

Introduction

Starting from this issue, our electronic newsletter will have two new columns temporarily named "**A Survivor's Story**" and "**A Volunteer's Voice**", each featuring an interview with a breast cancer survivor and a HKBCF volunteer. Through sharing their personal experiences, stories and feelings, we hope to bring encouragement and inspiration to other breast cancer patients, help them tackle challenges in a positive way, and go back to the beautiful path of life after recovery. We also hope that the general public can have a more thorough understanding about the mental path that patients go through, learn more about breast cancer, and even join us as volunteers to help patients in need.

We also appeal for titles of these two new columns (both Chinese and English). Members are welcome to use their inspiration and creativity and eagerly participate. Works can be submitted together with members' names and contact telephone numbers to the office of HKBCF via email (info@hkbcf.org), fax (2525 6233) or mail by 15 May 2008. The chosen works will be announced in the next issue of the newsletter. The winner will be awarded a beautiful souvenir. For more information, please contact our office on 2525 6033.

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A Survivor's Story

"Seize the day and treasure the ones around you" was Angela's resolution after she got the disease. Ever since she was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2006, she has been facing all the difficulties positively and optimistically, and has dealt the disease as an accepted fact. She did not for a moment think that she might not be cured, and with this belief she has finally pulled through the treatment and has embarked upon her happy life again. It is not easy to imagine how Angela, a small built lady, is filled with infinite energy and life. There is little doubt that people who have met her must have been touched by the optimism and sunshine in her.

Looking back, Angela says that she got immense support and encouragement from the HKBCF's support group sessions during her treatment. In between her operation and before chemotherapy, she attended meetings of the support group. She says that through the sharing and comfort from other patients, she was brightened up a lot and became more confident. More important, fellow patients' sharing helped her to be psychologically prepared for the treatment that followed. She says, with joy, that she had even waited for her hair to fall after chemotherapy. Because she was psychologically prepared, she describes her feelings at the moment when her hair really fell as "overwhelming" but she was not terrified.

Angela feels lucky to have had full support and care from her husband and two sons. In order not to let her family feel sad and worried about her, she faced her disease with strength and optimism. However, Angela points out that sometimes even family members may not fully understand the needs of patients. She therefore encourages other patients to tell their families about their own needs so that the family members can understand.

The experience with the disease has greatly changed Angela's outlook on life. Angela ran a travel agency before she was diagnosed with the disease. She describes herself as a well-planned and outgoing woman who had never thought of retiring, but now that she has experienced the disease, she sighs with regret that things would go other ways no matter how well planned one is. Now she has learnt how to let go her insistence, to seize every opportunity to enjoy life, and to look at things with a calm heart.

Angela's life style has also changed considerably. She now pays much more attention on her health. She goes hiking three to four times a week, takes yoga classes and practices Cantonese opera singing. She became a volunteer of the HKBCF in the end of 2006 to support and care about other patients with action. She brings members to outings every month, and has also enrolled for flower arrangement and dance classes, leading a solid and exciting life. She looks at her new life with a much relaxed and easy going perspective. "My life is getting happier and happier. I seldom fall ill and I feel free and unrestrained," says Angela.



Angela says fighting the disease with a happy mind is most important.

Angela took the role of Master of Ceremony in this year's Spring Party. A keen singer, she also showed her singing talent.



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A Volunteer's Voice

The first one to feature in this new column is freshman volunteer Rachel Bourke. Rachel joined our team of volunteers in February this year. She does research work for the HKBCF.

Rachel's participation in HKBCF owes its root to her mother, Mrs. Veronica Bourke, a current council member of the Foundation. Veronica always shares that "women should help each other". Inspired by her mother, Rachel has naturally become one of our volunteers. As she finds out more about breast cancer and the services of related organizations, Rachel understands the importance of regular checkups and early diagnosis. She has even become a "promotional ambassador" and always reminds her friends to do regular self breast examinations.

Though a newcomer to HKBCF, Rachel says being a volunteer has given her a lot of satisfaction especially when she sees breast cancer survivors, volunteers and devoted people support and help each other. This brings her a lot of energy. Talking about things in her voluntary work that impress her most, she recalls having been greatly touched when she saw how breast cancer patients and survivors looked at life with happiness and enjoyed themselves at the Spring Party in March.

Rachel opines that it is very important to educate the general public about breast cancer. She hopes the Government can assist by allocating more funds to promote school education on breast health and to provide huge support to researches related to breast cancer and genetic technology.



Rachel comes to HKBCF office several times a week to do voluntary work.

If you would like to share with us your story, you are welcome to contact us on 2525 6033 or email to info@hkbcf.org

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Spring Party 2008

To celebrate the Year of Rat and the 3rd anniversary of HKBCF, Spring Party 2008 was held at Cosmopolitan Hotel on 1 March 2008.

Around 100 members and guests attended upon invitation, and greeted each other in laughters and enjoyed tea and snacks. HKBCF's Honorary President, Mrs. Rita Fan, took the lead to make new year greeting to everybody. When addressing how to promote local education on breast cancer, she emphasized that the best promotion is patients' sharing own stories with people around them. She also encouraged us to maintain an optimistic and open mind, so that our body can has sufficient energy to fight the pressure and the disease.

Our Founder, Dr. Polly Cheung, and the Chairman, Mrs. Joanna Choi, recapped HKBCF's activities in the past year and also expected a progressive development in the Foundation's work. The excitement of the party reached its climax in the applause in the lucky draw and the beautiful singing in the karaoke session.

Toasting by Mrs. Rita Fan and council members.



Mrs. Rita Fan called upon breast cancer patients to share their own experience with others.

Almost 100 guests and members enjoyed themselves at the Spring Party.



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Pioneer School-based Breast Health Educational Program



Hundreds of senior students from the Diocesan Girls' School attended the talk on breast health on 25 February 2008. Ms. Ada Cheng, chairman of HKBCF's Education Committee, gave an introduction to the students.

Ms. Helen Hung, an ex-DGS teacher and a breast cancer survivor, shared her cancer fighting experience.



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Monthly Educational Talk

5 January 2008



Topic: Walking in the Shadow or Living Alive: Over-coming Fear and Living Fully

Speaker: Prof. Cecilia Chan, JP (middle)

29 March 2008

Topic: What Do We Know About Breast Cancer in Hong Kong: Where Do You Stand among other Breast Cancer Patients?

Speaker: Dr. Polly Cheung (Founder of Hong Kong Breast Cancer Foundation)



Dr. Polly Cheung gave a review on local breast cancer trend, treatments and the history of screening program in Hong Kong. She stressed the importance of establishing the Hong Kong Breast Cancer Registry in exploring appropriate insights for HKBCF, medical professionals, policy makers and the wider public, in order to advocate and design plans for more effective breast cancer control.



The audience was eager to raise questions on screening program and breast cancer treatments.

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Member Activities



Members went hiking along Bowen Road on 5 January 2008 and enjoyed a relaxing and refreshing morning.

Members took a trip on Lamma Island on 8 March 2008, enjoying the beauty and freshness of early spring.



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HKBCF News

1. Hong Kong Breast Cancer Registry

The HKBCF-initiated "Hong Kong Breast Cancer Registry" (HKBCR) has commenced the collection of information from breast cancer patients. The HKBCR collects and analyses vital breast cancer data and serves a significant foundation for breast cancer prevention and treatment policies as well as other relevant researches in the future. We appeal for the active participation of breast cancer survivors or patients. Please sign the HKBCR Consent Form. Our data officers will contact you and your doctors in person to fill out a detailed questionnaire. The HKBCR Consent Form can be downloaded from HKBCF's website:

[HKBCR Consent Form](#)

2. HKBCF new website

Entering our 4th year of operation, the **Hong Kong Breast Cancer Foundation** (HKBCF) is progressively strengthening our service to achieve the missions: Education, Support and Advocacy. With the aim to widely publicize the message "Early Detection Saves Life", provide more comprehensive news of breast health, breast cancer prevention and treatment methods, as well as to keep pace with the development of the Foundation, the HKBCF website now has a fresh new look. You will find that our new website is more user-friendly and informative; please click on www.hkbcf.org now to get the latest breast cancer information and the news about HKBCF.