

DECEMBER 2019

GB LOG

A GIRLS' BRIGADE SINGAPORE PUBLICATION

*Our PBB
Journey*



UNDER THE
S.E.A.

BECOMING WHO I WAS
MADE TO BE...

CHANGE MAKERS
IN A DIGITAL AGE

Our Mission

Developing each Girl and Officer to her fullest potential by Equipping, Empowering and Enabling:

Every Girl a Leader

Every Officer a Servant Leader

Guest Contributors

Joanne Kwok

Cover Photo

Christie Tan

Designed by

Dexel Pte Ltd

Printed by

Mui Kee Press & Media 5 Pte Ltd

Published by

THE GIRLS' BRIGADE SINGAPORE

📍 : 795 Upper Serangoon Road

Singapore 534667

☎ : 6288 6284

UEN: S61SS0001A

MCI (P) 046/10/2019

©2019 The Girls' Brigade Singapore

All rights reserved

No part of this publication may be produced without the prior and written permission of The Girls' Brigade Singapore

Precious Contributions from our Readers

If you would like to share your stories with us, please send them to editors@gb.org.sg

You have everything you need today to live your life well. But the chance for you to grow beyond who you are now, rests in your ability to step outside of your comfort zone.

But you won't do it. Because your feelings are always going to win. "You will be torn between what you should be doing and what you feel like doing."*

A young 17 year old Joni Eareckson found herself paralysed from the shoulders down after a freak accident. She hated herself so much she would drive her powered wheelchair into walls until they cracked. She found alcohol, depression and darkness.

Her doctors worked her hard - so she could learn to feed herself, push her wheelchair a little, and draw holding pencils between her teeth.

An internationally known author and speaker today, Joni will always remember it was family, friends, and knowing "God steers the ship", that helped her take every single step. Change was possible despite everything she thought she had or did not have. She just had to step outside of her comfort zone.

The first and most important step, is the most difficult one. Every great story has its beginning.

What would you like to see improved in your life? In your family, your friendships or the world around you?

Take a step towards positive change. Choose life. Do something right, not just what you feel like. Go, make a difference and make it good.

I wish you the best this new year!



Glen Ong
Executive Director
The Girls' Brigade Singapore

*Mel Robbins, *The 5 Second Rule*

Contents



12



22



32



4

NATIONAL

- 4 Walking a Mile in Their Shoes
- 7 Recognition As a Family
- 8 Change Makers in a Digital Age
- 10 Going Through Thick and Thin
- 12 Our PBB Journey

SPECIALS

- 16 Becoming Who I was Meant to Be
- 20 Quote of the Issue

COMPANY

- 26 Social Media Contest
- 34 A Conversation with Mrs Chin Thumboo
- 21 Under the S.E.A.
- 22 Self-Defence
- 24 A Gentle Touch of Art
- 27 Urban Farm Fun
- 28 Keeping up with the Kuching Girls
- 30 Heritage Amazing Race
- 32 Sista Camps

Walking a

Mile in Their Shoes



Appreciating change and the process of ageing at GB Friendship Day 2019

Together with President Halimah Yacob, 1,500 GB Girls from Primary and Secondary Schools gathered at the Science Centre Singapore to host 1,700 elderly friends from Social Service Agencies around Singapore.



"Taking care of the elderly is not easy, though it is a good thing to do!" Quips 11-year-old Nicole from Pioneer Primary School as she joins more than a thousand other GB Girls, spending hours of hard work and preparation to make this year's GB Friendship Day a meaningful one for their elderly guests.

The 9th annual carnival-styled event featured Kindness as an aspirational theme, selected from nine core values instituted by The Girls' Brigade Singapore. Held in partnership with Science Centre Singapore, the carnival featured over 50 game and

food stalls as well as health screening and eye check stations.



Empathy Before Kindness

Empathy is a critical building block for any young person to develop a lifestyle of action and habits, filled with the qualities of generosity, consideration, and friendliness.

70% of 5,000 young people surveyed in the United Kingdom admitted they started to appreciate their parents and older family members only after they turned 22 years old. Everything they felt as a teenager, made sense when they had their own children to raise. Many have felt the need to apologise for the unkind words spoken in the past.



"As much as I wanted to look after them, my elderly guest was the one who took care of me! I realised how important children are to an elderly person. I'm thankful that GB has given me a chance to learn this.**"**

- Koppada Satya Bhashini, 88th Company, Pioneer Primary School

"I learnt to interact with the Elderly. Especially when they cannot hear well, I can use hand gestures to communicate with them. Kindness means helping others when they are in need.**"**

- Chua Rui En, 28th P Company, Kuo Chuan Presbyterian Primary School



What happens to our body as we grow old?

Science Centre Singapore's 'Dialogue with Time' provided an experience for Girls to understand how ageing affects a person.

Muted Phone Call

"Hello, I'd like two tickets please."

"Huh? Sorry I can't hear you..."



It's easy to hear it all wrong when it's hard to hear. Imagine listening to your music at volume 1. That's how some of our elderly friends hear the world. Remember to be patient!

Trembling Hands

Ageing affects our nerves. Hands start to shake and tremble even when you're holding them still. Try opening a lock with a key when someone is shaking your hand. It's not easy to do it alone.



Decreased Muscle Strength

Muscles weaken with age. Lifting your own feet is like walking with bricks. Moving up and down the stairs? Walk in their shoes, and you'll know how to help them.





"We all have empathy. We may not have the courage to display it."

- Maya Angelou

"What I liked most was when our GB Girls had the opportunity to interact with the Elderlies. They were willing to step out of their comfort zone to chat with the Elderlies. They (the Elderlies) were very pleased. **"**

**- LT Hannah Huang, 76th Company
South View Primary School**

Simple steps to walk in different shoes: What have you done today to challenge yourself to walk in someone else's shoes? Observe the people around you on the way to school. Ask yourself what it's like to be them?



RECOGNITION as a Family



Getting recognised provides a form of validation that one is on the right track towards achieving their goals. As a value-driven organisation, we want to encourage growth and progress by rewarding Girls and Companies for their hard work. This builds confidence and a sense of fulfillment.

When a Company achieves an award, they enjoy the shared experience of earning an award as a team. This year's Award Ceremony was held on 13th April 2019 at Fairfield Methodist School (Secondary). Mrs Tan Chen Kee, the Divisional Director of Student Development Curriculum, of the Ministry of Education (MOE) was invited as our Guest-Of-Honour. Awardees and guests were treated with a music performance featuring the Chinese instrument, Hulusi.

Celebrating 50 Years of Service

Amongst all other recipients was LT Tay Poh Imm, incumbent President of The Girls' Brigade Singapore. This year marks half a century of her service to the Organisation. Mrs Tay started off as a GB Girl and continued fulfilling various roles, from GB Officer to Captainship of the 1st Company and then to President of The Girls' Brigade Singapore.

Mrs Tay has been inspiring Girls young and old, Officer or student to step out of their comfort zones to reach their greater potential. She has never failed to remind Girls to pursue every course with excellence, reiterating that every Girl matters to her. We salute Mrs Tay for her faithful, ongoing commitment towards The Girls' Brigade. Thank you, Mrs Tay!



Change Makers in a DIGITAL AGE

The Girls' Brigade Singapore heeds the call for a Smart Nation with 'Code to Serve' – the first national digital competition organised by a Uniformed Group.

Since its founding in 1927, The Girls' Brigade Singapore has been, at its core, a service-focused organisation. Every new opportunity encourages members to look for ways to improve the community around them. That legacy prevails today in our ever-changing world.

Part of the Dr Low Guat Tin Challenge, 'Code to Serve' showcased the innovative products of more than 900 Girls.

With the support of the Info-communications Media Development Authority (IMDA), Zenitang Holdings and Amazon Web Services, all 120 teams spent over 8 months, attending coding workshops and working on new digital design solutions to improve the quality of life of others.

Girls were challenged with a completely new way of interacting with the world. The rigour of learning a new design language is a test of discipline and teamwork – quite unlike the usual physical activity associated with Uniformed Groups.

To help the visually handicapped get to their medication, Evette's team from the 18th Company, Christchurch Secondary School, went the extra mile to visit the Singapore Association of the Visually

Handicapped. Evette discovered, "they would much prefer to do things independently than receive help from others." This led to the development of an automatic dispenser which made use of audio cues.



“ I feel very accomplished to be able to contribute to society at such a young age. ”

- Evette Poh, 18th Company, Christchurch Secondary School

“ The theme is very apt. Even as we learn about coding and programming, an important part of why we do this is for the service of others or causes which are important to us. ”

- Dr. Chia Shi-Lu, Member of Parliament, Tanjong Pagar GRC, Guest-of-Honour



Challenge Shield winning entry: "The Dispenser"



Making use of Amazon's Alexa and the Echo dot, Girls from the 18th Company, Christ Church Secondary School created this amazing invention which helps the visually impaired to independently obtain the right dose of medicine.

How it works:

1. Activate the Dispenser by saying "Alexa, dispenser."
2. The Dispenser will respond, "What would you like?"
3. The user responds, "Dispense _____ (name of pill)"
4. The Dispense will then dispense the medicine and it might say, "Take _____ (name of pill) twice a day, once in the morning and another at night."

Gold, Education Category: "Molly My Friend"

Autistic kids in school are restless and bored. "Molly" will help occupy and engage them.

Students from 91st Company, Grace Orchard School, who themselves cope with special learning needs, designed and programmed Molly to help younger children have fun and stay focused.

Molly interacts with students, rewards them from her gift drawers, and captures speech which may then alert teachers to urgent needs.



A Big Thank You...

This was an enriching experience and we are thankful to the Girls and Officers for taking up the challenge and giving their very best for this competition. This competition might not have been easy as it was very new to all of us. With Singapore's vision of becoming a Smart Nation, we hope that this will inspire everyone to explore innovative ways using technology to serve the community.

-LT Heng Ci Peng (Chairperson) and Vice-Chairperson, LT Tay Ching Yee, 42nd Company, Xinmin Secondary School



Watch the video



GOING THROUGH

thick and thin...

As a contingent | As a nation ...

In 15 weeks of preparation, Girls from 21 Companies Lived out our nation's 200-year old story of strangers becoming friends and the courageous commitment needed to create something wonderful.

Each year, Girls and Officers sacrifice hundreds of hours of their time away from much needed rest. Making space in their school life and careers, they choose to represent The Girls' Brigade Singapore at each National Day Parade.

On Singapore's Bicentennial birthday, our nation remembers how we've been brought together from the farthest reaches of Asia to create a new home and a new future for generations to come.

Every year, a new generation of Girls come together to experience both the price and the joy of resilience, friendship and achieving something they could not have done on their own.

“ I had the best time I could ever ask for. I will never forget the sense of pride I had as a Singaporean when I marched at the Padang. The GB Girls that I once saw as strangers are now my close friends. ”

- CPL Brenda Lim, 1st Company, Methodist Girls' School

“ I regarded every rehearsal as the actual day and gave my very best. ”

- LCP Thaarini Mohan, 28th S Company, Kuo Chuan Presbyterian Secondary School

“ Saturday trainings were tiring and tense. Despite that, we supported each other through the journey. I learnt different values and was encouraged by many to persevere, building strong friendships along the way. ”

- CPL Tammi Anisha Vas, 54th Company, Kent Ridge Secondary School

“ Through this tedious journey I have learnt resilience and perseverance. I did not give up even after long hours of training. I have also learnt about teamwork and not to be selfish, to leave no Girl behind as we listened to instructions and marched in unison with the contingent. ”

- CPL Lim Li En Brenda, 1st Company, Methodist Girls' School

“ The friendships built and bonds that strengthened over the Saturdays taught me to place others above myself and to be an encouragement to others. We were disciplined as a contingent, determined to do our very best. ”

- CPL Jolene Soh, 1st Company, Methodist Girls' School

“ The NDP experience taught us independence and teamwork. I also understand that getting reprimanded was for our good as the Officers were helping us to improve and do well. This memorable event will forever stay in my heart. ”

- LCP Charmian Hon, 71st Company, Gan Eng Seng School



174

hours of training

4 Full-dress Rehearsal Parades

50

Girls Registered

21

Companies Represented

9

Uniform Groups Represented



Join the amazing

NDP Journey
in 2020

Girls- talk to your Officers about being part of this great parade.



Officers- new volunteers are always needed to help chaperone our Girls for rehearsals. Contact sandi@gb.org.sg and find how you can lend a hand.

Our PBB Journey



22 Girls attended the PBB (Pioneer Brigader Brooch) Camp in 2019 and 8 achieved the award. This is the highest award that a Pioneer GB Girl can achieve. We speak to Christie Tan from the 84th Company, Singapore Chinese Girls' School and Shanice Kwok from the 3rd S Company, Fairfield Methodist School (Secondary) about their experience in GB and their journey towards achieving the PBB award.

1. What motivated you to join GB in Secondary school?

Christie:

When I first entered Secondary School and was looking for a CCA, my parents encouraged me to join The Girls' Brigade. They liked that it was an Organisation with a Christian Heritage. Moreover, my dad was quite active in The Boys' Brigade when he was in school. Over time, I grew to like GB very much!

Shanice:

The programmes are really good in GB. I've grown so much since my Primary School years. When I was much younger, I remember being a really shy kid. When I warmed up however, I would talk too much and be a bit too 'crazy'. Being in GB taught me how to be more self-aware in my interaction with others.

My Seniors were all in GB. They always looked out for me and I really wanted to be together with them. I have 3 younger sisters in my family and being the oldest, it is really refreshing having older sisters in GB to look up to and learn from.

GB is like a family to me. If I were to join a music or sport CCA, I'd have to be focussed in that specific area. In GB however, we get to participate in sports, art, music, and more. GB was the obvious choice!

2. How did you get to know about the Pioneer Brigader Brooch (PBB) and what motivated you to pursue it?

Christie:

I learnt about the PBB from my seniors, who told me that it was a prestigious award that only a few Girls had attained. Knowing this, I asked them more about it and decided to work towards achieving it.

I am usually quite a go-getter and like setting goals for myself. I get a sense of accomplishment when I achieve them and so I naturally try to do my best in my daily life.

Shanice:

When I was in Primary School, I achieved the Junior Brigader Brooch (JBB) with the encouragement of my Seniors who had achieved the PBB.

It's the last award that I could attain as a Pioneer GB Girl, and if I didn't attempt to work towards this award, it would be such a waste!

Even if I did not get the award, I knew I'd still have had the learning experience to take with me. Now I know I worked hard and I have achieved it!

3. How would you describe the PBB experience?

Christie:

It's something you have to put in more effort for: study for a test, go through a selection camp and do well in it. It is very fulfilling and pushes you out of your comfort zone.

Achieving the PBB award gave me a huge sense of achievement. My mum was so happy for me that she cried. Knowing that I've achieved something I have been working hard for since Secondary Two, made me really proud of myself.

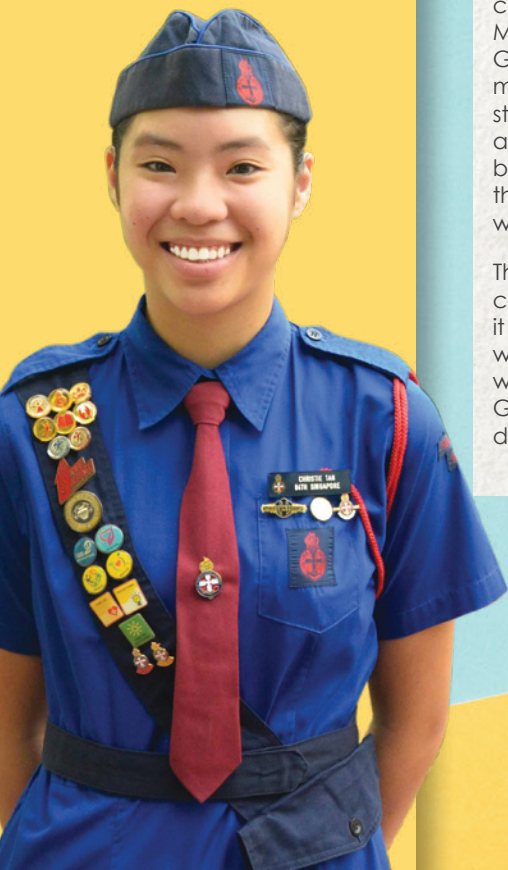
Shanice:

The journey to getting the PBB doesn't just focus on the award, it taught me to reflect on my time in GB, to think about how I can do things differently and be a better servant-leader.

At the selection camp, we were assessed not just on the score of the tests but our character. It is a unique camp and I did not experience anything like this in all my school years.

We were given roles to plan various segments of the camp. At times, we had to think on our feet. I had past experiences planning for Company camps but during the PBB camp, there was less preparation time. We were also asked to explain our rationale for the decisions we made. We learnt to do things with reason and purpose instead of carrying them out blindly.

“We learnt to do things with reason and purpose instead of carrying them out blindly.”



4. What were the challenges you faced during the PBB camp?

Christie:

It was the hike. The Girls at the PBB camp were very enthusiastic. Though the 30 km hike was mentally and physically challenging, the support from friends motivated me to complete it. Looking back, I remember the exhaustion that came with it, but it was all worth it!

Shanice:

In my Company, I lead my Girls. At the PBB Camp, it was different as I was working with leaders. I realised then that my biggest challenge was myself, especially the pride in me.

I was humbled at this camp, realising that I did not always have to prove myself. I became more aware of my tendency to strive to outshine others and learnt instead to appreciate that everyone can be a leader. I remember Ms Sandi (Assistant Manager, GB Singapore) lovingly telling me that I did not have to stress myself out. I did not always have to do things to be noticed. Knowing all of this helps me to work better with people.

There were many other challenges in the camp, but it helped that I was together with a group of Girls who were so passionate about GB and genuinely wanted to do their best.

5. How was it meeting the GB Pioneers at the PBB camp?

Christie:

I remember Dr Low Guat Tin sharing about her time at GB when she was in school. They did not have today's technology and yet they could create interactive games to engage everyone, one of which was using an empty can! There can be fun even in the simple things.

We live in a generation where we are so dependent on our mobile phones. Even though it is supposed to be a communication device, we conveniently use our phones even when we are with our friends and family. I think we should not allow ourselves to be easily distracted with our phones. Among friends, we managed to create interactive games with just a pen and paper and it can be so much fun!

Seeing how Dr Low has been involved with community service all these years and dedicating her entire life helping in GB has really inspired me!

Shanice:

I learnt that what we do can affect and influence people. Our Pioneers have a big heart to serve. They encouraged us to continue serving others even after graduating from school. Knowing that they had invested their entire lives into GB inspired me so much!

6. You are graduating from Secondary School, what are some thoughts about your next season in life?

Christie:

I have mixed feelings about the next season of my life. One of the big changes is being in a co-ed school since I've been an all girls schools my entire life. A new campus, new people, a more intense academic content will all be factors to adjust to. But I believe it's also exciting looking forward to new seasons!

Through GB I've learnt more about resilience. It can be stressful handling many things at a time but I've learnt to handle tasks calmly, set a goal and work towards it with my best effort.

Shanice:

I'm excited because there are a lot of new things to look forward to but I am also a little nervous about the next season. Will I be able to make friends? Will I be able to handle my studies well? In Junior College, I believe there will be more to handle.

What is helpful though is that I've learnt so much from GB in the past 8 years. If I could get through the last couple of years, I will be able to manage the years ahead.

7. What do you have to say to juniors about the PBB and why?

Christie:

You Girls should go for the PBB! It may not be the easiest award to achieve but it's a great experience even if you don't get the award. Making friends from other companies and going through the activities and challenges was such a joy. The experience at this camp is very different from Company camps and you'd have to go to find out!

Shanice:

It's quite cool being the first batch to have both the JBB and PBB! It's a big sense of achievement! I really hope that my juniors can continue achieving both these awards.



“... I've learnt so much from GB in the past 8 years. If I could get through the last couple of years, I will be able to manage the years ahead.”

Becoming who I was



made to be ...

Joanne is the Creative Producer at Thir.st, a faith-based website for young adults. She's spent the past 7 years out of school writing, creating and telling stories at TEDx and other conferences.

Everything will change, yet will stay the same.

It was the first thought that struck me when I was asked to talk about change in a girl's life. I think about myself at 12, then at 15, 17, and so on, until I settle on 30-year-old me – and I find myself smiling fondly because it's so true.

Everything has changed. How I now dare to wear the natural curls on my head after spending a good seven years taming them with a rebond. The impressive collection of coloured tights I have packed away for good in my closet, still slightly certain I will have use for them one day. Wearing jeans almost every day to work when I once was thoroughly convinced I could never wear pants because I looked bad in them.

And somehow, to my slight horror, everything has stayed the same. The body I used to trace out on paper at 12, tearfully asking myself why I looked that way when other people didn't – I still struggle at times to make eye contact with in the mirror. When I consider how my friends are doing in life compared to me, I'm that 15-year-old again, wanting so badly to prove – especially to her parents – that she can be a success without fitting into its traditional mould.

This next one's most bittersweet but I'll admit it for you: I wonder if a boy would ever love me back for who I am, the same question I had when I fell in love for the very first time at 17.

The woman I've become in the last three decades of my life may fit a little better than yesterday, like a shirt you're starting to grow into. But the truth is, she's still not sure if even she can live up to the one thing I hope you'll find resounding in your heart as the days go by:

I want to be myself.

By now, you probably want to be many other people who aren't yourself. That girl you know who's so pretty and smart. The school senior who's so accomplished. Some singer or actress who is just perfection in every way. Maybe a future version of you with all these top qualities worked in. There's something you think is just not quite right about who you are, from the superficial, like your nose, to the fundamental – the lack of outstanding talent in music, arts or sports, or the lack of anything special about you, really.

“Perhaps it is not change we fear or find difficult to cope with – but having no change at all.”

And if you could change that something, or most things, you would. Perhaps it is not change we fear or find difficult to cope with – but having no change at all. That amid the flurry of transitions our education system and bodies push us through, we remain that girl who's just less than everyone else and her ideal picture of herself.

Everything changes, but everything stays the same.

I carried this little inner bag of ideas about who I was supposed to be throughout my teenage years and into my twenties, hoping to reconcile the old pangs of failure with some sort of success as a young adult. I had not been the most stellar student, as consistently proven by my O-Level, A-Level and college results. At the time of graduation, there were no awards, job offers or even a boyfriend to my name.

I did not know then, but it was around this period that the God I'd known since I was a child began to reveal His hand in my life, particularly in 3 powerful encounters that linked back to experiences at 12, 15 and 17, which leads me to 3 things I want to leave with you today:

"It took me so long to get here, but I'm finally more sure than yesterday that I want to be myself."

1. GOD KNOWS EXACTLY WHO YOU ARE

The fracture of my body image and self-worth set in on the brink of adolescence, when repeated comments about the shape of my body soon proved too heavy for a 12-year-old to bear. I would cry myself to sleep under the covers, convinced I had missed my "prime" to be beautiful.

I knew this pain in my heart wasn't right, and I remember telling God in between sobs that if He ever let me speak to others about how they should never have to feel this way about themselves, this suffering would all make sense one day. Yes, I was a very intense little girl.

Ten years later, at the age of 22, I received a picture as I prayed about the destiny God had for me at a college camp. In it, I saw myself standing on stage, speaking to a multitude of people. At that point, I had never done public speaking in my life, but remembering my prayer at age 12, it somehow felt possible.

Around the same time the next year, through a series of unusual events, I was invited to give a talk for TEDx, which would be my first out of two before the age of 26. The speaking engagements have not stopped throughout the years since.

Even when I thought I was nothing, God knew everything He had made me to be.

2. GOD WILL REMEMBER YOUR DREAMS FOR YOU

Half my lifetime ago, at 15, I had observed my schoolmates making it to the covers of well-known teenage magazines and dreamt of being on one myself.

Even in the thick of an intensifying struggle with how I looked, I wanted so

badly to believe I could be unconventionally sized and still considered pretty. So when I saw a call-out for models in one of the issues one day, I secretly submitted my photos to them. I didn't even get a response.

I decided from then on that if I were to ever be featured in a magazine, it would have to be as TIME's 100 Most Influential People of the Year, or Forbes' 30 under 30.

This year, just about a month before my 30th birthday, I received a surprise request from Kallos, a publication for girls. They asked if I would be the feature story for their upcoming issue on godly influence, me being Creative Producer at Thir.st, a faith-based digital website for Singaporean young adults. This would include being on the cover of the magazine.

God always had a plan to bring even my smallest dreams back to life.

3. GOD HAS THE BEST AND MOST BEAUTIFUL IDEAS

I remember rhyming my first poem at the age of 5. Realising this was a good way to keep me occupied, my mother supplied me with an ample supply of notebooks to write in, and when I was a little older, sat me down in front of our family computer and showed me how to transfer my stories from paper to screen.

Wanting to be a writer as a child was amusing for my parents, until I turned 17 and was given a little booklet called the Encyclopedia of Careers at school. I read through it innocently enough, but when I came to the letter "c", I found myself gripped by the description of copywriting.

I had never heard of copywriters before, but their job – crafting words to persuade people to take some form of action – sounded exactly like what I wanted

to do with my deep love for creative work and words. My parents did not have quite the same idea. Greatly discouraged, I buried the thought and carried on preparing for my A-Levels.

In my third year of university, I signed up for a module on Creative Communication as part of my major in Business school. I didn't know then that my Professor had actually been a copywriter himself, back when he was still working in advertising agencies. For the course, he set us on two copywriting assignments, both of which I aced. At the end of the term, I received an email from him, asking me if I had ever considered being a copywriter.

Because of his suggestion, which was really God's intervention, I spent the next four years training as a copywriter, and the following three writing for Thir.st.

It had been His idea all along.

When someone asked how I was so brave to share my life stories with the world, the answer came surprisingly easy to me: When you know who you are, you stop being so scared.

It's not because I know everything that I am – I don't think any of us ever will. I just started by tracing the outlines of God's broad strokes across my life, from the way He was moving, like a blind person feeling someone's face for the first time. And then I came closer, intrigued that He seemed to have a much greater vision for who I was than what I had imagined for myself – and His attention to fine detail, as I have briefly shared with you, and you might agree, has been nothing short of breathtaking.

It took me so long to get here, but I'm finally more sure than yesterday that I want to be myself. God's message to me is His message to you: I know who you are. I will remember all your dreams. I have so many beautiful ideas for your life.

To Me, you are someone. Do you trust Me?

Everything can change. Or everything can stay the same. But the girl who trusts that she is someone worth becoming is the most powerful and beautiful of all.



*The pessimist complains about the wind.
The optimist expects it to change.
The leader adjusts the sail.*

- John C Maxwell


UNDER THE S.E.A.

Getting up close to marine life may seem like a distant idea in Singapore but the 40th Company from Whitley Secondary School enjoyed a unique experience staying overnight at the S.E.A. Aquarium! This was the first overnight stay outside of the school for the Company's new Secondary One Girls.

On this exclusive guided tour (without the usual crowds), the Girls enjoyed learning about different habitats and types of marine life, which originated from all over the world. Imagine waking up right next to a huge aquarium of fishes!

“ I found it interesting to learn about various species of fishes. The tour taught me so much more about marine life and how we should actively take action to prevent the extinction of marine life. Conserving marine life can be as simple as reducing the use of plastics and adopting a habit of recycling. ”

- CPL Mandy Chen



The Girls left the S.E.A. Aquarium with a new conviction to protect marine life, prevent their extinction by using fewer plastic straws and choosing to say “no” to consuming certain delicacies, such as shark’s fin soup. This trip proved to be an amazing induction for the Secondary Ones, as well as a memorable farewell experience for the graduating Secondary Fours.

“ I enjoyed myself at the aquarium. I have learnt about the marine animals, such as the Manta Rays, Stingrays and many more. We slept at the aquarium. It was a truly amazing and fun experience! ”

- PTE Delina Joy

Some Marine Conservation Tips to share with you



Choose Your Food Wisely

Be mindful of consuming overexploited species. About 100 million sharks are killed for their fins every year resulting in the decline of Sharks population by 60-90% in the last 15 years.



Use Fewer Plastic Products

Plastics that end up as litter in the ocean kill tens of thousands of marine creatures. Bring your own reusable water bottle instead of buying new ones, take along an empty tote bag when shopping and use bamboo/metal straws when you drink your next bubble tea. Plastic bottles can take up to 450 years to decompose!



Say No to Beach Litter

When you are at the beach, enjoy its beauty and help keep it clean. East Coast Park in Singapore once had 1000kg of litter and debris collected in just a few days. Let's not add to it!



Share this with a Friend

Don't keep useful facts and tips to yourself! Share helpful tips with your friends so that together we can conserve the environment. Marine conservation starts at home and every drop makes an ocean!

SELF-DEFENCE

Street violence can include senseless unprovoked assaults, violent robbery with weapons, molestation, attempted rape or kidnapping when least expected. This was an eye-opening experience for Girls from the 71st Company. They were excited to learn and practise useful tactics by Coach Qin Yun Quan to de-escalate, evade or control and restrain their assailant until they find help or opportunities to escape.



Through this training, Girls understood better how to identify signs of an imminent attack. Instead of relying on strength-based techniques, many Girls gained confidence to execute defence strategies using principles of bio-mechanics if they face danger.



“ I learnt to be more aware of my surroundings and maintain a safe distance from strangers. ”
- SGT T. Puvitra

“ I have built confidence knowing that I will be more prepared and equipped with defence techniques when going home late in the evenings. I really enjoyed this course. ”
- LCPL Charmian Hon

“ Defending oneself from attacks does not require physical strength but the mental preparation and technique to prevent ourselves from being attacked. The best thing we can do in any situation is to defend ourselves appropriately so that we do not get hurt and suffer in silence. ”
- CPL Wang Yi Xin

“ Not only was it useful, it was also very fun and effective because we could use these skills if anyone sought to attack us. It was an interesting session as we never had anything similar taught in The Girls' Brigade before. ”
- LCPL Tan Zhi Ning

“ Our instructor taught us that self-defence is not about causing harm to others. Instead, it is about protecting ourselves in times of danger. I had fun and learned several useful self-defence techniques which we practiced with our partners. ”
- LCPL Lee Le Yi

“ Both courage and knowledge are important. Without courage, it would be useless even if we knew what to do. The coach told us many real stories of people getting attacked, one of whom was her student who was able to put what she learnt to use. I really enjoyed this course. ”
- LCPL Lim Song Lin

71st Company, Gan Eng Seng School

COACH YUN QUAN SHARES...

3 simple tips for our readers to protect themselves from a sudden attack.

1. FACE THE PERSON

Do not allow a stranger to approach you from behind or the side. Always face the person so you are ready to act or defend yourself.



2. DISTANCE MANAGEMENT

Keep a safe distance of about one arm's (of the person approaching you) length plus 20% to 30% more (the one approaching you) from the person you are talking to.



3. WEAPONS IN FRONT

Your hands are your weapons. Keep a covert posture when you are unsure of the stranger's intent. Try the 'praying hands' or 'thoughtful look' posture. When your hands are in front, you will be able to protect yourself better. If the threat level has gone up (though not yet physical), the 'fence' posture should be adopted and one should find a way to extract themselves from the situation as quickly as possible.



A Gentle Touch of Art

50th Company, Kranji Secondary school

Japanese Pastel Art (JPA) is a form of Japanese art founded in Japan 20 years ago, using pastels with cotton and gentle dabbing of our fingers to create a gentle, transparent, warm art through simple yet unique painting techniques.



“ Japanese pastel art is an interesting type of art. Mixing the different coloured pastel powder together and controlling the pigmentation of the powder requires patience. If there was too much pressure on the cotton pad or too much powder added, it would be difficult to achieve the style of art I intend to achieve. The colours would be uneven and unpleasant. This principle can also be applied when leading my juniors/peers. They would not be able to cope if I rushed them, as everyone works at their own pace. Some people would be able to finish earlier while others, later. ”

- SGT Lay Xin Yi

“ I was intrigued by the fact that using cotton wool and crayons could create such a nice work of art. I was surprised at how easy it was to create this art even though reaching the instructor's standard initially seemed difficult. ”

- SGT Ashley Ang

“ I am not usually very good at art. But after learning how easy it was to create that art piece, I gained a little more confidence and was satisfied with my results. Initially, I thought that we would need great drawing and painting skills. In fact, we only need to dab the grated colour chalks on our papers with a cotton piece. It was an interesting and engaging experience for me as I was able to discover my creative side. ”

- SGT Charmain Tang

“ I really enjoyed the Japanese pastel art as the experience enabled me to relive my kindergarten memories. This session gave me a sense of calmness. Perhaps it was by doing such kinds of art, did the Japanese live longer lives. I really had a fun time doing it. Whenever I am stressed, I can also do this at home. ”

- SGT Vijeta D/O Senthil Nathan

“ I found the pastel art session a very gentle art form that calmed my mind. I was able to focus on the task at hand and express myself by using different colours and tones. ”

- SGT Putri Natasys Wellem

“ I really enjoyed this Japanese pastel art session. Initially, I thought that I would not be able to do well as I dislike drawing. However, I was proven wrong as the instructor said that my art piece was the best. I learnt that you do not need to be a professional artist to do well in art as everyone is different and unique in their abilities. ”

- SGT Suresh Abinaya

Social Media CONTEST

This issue's theme is on 'change' and we want to invite you to share on instagram what it means to you!

Here's what you need to do:

1. Like our instagram profile @GirlsBrigadeSG
2. Snap a photo of what 'change' means to you.
3. In no more than 50 words, tell us why the photo speaks about change.
4. Upload on your Instagram account together with the hashtag #GBLOGchange2020.

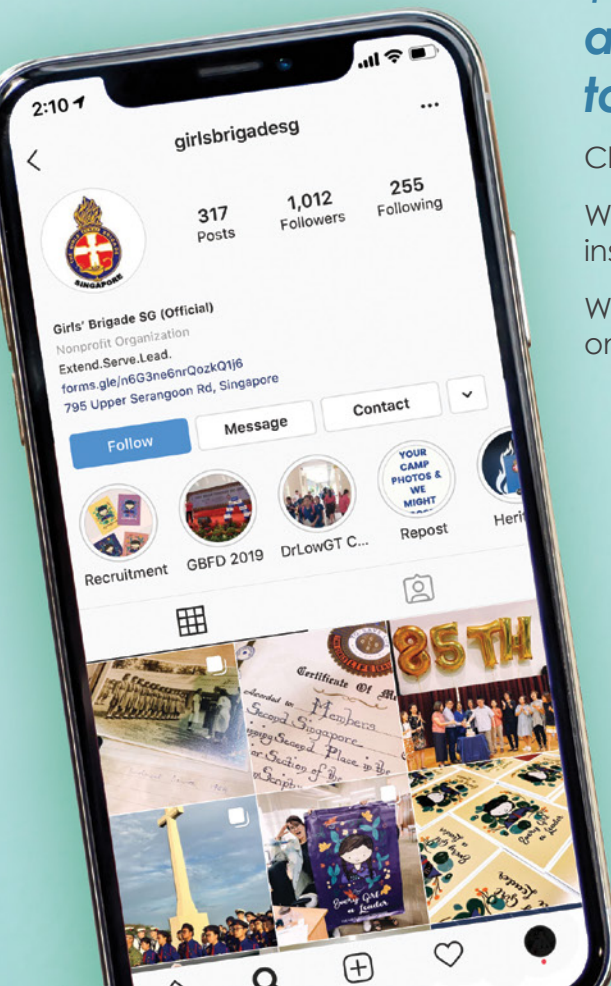
Follow Us
@GirlsBrigadeSG

\$20 vouchers from an awesome cafe will be given to the top 3 winners!

Closing date: 23rd March 2020

Winners will be notified via instagram on 26th March 2020.

Winning entries will be featured on our social media accounts.



Urban FUN
Farm



Ever wondered how a farm can exist in a space constrained urban city like Singapore?

In March 2019, Junior Girls from the 63rd Company, Naval Base Primary School attended a workshop at Urban Farm & Barn in Bukit Panjang.

The workshop included a walking tour of the nearby community farms where Girls learnt the concept of community gardens in Singapore. These gardens are shared spaces set up and maintained by avid gardeners from different backgrounds.

A new experience for many, the Girls were awed by the possibilities vertical farming could offer in a country like ours.

“ The walking tour ended at the vertical farm where the Girls explored how plants can be farmed in vertical racks. Girls discovered differences between farming in the ground and vertical farming. It was exciting and relevant for them as it was the first time for many to see commonly eaten plants in a farming environment. Our Girls got to plant a kang kong that they were able to bring home to care for, harvest and eat. ”

- LT Neo Yu Shan, 63rd Company, Naval Base Primary School

What is Urban Farming?

Urban Farming is the growing or producing of food in a heavily populated city area.

In recent times, the urban farming scene is gaining popularity in land scarce cities. New technology and encouragement from governments to explore innovative farming methods have created a small but noticeable movement amongst Singaporeans.

Make Your Own Bottle Farm!

I am more and more convinced that this gardening method can be a significant contribution to the combat of desertification, hunger and pollution of the environment (less plastic in the household waste)

- Prof. Dr. Willem Van Cotthem

- 1 Get a plastic bottle and perforate the bottom for drainage. Make a hole or many.
- 2 Cut away the conical part of the bottle.
- 3 Push cone to the bottom.
- 4 Fill with potting soil or synthetic soil (you can buy it easily), well compacted up to 5 cm from the bottle top.
- 5 Place seeds or seedlings in the soaked potting soil.

<https://containergardening.wordpress.com/2007/08/14/gardening-ideas/>

Keeping up with the KUCHING GIRLS



46th Company, Bukit View Secondary School

We live in a world where establishing a connection with a person living miles away can be made in seconds through technology. Yet there is so much more to learn and experience, when we interact face-to-face. Girls from The 46th Singapore Company flew over to Malaysia and met with the 1st Kuching Company for a weekend of rich cultural exchange.

Appreciating Traditional Practices

A visit to the Sarawak Cultural Village's living museum, transported us to the tradition and culture of aboriginal ethnic communities such as: the Iban, Bidayuh, Melanau and Ulu. We had the privilege of asking questions and learning about the community, as well as ancient practices and beliefs like headhunting!

Learning Hospitality

Coming from a city like Singapore, we are used to living in the privacy of our individual homes. It was an eye-opening experience at the Annah Rais Longhouse (home to the second largest ethnic group in Sarawak, the Bidayuh tribe) seeing many families all living under one roof! The locals taught us so much about hospitality when they warmly welcomed us to the Longhouse and shared about all their interesting community practises and beliefs.

Later, during the weekly Saturday Parade, The 1st Kuching Company displayed such generous hospitality and had us participating in their company activities. We were included in their annual photo-taking session too!



“There was so much value in these shared experiences.”

Food, Fun and Fellowship Together

Together, we learnt how to: weave headgear with pandanus leaves, use a blowpipe, dance the Bidayuh eagle dance and cook rice with chicken in bamboo. During these activities, there was room for great conversations with the Kuching Girls where they warmly and keenly answered queries and readily helped us with weaving or using the blowpipe.

All these activities were very new to us, but everyone participated eagerly and there was so much value in these shared experiences!

New Friendships Made

We deeply appreciate our new Kuching friends, our local tour guide and bus driver. Touched by their hospitality, we decided to compose cards to express our joy from these new-found connections. We have been enriched by everyone we met in Kuching – including the hotel staff – of their authentic and heartfelt hospitality. This trip left an indelible, lifelong mark on us!

Heritage Amazing Race

28th S Company, Kuo Chuan Presbyterian Secondary School

Did you know about Singapore's rich history, who our founding fathers are or about World War II in Singapore which lasted between 1941-1945?

Girls from the 28th S Company had an amazing day creating games based on these two themes - 'Our Founding Fathers' and 'War Sites'.

Here's what they had to say about their day of research and fun!



“ Through this Amazing Race, I have learnt much more about the founding fathers and their struggles to develop Singapore from a third to a first world nation. Through the process of research, I learnt much more than what would be taught in a typical history lesson. I've come to realise and appreciate all that we have around us in Singapore and the amount of hardship our founding fathers had to go through to come to where we are today. Whenever something went wrong, we would work together to settle the problem. ”

- LCP Lai Jiasuen

“ I learnt about the founding fathers of Singapore like the late Mr Lee Kuan Yew and the late Mr Tan Tock Seng and also learnt how to work as a team. Planning the activity for the whole Company was difficult. As the Amazing Race game master, I had to step out of my comfort zone to carry out my role. Though we had a little mishap during our activity, we managed to work in a group and handled the situation in a calm manner. As a group, we learnt to listen to each other's opinions in order to gain perspective and develop ideas together. ”

- LCP Durga Ravichandran

Group ONE | Founding Fathers of Singapore

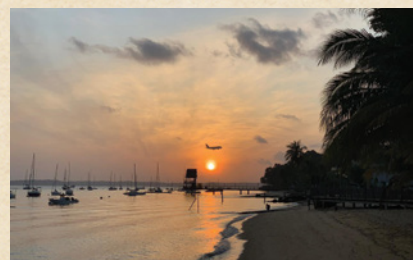
Group TWO | Heritage War Sites

“ My group decided to do a video presentation about the war. We went to different heritage sites that were involved in the Japanese occupation. Places explored include Fort Canning, Kranji War Memorial, Tiong Bahru Air Raid Shelter and Changi Beach. These locations are a vital part of Singapore's history. Through the process of planning this project, I've learnt to create videos and manage my time and most importantly I've learnt new things about Singapore's history during the years of war and our historical sites. ”

- LCP Rajasankar Thanya

“ I was able to learn a lot more about the historical sites during our research. For example, I learnt that during the Japanese occupation, many men were shot down at Changi beach. After school, we went to the different heritage sites to take video footages of the site to share with the rest of our GB mates. ”

- LCP Chloe Ng



START



SISTA Camps

Sister companies 10th & 19th organised a joint camp catered for three groups:

1. RTC - Recruits Training Camp
2. LTC - Leadership Training Camp
3. NCOTC - National Cadet Officers Training Camp

In these 3 days, Girls experienced challenging and fun activities such as tent-pitching, field cooking, leadership workshops and a water bomb telematch amongst many other engaging activities.



10th Company, Bukit Batok Secondary School

“ I realised that teamwork is very important. Through teaching my Juniors drill and spending time with them, I learnt how to be a better role model. This experience at LTC gave me a new perspective to camps. ”

- SGT Amanda Koh

“ As a prospective NCOs, I coordinated games, events and conducted briefings. I began to understand the meaning of responsibility and taking ownership of tasks assigned to me. ”

- LCPL Camelia Sim

“ LTC was a memorable camp! We raced against the clock to cook and clean together in the field-cooking segment. I also learnt the importance of punctuality in my daily life and working together with team-mates. ”

- LCPL Gwendelyne Seo

“ We had fun pitching tents, competing against one another to win ingredients for the field-cooking segment, and had so much fun in the water bomb challenge. RTC also taught me the importance of being punctual, not wasting food and learning from mistakes. ”

- PTE Su Yan Xin



19th Company, Unity Secondary School

“ LTC was a fruitful experience for me. I learnt how to communicate better with others, respond to instructions and experienced first-hand on how communication can affect teamwork and cooperation. ”

- LCPL Shan Yang



“ This NCOTC taught me to be open to working with others. It was rewarding to see the games and activities which we planned come to fruition. ”

- CPL Victoria Wong

“ I enjoyed the time in RTC as an Instructor. I learnt the importance of helping one another especially when others are moving at a slower speed or facing difficulties. Instead of waiting for others to take the lead, I learnt to be more proactive. ”

- SGT Destiny Ong

“ I was in the operations team overseeing the camp's programme. I learnt that teamwork is the most important ingredient for things to be done well. I've become more appreciative of my Officers too! ”

- SGT Yeo Yi Ting



“ AS LONG AS THE
MIND IS WILLING,
AGE IS NEVER
THE BARRIER. ”

At the age of 78, Officer Chin Thumboo will take you on at sabre and archery tag – anytime. If you ask how she still finds the energy to do so, Mrs Chin would tell you, “If I did not join in the game, how would I be an encouragement to my fellow Officers and Girls?”

GB has kept her active for years – both physically, spiritually and mentally. From conducting Home Badgework sessions, supervising camp expeditions at 2am in the morning, to taking part in physically rigorous activities like rifle shooting and cycling, she wanted to be deeply involved with the Girls' journey - even if it did exhaust her at times.

Mrs Chin believes that as long as the mind is willing, age is never the barrier.

