

# Braving Antarctica to help troubled youth

By CHERYL ONG

IT IS out of the frying pan and into the freezer for life coach Thaddeus Lawrence.

Mr Lawrence, 37, is embarking on a race in Antarctica in November, fresh from completing a week-long trek through the Gobi Desert in Inner Mongolia in June.

And he is doing all this to raise funds for The Salvation Army Gracehaven, a charity for troubled youth. The motivational speaker is aiming to raise \$100,000, of which \$30,000 will pay for the race, through his participation in the international endurance event Racing The Planet.

He has already found sponsors such as local chain store Pet Lovers Centre's charity foundation, which donated \$15,000, and other corporate supporters such as bathroom fixtures maker Hansgrohe. They have given \$21,110 so far.

Mr Lawrence is also publicising his "Braving Antarctica" campaign on Give.sg, an online fund-raising platform, with which he hopes to hit his target amount for the Gracehaven charity. So far, the page has drawn about \$900 in donations from the public.

Gracehaven executive director Raymond Aloba said Mr Lawrence will serve as an inspiration to the young people in Gracehaven who face difficulties in their lives.

"By running this gruelling race in sub-zero conditions, Thaddeus lives by example that if he can do it, so they too can live their dreams and lead purposeful lives," he said.

The money raised will help pay for the needy children and young people's educational needs and life skills development programmes.

The international race comprises week-long jaunts through four of the harshest deserts in the world - the Sahara in Egypt, the Gobi in China, the Atacama Crossing in Chile and finally, "The Last Desert" - Antarctica. All feature trails that span 250km.

Mr Lawrence has completed two races - the Sahara last year, and the Gobi in June - to qualify for the South Pole event, which happens only once every two years.

The Sahara race was partly sponsored by companies such as Singapore Airlines, while he paid for the Gobi race himself. The only Singaporean who has completed the Antarctica race was hedge fund manager Leow Kah Shin in 2008.

Said Mr Lawrence: "There are the vagaries of the weather and you're always risking the possibility of stormy blizzards that could whip up. The other aspect is the terrain. In Antarctica, there will be mountain ranges and passes I'll be going through."

Right now, the bachelor is building up his fitness for the race by running regularly, and exercising in cold rooms to get used to the freezing temperatures. He has also consulted fitness experts to develop a fitness regimen.

His mother worries a bit, he said, though both his parents are proud of him.

But these worries are secondary to the

main issue of endurance for all marathon runners, especially in harsh climates.

"It's a mental inner game," he said. "I read somewhere that on a long multi-day, multi-stage race, you start off running with your legs, after that you run with your head. At the last part, you run with your heart."

Those who wish to lend their support to Mr Lawrence's race may visit fund-raising platform Give.sg and donate to the "Braving Antarctica" campaign.



Life coach Thaddeus Lawrence will endure sub-zero conditions in Antarctica to raise funds for The Salvation Army Gracehaven. ST PHOTO: BENJAMIN NG

## Deeds list

### Charity golf raises

Non-profit charity Touch Community Services raised \$230,000 for its charity golf event yesterday.

This is the highest amount raised for the charity golf event, Swing for Good, since Touch Community Services organised it in 2004.

Minister of State for Social Work, Industry and Manpower, Lim Joo Seok, attended the event.

The money can be used to support the organisation to provide services such as needy families, the elderly and the frail elderly.

### River Valley Primary

ST Pocket Money Fund

River Valley Primary School raised \$58,000 to The Straits Times Pocket Money Fund for the school's 25th anniversary.

The school raised the money through a musical production, "The Sound of Music", at the Jubilee Hall.

Pupils also collected donation cards, and teachers have written some of their own.

Giro from January to the year as of

### Keppel charity

Keppel Charity

Keppel Charity for Canos, Home and kitchen on

Keppel dinner at

for 45 of the executives

partners, \$1,200 to prepare chefs.

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### KPMG raises over

disadvantaged children

Financial advisor KPMG raised over \$60,000 for disadvantaged children from its annual "Difference Day", on

Some 2,000 employees organised a carnival from charities like

and Viriya Community Centre and Viriya Community Centre adventure site Outward Bound Singapore. Staff organised games and entertainment performances.

Contribution boxes for carnival stalls to collect from employees each time any of the games or

### NTU students spread

Students from Nanyang

University's (NTU) Youth Club are helping to spread a message in the Youth

Volunteers from the club encourage youth around the Youth Office to write and pin a pro-message onto a board wear as they walk

During the Game out at the United Nations Programme booth to cause.