



# A Scouting Fellowship in the Chinese Community



BY JASON KWOK

**T**he Chinese Scouters Association was formed in 1998 when a group of experienced and dedicated Scouters coming from Hong Kong realized the need and importance of Scouting activities in the Chinese community of Toronto. It was around this time that many immigrants rushed into Toronto and neighbouring areas from Hong Kong, Taiwan and



mainland China. This group of dedicated Scouters rightly believed that joining Scout activities was one of the most effective ways for new immigrants to merge into mainstream society, and so the first Chinese Scout group was formed. Many more Chinese Scout groups followed, and as of present, there are more than thirty Chinese Scout groups in and around the Greater Toronto Area.

Over the years, we organized Wood Badge training courses, conducted in Chinese, as a supplement offered by the councils and areas, for those Scouters who may not be fluent in the use of the English language. We also organized First Aid courses, in cooperation with St. John Brigade, again conducted in Chinese. On August 4 – 8, 2006, we organized a canoe training course at picturesque Algonquin Provincial Park, Ontario. More than 50 youth and adult Scout members attended this practical and fun-filled training course.

We were proud to host the Dragon Jamborette in the summer of 2004 at Blue Springs Scout Reserve, Ontario. The event attracted more than 400 participants, including youth and adult members from Scout groups in and around the Greater Toronto Area, from other provinces including British Columbia, Manitoba and Quebec, as well as the USA, Hong Kong and as far away as

Germany. This was the first time Scouts and Scouters of Chinese descent of such a dimension gathered in Canada for a jamboree. We had the honour of having Mike Scott (Chief Commissioner, Scouts Canada) to officiate the Opening Ceremony. We also had the privilege of having Shiu-hung Pao (Chief Commissioner, Hong Kong Scout Association) and Hoi Leung (President, American Chinese Scout Association) as our guests of honour. In addition to the over four hundred campers, there were an additional 400 guests – Beavers, Cubs and parents who came from Toronto to attend the Open Day.

The Association also coordinates the Jamboree On The Trail. JOTT takes place on the second Saturday of May every year when Scouts all over the world hike together, separated in space but united in Scouting spirit. This international event has its origin in Canada. The Association also organizes

a Campfire Sing Song Competition. The number of participants and participating Scout groups in this song-filled competition are increasing year after year.

The Association is actively involved in many community services too. We are one of the sponsors of the Community Based Policing Conference Banquet, working with the Police Department in bringing peace and harmony within the community. We participated in the Canada Day Parade, Remembrance Day Parade, Hike-for-hunger, and United Way Walkathon. We have provided service for many community events, including the Dragon Festival, the Chinese Youth Arts and Literacy Competition, Grand Opening of the Canadian Chinese Broadcast Radio Station, fund raising concerts, etc. This provides opportunities for youth and adult Scouting members to serve the community and increase the profile of

Scouting in the community, attracting more people to join Scouting.

To celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> year of Scouting, the Association, in cooperation with the Central Ontario Administrative Office, hosted a Centennial Banquet on November 30, 2007. We had the honour of having Mr. Herman Hui, Chairman of the World Scout Committee, as the keynote speaker. The banquet was well attended by around three hundred participants, including representatives of Scouts Canada, Scouters, Scouts, parents, relatives, friends and renowned persons of the community.

We continue to strive to fulfill our mission of uniting Chinese Scout groups in the Greater Toronto Area, deepening our relations with Scouts Canada, strengthening our connection with local and overseas Scout groups, and providing community services. ✕  
– Jason Kwok, Chairman of the Chinese Scouters Association, Greater Toronto Council, ON.

Photos (top left and top right): Jason Kwok. Photo (centre): Chinese Scouters Association

## Exploring Canadian Scouting

**T**his new column will delve into the many diverse cultures, languages and spiritual groups which make up our Canadian Scouting Family. We invite you to submit articles and images of your groups to help make this column a success. Send your material to the editor, Susan Muehlherr, at: [smuehlherr@scouts.ca](mailto:smuehlherr@scouts.ca).