



Employers' Reception 2007

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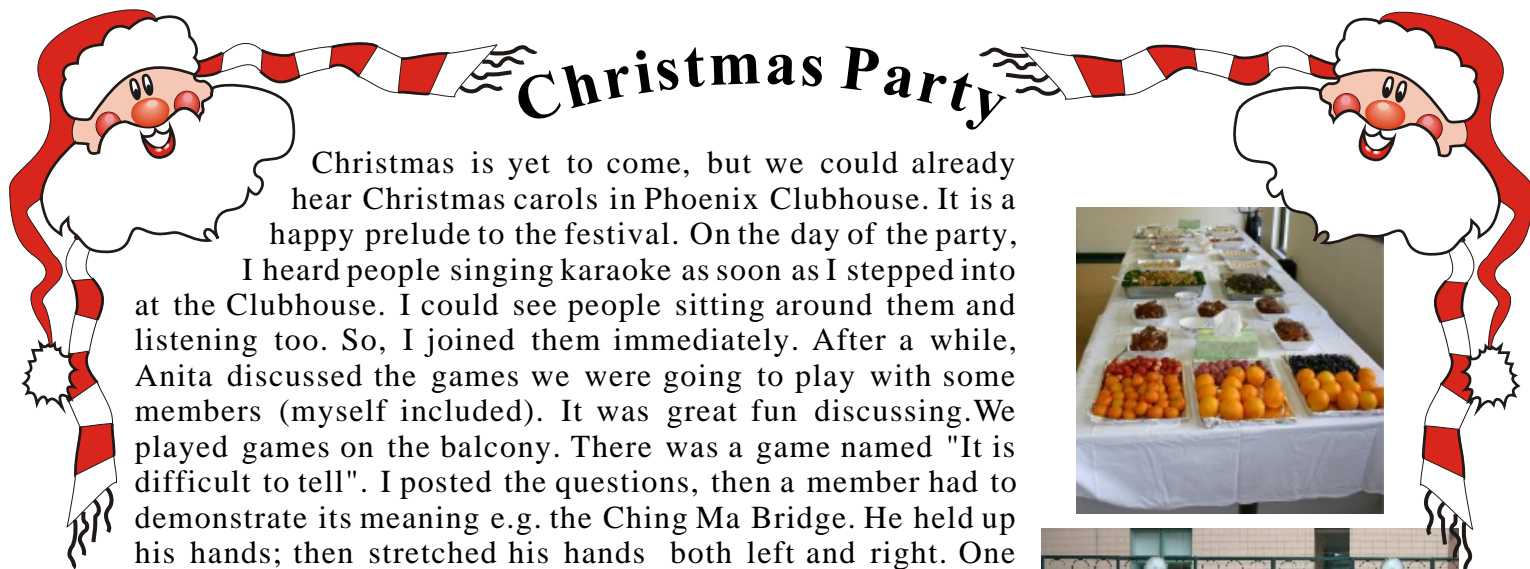
The Employers' Reception on Thursday, 15th November, 2007 was very successful. More than 100 employers and staff from various organizations showed their support by attending the event. I myself felt very much honoured to be the M. C. and to share with everybody my thoughts and experience. To me, the event was a happy one, because I was able to come as an independent employee. (By independent employee, I mean that I applied for and got a job just like any ordinary person in society).

The place where I currently work is the same place where I had my first transitional employment --- Morgan Stanley's mail room --- where I worked in 2003 when my life was at its lowest point, I had little self-confidence, and I very much needed to be accepted by society. Although my present job at Morgan Stanley is a full-time job and the hours are long, I am happy working there because I can work with my former colleagues. On the afternoon of the reception, I came back to the Clubhouse. After lunch, I began memorizing the M.C.'s lines and my testimony. I got a bit nervous. Time passed and it was after 5:00pm, and guests started arriving at the Clubhouse. As the tour guides showed them around the clubhouse, I started to calm down. The program started promptly at 6:45 pm. After Alex gave a brief introduction in English, I took over as M.C. First I stated the purposes of this Reception, and four Clubhouse members (including myself) shared their testimonies. Then Eva and Helen explained the future development of the Clubhouse. At the end awards were given to three employers and organizations that have given transitional employment positions to Clubhouse members for over 5 years. At the end of the Reception, snacks and beverages were served and souvenirs were given to everybody.

I was very happy that many colleagues showed up at the reception to give me support and encouragement. But what saddened me a bit was that my mother, who had recently passed away, could not be present to see that I am able to get re-employed and get back on my feet again. This is the greatest regret in my life. Several times after the reception, my superiors and colleagues praised and encouraged me. They told me that they were now able to look positively at rehabilitated patients and that it is unfair for the media to place any stigma on them. Thus this Employers' Reception was not only a reception, but also a platform that carries a correct message to everybody that most rehabilitated mental patients are able to work and are not useless.

Kenneth Chung





Christmas is yet to come, but we could already hear Christmas carols in Phoenix Clubhouse. It is a happy prelude to the festival. On the day of the party, I heard people singing karaoke as soon as I stepped into at the Clubhouse. I could see people sitting around them and listening too. So, I joined them immediately. After a while, Anita discussed the games we were going to play with some members (myself included). It was great fun discussing. We played games on the balcony. There was a game named "It is difficult to tell". I posted the questions, then a member had to demonstrate its meaning e.g. the Ching Ma Bridge. He held up his hands; then stretched his hands both left and right. One member thought that it was "open the door and see the mountain" (meaning: very straight forward), which was wrong. Finally, it was the same person who guessed the right answer! What impressed me most is carol singing. The choir composed of staff, members, volunteers and guests sang "Silent Night" so well that they were able to bring us well in the Christmas mood. It made me look forward to Christmas even more.

Ginny

Joint Clubhouse Autumn Barbecue and Picnic

October 27, 2007 was a nice day. The four clubhouses, Phoenix Clubhouse, Kapok Clubhouse, Amity Centre and Take Your Way Clubhouse, went on the first joint clubhouse picnic in Ma On Shan park.

In the morning, 50 members from Phoenix Clubhouse, high-spirited and excited, took the bus to our destination. Some of us took turns singing and other members followed. We also tried to guess the answers to some difficult questions that tested our IQ. We were already very excited on the bus. Very soon, we arrived at Ma On Shan park, which was very large and green. The fresh air there refreshed our minds.

We talked and got the barbecue going. Once ready, we could not wait to dig into the food. We had pork-chops, fish balls and chicken wings, a rich combination. Minutes later, the food was cooked and the aroma aroused our appetite. It was really a very enjoyable time. After our stomachs are full, we played shuttle cork games. We laughed a lot and took snap shots of our happy time together.

Afterwards, the more than 200 people from the four clubhouses gathered together and played group games. Winners of the game received nice presents.

Time flies when one is having fun! Soon, it was time to go home. On the bus, we sang songs and played the same games again. One of the questions was "The mother of Da Hung punished Da Hung by ordering him to kneel outside the house. What did Doraemon do to rescue him?" We had to guess the name of a machine and it turned out to be an instant automatic cash machine, a tricky one, as one needed to know the Cantonese pronunciation equivalence to this name.

I wish we would have more joint clubhouse activities in the future so their members have more opportunities to get to know one another.

Wing



THE FOURTEENTH INTERNATIONAL CLUBHOUSE CONFERENCE

On October 14, 2007, Eva, director of Phoenix Clubhouse and I, arrived at Chicago International Airport on United Airlines. We went on by domestic flight to Milwaukee, a town in Wisconsin and checked into the Hilton City Center Hotel. After settling in, we decided to participate in the welcome party in the ballroom on the first floor of the hotel. There, I met many staff members and clubhouse members from different countries.

The next day, Eva and I attended the opening of the International Clubhouse Conference opposite the hotel. At 10:30 a.m., we made a speech on behalf of the Chengsha Heart Wing Clubhouse. We were excited to find that other conference delegates took the initiative to get to know us afterwards.

Presentations and workshops were scheduled on the following few days. When a speaker presented a good idea or said something touching, the audience would give him a standing ovation. What a great situation! It was not only supportive to the speaker, but it also encouraged others to voice their ideas. At the same time, I experienced and appreciated the value of freedom of speech.

Quietly I went to Milwaukee, and quietly I left, very much enriched by the experience of others and filled with indescribable joy!

Wilson

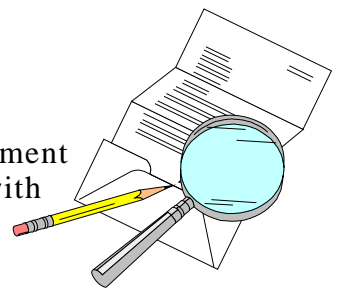


Member's Voice

The Clubhouse referred me to three different transitional employment positions these past few years. The first one was telephone interviewer with HKU. There, I learnt that one must not be impatient, and must be polite. I was also privy to some information not commonly known, for example, the organization known as Oxfam.

The position of office assistant with Paul Hastings last year allowed me to get back in touch with an office setting that I sorely miss. Later, I was fortunate enough to be a general assistant at Morgan Stanley, which is my current workplace. My main duties are to fold letters, put letters into envelopes, and help to deal with contact notes. Although these duties seem very simple, they are very important indeed. I need to concentrate and pay a lot of attention in order to avoid mistakes. I will try my best to gain experience from this transitional employment and hope that I can use what I have learnt.

Celia



Reports Of The Units

Administration Unit

- 1.) The Employers Reception was held on November 15. We thank members for their active participation in the event and in the preparatory work. We thank them for their support.
- 2.) An Joint Clubhouse Autumn Barbeque and picnic was held in Ma On Shan Countryside Park on October 27. It was an unforgettable and happy day.
- 3.) On 18th-20th November, Eva and Dr. Wong visited Heart Wing Clubhouse in Chengsha and had a successful exchange of ideas and experiences.
- 4.) On 13th October Eva and Wilson returned to Hong Kong after representing the Clubhouse at the 14th International Clubhouse Conference in Wisconsin, USA.

Employment

- 1.) An arrangement has been made for Nichole to go to work at Baker and McKenzie.
- 2.) Doris is working in Sherman & Sterling LLP.
- 3.) On 27th November members in group placements went to work for Jardine Engineering Company.

Supported Employment

- 1.) Neil is working part time as office assistant at Sky Trend Accounting Firm.

Clerical Unit

- 1.) 100 guests from 19 companies showed up on the evening of the Employer's Reception. 5 members shared their testimonies. Members of the various units did their best to successfully show the guests around the Clubhouse.
- 2.) We thank Mr. Sitt for taking the "My Favourite clubhouse spot" photos of members in the Clubhouse.
- 3.) Good news: 5 computers are now linked to the Internet.

Education

- 1.) Chinese and English typing exercises are conducted from 11:30 am to 12:00 noon in December.
- 2.) Shu-Lin is taking a training course with the Security and Discipline Unit.
- 3.) The Clubhouse is financing Better to take a computer course on Microsoft Word.

Environmental Protection and Tuck Shop Unit

- 1.) Recently the Tuck Shop has purchased new products: three in One Old Town White Coffee (no sugar) and Three-in-One Coffee are priced at \$3.00; Whole Wheat Biscuits with added calcium, and Whole Wheat Biscuits with black sesame, at \$1.50; individually wrapped Californian Seedless Plums at \$1.00 for two bags; and energy PP sticks at \$1.00. Thank you for your patronage.
- 2.) Owing to rising costs in January, the prices of some of the food items and beverages of the tuck shop unit will be raised.

Food Services Unit

- 1.) The water machine in the dining room has been repaired. Everyone is welcomed to use it.
- 2.) The bratt pan in the kitchen is already old. Yesterday it could not be lit for cooking. Although it has already been repaired by the technician, there is still a chance that it will break down in the future. If that happens, the kitchen will change to another menu.
- 3.) The Food Services Unit has come up with ten health food items and beverages. The most popular ones are tomato and minced pork with macaroni and skimmed milk with banana, respectively. They will be served to everybody on designated days, while honey green tea, honey oatmeal, honey water and skimmed milk with black sesame and Soya beans can be served and enjoyed at all times.

January 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
		New Year Day		Hot Pot(5:15-7:00) Gabriel, Little Helen		Celebration of Employment and Education Eva, Henry, Bing
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Standards Meeting(2:30-3:00) Monthly Meeting(3:00-5:00) Computer Class Henry, Kong-Sang				Education Lunch: Recommending good books. Birthday Party Anita, Gabriel, Sindy
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
		Standards Meeting (2:30-3:00) Weekly Meeting(3:00-5:00)		Badminton(5:15- 7:00) Gabriel, Miu Miu		English Class(I) Amanda, Mui, Wilson
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
		Standards Meeting(2:30-3:00) Weekly Meeting(3:00-5:00)	Yoga Class (5:15-7:00) June, Henry, Bing			Chess Games/Professional hair-cutting by a volunteer Wendy, Marge, Neil, Didi
27	28	29	30	31		
		Standards Meeting (2:30-3:00) Weekly Meeting (3:00-5:00)		Year-end Reunion Dinner (5:15-7:00) Gabriel, Chi Wai		

February, 2008

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
						English Class (II) New Year Snacks (Eva, Henry, Wilson)
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		Standards Meeting (2:30-3:00) Monthly Meeting (3:00-5:00) Karaoke/Treadmill (5:15-7:00) Henry, Lung		Chinese New Year Day Gathering (Anita, Henry, Kong-Sang)	Second Day of the Chinese New Year	Third Day of the Chinese New Year Gathering Amanda, Gabriel, Lung
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
		Standards Meeting(2:30-3:00) Weekly Meeting(3:00-5:00)		Bin Bong Ball (5:15-7:00) Gabriel, Man-Ling		Audio-Visual Entertainment/ Hula Hoop/Birthday Party Anita, Gabriel, Peter
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
		Standards Meeting(2:30-3:00) Weekly Meeting(3:00-5:00) Yuen-Shiu Lantern Display (5:15-7:00)Henry, Bing	Spring Lunch (12:30-2:00) Clerical Units Rowena			Employment Lunch: How to find a job. Amanda, Mui. Neil
24	25	26	27	28	29	
		Standards Meeting(2:30-3:00) Weekly Meeting(3:00-5:00)		Basketball (5:15-7:00) Gabriel, Ho		

The Latest News

- ✻ January 5 (Sat), the Clubhouse held a celebration party for education and employment. Refreshments were served and souvenirs were given to members who completed education and/or jobs last year.
- ✻ February 20 (Wed), which is the 14th day of the first month of the Chinese lunar calendar, the Clubhouse will have a Chinese New Year celebration lunch.
- ✻ The First Day of Chinese New Year, there will be a New Year Gathering in the Clubhouse. Everybody is welcomed.
- ✻ April 2008, another Four-Day Clubhouse Orientation Program will be held. We are now taking applications for this course.
- ✻ February 2008, Man-Ling and Eva will represent the Clubhouse to lecture in Shanghai.

Special thanks to Miss Stella Poon for proofreading the newsletter.

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