

for Troop 1. It was only 12 miles from Fort Worth but remote enough for boys to live their own weekend adventures. The scouts could hike to the nearest ranch house for water, fish in the slow moving creek waters, or play "Capture the Flag" in the thick underbrush.

As the Scouts were careful not to damage the property, a close relationship grew between the scouts of Troop 1 and John Murrin. This relationship led to the creation of a permanent camp dedicated to the Catholic Troops of the Fort Worth area. John Murrin was contemplating retirement when he began breaking up his ranch between the Army Corp of Engineers (for the Lake Benbrook Flood Control Project), other acreage was given to his nephew and nieces while one parcel of land (approx 6.5 acres) was given to six Scoutmasters, as a campsite for scouts. The Scoutmasters, Troops and Sponsors are listed in the deed as follows:

Anderson, Harry H. T173. St. Paul's Church
Dauterive, Donald J. T422. St. Peter's Church
Gillespie, J.E. T32. KC #759
Hannon, Gerald E. T31. St. Mary of the Assumption Church
Sievers, Jerry T97. St. Andrews Church
Tout, Elbert H. T101. St. Alice's Church

On June 26th, 1960 Carl King met John Murrin at the entrance to the camp and proceeded on a brisk walk around the perimeter. Once the boundaries were identified, a map was drawn and the deed completed, the land was renamed Camp John Murrin. Although civilization has moved closer to the boundaries of the camp, it is still off the beaten path.

Retreat

Longevity of a program is often based upon the untiring vision of key individuals. The Fort Worth Deanery was already fortunate to have a legend in his own time serving as chairman during its early foundation in 1958. Ole Man was in a position of CCS leadership as a "can do" scouter who had led Troop 32 into each new innovation that the BSA would provide — Senior Scouts, Sea Scouts, Cub Scouts, Ad Altare Dei

Award Program, Air Squadron 32 and the Order of the Arrow. He was finding his way within the CCS when a young scout named Jim Sawey remembers discussions of an annual retreat at the 1960 National Jamboree.

A man of legend and innovation met a man of vision and determination when Robert E. Connelly approached Ole Man. Although a recent transplant from Buffalo, New York, Bob was already a scouter who had experienced scout retreats in his old council. When these scouters finally met, the creation of an annual Catholic Scout Retreat was born. As the first annual retreat came to fruition, the reins of CCS leadership passed to Bob Connelly shortly before his vision became reality.



Rev. Harold Helman looks on as Robert Giebs (center) and Tom Gamble set camp in preparation for the first Catholic Scout Retreat in 1961.

An early organizational meeting for the first scout retreat included Lee Reese, Robert Connelly, Pete Morales, Ole Man, Lupe Felipe, and George Perdue. The location for the event was an easy choice as KC Council #759 was meeting at a local country club which had plenty of open space. As a sponsor of the event, it also allowed use of the KC facilities. Since Troop 32 served as host, Ole Man became Camp Director and KC Pete Morales served on the Food Committee. Bob Connelly assisted Retreat master Rev. John Fowler for the inaugural event on March 3-4, 1961.

The patch designed by the CCS would set the foundation for a design that would be used for the next fourteen annual retreats. The central image of the patch was that of a cross surrounded by letters—“Catholic Scout Retreat ... Longhorn Council.” Since the date was left off the first four retreat patches, it sometimes causes a debate amongst recent historians on which was the first issue.

The success and enthusiasm for the first retreat fueled the anticipation for the next.

Since the retreat had drawn a large number of participants and the award program was inspiring a great number of candidates, the need for additional leadership for the retreat was integral. George Perdue became Chairman of the CCS while Bob Connelly accepted the role as retreat master or general chairman of the second retreat. This leadership framework laid the foundation for the substantial increase in scout participation for the next decade.

Our Lady of Victory High School (later renamed Nolan H.S.) would be secured as the site for the Second Retreat through efforts by Lee Reese. As Food Committee Chairman, Lee worked closely with Father Newman and Brother John Kurz S.M. on location arrangements as well as Mrs. Haubert in the high school cafeteria. Although this would be the last place that the retreat would be held at a non-scout location, it helped the retreat organization grow to a point where the committee could support an annual event at Worth Ranch for the next three years.

Ken Majka was a young scout from Arlington who attended the Second Retreat at Our Lady of Victory High School. He remembers how the scouts were separated by age and that older scouts would join groups discussing sexuality. Despite the serious nature of the talk, he wasn't old enough to grasp the total meaning of what was being said. However, because of heavy rain at the end of the day, everyone had bedded down on the floor of the school gym when "Lights Out" was announced. A few coughs interrupted the silence of the dark gym when suddenly a pebble was heard bouncing against the hardwood floor. Moments later a second pebble skittered across the floor as the silence was broken again. When the third pebble flew, it drew the ire of one unnamed adult as the lights went on. A threat "to get everyone up and run laps" was made in anger by one of the leadership as the lights were cut out once more. Since boys will be boys, it was not long before a lone teenager challenged the leadership by tossing another pebble.

Every single boy was roused out of his sleeping bag and made to run laps around the

parking lot. Boys in pajamas, sweat suits and all manner of garb could be seen shivering as they ran around midnight. After a sufficient number of laps were completed, everyone ventured into the gym. There were two lessons learned that night. 1) Never assemble the whole group in one place to sleep, and 2) never run laps at night. The rising chorus of coughing from every corner of the gym served notice that no one would get much rest that night.

Diocesan Chaplain

When Bishop Gorman adopted the Scouting program by his general efforts, his annual attendance at awards ceremonies, and increased coverage in the Texas Catholic—he appointed several Diocesan Chaplains who would be instrumental in its future—Rev.



Circa 1961. New awardees from T315 (clockwise from top left) Leonard Belota Jr., Frank Menchaca, Fred Laux, Larry Laux.

Raymond Scott and Rev. William Moran. Their constant correspondence with leaders in the Fort Worth Deanery, the diligent records of boy candidates and the foresight to involve every single unit sponsored by a Catholic institution, was integral as a foundation for a committee that would one day act on its own authority (when the Fort Worth Diocese became a reality). They maintained a list of boy candidates through their contacts on the Fort Worth Deanery Committee. After the list was created they would occasionally follow-up with letters to the committee or to individual units to monitor the progress of these boys towards their awards.

This increased vigilance on the part of the Chaplain was unprecedented and helped raise the level of expectations amongst scouters in the Diocese as well as Longhorn Council. The Fort Worth Deanery began to see itself as an organization able to succeed administering a two-step religious award program. Adult participation within

the Catholic Troops also provided a deepening framework of leadership which lent itself to well orchestrated events. This structure began to emulate a natural progression of men from one position to another (e.g. Asst. Retreat Chairman to Retreat Chairman, etc.). Apart from someone moving out of the area, each scouter knew what he needed to do as the work was evenly divided. In addition, since George Perdue and Lee Reese were influential officers of the Knights of Columbus (KC) Council 759, it also had membership sprinkled throughout the area. KC Councils were influential in sponsoring scout units and in promoting the Catholic Scouting program. Besides sponsoring the first scout retreat, KC Council 759 was integral in providing support for an annual dinner for religious awardees, providing facilities for CCS meetings and offering majestic presence in the form of 4th Degree Knights in full regalia. Although the consistency of Diocesan support, the increase of Catholic units, the mutual interest of all Catholic scout leadership, the resources of the KC's, the unprecedented direction of a Diocesan Chaplin, the success of the first annual retreats and the growing participation in religious awards would seem to announce the zenith of a successful program, it was the selection of one man who would be the key to bringing the program to the next level fueled by the build up of a leadership structure able to meet any challenge.

Religious Scout Renaissance

When Lee Reese, a man of unique rhetoric and writing ability, became the chairman of the Fort Worth Deanery CCS in 1963, it signaled a renaissance of Catholic Scouting. His speaking ability, presence as a Master of Ceremonies at scouting



1963 Religious Awards Ceremony at Sacred Heart Cathedral with Bishop Gorman. Lee Reese (far left) awarded St. George Award as a member of Ft. Worth Deanery. Bishop Gorman (front center), is shown with recipients of the St. George award, Lee Reese Jr., Francis X. Falwell, L.H. Shaffer and George M. Kaler. On back row are Fathers R.J. Scott, John Haugh and William Moran.

events, and easy manner provided the final ingredient in what would become a vibrant scouting organization. With his leadership, the CCS became more than the organizer of religious award ceremonies, it began to take on the outward signs of a committee which could operate on its own merit.

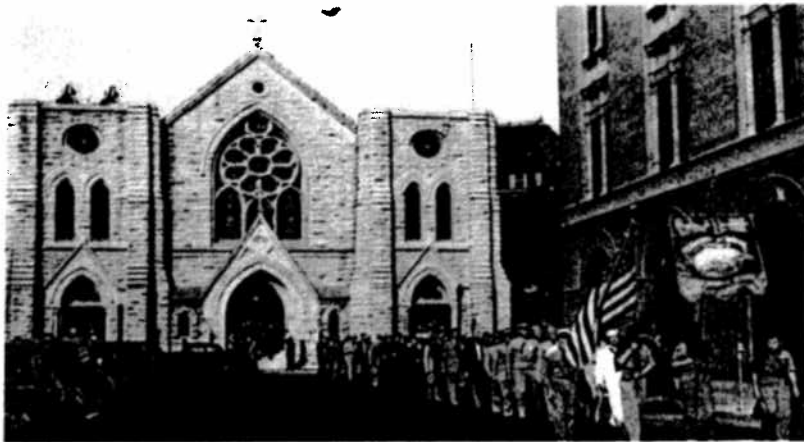
His legacy began with the 3rd Annual Scout Retreat held at Worth Ranch. There were eighteen Troops, two Explorer Posts and two hundred fifty scouts who participated as the Fort Worth Deanery began to rival the Dallas Deanery in program impact. Virtually every Fort Worth Catholic unit was participating, new Catholic units were nearing creation, and the beginnings of religious awards for Cub Scouts ensured a bright future. It was at this moment that Longhorn Council Executive Kirk Henry and CCS Chairman Lee Reese discussed ways to enliven relationships within the council. As a convert to Catholicism, Lee Reese brought the awareness of the teachings of other religious denominations and the unique ability to try something that had never been done before. On Saturday, September 9, 1964 at Texas Wesleyan University, religious ministers of all denominations participated in a banquet which would see scout religious awards presented to over one hundred scouts from forty-five religious institutions. In a letter following the event, Kirk Henry wrote, "This was the best thing that has come down the pike in many a moon and one Lee Reese, to be dang sure, has been and is one of the leading figures in getting the job done." Ecumenical cooperation was prevalent in the years following the unprecedented All Faith Religious Awards ceremony held in 1964.



Circa 1964. Rev. William Moran, Diocesan Scout Chaplain, is leading a discussion during a Catholic Scout Retreat at Worth Ranch.

One of the great wisdoms of Scouting is its acceptance of all religions. Throughout the development and longevity of our CCS for the Diocese of Fort Worth, we have been fortunate to have scouts and religious of other denominations attend and participate in CCS activities. During the 1964 Boy Scout Retreat, Methodist scouts attended

the retreat program and Rev. Erickson conducted Sunday services while Fr. Raymond Scott celebrated Catholic Mass. Similarly, in 1966, Baptist scouts attended the retreat and Rev. Moore conducted Baptist services. It was in this era of religious cooperation that Martin Cannon became the first non-Catholic scouter to receive the St. George Award in the Diocese of Fort Worth. He was presented the award by Bishop Cassata in ceremonies during 1970. In recent years, families with more than one religion have participated in Catholic Cub Scout Retreats. With a prepared script that has been reviewed by both Catholic and Protestant ministers, Jay Krail (CCSR Program Director) has welcomed several Baptist and Methodist families to participate in retreats exploring our shared Christian beliefs. It is a tribute to Scouting's non-denominational acceptance of greater spiritual enrichment to each boy.



March of Faith. Downtown Ft. Worth. Circa 1940's. Scouts act as an honor guard while active military and KC 4th Degree members follow.

Participation in events outside of its domain was one proof that the CCS was strong and able to extend itself beyond the limits of a committee to administer the religious program. Some

examples: Scouting for Sisters (see I-30), clean up

of Old Calvary Cemetery, involvement in the building of a scout hut (see T314), providing scout altar boys and color guards at Memorial Day Ceremonies at Old Calvary Cemetery, and many other incidental projects they were asked to participate in.

Requests from the Scouting District or Longhorn Council to support an event were usually directed to a unit, but with the CCS, it was almost as if it was a separate and distinct district active on the council level for some of Longhorn and Circle Ten events.

The core of experience was vast as many scouters had risen through the scouting program as boys and were now providing adult leadership for units. It was not unusual