

# Lecturer, 62, wins Scouts' highest honour

He is only fourth Singaporean to receive Bronze Wolf since 1935

**Zhaki Abdullah**

Singapore Scout Association executive director Mohd Effendy Rajab's office is littered with turtle memorabilia of all kinds, from paperweights to T-shirts to even a guitar made from a turtle shell.

They are in reference to his nickname *Penyu*, or turtle in Malay.

Last Friday, he added another animal to his collection – a Bronze Wolf, scouting's highest honour.

Dr Effendy, 62, was one of 16 recipients of the award, given out at the World Scout Conference held in Azerbaijan. He is only the fourth Singaporean to have won the award, which recognises "outstanding international services" to the World Scout Movement.

"It is a great honour not only for me but also for the Singapore Scout Association, because it is very rare," he said, adding that only 357 people have received the Bronze Wolf since the award's inception 82 years ago, in 1935.

In his 51 years as a Scout, Dr Effendy has served the movement in various capacities.

He has been the executive director of the Singapore Scout Association for years, and is also the secre-



tary-general of the Asean Scout Association.

He has also worked at the World Scout Bureau in Geneva, Switzerland, as its director of adult resources.

He first joined the Scout movement in 1966 as a Kaki Bukit Primary School pupil. "As a young boy, it was the uniform and the badges that attracted me," he said.

"But eventually, as I grew up, I learnt that scouting is a value-based education," he added, pointing to the Scout's motto "be prepared" as relevant to different aspects of life.

In 1971, as part of a 12-person contingent to the 13th World Scout Jamboree, he met astronaut Neil Armstrong, who was himself a Scout.

Dr Effendy is married to Madam Radiah Koming, 63, a nurse. They have a son aged 32.



Singapore Scout Association executive director Mohd Effendy Rajab, a Scout of 51 years, has served the movement in various capacities. His Bronze Wolf award recognises "outstanding international services" to the World Scout Movement.

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Dr Effendy's long career with the Scouts, which requires him to regularly volunteer outside of his responsibilities during office hours, would not have been possible without support from his family, he said.

"I am very blessed to have had my wife's blessing for my work with the Scouts."

He said the movement remains strong here, growing from 9,000 in 2010 to 12,000 currently.

Scouting itself is changing to stay relevant, he said, noting the adoption of technology such as the Global Position System and drones.

But even as skills, such as coding, are embraced, scouting remains very much focused on outdoor activities, he insists.

Dr Effendy previously worked as a lifeguard and fireman.

He is now an associate lecturer with both the Singapore University of Social Sciences and SIM Global, teaching in the field of human resources, and is a proponent of life-long learning.

He began his educational journey late in life, earning his diploma in management from the Singapore Institute of Management at the age of 36. He earned his PhD in human resource development at 44.

He uses his own experience to inspire his students, many of whom are adult learners. "If I can do it, why not others?" he asks.

Though Dr Effendy is retiring this year, he still hopes to contribute to scouting as a volunteer in future.

"It takes a special species of person to be a Scout," he said.