

By TAN JU-ENG
jueng@thestar.com.my

Lending a helping hand

Online group finds a way to give back to the community

CHARITY is often the last thing on anyone's mind when you are down and out. To give, especially when you are living from hand to mouth, would certainly require a huge dose of generosity.

So when Poesy Liang, 33, survived a personal illness two years ago with the help of some good people around her, she decided that there were a lot more people like her out there who could do with a helping hand.

On the eve of Merdeka last year, she started a group on Facebook over the internet called Helping Angels to get volunteers to do charity and community work around the Klang valley.

The description on the page reads: We serve to help those in need. By helping others, our lives are in turn enhanced.

"It was a random gesture by my friend and I. I had always wanted to give back to the community ever since I returned from the US after a successful operation to remove a spinal tumour," said Poesy who raised the funds for the surgery herself.

She needed USD80,000 for the operation and raised the amount from her own network of friends.

"I was motivated to give back and I had the aspiration to start something where I can be the bridge between those who have the resources and those needing them."

Within two weeks of starting Helping Angels, 400 people have signed up on the Facebook group.

It did not matter whether there were ready to help but Poesy felt it was important to plant the seed of volunteerism.

During last Christmas, Poesy and her volunteers managed to put together two events for children in two welfare homes.

"It was not a lot of money but we passed the hat around and we managed to get enough and had some other stuff sponsored.

"Helping Angels also help the givers to remember their blessing of



Poesy: 'You can give money or advice but money does not count for much. If you have the time, you are our hero'

»Our long-term goals would be to explore fostering programmes, adoptions and to give out scholarships«

POESY LIANG

having more than the people we help," said Poesy who works as an interior and a jewellery designer.

She believes that the noble inten-

tion of the group can be therapeutic and help volunteers resolve personal issues.

Today, the group with 700 mem-

bers has committed itself to more serious tasks like giving weekly tuition classes to a children's home in Petaling Jaya.

"Education will give these children a chance to improve their circumstances and our activities with them can also help them forget whatever unpleasant experiences that may have landed them in the homes.

"Our long term goals would be to explore fostering programmes, adoption and to give out scholar-

ships. One day I'll be rich enough to run everything!" she quipped "but if I don't, I'll do what I can."

Her plans for Helping Angels include work towards protection of animals, welfare cases, and environmental conservation.

Poesy has also been a volunteer with the SPCA since she was 19 years old.

"You can give money or advice but money does not count for much. If you have the time, you are our hero!" she concluded.

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