

C. Ann Scott

■ ■ By Karly Kehres

At 12 years old, C. Ann Scott, draped in a badge-adorned, beige sash, with a beanie atop her head and three fingers raised proudly in the air, pledged on her honor “to serve God and my country, to help people at all times and to live by the Girl Scout law.”

The now 62-year-old woman, who after 50 years has yet to find free time and is left speechless only when asked to speak about herself, has done just that.

As the assistant principal at Fort Clarke Middle School, Scott knows children. But as vice president of program development at Girls Place Inc., member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Twenty Pearls foundation board, Girl Scout and former troop leader, Scott knows girls.

“I am for the women first—always. I want to see us succeed,” Scott said. “I’ll help the guys, but women are my heart.”

Having grown up in Detroit, Mich. with two working parents and a brother, Scott joined the Girl Scouts seeking schoolgirl giggles and sister-style bonding. To this day, her 89-year-old father reminisces about the number of Samoas and Peanut Butter Patties he bought and sold at the office. But for Scott, it wasn’t about the cookies as much as the cause.

She’ll admit that sporting her uniform down the Catholic School halls once a week was a thrill she’ll never forget, but more importantly, the weekly after-school meetings ignited a latent love for serving the community that has outlived her Girl Scout membership.

From swapping her Christmas cash for dresses to donate to the annual Ruth Alden Children’s Clothing Drive to earning her first childcare badge for babysitting, Scott attributes the Girl Scouts for introducing her to all of the causes she supports.

“If not you, then who?” she said. “I feel

like if I don’t help these people, who’s going to do it?”

As Scott grew in maturity and stature, she swapped her Brownie beanie for a green, full-out Girl Scout uniform, and eventually a troop leader label for her daughter’s troop at Carpenter Elementary School in Ann Arbor, Mich.

She and her neighbor co-directed the troop for two or three years, starting each by compiling a list of goals they wanted to accomplish that year—a list that’s length reflected their enthusiasm as much as their creativity.

Camping trips always topped the list, a luxury Scott did not experience often as a Girl Scout herself due to lack of resources and financial capability. These limits extended to the extravagance of its crafting as well, but not to its zeal.

“When I was a troop leader, we just had more things,” Scott said. “It was a great experience, and it taught the kids that adults can be goofy and have a good time, too.”

Her close relationship with the children in her life has remained unchanged as she switched roles from sixth-grade math teacher, teacher and teachers consultant for handicapped students, guidance counselor and, finally, assistant principal.

“She’s certainly a role model for a successful woman, absolutely,” said Renae Clements, executive director of Girls Place Inc., and previous winner of the Women Who Make a Difference award. “She has all the qualities that a young girl would admire and try to emulate.” Scott’s background in the education system has played a vital role in helping her fill the gaps between what is being taught in school and what the girls need outside of the classroom. Her connection with the

Girl Scouts has helped her relate to young girls, and to use this personal experience to develop programs and policies at Girls Place, an organization that shares many of its members and supporters with the scouts.

“Girl Scouts actually prepares you for life, for everything,” Scott said. “Even now when I hear the Taps song — ‘day is done, gone the sun’ — I almost get tears in my eyes. I loved going to Girl Scouts, and that meant: day is over, time to go.” ■ ■

Photo by Robyn Nach

