



WONG KIM HOH

What's wrong with
calling a spade a spade?
page14

the **sundaytimes** December 14, 2008

lifestyle



'Tis The Season To Reach Out

Despite these tough times, there are still volunteers who lend their hand to cheer up others. Sadly, charities are seeing fewer do-gooders. **TAY SUAN CHIANG** and **JOCELYN LEE** report.

PAGE4

Volunteer Yee Boon Nan, 75, spreads goodwill during this festive season.



ST PHOTO: WANG HUI FEN

Retiree Yee Boon Nan (foreground) lives in Sembawang, but travels to Lions Befrienders in Ang Mo Kio daily to spend time with the old folks there.

75 and a volunteer

Even at age 75, retiree Yee Boon Nan is still volunteering to help out other elderly people: Every morning, he travels from his Sembawang home to Lions Befrienders Service Association in Ang Mo Kio to spend time with about 50 old folks. He teaches them to play simple games, and stays there from 9am to 5.30pm.

Lions Befrienders is a voluntary welfare organisation which encourages senior citizens to take part in meaningful activities such as morning exercises and games. It has neighbourhood branches in Ang Mo Kio, Bendemeer and Queenstown.

Mr Yee, whose wife died about 30 years ago, and has two grown-up children, says: "I have nothing to do in the day anyway, so I might as well make my life more meaningful by volunteering."

The former tailor started volunteering 10 years ago at Lions Befrienders when he was living in Ang Mo Kio and got to know about the place. He continued volunteering there even after he moved to Sembawang.

This festive season, he will serve as station master at the centre's Christmas celebrations next Monday. There will be simple table games and his job is to explain to his peers how to play and help facilitate them.

Mr Yee, who is very excited about the upcoming event, says: "Although I am the oldest volunteer around, I am glad that I am still given the opportunity to help others.

"I also get to hang out with people around my age and I treat them as my brothers and sisters."

Jocelyn Lee