

**NEWS CLIPPING**

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# Learning about rivers

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**R**IVERS are the veins of the Earth, a life source for all living beings. Our rivers provide for us, their functions branching out in countless ways as our civilisations developed, yet most of us are taking rivers for granted, even when we know they are not an inexhaustible resource.

It was this environmental concern that led the Guinness Anchor Berhad (GAB) Foundation to launch its WATER (Working Actively Through Education and Rehabilitation) project in an effort to conserve our country's main water sources.

The project was founded in 2007 and managed to engage various stakeholders from corporate

companies, Government agencies and local communities to collaborate in educating future generations to adopt good water usage habits. One of GAB Foundation's stakeholders is the Global Environment Centre (GEC), who contributed with their technical expertise. Under this collaboration, they successfully rehabilitated the Sungai Way river in Selangor.

The WATER Project adopted the 2.5km river as its pilot river to monitor throughout a three-year period, during which they trained the surrounding local communities on river management.

As a result of this, Sungai Way's water quality improved from a Class IV - V, which signifies extremely polluted water, to a Class III, where water is suitable for life. Aside from training sessions, the foundation also organised rivers clean-ups, walks, pollution mapping and river bank beautification.

In the years that followed, GAB Foundation organised activities such as the "Business Community", where businesses

Andrian Tam (left) and Aaron Liew performing one of the River Hunt tasks. Let's just say they've been on easier assignments than this.

are invited to workshops on resource management practices; "Habitat Recreation", where rocks, trees and other vegetation will be restored at the river to create more habitats for aquatic animals; and the "River Carnival", a fun festival to involve the community in environmental activities.

It was the latter event that the BRATs were invited to last weekend, when we were given a spot in the carnival's exciting and educational "River Hunt".

This year's River Carnival, the third one GAB Foundation has organised, was held at Zoo Negara in Kuala Lumpur, and was by far the largest one to date.

It featured a series of fun, interactive activities that highlighted the importance of water and our rivers. The River Hunt, of course, was one of them.

Families, busloads of school kids and zoo-visiting tourists could be seen flocking to the string of tents to watch the performances, have a go at the mini funfair games, line up for face-painting or try their hand at arts and craft.

All the while, a bunch of young people decked in white T-shirts emblazoned with the BRATs logo were running breathlessly around the zoo, completing river-related tasks and solving puzzles in a desperate attempt to win the

River Hunt's grand prize of RM1,000 in AEON vouchers.

At the end of the day, we walked away knowing how beautiful our rivers are and that we have the power to conserve and protect them.

And oh, by the way, we finished second. BRATs rule! ... Almost.

■ The members of "Kumpulan 6" from the 2012 GAB Foundation River Hunt were: Tham Ying Hui, Tham Ying Ying, Ho Hui Jan, Trecia Tan, Lee Jia Tong, Amanda Lian, Andrian Tam, Kelvin Yee, Marcus Heng and Aaron Liew. For more information about the WATER Project, log on to facebook.com/GABFoundation.



A child getting some river-themed body art painted on at the GAB Foundation River Carnival.



A team of BRATs young journalists were invited to participate in the GAB Foundation River Hunt competition, and they came in second! How disappointing...

