

EAGLE'S WINGS NEWS

Volume 4

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Don Collier Recognized As 2007 EWRC Volunteer Of The Year

The Eagle's Wings' Volunteer of the Year Award for 2007 was presented to Don Collier on March 16 at St. Helen's Catholic Church in Georgetown, TX. Don stepped forward and answered a call in the spring of 2004 to become the project manager for the development of the main campus of the Eagle's Wings Retreat Center. Don has worked countless hours securing professionals to volunteer their expertise and then coordinated the engineering work from over 25 different individuals. He is the main reason the Eagle's Wings Retreat Center's main campus design project has been successful. The team that Don assembled has completed all the design work for what is currently referred to as the main campus and consists of a Dining Hall, a Meeting Hall and a Chapel that will seat up to 200 people. It also includes 4 Dormitories and 2 Lodges. Collectively these buildings will provide overnight accommodations for over 200 people. The design also includes a clergy residence, a small administration building, a maintenance building and a recreation

complex that will have a pool, an outdoor sports pavilion, a soccer field and a softball diamond. Don has kept the organization focused on the most important aspects of the project resulting in a well defined approach for moving into the building

phase which is currently underway. He has been and continues to be a guiding star for God's project for a youth retreat center in central Texas and very much deserves this recognition as Eagles' Wings 2007 Volunteer of the Year.



Don Collier (with plaque) is pictured with EWRC advisory board member Msgr. Louis Pavlicek and EWRC President Joe Noonan.

Renew Your Commitment To Eagle's Wings

**By Joe Noonan
EWRC President**

For the past 4 years we have made great progress at Eagle's Wings and much of it can be attributed to our many volunteers. Most nonprofit organizations success is a reflection of volunteers. Here at Eagles' Wings that continues to be a strong part of our success. We have been blessed with many individuals, adult groups, teen groups from churches, Mission groups, Eagle Scouts, generous professional people

and generous construction people that have contributed to our success. Last year we logged over 5,000 volunteer hours.

Jesus made it clear to all of us that we are here to serve not to be served. The community of Central Texas is doing just that. We are serving by building a retreat center for our Youth. Eagle's Wings was founded with the thought that it would be the people of Central Texas that would make this happen. Whether it is through

your donations of money, time or talent, we feel confident that God will help us make this a reality through your hands. I love seeing our teens come out and help. They have experienced retreats and know the value of these experiences on other teens. Adults contribute and help because they know what a wonderful experience this can be for our youth. Let's continue the success and continue to do what God has asked us to do. Peace.

St. Mary's - Temple Holds Retreat, Service Projects



Living Rosary

On Friday, Feb. 8th St. Mary's Catholic School of Temple came to Eagle's Wings Retreat Center for a day of service projects and spiritual development. These 6th, 7th & 8th graders were blessed with a day of sunshine, Mass, a spiritual talk on 'Mercy' by Doug Weisbruch, a time to pray using a 50 ft. Living Rosary and many boxes of pizza for lunch.

In return, EWRC was twice blessed by this group. The first blessing came from their efforts to lay mulch to beautify the paths for Stations of the Cross. The next blessing was a surprise presentation to two of the founders with a check that was the result of bake sales that were held at their school. This is an example of youth taking responsibility for building **THEIR** retreat center. Thank you St. Mary's for taking ownership in your future spiritual home.



St. Mary's Catholic School Grades 6, 7, & 8



Check Presentation

Eagle's Wings was presented with a check from proceeds of a bake sale. (l to r) Dr. Ardelle Hamilton, Fr. Ranjan Cletus, Curt Haffner, Katie Haffner, and Kurt Hentschel



The 20 Somethings group from St. Theresa's in Austin gave service at Eagle's Wings recently when they arrived to clear cedar and dead wood, weed whip and assemble a picnic table.

Retreat Centers Aid In Spiritual Formation

From the desk of Fr. Elmer Holtman

It was back in the 70's when I was a campus minister at St. Mary's at Texas A&M that I began to appreciate the great impact weekend retreats could have on college youth. For many, their weekend retreat experience was the first time they ever felt connected to God and their Catholic faith. I found out that the same could be true when we started LIFE Teen retreats with St. Thomas More and began sponsoring weekend retreats for our High school youth. We have a high school retreat each semester plus one special one for our Confirmation candidates. We also sponsor retreats for our middle school youth. As a matter of fact, high school juniors and seniors, having received the sacrament of Confirmation, actively participate in giving the retreat for our middle school youth. This year we have 340 middle school youth registered and 250 High School teens. And

from all indications we will be getting into campus ministry next year. I have been informed by the Concordia University president that 1/3 of their enrollment are Roman Catholic. Next Fall their campus will be only a mile or so up the road.

Looking at this great number of Catholic youth, I have been encouraging our ministry to Eagle's Wings Catholic Youth Retreat center located just outside Burnet close to Lake Buchanan. Our youth and adults from St. Thomas More have spent hundreds of hours clearing, cleaning and building at Eagle's Wings in the last two years getting ready for the construction of the main campus that will eventually accommodate two hundred youth at the same time.

Eagle's Wings is a beautiful forty acre campus and part of a 157 acre ranch on FM 2341, a couple of miles from Lake Buchanan. The property was donated by Curt and Katie Haffner, owners of the ranch, for the specific purpose of establishing a

Catholic youth retreat center. It is being governed by a board of directors who have been soliciting volunteer craftsmen, engineers and architects to establish the sub structure in preparation for our construction phase. Our parish professionals and youth have been heavily involved with the project from the beginning. At this time it is still a private venture and not a project of the Diocese of Austin.

Eagle's Wings is now at the initial stages of its capital campaign. Several months ago I approached our Pastoral Council with the idea of our parish making a financial commitment to the campaign. They agreed to make a proposal to our parish Finance Committee that St. Thomas More sponsor the building of one of the bunkhouses. The commitment that our finance committee made was \$125,000.00 over a five year period. We hope to get the campaign started with this pledge and that other parishes will follow the example.

It is my hope that the generosity and effort being put forth for this project by Catholics through the diocese, will become a living legacy to the spiritual formation of our youth for years to come.



Service Project Includes Discovery



The CHRP Men's group from St. Thomas More Catholic Parish in Austin recently participated in the Stations of the Cross and rebuilt a bridge. Participating were: Scott Walsh, Jim Stephens, Chas Velleca, Rich Chiappe, Bob Bracht, Cesar Gonzalez, Frank Kelly, Jim Babka, and Joe Noonan.

Eagle's Wings Offers Many Options For Service To God And Man

By Don Comedy

EWRC Development Director

This issue of the Eagle's Wings News is dedicated to service and headlines with a salute to Don Collier and his recognition as Volunteer of the Year for 2007.

When we first started talking about dedicating an issue to service, I started thinking about all the Scripture that talks about service. The first one that always comes to mind is Joshua's statement to the Israelites just before his death. ... "choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15. Service to God can take many forms. We can dedicate ourselves to living Godly lives or we can serve our fellow man. But, at the end of the day serving our fellow man is just another

form of service to God.

Recently I attended the graduation of my son-in-law from the Abilene Police Academy and the Mayor gave the principal address. His address was about the service that police officers provide and one statement really stood out. He said, "True service is doing something for someone who can never repay you". I knew exactly what he meant, but I immediately started to think about the opportunities that each of us have with our involvement in Eagle's Wings.

In today's world it is easy to get so wrapped up in ourselves that we become mummies. If we can just unwrap ourselves and see the opportunity at hand we can utilize our talents, whatever they may be, and contribute to Eagle's Wings and serve God and future generations of youth at the

same time.

Service projects are always available and you can sign up by calling today. You can also serve by writing a check and putting it in the enclosed envelope. Both ways you are serving God and at the same time serve our youth.

Great things are happening at Eagle's Wings and you can make them better. Come join us.

Wish List

24' extension ladder (\$200.00)

Hard wheeled wheel barrow (\$160.00)

18 volt cordless drill (\$150.00)

You can make your wish list donation either by delivering items to the center or mailing a check for the item you wish to donate.

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Fr. Elmer Says



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