

30 Years of Truong Son, 11 Years of Scouting

I can still remember the first day I went to Scouts. The heat on my face, my hair constantly blowing in front of my eyes, the crisp, mountain air. I was four then; a fledgling wobbling on thin legs, quietly waiting to see how this would all turn out.

I remember, clearly, my first days as a Brownie Girl Scout. Days, afternoons, mornings, spent eagerly with Margaret, then Kaydee, then Tu Anh and Andrea. Afternoons spent begging my parents, “Oh, please, please, let me go to Kaydee’s house!”, mostly in vain. Mornings spent in the Brownie Club House with Truong Bich, making all sorts of crafts and playing fun games. Other girls came and went; some were ardent Scouts, some passive.

The Junior days were often spent at the park with Truong Nhạn and Truong Hue, socializing with Andrea and Kaydee, before she left. The tent that I won from the Friendship Games’ Patch Contest made me prideful in my work. Most prominent in my mind from those times, though, was the sole week of TT8. The hot, beating, Riverside sun wore down each and every participant. Bitterly, I recall the soiling of that beautiful new tent, the extremity of the heat. More nostalgic are the times spent at the lake with the two Brownies and my tentmates Andrea and Tu Anh, holding cups in our hands, deep under water, waiting for particularly ignorant fish to meander inside. We would snap the cups to the surface as fast as we could, trapping the fish inside. The dunk tank where we refreshed ourselves on Thursday; the pizza-eating contest between the boys and the girls (which I lost by only one slice) are incredibly fond memories.

My days as a Cadette became serious. Organization, management—I became educated in the ways of the world; how everything is arranged and how to create the perfect plan. I learned the horrors of procrastination; the joys of having fun in Scouts as I re-bonded with Margaret and Andrea. Together, we experienced TT9—the excitement of San Jose, the Australian craze.

I’ve often heard of scouting described as a journey, and it is. It’s a journey through the times of life, and a school of increasing responsibility. The higher you rise, the more responsibility you take for yourself—a thing all of us need to learn. We begin as fledglings, feeble and weak.

Through tender nurturing and care, we gain strength, gain ability, gain confidence to stand up and give ourselves a voice. We become powerful in our own way; we become empowered with the ability to make a change in our world and society.

I began my journey as a young fledgling; a young Brownie. Eleven years later, I stand proudly; a seasoned, confident Cadette, on the cusp of beginning anew as a Senior Girl Scout and almost ready to spread my wings and fly.

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