

## **Just Do It\*\* – At York Region’s Run for the Cure**

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*On Oct 2, 2011, the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and I joined the QESOSA Ontario Team to walk at the foundation’s annual Run for the Cure event. This was the first time I had ever been at the event, and I would like to share with you some of my thoughts ....*

The day was grey, and the sky was thick with heavy clouds. The overcast sky gave way to light showers, which occasionally turned into large drops of rain; there were whispers of snowflakes.

Yet the atmosphere was elating and upbeat, among all shades of pink. We could see pink hats, shirts, scarves, bandanas, ties, gloves, pants, socks, sneakers, umbrellas, as well as a cement truck! Blowing in the wind was a sense of somberness and hope – ‘somber’ in the sense of the graveness of the decease, which has challenged so many families, and has claimed so many lives, and ‘hope’ in the sense that breast cancer survival rates continue to climb, and a full cure is in sight.

As we reached the event site, we saw big crowds of men and women - young and old, and of many different ethnicities; there were even babies in strollers. People gathered in the school hall, congregated on the open ground, and continuously streamed in from the car park nearby.

I had learnt about this event at the OSA spring function. Our new Director Karen Kwok (FA93), Captain of the QESOSA Ontario Team, initiated our participation in this Run for the Cure. She brought along her hubby, who acted as our (un)official photographer. Our team also had our own chauffeurs, Chan Chi-Hung (FA65) and Leung Yat-To (FA64), taking us to the event site from our gathering spot.

In the spirit of our school motto of contributing to the community, Barbara Yang (FA78), our President, had led us through to this event, this time for a cause that is very much worthy of our time and effort. Our founding President, James H.K. Tang (FA61), commented that it had been almost twenty years since QESOSA Ontario participated in United Way’s Walkathon at the Toronto harbour.

To my greatest surprise, the pledge letter, which I had sent to my friends just 10 days before the walk, generated great responses. I am forever grateful to my friends’ and family’s charity spirit.

Two days before the walk, my physiotherapist, who had been treating my hip pain, gave me the go-ahead, but cautioned me to take it easy - walk, don’t run!

My kudos to my school friend Anita Chu (FA65), who is a QESOSA Ontario member now living in sunny California. She had just got off a redeye flight to Toronto for a family gathering, and bravely went straight from the airport to join her sister Irene Ho (FA61) and the QESOSA Ontario team in the Run. Good job, Anita!

At the 1 Km point, we were given a choice of continuing on, or turning back, i.e. to brave the cold and rain for the remaining 4 Km, or to quit right there and then. The choice was easy!

We walked through highways, on country roads, and through a park with a beautiful garden, a waterfall, a gazebo, and a bridge over running stream. Our team reached the finish line in just one hour.

The team gave up the goodies offered at the reception tent at the event site and opted for a dim sum lunch with our very own QES cheering team, headed by our VP, James S.K. Tang (FA64).

We were a relatively small team, but we exceeded our fundraising goal of \$1,000.00 by a big margin. The total funds raised for the Run was well over \$3,000.00.

p.s. When I received an invitation to a post-event party on Nov 8 for the top 100 walkers with most funds raised in 2011 for the York Region's Run for the Cure, I had a feeling of "double happiness". First, I had helped to make a difference. Second, I have the good fortune of being healthy - having walked the 5K and being able to continue an active life style.

p.p.s. Our team donation got another boost because the company Karen's husband works for would match his final funds raised. It is wonderful to see a company with community and charity spirits!

\*\* The use of this title was inspired by our guest speaker, Neville Lau, at our Annual General Meeting dinner. He said that there was nothing new in his talk, and that anyone with time could find all the materials on the internet. Repeatedly, he stressed that the way to good health was simple: Participation, or Just Do It!