

On a cold, clear December 15, 1978, interviewer Cis Jankowski was met at the door of the home of Madeline Simpson by the lady of the house and the aroma of fresh, baking Christmas cookies. As they sat amidst the fragrance of the kitchen and sipped coffee, Madeline occasionally checking the oven for finished cookies, they discussed "Forty-three Years in Girl Scouting". CJs Okay, you were talking about the "Mariners."

MS: The mariners are the sea-going branch of the Girl Scouts. And they were senior scouts from fourteen to seventeen. You taught them all the things they would need to survive on the water. They had to pass swimming tests before you could take them out in the boat. I took over in January of '38. It had been started but only just signed up. Nobody had done anything the year before. So when I took it over in '38, I inherited part of a troop committee and Ralph Moore, who was the assistant lighthouse keeper was there. His oldest daughter came in with me. Before we got through, I had all three of his daughters. We lighthouse keeper was there. His oldest daughter came in with me. Before we got through, I had all three of his daughters. We had other families where they would follow along one, two, three. Then in '41 we got a little desperate because nobody seemed to offer to take us out on their boat or anything. There weren't that many out there in these dams either. Although the basin was, us, Heideman was in charge of the basin and there was buoys and the fisherman went out regularly which they don't do was, us, Heideman was in charge of the basin and there was buoys and the fisherman went out regularly which they don't do anymore. They used to go out twice a day, with their poles in the air out to the outer breakwater. Well, in '41 we got a little desperate and decided we had to buy a boat. We only had \$40.00 in the treasury. So, we went around looking. Finally we found a nice man who would sell us a little fourteen foot sailboat, a New Englander, it was a sloop for \$85.00. So, with our \$2.00 here and our \$3.00 there and \$5.00 there. The Episcopalian Women had not sponsored a troop, and I was Episcopalian. So I talked them into sponsoring us. In those days though, you couldn't have an extra fund-raising thing for your troop. Because you go against the United Fund which was in the, uh, it had a different name then. You just weren't allowed, otherwise, 'course fund-raising they'd have too many things going on in the name of Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts and everybody else. It would take away from the general fund. So, they had to say it was for some other reason. We got \$40.00 out everybody else. It would take away from the general fund. So, they had to say it was for some other reason. We got \$40.00 out of them. Now, maybe my addition isn't coming out right, but anyway we had, with the money they gave us and the money we borrowed and the money we had--I think I lied there, I think we had \$12.00 in the treasury--we bought the boat. My girls were free enough, it had not become necessary for prestige or anything, for these girls to work in the summertime. Nobody needed that much money, to begin with. Papa seemed to be earning enough to support the family. So, the girls would take care needed that much money, to begin with. Papa seemed to be earning enough to support the family. So, the girls would take care of the painting and pay the mooring fee which was \$12.00 a year out of the treasury, and we had a real good time. I would schedule the sailing so we took em down, when we could, when the weather was half-way decent. I had had a two-week training course, the last that was given for just mariner leaders up at Lake Geneva. And they gave us the basics of sailing and a lot of the other basics we had to follow through otherwise. But at least you had a smattering of knowing something of what you of the other basics we had to follow through otherwise. But at least you had a smattering of knowing something of what you had to do. And of course, our, waters here are about the safest waters that you can have for sailing. Your winds will change but your bottom stays sandy. You're not in the danger you are in a lot of rocky

places. See? So, if you watch your weather, which was another thing we had going, you'd come out pretty good with it. Well, we kept that going for five years. And then, which was another thing we had going, you'd come out pretty good with it. Well, we kept that going for five years. And then, there just seemed like we always had more people than we had boat size to go. Again we didn't have the money. So my two children decided they would buy the boat if the mariners would pay the painting and mooring. Take care of the painting. So they bought an eighteen foot Seagull. Well, that, we could get more people on and that went fine. But right about then, the girls had to go to work, or they were "lazy." This was the prestige business. If you didn't have a job, you know, well, girls had to go to work, or they were "lazy." This was the prestige business. If you didn't have a job, you know, well, "what's the matter with you?" So we had a hard time getting enough of them down in the daytime to go sailing. Well, it wasn't fair to make 'em take care of the boat if they weren't gonna go sailing. Well, we struggled along until 1950. Then we gave up on the boat part of it. About then, we were given a boat for the troop. Salmasseys gave us one. And it was a sailboat but it took a lot of fixing up and the only thing we could do was trailer it over to LaPorte, to Pine Lake at that point. And again, took a lot of fixing up and the only thing we could do was trailer it over to LaPorte, to Pine Lake at that point. And again, we were faced with the problem of girls not being free in the daytime. And Girl Scouts don't sail or swim at night. So there we were. Along about then, my son went in as an assistant leader so he would tow them over, and that went very good. Then gradually it just, as the leadership turned over and the leaders were not that much interested in the water, it gradually deteriorated. Now, we've gotten to a place where the girls are so busy in high school, so many activities, that they can't get enough time. We tried it a couple years ago to revive it and I was giving the lady who would take charge of it, training on the spot. And we had all the meetings here. We arranged it so we had a meeting every other week so the girls wouldn't be pushed. So they would come when they felt like it, which did not give them enough knowledge to carry through. And with girls you don't have the same club that you do over the boys, for some reason or another. They seem to be able to make the girls you don't have the same club that you do over the boys, for some reason or another. They seem to be able to make the Sea Scouts knuckle down. But you can't with the girls. So that kinda went by the by. As far as the rest of the girl scouting goes, it just kept growing on us. We went from Michigan City to four counties. They decided around the country that there were too many little lone troops here and there, and they weren't getting any help. If they wanted a few new pins they had to write to New York to get them. Anything they wanted by way of help had to come from a main office. Too difficult. So had to write to New York to get them. Anything they wanted by way of help had to come from a main office. Too difficult. So the slogan was to get them all "under the green umbrella." So with that we went from Michigan City to four counties: LaPorte, Lake, Starke, St. Joseph. Four counties right in this square, if you look at the map. That was the Northern Indiana Council. From there they went on to being the Singing Sands Council which has ten counties now. We have added six that came in from Michigan. So we take in South Haven, and 'course St. Joe...

CJ: So the Northern Indiana...

MS: ...is no longer there. It's the same thing.

CJ: You mentioned another name. Sony Springs. Now what is that?

MS: Well, that's a camp. We always desperately wanted our own camp, established camp, for four to six week camping.

CJ: What did you do before for camping?

MS: For awhile, we rented from the state, then we went in with the Northern Indiana Camping Association. There was a group of us that, oh, Calumet, and Gary and around, that went together. We would rent the camp down at Potawatomi State Park. We would divide it up. We'd take it two weeks and they'd take it two weeks, and so forth. That would work. Then for eight years, I think, we rented the Boy Scout Camp up in Michigan, Camp Tamarack. But meantime, the Boy Scouts have taken in eight years, I think, we rented the Boy Scout Camp up in Michigan, Camp Tamarack. But meantime, the Boy Scouts have taken in South Bend, too and that's part of their group. So then they got so they couldn't give us the time, because they had too many boys coming and they needed the time to go there. So we were desperately trying. We knew the time was going to come so we'd been working for it, I think it was 1960 that we bought the camp. The Sony property. And had it surveyed and we bought a hundred and fifty acres. And at the time, we were planning and building our hopes on it, national required one acre per girl. Hundred and fifty acres. And at the time, we were planning and building our hopes on it, national required one acre per girl. Then they got, now they want three acres. So before we got through with it, we didn't have enough acreage, to handle a camp that could pay for its own way. It gets a little expensive. Well, now of course we joined with the other camps, we have an established camp in South Haven, maybe St. Joe, had their own camp. So our girls go there for established camp. Then we use our Sony Springs for trip camping, for overnight camping, for special events, you know, a few days at a time. We built a lake our Sony Springs for trip camping, for overnight camping, for special events, you know, a few days at a time. We built a lake out there, and have a caretaker. That's another sad thing in this day and age. The Motts Woods, the city loaned us, a lease for nothing. Twenty acres for the use of the youth of the town. And then we bought four lots right adjoining it and built a building. We were afraid to build a building. Put all that money and energy into something that would be city property, could building. We were afraid to build a building. Put all that money and energy into something that would be city property, could be yanked out from under you. So, at this point, (that is right out there next to, close to the golf course).

CJ: Is that off of... what road is that? Tryon Road right through there? Warnke?

MS: No, we used to go off of Warnke Road. But then they, the bridge went down. There was a bridge over Trail Creek right there. And it's city property but they wouldn't fix it. So we go in from Mott's Lane, or something. It's the last, off Michigan Street, when you're going out of town, it's the last road, that goes in. I guess they tried to sell it now, I don't know.

CJ: They did take it back then?

MS: We didn't sell it, we didn't get rid of it yet, that I know of. I think they're still trying to get rid of it because of the vandalism, it's more than they can handle. Many of the girls that are now leaders have so many happy memories of fun being out there.

CJ: They still use it in the summertime then? For just day camps?

MS: Well, they used it this time, in '78 for day camp. And of course that only takes one week. But it has been such that the leaders were leery of taking the girls out over night. Sad commentary on our times.

CJ: Because of the vandalism and they've had so many other people wandering through there? That's really too bad. How is it that you can keep a place safe from that? This place up in Michigan, then?

MS: They have a caretaker. We had a little trouble up there before they finally got a caretaker. Then you run into money again. Maybe it isn't much, but it's an awful lot as far as our budget is concerned. They're always meticulously figured. I know when I first had an occasion to be going with them to the, what's the present-day United Fund. They couldn't believe we weren't padding it. They always cut something off, you know. Well, we didn't pad it. If we got cut off, well, then we pulled weren't padding it. They always cut something off, you know. Well, we didn't pad it. If we got cut off, well, then we pulled in the belt some place. But that's all you can do about it. But now I think they believe. The Girl Scouts tell it like it is.

CJ: Is that mainly where you get your money from? The United Way? How is it that this camp was funded?

MS: Cookie money, for one thing. We sell the Girl Scout cookies, that goes into a camp fund. I can't remember what the percentages was. We were doing deficits then, even before the government thought about it. Not quite, we weren't going into debt, but we were... The men couldn't understand, you just cannot charge a kid as much money as it takes to run a camp. That's all there is to it. Not if they're going to get good food and get decent leaders. And we didn't pay our staff what they did in private camps, or anything like that. But even so, I think it's the one time that we had to figure enough money to cover four dollars per girl, per week, I think. Extra, over what the kids were paying. And that has to come from someplace. Well, that comes from the cookies, and used to be from the extra calendar money, if there was any, and so forth. But that was it. Or somebody who gives you money for a special reason. But that was a separate fund.

CJ: How was it that camping became such an important part of Girl Scouting? Do you know?

MS: Always was. From way back in the beginning, camping was the main something that they did.

CJ: Because maybe most people didn't have the opportunity to do that?

MS: I suppose so. I never thought of it in that way before, but after all, that is something they don't get at home as a general rule. You'd be surprised at some of the leaders we've had to train and how scared they were to get out in the woods. One training course... I felt a little diffident when I first started training. And one of the gals was a nurse and I thought "Oh, my! She's had so much more experience and everything else. What am I trying to teach her?" And when we left

she said "Oh, my! She's had so much more experience and everything else. What am I trying to teach her?" And when we left she said "Oh Skipper, you were so right. I never would have had the nerve to take the girls out in the woods if I hadn't had the training course." So, then we decided it was well worth it. But again, people are trying to cut down. They haven't got time for this and that and the other thin. So they want less time in the training courses, and less time in lessons, and it doesn't help. You need a basic training.

CJ: What kinds of things would you cover in your training?

MS: Well, in your basic training for leadership, all right, you'd cover your characteristics of girls; what you're gonna come up against when you reach a six and seven, seven and eight, and a ten, your adolescence, how they're going to react to things. You would want the leaders to know, and you're always throwing in bits of program things, different songs, different games we had, along with your basic training we always had at least a four-hour outdoor course. We'd take 'em out in the morning, or whatever, and that would be basic fire, one-pot cooking, that sort of thing. Let 'em go on from there. If they get their confidence on one thing, they'll go on to another. You want them to know the structure of the Girl Scouts. You want them to know ...you get a little tired of hearing people say "well, they..." meaning the Board of Directors, who are people that are working just as hard as they know how, and would like all the input they could get from anybody, you know. "They won't let us do this and that..." Because, course, they have to consider the whole picture and not just one or two. So you want them to have their structure. Where they can go for help and what the different jobs are of the different people. At this point, I think they've got some very good men on the Board that are financially making it work. What they would know about Girl Scouts, I don't know. They're not chosen for what they know about girls. They're chosen for what they can do in that line. Public Relations, or Personnel. It's been a while since I've trained. It's been about fifteen years, since I did any training and it's just kinda gone by the board. Well, we'd have to get it all in some how or another.

CJ: How long does the training usually last then? You said it used to be longer and now people don't have so much time.

MS: It used to last twenty hours, twenty-four with the outdoor course. I think they've cut it down considerably now.

CJ: To about what?

MS: I don't know. I really don't. I know that two years ago, our very first professional retired. She'd been working out of New York, the main office. So she came and spent a week with me. And she and I would write to each other about how they'd cut down on the hours of training. She said it really hadn't helped a bit. But everything changes. And who's to say whether it's better or worse. I think with any kind of job like that, you just have to feel you did the best you could while you were there and now it's somebody else's job. I don't like people going around and saying "This was better back so and so..." How do you know it was!

CJ: What kind of people would volunteer to be the leaders?

MS: Mostly their mothers, in the beginning. The kids would come home and say "Well, we can't have a troop. I can't get in if you don't come." And then they get, some of them get hooked. That's how I got into it. My Brownie. I had the Boy Scouts, the Cub Scouts. And my girl was a year and a half younger and "How come you'll go with Ray and you won't go with me?" They didn't need help in her troop, when I went for the Brownies. And then when I'd been there just a year, this other group kinda went so, they wanted a leader so badly, and the professional was working on me to do it. So I put it up for my kids to decide whether they wanted me to do it or not. If they wanted me to go into it. 'Cause I said it was gonna take more time. And they thought that'd be fun. 'Cause they loved the water too. So that's how I got into it.

CJ: So the purpose of the Mariners was just a form of recreation also, as well as part of the training was that they went into lifesaving skills.

MS: Not necessarily. The last of the ranks that we had required that they be life-saver. But otherwise it didn't. As with all of Girl Scouting it was just character-building, but it was on a different type of basis. That was all. Character-building with the water as your basis. Your basic interest, I should say. 'Cause we do have horse-back riding troops. We have some in the West that are real good. In fact, we have horse-back riding at the Established Camp. If the girls want to pay the extra money and take care of the horses, and that sort of thing. We had, some places they had Wing Scouts. I wonder if they still do or not. Airplanes. They tried to get that started here. And they worked for a while but I don't think there is any of them now. So there were a lot of branches that you could have.

CJ: Did you run into any kind of problems when you had the Mariners, like accidents?

NS: No, no accidents. We had problems. You don't have teenage girls without problems. Well, that's another thing that's so deeply built into you from the beginning is your caution, and, that you think first about the safety of the whole group and so forth. That if you're lucky and you don't have any uncalled for things happen, well, it's alright. We never had any accidents, no. Never had anybody that I remember of.

CJ: What kind of problems did you have? You smiled a little bit when I asked you about that.

MS: Well, we won't worry about that. (chuckles) Not while the recorder is going. It wasn't a big problem or anything. But, some of my very closest friends are girls that I had in Girl Scouts.

CJ: Were they a different kind of problems as maybe the things that you would run into now? You said the girls are different now.

MS: The girls are different now in that people are different now, in their dedication to what they might be doing, as a rule. Or in their choosing of, I don't mean choosing, how they're, well, I guess right down to dedication. If they don't have it, they don't have it. Now we've still got some girls that do, naturally. You're goin' to have some people that do. Well, it's the same with your religion. Some of them are really gung-ho and some of them wouldn't give you anything for it, and some are in the middle. I mean, it goes in all directions. But as far as the Girl Scout program is concerned, I think basically, it's as good a character-building program as you're gonna have

any place. But of course then we run up against, now it's the 4-H, gets into it. Now they do beautiful work. They are also government subsidized to a certain point. They can get a little more done with people 'cause they've got more money to get more leadership. None of our leaders ever get paid. They might get mileage if there was something, well for instance, I didn't take it but as I was training out-of-town, I went down to Knox and did a training course every week for about eight weeks. That sort of thing you would get mileage for it. But not just to run over to go to a meeting because you want to go to a meeting. Not that. And there's no other pay. It costs you if you're gonna do a leadership job. But you spend it for something anyways, might as well do something you're interested in, have fun in. I can't think of anything else.

CJ: What kinds of things do they stress in the program? You say character-building. Was that the main thing that was stressed?

MS: No, you don't stress it. You wiggle it in on the other things you do. You get it in on how you're considerate of the other fellow when it comes to, well, your fire-building. You don't build a fire in this and that and the other because it could damage the tree. You don't leave it unattended because someone might get burned. You don't say "Now, this is for your character." You sneak it at them.

CJ: What kinds of activities were the favorite activities when you first started and are they much the same now? Like the camping.. .

MS: I think so, yes. Now, they're having activities like for all the Brownie troops would go on a fun day. And the leaders all get together and do the planning and all that sort of thing. And the Juniors will have a special skills day or something like that. And they'll be planned out ahead of time to a certain extent so they're kept busy and involved. You gotta keep kids busy. Because once they don't have something to do, why, that's the end of everything right there. And that's why you'll have kids that say "Well, I just didn't enjoy Girl Scouts. I didn't have any fun." It's because that particular leader didn't know how to keep 'em going. You don't just bring them into the house and turn it over to them. A leader makes it or breaks it, yeah. And in the emphasis, I always used to stress to my gals that were taking leadership training. I said "Now, this is the most important thing you can do." It used to drive them crazy, but it's better than church work, and the organization work. And you concentrate why you're going to be doing this stuff on what you're doing with the kids. 'Cause that's much more important, even for the future, than what you can do for any other organization you belong to. And I firmly believe that. I also believe you can be very capable of leaving the dishes in the sink.

CJ: What do you mean by that?

MS: Well, I mean by that, if you're going to a Girl Scout meeting you're not late because you had to stop and wash the dishes. You've got women like that. They couldn't possibly leave the house with dirty dishes there. I don't know that that's so prevalent any more but it was when I first started.

CJ: Are the leaders of the summer camps, the day camps, and the two-week overnight camps, the same leaders as the troop leaders?

MS: Yeah, when you get into an established camp then you can have girls for four, six, and eight weeks at a time. Then the staff will mostly be college girls who can spend the whole summer. When you come to these short-term things you're not going to catch those people as a rule, unless they don't have a summer job. So then it's your mothers. And this is why, then, I think one of the reasons we have such very successful camps, camping sessions when we could only have two week sessions, we couldn't hire the college girls and the young people. Listening to some of the leaders now that had sent their kids to camp, and the discontent they had. You could feel that this dedication is not there with some of the younger leaders that are there. They just couldn't be bothered, with a lot of the things. Whereas your leaders that are your mothers, that's already bred in 'em. They're already interested enough, to keep the kids going, and keep 'em interested, and have a fire in their unit at night and that sort of thing. Now, for all the Brownie things, those are all mothers. You might find one in a hundred that isn't a mother. Not very many. We had several in town. I don't know how many years we had a few. She was married, and had been a Girl Scout, and all her best friends were professionals out of New York and all that. But they're very few and far between. We had one school teacher down in Central School when I first started. The kids loved her and so she finally had to make two troops of it. In the two troops, she had over sixty girls. And she never had any trouble with them. But she was just that type of person. She kept them so interested and so busy that they all just adored her.

CJ: There are different divisions now, right? The Brownies are the first group up to about what age?

MS: Up to nine. And now they're taking them in at six. And then the Juniors, and then the Cadettes are twelve to fourteen.

CJ: And then what happens after that? Are they forced to quit?

MS: well, they go away to school, or get a job and they don't have time. Some of them stay on. We have a few that had grown up as Girl Scouts and if they stay in town, they take a troop and stay busy. Some of those gals are still around. Some have kids and some don't. But they aren't a Girl Scout anymore. They go away. Now some of them have gone into scouting, into professional scouting. We've got one that's in I think the Detroit area and another one in Philadelphia. That I know of and I'm sure there's others. But they get interested enough to go on to that. My daughter took all her college courses with that in mind. Got married instead.

CJ: What would that be then, more of an administrative level?

MS: No, you get special training after you get out of college, before you're a professional. You cannot be an executive director until you are twenty-five. But before that, you can be something special. You can be a special in training, in your college there would be a general course plus a social studies, humanities and that sort of thing. Or this one gal got into camping, was her pursuit, cause she just loved that. And she's a camp director. She isn't an executive director, she's old enough but she didn't want to be. She's got a better job, taking over all the camps I think it is, out in the Philadelphia area. Quite a few anyway. Maybe they go on to training, maybe they go on to camping, maybe they go on to personnel or program and planning what they're going to do or working with the volunteers that are working in that area. I don't know how big our staff is

now. We have as staff, we don't have an executive director, we're supposed to. Executive Director, Special Services Department. Now that takes in your inner-city and so forth if you've got that kind of a group. A Field Projects Director, Community Relations Department, Program Services, and then we have the different areas in this council. We've got ten counties so we have some who are field support. They deal directly. Now we've got one that would deal directly with Michigan City. Who else is with us? I don't remember who else is in there with us. I think we're separate. 'Cause we're big enough. With enough people, ourselves. Then we take in Plymouth and around that area. But then these gals get to know the volunteers, very closely. And then you have to have an office manager. So that meant there is five field supports, and five of the other general staff. Ten. Then we have an office manager. And a secretary, a receptionist, Cookie Sales, Candy Coordinator, Membership Coordinator, and Project Sale Coordinator, and then two caretakers. That's a lot of staff to pay. Michigan City. Who else is with us? I don't remember who else is in there with us. I think we're separate. 'Cause we're big enough. With enough people, ourselves. Then we take in Plymouth and around that area. But then these gals get to know the volunteers, very closely.

CJ: Now, most of those jobs are not connected with working with children.

MS: Those are all paid. No, not directly (connected with children). They might at some time go into some of them, you know, I mean, say, the Camping Director might go some time or another to a camp. But not working with them. They work with the people that work with the kids.

CJ: How does that compare to when you first started? Who was doing all those jobs? How many people?

MS: We had one executive director. And sometimes we had an office secretary. Three. Well, then of course, we only had Michigan City too. We had well over a thousand Girl Scouts, what we had then. They always figured if you could get 25% of the eligible girls in the town, that age bracket, you're doing pretty good. And we always did that. We had a very dedicated Board that worked on everything. And then as we got bigger, we had an executive director and two field directors when we went into four counties. Those two gals kept running around the county. And at that point, we had two in the office. Everything I think gets a little too big but if you're gonna service everything, I don't know how you're gonna do it otherwise. I don't have to worry about it.

CJ: What do you think is lost in the process of it getting too large? Like what would be the advantage of it being just one county?

MS: Well, there probably wouldn't be any because the whole country is geared this way. Your dues money now, that the girls pay, or the leaders, goes directly to national. And comes back to us by, none of that stays in Michigan City. None of that is for any of your work here except that the materials that come back and the studies that are made and all that sort of thing, the conventions that are planned for. There's more money that goes out than comes in too, as far as that goes. They have grants from different people. Then you see your different United Funds, or community funds I guess we used to call them, of all the little towns all go together for the fund for this one, this council of Singing Sands. Our United Funds last year gave us \$159,343.00. Our product sales, the net was \$148,686.00. Pretty good. Program fees, this is something you pay to

go to it, like your camping \$29,609.00. Council campaigns, now there may be that some of your littler towns, little, little towns don't have any community funds. So then they do their own collecting, by campaigning. And then we have investments and resale merchandise provide a total income of \$352,000.00. So it gets to be pretty big business.

CJ: About how much do Girl Scouts pay in dues now as compared to let's say...

MS: Three dollars a year. Then they pay in their troop, I don't know what they go, generally it used to be ten cents a meeting. CJs Now they just pay by the year? Or that's in addition to it?

MS: Yes, whatever they decide.

CJ: It's usually weekly meetings then?

MS: Most of them have them weekly, I think. CJs How 'bout uniforms? Did they start out wearing uniforms? What did they look like?

MS: They were brown. The old first uniforms were brown, khaki, with wide hats like the rangers wear. And kinda a midi-blouse affair if I remember right. You only see them when they bring them out for a special occasion. They've always worn green since I've known them. Now, by golly, you couldn't tell a Girl Scout 'cause there are all different types. They've got slack uniforms, they've got dress uniforms, they've got a suit uniform, a combination of what they got. They got a blouse, a design, a Girl Scout design, in gold and green on white. And they wear that with a jumper. Oh I tell you it's...lotsa choice.

CJ: How 'bout, do the leaders wear the same kinds of uniforms?

MS: Oh yes, I'm talking about the leaders' uniforms now. The girls' are green. And I think they've got almost almost as many leeway now. They used to have more leeways than the leaders did. But they did away with the Mariners uniforms some time ago because there weren't enough of 'em across the country to warrant the cost of putting out that kind of uniform. But, oh they were so pretty. It was a real marine blue that's becoming to almost everybody.

CJ: That's quite a difference from the standard green, is it that same color of green, that Girl Scout green.

MS: Yeah, Girl Scout green. I know one convention I went to, there were so many of us in the hotel. In the elevator one time, I heard a man say "Well, when you can get five thousand women wearing the same hat and they all look different, I guess it's alright." But now they don't wear the same hat so you couldn't tell.

CJ: How 'bout badges? Do they still have badges? Did they start out with that?

MS: I'm sure they did. They always had badges when I, when my daughter was in anyway. Back in the, I took the Mariners in '38 and she was in, she came into the Mariners about '44, 43 or '44. Even before that they had badges. They used to have, you've heard of the Boy Scouts Eagle

Badge? Well, they used to have a Girl Scout Golden Eagle, or Golden Eaglette. And they discontinued that, I would, think it was 1930, maybe 1940 by that time. And I don't know but at any rate, they discontinued that a long time ago. And in 1972 I went to the Girl Scout Convention in Dallas and there were fifty women there from all over the country, one of 'em had her arm in a cast, and another one was in a wheelchair, that had been Golden Eaglettes as girls, and they all got together, 'cause they're very rare, 'course few had achieved it by that time. They were getting to be older women too, you know.

MS: That was the tops. You really had to do everything super-duper. I really never did see the requirements of it because there was an awful lot to it.

CJ: Why did they discontinue it, d'ya think?

MS: I don't think enough of 'em got that far. I don't know. It might've been a matter of people, a person worked too hard, and some of 'em saying they did it when they didn't. I don't know.

CJ: And have they replaced that with anything comparable?

MS: No, we have now a First Class Scout. When they have reached that they have really done quite a bit. They've covered a lot of ground. And the Cadets, is the Challenges, there's four Challenges of the Cadet. When they go through all of those, then do extras, then they get the First Class. They have to learn these things. One of the Challenges is Social, Social Graces or something like that. And one is the Challenge of Preparedness, emergency preparedness. Anyway, they learn something for each one, they learn something first, basically, then the leader makes up a Challenge for them. And it could be that challenge would be that they are giving a dinner and inviting people and everything has to be just so, and they're judged accordingly. It might be an emergency set-up some time when they're not expecting it. When they've gone out on a camping trip and somebody, or some leader simulates a broken leg or something of that sort. Then they're graded on how well they pass those. Then when they get all four of those challenges then they are a First Class Scout. Then they get a letter from the President.

CJ: There was something called the Marion Award.

MS: That's for the Catholic girls. Now just what that involves, I don't know. But that's strictly the Catholic Girl Scouts.

CJ: Are there different divisions like that? Or just with the Catholic girls?

MS: We're not divided Catholic and Protestant troops, no. It's just that it's a Catholic unit, oh I always had, at one time I had Jews, Protestants and Catholics in my troop. So you can have every thing. Hopefully you will. We'd rather have it that way. However, you get a troop that's meeting and you are leader from and they're all centered like Queen of All Saints, you're going to have a Catholic troop more than likely. You might have a little stray Protestant in there someplace, but not, they don't keep 'em out, not if we catch them, that is. But, no, they don't really, I don't mean that.

CJ: That was maybe just some part of the award was more like church connected?

MS: No, the Church put that out. It's sponsored by the Catholic Church. The Marion Award. And probably then it was okayed probably because it's nationally known. And that's been going on a good many years. I don't know how many.

CJ: What are the different badges that they had when you started out? I imagine that they've expanded them a lot just as the girls change and their interests change.

MS: Oh yes. I think they're getting a little too far afield now. They're getting to where they sometimes can pick out what they want to learn for a badge. I don't know if that's always gonna work so good, you know? (Pause, while looking for a pamphlet.) I don't know how many there was. We were seventeen from region seven here. I was very fortunate to be one of them because the rest of them were all professionals except one. And she was a national board member. But we're from the four states that hit Lake Michigan. Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan. And then when we came home from this training course at Camp Macy, we were out there for almost two weeks, then we had to train the trainers. And then go on with the trainers and train the leaders. So I trained the trainers at Purdue and I trained leaders up in, they tried to make it so we all had a lot to do, you know, but they portioned us around. Up at Grand Rapids, there were about six or eight of us on that deal and then divide up other things, so it was quite a comprehensive change. The whole Girl Scout concept. And that's when the Cadets came into being. There weren't any Cadets up to that time. It was just badge work. The intermediates which are not Juniors.

CJ: I see, so there are three divisions?

MS: Four. Brownie, Junior, Cadets, and Senior. The Junior comes right after the Brownie.

CJ: It looks like, in looking through the Brownie book here that this is just simple tasks and more of a fun kind of thing. Stories in here...

MS: I think that's why they brought it down to six years old now. And by nine, they're in working on their badges.

CJ: About how long did it take someone to work on a particular badge? I suppose that would differ.

MS: That would differ with the girl and the badge too.

CJ: There was no time limit on them? They could take as long as they like?

MS: Yeah, the only thing we tried to discourage was any girl getting too many badges in one year. 'Cause then we figured she wasn't doing too well on any of 'em.

CJ: About how many would that be then?

MS: Well, that depends. Again, you get back to what kind of badges. I mean some of 'em are going to take longer.

CJ: Like which ones?

MS: Oh probably your, the sewing badge. It might take longer, finishing up things. Probably the camping badge because it would take in some, several different times that you had to go out. You couldn't go out every day in a row or anything like that.

CJ: You were saying that now they can pretty much pick what they want to work on?

MS: Yeah, they got some that they can almost make it out and name it. Then they follow that one up. I haven't seen that done. They have added a lot a new ones. I really am not too well versed on that. But there's an awful lot of badges. To be sure that they hit everything, I think.

CJ: Does the troop, at all, or the leaders help with some of these things, with as far as materials? Or are the girls pretty much expected to find those things themselves? Like, say art.

MS: If it's the Cadets, they furnish their own. The leaders don't furnish anything. If the Cadets want to do it, they bring it and do it. 'Course, if it's the Brownies, the leaders will have it there to hand it to them 'cause if you tell a Brownie, she'd never remember to bring it in when you tell her to.

CJ: In some way, with these new badges you're talking about, where they can pick something and they even set up their own activities on it? (MS: uh-huh.) That takes a little bit of creativity, as long as the leader has to okay it.

MS: Yes, it does.

CJ: Where does the troop get their materials from? Are these at the expense of the leaders, or does that partially come out of the troop money?

MS: Generally, they would determine that in their meeting, in their Girl Scout meetings. How they're gonna handle it. And if you're going on a camp-out, are you going to pay all of it, are you going to pay part of it, or everybody pay their own. Awright, so Susie didn't work on this last project, she didn't earn any money, does she get to go anyway? I mean, you've got all kinds of problems coming up with girls. Or people.

CJ: Do you work together on some badges?

MS: Oh yes. Well, of course, personally, I think it's much better if they all work together but with most of the badges that they have, there are some things that they have to do together and some that they can't do together. They almost have to do alone. And a lot of those you get mother's signature, something you've done at home.

CJ: I read about something called the Girl Scout rodeo. What is that now? Anybody from anyplace can go?

MS: No, now that would depend on, that would be a local set-up again. How that particular group set it up. But they find out it's not worth setting up a rodeo. It'd be just the same as setting up a Moto-cross or something like that.

CJ: Oh, I thought it was like a national thing.

MS: No, we don't have anything national like that anymore. The last national thing that we had was the last Girl Scout round-up. I think that was '65. Yeah. And that was out in Idaho. They decided then that they were spending too much money on too few girls. Because, now with the girls we had numbered we were allowed to have one patrol, that was eight girls, and then we would have two alternates. And had to get the money together ahead of time for them. And girls from all over the country and some international, out to Idaho. And it met at this huge camp, there were better than ten thousand girls camping. I don't believe, we couldn't do it now because the army took care of security. They guarded the perimeters or we never could have financed anything like this. Now, right outside of Michigan City, the La Lumiere had a farm, what did they call it... Girls were invited. Different councils will set up these things. We're gonna have a theatre group there, we're gonna have a farm group there, we're gonna do this and that. And send the invitation out. And then figure out how much it's gonna cost. And then they'll send their applications in to you if you get it, first come, first serve. Then they're taken care of. You can only set it up by how many girls you can handle. So those are the kind of international, or national things that we're having now.

CJ: The round-up then was just basically a large camp-out.

MS: And it was just too much of a good thing. It was gorgeous. Just beautiful. It just took too much money from the national funds. They always figure it out per girl, you know, and they decided they were spending too much money on a few girls when they should be spreading it around and helping the whole works.

CJ: So they don't do anything like that any more?

MS: No, they don't have that anymore.

CJ: That's too bad because probably for some girls the traveling is also a good part of it.

MS: Oh yes. Well, they can still... We had two girls from here go to Sweden at one time. To a camp over there. We've had more go since then but these happened to be good friends of mine. I mean there are opportunities. If they've got their eyes open and they want to, they'll get someplace. Nowadays, kids get all over anyways.

CJ: What made you finally leave Girl Scouting?

MS: I didn't. I'm still registered and I still go to the main meetings and all that, but when you can't walk you can't do too much of a good thing.

CJ: Well, thank you.