

Kudos to loos' unsung heroes

I refer to the letter, "Elderly toilet cleaners a sad reflection of society here" (The Sunday Times, April 6), by Dr Anne Chong Su Yan.

The Restroom Association (Singapore), or RAS, supports her call to resolve this issue.

As a non-profit organisation advocating clean public toilets, we believe that everyone – toilet owners, users and cleaners – can play a part.

The RAS would like to express our sincere gratitude to, and appreciation of, all toilet cleaners, our unsung heroes, for their relentless efforts and contributions. Last year, we celebrated World Toilet Day by paying tribute to them.

We would also like to encourage the public to join us in giving recognition to all toilet cleaners, as it would be dreadful to imagine a day without them.

We believe that proper training and better welfare and wages will improve the image and professionalism of toilet cleaners, and thus attract younger or foreign workers. We urge all cleaning contractors to send their cleaners for professional training courses, such as our restroom specialist training course.

The RAS is also looking into

the possibility of designing jobs for elderly toilet cleaners. With sufficient funding, they can be trained as restroom assessors to audit and rate public toilets for our LOO Campaign this year.

The campaign aims to achieve our 2010 goal of 70 per cent clean toilets islandwide to meet our basic standard of cleanliness.

We would be happy to work with the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports or the Ministry of Manpower to help these elderly cleaners.

The RAS has been educating preschoolers and students to empathise with toilet cleaners, and practise good toilet habits, with our Happy Toilet School Education Programme. We will extend our programme to the public.

We would like to invite people like Dr Chong to join the RAS in our effort to foster a gracious society with clean public toilets for everyone. The public can e-mail info@toilet.org.sg for volunteering opportunities, or share their views on public toilets via e-mail at mysay@toilet.org.sg, or via SMS on 9770-LOOS (9770-5667).

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