

CREW

Andy Ha

To say that Scouting has an impact on my life is a huge understatement. I've been in Scouting for most of my life, and it is a part of me. I'm not a social person; I'm like a turtle in a shell, too afraid to come out. The thing about Scouting is it'll pull turtles right out of their shell. I was timid about the other Boy Scouts, but when you're forced to sleep in a tight tent with your peers, you tend to get to know them. I made friends in Scouting, friends I can laugh with, smile with, bond with. I love and cherish them, and I know they feel the same way. In the beginning, I felt afraid, but as time passed, I felt like a king. Someone once told me, "You don't go to Scouts for your Eagle rank; you go to make friends." Because of Scouting, I've grown as a person in knowledge, leadership and confidence. I will never forget the distance between what I was, and what I am.

Andy with Vinh Nghi and Martin
(Tr. Sato's son, now a leader for LD
Phat Luan in TX)



Andy Ha: The Gallon Game

It was a cold night, New Year's Eve if my memory serves. There was a party going on, but a group of us Thieu (Boy Scouts) left. We walked over to a 7-Eleven for food. One of us held an empty water gallon. Someone made the marvelous suggestion to the cashier, "Can we fill this gallon with slurpie for \$6?". The cashier was perplexed, but abided. We filled an entire gallon with blue and red slurpie, creating a purple flux of the icy drink. We made a small circle outside in the parking lot. I don't know how this started, but somehow we all consented to participate in a phenomenon which is now known as "The Gallon Game". How do you play? Simply put, one simply takes a large gulp from the gallon, and passes it to the next person in the circle. The gallon is passed around the circle until all slurpie is gone. Some people dismiss this game as unsanitary and untame. To them I say, when you're making unforgettable memories with friends, nothing is

really tame, is it? In the years to come, we would play the Gallon Game once again. The game is still remembered to this day. People still speak of it and all remember it.

Andy Ha: One Hundred and Fifty Chicken Nuggets

The Thieus (Boy Scouts) were having a car wash over by a vacant building near Bolsa Grande High School. It was a standard car wash, nothing we haven't handled before. It was hot, business was moderate. Most kids wanted the easy job. That is, waving a sign around in the air and screaming "car wash!" The young kids had that job and I remember for whatever reason, our signs all incorrectly read "Free Carwash: Donations Accepted". Lord knows who was responsible for getting those signs made. It was fun to see people come in thinking they'd receive a free car wash, and being told otherwise. All the while, the adults were trying to find out why customers kept pouring in demanding for a free car wash. The signs were determined as the cause and sweet justice followed swiftly.

It was hot and we were tired from working the hours. And we were hungry. Chris Luu, Kevin Nguyen, James Phan, and Brian Do wanted some McDonalds. It was going to be a long walk. We

nibbled on some Burger King French fries on the way. It would "expand our stomachs and make us more hungry" according to Chris. I can certainly verify that it did.

We arrived at McDonalds. We didn't know what we were going to order. Then gradually we coaxed each other to buying one hundred and fifty grand-old McDonalds chicken nuggets. We sat down with one hundred golden chicken nuggets and a pyramid of dipping sauces.

I realized I should have gorged myself, but I was on a diet and at the time, I tried keeping it inconspicuous. But Chris and Kevin, they took one for the team and ate chicken nuggets like an anteater eats ants. Such a fun time; we brought out our phones, recorded our reactions, our food comas, our staggered walks after being so well stuffed.

The meal was a costly purchase, but well worth it. The dining would become immortalized in the memories of the Thieu and the troop. People would remember this. People would remark "remember the time we bought one-hundred and fifty chicken nuggets?" After all these years, we still talk about this. We speak of the day when we will return to McDonalds and buy a whopping two-hundred chicken nuggets. And it won't be just me, Chris, Kevin, James and Brian, but our expanded circle of friends as well. The original five of us were peas in a pod. I'll admit times changed and some of us went our separate ways, but we are always connected in the fondness in memories like this. I'd like to end with a quote from the musical Wicked: "I've heard it said, that people come into our lives for a reason, bringing something we must learn and we are led to those who help us most to grow if we let them and we help them in return. Well, I don't know if I believe that's true. But I know I'm who I am today, because I knew you..."

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The most important thing I have learned from Scouting is courtesy and respect for everyone else and myself. I enjoy Scouting because I learn numerous personal skills such as time management, community participation, and most importantly leadership. When I put these skills into practice, it is an excellent learning experience and it boosts my confidence both in Scouts and in school. I learn not to be afraid of making mistakes when trying new things, because that is part of learning. Success is always within reach and all these years of Scouting make dreams possible.

Jacob Nguyen



*Jacob's present at
LD Bridging Camp*