

Message From the President

Dear Fellow Members,

On behalf of the Management Committee, Season's Greetings to all members and a very Happy New Year 2012. I am pleased to see members celebrating the festive season at the many events organized at the Club and as usual, it was a great experience to welcome the New Year with our members at our New Year's Eve Gala Dinner.

I would also like to take this opportunity to report to members on the following:-

1. AGM 2011

The Club's Annual General Meeting (AGM) this year was held on Sunday, 30th October 2011 and attracted a large turnout of members. Some of the matters deliberated at the AGM include:

Separation of the Resort Facilities

While the Resort Facilities at Samarahan is an issue that has divided members ever since the proposal for the Resort Facilities was conceived, the members of the Club have at the AGM voted decisively on this issue and given the mandate to the Management Committee to act accordingly.

Our immediate Past President Encik Mohd Shookry Ghani has mentioned on many occasions that the MC does not have a monopoly of wisdom nor virtues and members are encouraged to put forward their views so that decisions made will take into account the differing viewpoints of members. In respect of separation of the Resort Facilities from the City Club, this MC understands that there are many members who are passionate with the Resort Facilities and adamant that the Resort Facilities be retained with the Sarawak Club. Nevertheless, in a society such as ours, the decision of the majority must prevail.

Election of the Management Committee

The AGM also saw the election of the Management Committee for 2011-2012. This year, all positions of the Management Committee were contested. It is

heartening to see members offering themselves to serve as MC members. Winning or losing the election is not important. What is important is that members with a genuine interest to serve offering their services to the Club. Together with my fellow MC members, I am grateful for the trust placed upon us to serve as MC members. We are well aware of the responsibilities that come with the office and will endeavour to do our utmost best to meet the expectations of members and improve areas that need to be improved at the Sarawak Club.

It is regrettable that some members who have put themselves up for election have been over zealous in their campaigning to the extent of bringing the Club into disrepute through the use of blogs and social media to character assassinate their opponents. The Sarawak Club is a premier club with a long history and tradition. By the creation of blogs and anonymous postings in various websites which are accessible not only to members of the Sarawak Club but the public at large, the image of the Sarawak Club as well as its members is tarnished. This is a practice that is not acceptable within our Club and many members have written to the Club requesting for disciplinary action to be taken against offending members.

Complaints to ROS

Many members are also deeply affronted that some members have resorted to lodging reports to the Registrar of Societies (ROS) on alleged infringements and transgressions by the then MC. Members of the Club who have legitimate concerns should bring to the MC's attention such concerns so that those concerns may be addressed. By reporting to the ROS rather than engaging the MC, these members put at risk the Club the possibility of severe adverse repercussions. I therefore urge members who are genuinely concerned with the welfare of the Club to engage the MC rather than to put our Club at risk.

In any society, it is inevitable for there to be differences of opinion. However, this difference of opinion should be resolved within the available framework of the Club in accordance with the Club's Rules rather than by way of complaints to the authorities. Complaints to the authorities should only be made as a last resort

when all avenues for resolution within our Club have failed. This is a sentiment which is shared by most members at the last AGM.

Submission of Motions at AGM

At the recent AGM, several motions were submitted for deliberation by members. The Rules of the Sarawak Club allow for motions to be put forward for deliberation and to be voted on by members at General Meetings. However, this process should not be abused to circulate baseless allegations against the MC (some of which were considered by members at the AGM to be defamatory in nature) as part of election campaigning by members seeking election to office. Further, some members have submitted motions for deliberation which were subsequently not presented by the proposers or seconders of the motions while some motions were withdrawn without any explanations to members. In doing so and in the absence of valid reasons, these members have shown gross disrespect to other members who have made the effort to submit proxies or attended at the AGM to participate in the deliberations.

I urge members to bear in mind that we are members of a premier club and it is important that all members conduct themselves with proper decorum so that the dignity and stature of the Sarawak Club and its members may be maintained. While members may disagree with each other on issues, such disagreements and conflicts should not give rise to personal attacks on other members. Where issues are put to a vote, the decision of the majority should be respected and allowed to be implemented.

2. POST AGM

Since the AGM, the Management Committee has established an Advisory Council, a Disciplinary Committee as well as various Sub-Committees to assist the MC and also ensure members are included in the decision making process.

Advisory Council

The Advisory Council is comprised of eminent members of the Sarawak Club. In view that the Club Rules currently allow MC members to serve a maximum of two terms in the same portfolio, the Management Committee will be able to tap on

the experience and wisdom of the Advisory Council. I am grateful to the Advisory Council members for volunteering their invaluable services to the Club and the MC.

Disciplinary Committee

A Disciplinary Committee has also been empanelled to hear Disciplinary Inquiries and to recommend disciplinary action against members who have contravened the Club Rules when the decision of such an independent Disciplinary Committee is considered to be necessary by the MC. It is the fervent hope of the MC that with the establishment of an independent Disciplinary Committee to hear Disciplinary Inquiries, the incidences of indiscipline amongst members, and in particular those incidences of indiscipline that puts the Club or its well being at risk, will be reduced.

The composition of the above Advisory Council and Disciplinary Committee will be announced at a later date.

Golf Resort Committee

With the decision of members to separate the Golf Resort, a Golf Resort Committee has been set up to prepare the Golf Resort for eventual autonomy from the Sarawak Club and so that the Committee may be better focused on the management of the Golf Resort.

Sub-Committees

In addition to the above, various Sub-Committees have been established to assist the MC as well as to ensure that the MC adopts a more inclusive approach in running the Club. The Sub Committees established include the **Separation Sub Committee**, which is tasked with ensuring that the resolutions passed at the AGM pertaining to separation are properly implemented; the **Golf Sub-Committee** which is tasked with ensuring that adequate effort is applied towards organising events at the Golf Resort and that the Golf Resort is adequately and continuously promoted.

Other Sub-Committees include the Bar Sub-Committee, the Catering Sub-Committee, the Entertainment Sub-Committee, the Games Sub-Committee, the House Sub-Committee, the Sports Sub-Committee and the Swimming Sub-Committee to provide feedback and assistance to the respective MC members.

Improvements in Management

The MC is seeking better delivery to members by:-

- (1) Improving Systems and Methods of management;
- (2) Introducing a Performance-Based Remuneration Scheme for Staff; and
- (3) Introducing Staff Training.

The above measures to improve management of the Club which were initiated during the tenure of our Immediate Past President, Encik Mohamad Shookry Ghani, are being continued. This MC also seeks to improve the skills of our staff to ensure more professional management and the service standards of our service staff are lifted. Improvements to systems and methods will also be introduced. The staff of the Club is constantly challenged to improve the way things are done at the Sarawak Club. The MC believes that a culture of compliance and accountability should be instilled in senior management of the Club staff so that management is accountable and there are no contraventions of our Rules or applicable laws.

With the above measures, the MC hopes to improve the financial performance as well as to improve the service standards at the Club.

CONCLUSION

The festive season is upon us once again and the various MC members as well as their Sub-Committees have been working hard to organise exciting events at the Club. The Club has been transformed with decorations of the festive season and festive lightings. Holiday events were organised for the kids. I look forward to the active participation of members in these events.

May you all be well and happy in 2012. As we will be ushering in the Year of the Dragon 2012 soon, I would like to wish all our Chinese members “Gong Xi Fa Cai”.

Yours truly,

Richard Wee Liang Chiat
President