



This story was printed from TODAYonline

A Scout's honour

A childhood passion prompted 40-year-old CEO to be a leader to the younger ones

Wednesday • February 22, 2006

Joshua Hiew

news@newstoday.com.sg

AT 40, Mr Michael Lim is possibly the oldest active "boy" scout in Singapore — and probably the only CEO who patrols a water canal in a scout's uniform.

For the past month, the bachelor has rekindled his childhood passion for scouting through Singapore's first community-based Sea Scouts Group: The Nanyang Residents' Committee Community Scouts Group.

Along with about 25 others, Mr Lim patrols canals one to two times a week to keep them free of litter and blockages. This is in support of the Public Utilities Board's "Our Waters" programme which aims to nurture a sense of ownership among Singaporeans for local water bodies.

Most of the other sea scouts are also former scouts who have returned to serve the community. Unlike Mr Lim, however, half are under the age of 18, with the youngest being 14 years old.

As the oldest scout in the group, does Mr Lim — who is the chief executive of IT company Obtech Asia Pacific — ever feel like a fish out of water?

Said Mr Lim: "Not at all. I'm actually very excited about what I'm doing. The chance to resume a life-long passion, passing on the lessons and traditions of scouting, is what keeps me going."

A Singapore permanent resident from Malaysia, Mr Lim's love for scouting harks back to his schoolboy days in Taiping when he was 8 years old.

He started out as a Cub and remained true to the Scout way of life through his 15 years in primary and secondary school. After graduating, he returned to his alma mater to work part-time with the scouts.

It was through scouting that Mr Lim learnt valuable life lessons and values.

"Lord Baden Powell founded the scouting movement on brotherhood, a spirit that spans across all countries, religions and races. These traditions and values which pull people together remain relevant today, if not more so than ever. In many ways, scouting has made me what I am today," said Mr Lim.

He maintains a close relationship with those under his tutelage, many of whom he has trained to become King's Scouts — the highest award any Scout can achieve.

"To see all these boys turning out to be good leaders is often rewarding enough for me," he said.

He has picked up a series of merit service awards from schools and was even made an Assistant District Commissioner in Taiping.

Now, Mr Lim plans to take charge of a group in their 20s, leading them not only in water-based activities such as canoeing, sailing and life-saving, but also training them to be future leaders of the scout troop.

This is to "keep the chain going", he said, as he grooms a new generation of Scout leaders.

Copyright MediaCorp Press Ltd. All rights reserved.