

with virtually no equipment and 18 Tenderfoot scouts, many of the families could not afford the expense of new uniforms and the basic equipment necessary to belong. So Ernie Doclar and Raul Chavez initiated a program where notices in the St. Francis Sunday Bulletin prompted donations of used scout uniforms and equipment. When boys from St. Theresa's Orphanage and the Lena Pope Home were members of T32, sponsor and individuals of KC 759 would always respond to specific requests to help provide a young boy with the essential needs.

### **New Era Peaks, Declines and Re-Emerges**

The great successes of the 60's and early 70's could not have foreseen the coming challenges of the 80's. There were a number of factors influencing this trend. The core of leadership in the CCS and Catholic units was declining as long time Scoutmasters began to "retire" after decades of leadership. The baby boom of the 50's provided the huge increase in boy participation in the 60's and 70's but dropped precipitously in the 80's. The war in Vietnam, the loss of available clergy, the drop in United Way funding to the BSA, and the divorce rate were all harbingers of tough times. Scouting was not alone as membership and participation in the Knights of Columbus also felt the impact. Since the leadership and experience of long time Scoutmasters could not be replaced, and the commitment of the new leadership to the CCS was not as strong, the religious awards program also faltered. As Diocesan Chaplains were reassigned, their diligence could not match earlier days as the burden of priests was becoming too great. With the structure of the CCS faltering and the failure of Catholic units rising, attendance dropped and annual awardees were under a dozen. Since there were not as many priests, the program was in a fundamental crisis.

Great challenges often draw the talents of great leaders. The first woman chairman of the CCS, Irene Herring, had already been involved in Catholic Scouting several years before taking the helm during the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Scouting in 1980. She had begun her Scouting career as Den Mother before becoming Scout Assistant, Co-Roundtable

Chairman and perennial member of the CCS. Being Woodbadge trained, she also used these principles to adopt new innovations to a program that was faltering. Everywhere one turned, the challenges to scouting itself were unprecedented to a program that was second to none during the 1950's. However, the openness to new innovations was integral for turning the tide. Scouter development adult training, combining Cub, Boy Scout and Girl Scout awards ceremonies, travel to outlying churches to present awards, and maintaining contact with religious awards counselors throughout the diocese were all necessary for the program to prevail.



Circa 1973. Medical Officer Irene Herring (future CCS Chairman) serves as an injured subject for scouts Tom Smith and Tom Perdue at 1973 Scout Show.

When a boy is on the trail to Eagle, he witnesses the recognition of his peers each step of the way during every Troop Court of Honor. When the CCS realized this natural reinforcement on the Troop level could be brought to the



Circa 1985. Fifteen Muenster Cub Scouts receive the Parvuli Dei Award from CCS Officers during ceremonies held at Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls, Texas.

religious awards on the Diocesan level, work was underway to combine Cub Scout, Girl Scout and Boy Scout religious awards ceremonies. During 1986, this important



Circa 1985. Four Muenster Boy Scouts receive the Ad Altare Dei Award in ceremonies held by Bishop Joseph Delaney. (Two girl awardees are also from Muenster)

innovation began another tradition that would reap the goal of increased Ad Altare Dei awardees in later years. However, the desire to expand the program to outlying areas of the Diocese demanded unprecedented effort. Buck Rogers, James Sawey, Rich Lockwood, and Bill Miller were among local CCS members who traveled to Muenster and Wichita Falls to present religious awards in order to invigorate the program and encourage participation. These early efforts in the 80's paid off in record numbers of scout awardees during the 90's. Because of this

effort, it is not uncommon for a boy to achieve two Cub Scout and two Boy Scout religious awards while obtaining their Arrow of Light and Eagle Scout Award.



Scout Sunday. Circa 1993. SM of Troop 13 Fred Novak and scout J.W. Pogue finish setting a model campsite on the grounds of Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls.

One of the greatest moments of Scouting is also amongst the holiest. Scout Sunday has become a way to recognize the many adult volunteers, the hard earned awards of each boy and also serve as an opportunity for each scout to participate as altar boy, reader, greeter, or Eucharistic minister while wearing scout uniforms in their

parish. On February 7, 1993, Scoutmaster Fred Novak and scout J.W. Pogue appeared in the North Texas Catholic after building a model campsite on the church

grounds of Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls. St. Andrews Church (T97), Holy Family Church (T101), and St. Francis (T7), have celebrated the same occasion for decades as a chance to show off Scouting spirit and invite new members. On Scout Sunday during 1980, adults of St. Francis (Grapevine) set up camp, cooked biscuits on



COR Ernie Doclar (left) and SM of Troop 7 Dave Creeger accept the Pope Paul VI Unit Recognition from Bishop Joseph Delaney during 1989 Annual Award Ceremonies.

a stick and bacon on a rock while answering prospective members questions. With Fr. Balthasar Szarka singing the praises of Scouting in his sermon, T7 went from inactive status and zero members to active status and eighteen new scouts the next evening. Louis Mathews, an Eagle Scout from 1919, came out of "retirement" and told the new boys of the early days of scouting while giving a few camping tips. Another time-honored practice is the Father/Son Camping Weekend where sons can impress their fathers with skills learned in the outdoors. During T507's acknowledgement of Scouting Anniversary month in 1963, Scoutmaster Bill Lepenski combined forces with Explorer Post 196 for a weekend of Father/Son camping skills at the Ed Adamcik farm in south Grand Prairie. After a day of scout skills and training, Ed Luloff was inducted into the troop during an evening campfire full of comedy skits and group songs.

Another shining light of the period was the appointment of a Diocesan Chaplain who had been a member of T97 and was awarded the Ad Altare Dei Award during 1964. Fr. John Hennessey, the second Ad Altare Dei awardee to become Diocesan Chaplain, inherited a program which required a Herculean effort to survive the challenge of the 80's. It is a tribute to his knowledge of Scouting, to his invaluable work and presence that the religious award program did not go inactive.



Circa 1982. Catholic Scouts and Scouters were honored April 18 in special ceremonies at St. Pat's Cathedral. Recipients of awards included Ad Altare Dei Awards were Carlos Flored, Curtis Boemer, Kenneth James, Andrew Martinez, David Heise, George Berry, Stephen Lucas, Charles Rhodes, Paul Herrera, Jeffrey Lanzarotti and Derek Percy. Earning the Plus XII award were Tony Miller, David Miller and Tony Moosey. The St. Elizabeth Seton award went to Mrs. Peggy Hart and Father John Hennessey and the Bronze Pelican award went to Father Hennessey, Father Bill Patz, Douglas Gardiner, Father Karl Schilken and Arlen Voldness. The St. George award was presented to Anne Mack and Bill Lauree.

The ultimate Scouting fellowship is had by each scout who has ever had the opportunity to participate in a National Scouting Jamboree experience. Steven Spielberg, President Bush, Shuttle Astronauts, Olympic Athletes, Country and Western Singers, Miss Teenage America and a host of legendary personalities drop by to

visit the 40,000-scout campsite once every four years. Perennial Retreat Cook and future CCS Chairman, Buck Rogers, was selected Scoutmaster of the 1977 Longhorn Council Contingent Troop 582-2. Scouts of Troops 32 and 34 participated in the trip that continues to live large in the hearts of each boy. Torrential rains flooded half the Jamboree site but left T582-2 relatively unscathed. Recent Olympic Decathlon Champion Bruce Jenner walked through their campsite, Miss Teenage America posed for pictures with them, and a couple of scouts were treated to an exclusive concert by Burl Ives. Before the Jamboree, scouts visited the Gettysburg Battlefield, the Smithsonian and walked the streets of Washington DC like their predecessors did forty years earlier. Speaker of the House Jim Wright, took 160 Fort Worth scouts on a tour of the Capital Building and had a picture made on the steps that appeared in the Longhorn Council Pacesetter. Scout Correspondent, Brian Hedgecoke, was awarded a Jamboree Typewriter for his stories sent home. However, one scout from a fatherless family wanted to attend but may never have gotten the chance because finances were tight. When KC 759 Grand Knight Baldwin "Baldy" Stanton heard of this predicament, he got up in the middle of a closed KC meeting and made a speech about the qualities

of this one scout and that his dream was to attend the National Jamboree with his friends. They passed the hat and a young man's wish came true. Before the 1977 Jamboree, the tradition began when Ole Man Gillespie and scout A.L. Crouch attended the First National Jamboree (1937) and participated in a parade (which included President Franklin Roosevelt), witnessed the Worth Ranch Trek Cart involved in competition, and an Arena Show in the shadow of the Washington Monument. Frank Pellizzari Jr, a participant of this same Jamboree from Breckenridge Texas (Comanche Trail Council), was an Eagle Scout entrusted with the responsibility of running the Cowboys and Indians portion of the Arena Show. Every participant from Comanche Trail Council had constructed a full Indian costume and performed according to Frank's direction. After WWII, scouts of Troop 32 and Troop 15 went by train to Irvine Ranch, CA for the 1953 National Jamboree where they were visited by movie stars, participated in a massive outdoor mass with the Archbishop of Los Angeles while enjoying the company of contingent troops from every country in the free world. The 1960 National Jamboree was also the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Scouting where eight scouts from Troop 32 and Ole Man Gillespie (Quartermaster) were part of Longhorn Council Contingent Troop 58. Frank Donnelly, a young "Steven Spielberg," learned how to use a 16mm movie camera and caught Vice President Richard Nixon as well as President Eisenhower on tape during their visit to the Jamboree in Colorado Springs. It was during this Jamboree that discussions were initially held regarding the very first Boy Scout Retreat.

A significant event in the Catholic church both locally and in the Vatican occurred during the 1980's. Pope John Paul II was elected as the first non Italian Pope in decades, Bishop Joseph Delaney replaced Bishop John Cassata within the Diocese of Fort Worth, and five scouters were recognized as having attended each of twenty-five Boy Scout Retreats (1961-1985). The 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Retreat (1985) was a high water mark in the history of the CCS as Bishop Delaney celebrated mass during the retreat.



Bishop Joseph Delaney

As the first Bishop to celebrate mass during a retreat, he reaffirmed his concern for today's youth and reminisced on his own activities as a Boy Scout.

Since Bishop Delaney was entrusted with the leadership of our Diocese during 1981, he has been one of the most active supporters amongst public officials in the area. In his homily during the 1993 Annual Religious Awards Ceremony, he expressed his appreciation saying "Without your long hours and great effort, the Scouting Program would not be possible in the Diocese," He went on to say that the work of Christ in Scouting is served by sharing the Good News with each boy. The Bishop addressed



Circa 1946. Eagle Scout and Ad Altare Dei awardee Joe Schumacher (now Msgr. Schumacher).

the honorees, "It is fitting that we celebrate the awards and the commitment of the recipients to serve one another. Appreciate what it means to be a child of God. In what people see you do and say will they find the presence of Christ. These symbols stand for the commitment to share Christ's love with others, and to fulfill Jesus' command we must serve others as he has served us." He continued speaking for vocations, "I trust that God will call some of you here to the priesthood or religious life." Truly, it is a fact not lost in the diocese that Fr. Joe Scantlin, Fr. Tim Thompson, Fr. Robert Wilson, and Msgr. Joseph Schumacher were all scouts as boys, and have served many communities around this diocese.

"Never break a promise to a kid" was one motto that John Hernandez recalls as longtime Scoutmaster of Troop 315 sponsored by All Saints Church in Fort Worth. His steadfast devotion to this policy, along with the promise to go camping once a month, offered several moments for him to reconsider. His convictions may have realized a moment of doubt as he watched his scouts cook tacos in the snow more than once. However, in retrospect, the satisfaction it gave young boys to overcome the elements helped give each scout the confidence to achieve greater

things. As Scoutmaster of Troop 315 one of the greatest achievements of his scouts lives was overcoming obstacles to win 17 Presidential Awards at District Camporees. Just like the summer camp in 1985 that was over 106 degrees, another significant challenge was not enough to hold back the desire of young men striving to be their best.

As Senior Scouts achieve Eagle Scout and the Ad Altare Dei Award, they look for bigger challenges worthy of their confidence. Troop 509 focused on a virtually unknown program amongst Texas Scouters – Florida Sea Base. The degree of interest was so great that they filled two sailboats. They flew into Miami and went through initial orientation as each sailboat had an experienced captain while the scouts made up the crew. Both groups stayed overnight on their 45 foot Morgan Class sailboat as they sailed their way to Key West Florida. After touring the city, they sailed back to Sea Base and enjoyed snorkeling amongst small barracuda and an eel. One last adventure was had by one sailboat as the experienced captain ran aground on a sand bar.

A particularly poignant message was written by Bishop Advisor Kenny to the NCCS during the beginning of scouting re-emergence. "Many of our youth today are struggling with an identity crisis and problems that growing up in these times often create. Boys involved in Scouting experience, and girls as well in Exploring, have a real advantage in coming to know themselves, in establishing clear and personal ideals, and in attaining skills that will give direction to their lives." Bishop Kenny promoted the aims of the NCCS and its local CCS affiliates by clarifying the religious dimension in Scouting. "Through the religious emblems program, scouts have an opportunity to broaden their knowledge and understanding of their faith and to engage in regular service to their local churches. Through the presence and activity of Scout Chaplains, scouts have an opportunity to develop personal relations with priests and religious outside the customary church and social settings." In addition, boys and leaders are "Frequently called upon to lead religious services, to help out at the parish or diocesan activities, to engage in programs directed toward justice and charity, the Scouts have an opportunity to experience and be a part of the church in ways that are both vital and personal."