents, families, staff and the local community.

Run by The Salvation Army, Peacehaven's services include basic nursing care; physiotherapy, occupational and recreational therapy; on-site medical services; financial counselling, advocacy and discharge planning; and pastoral care.

About Charity BnB 2009 Sponsors (updated as of 29 April 2009)

Equinix

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