A Harlingen Scouting and Related Chronology

Compiled by Norman Rozeff, Harlingen Historical Preservation Society


2/19/10 The First Methodist Church is founded by 31 charter members. At that time it is affiliated with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Among the charter members are Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Perry.

1911 Members of the Harlingen's first Equalization Board to adjust the tax valuation of property are A.W. Weller, Gordon Hill, C.F. Perry, C.W. Hoot, and R.S. Chambers.

1920 A Boy Scout troop is organized this year. When it celebrates its fifth anniversary in May 1925, 35 scouts are present. Some will soon attend a ten-day camp located 7 miles east of Harlingen on the Arroyo Colorado. Scoutmaster Lynn Kellogg is commended for his work with the boys.

2/11/27 The Valley Council of the Boy Scouts of America is organized. Dr. R.E. Utley is chairman of the local Boy Scout District committee.

It is 1927 that the Boy Scout camp to be named Camp Perry becomes a reality. Land is obtained along the west bank of the Arroyo Colorado west of Rio Hondo. Harlingen realtor Charles Perry donates some land for the camp, which will eventually encompass 260 acres. He takes an active role in building the stone chimney adjacent to the main hall. Perry is married to Velma Simmons and their daughter is to be Vonnie Mae Perry Westbrook of 802 N. 1st Street. In 2002 the camp will celebrate its diamond jubilee anniversary. It continues to serve scouts from across the Valley.

5/27 The Sessions and Board of Deacons of the First Presbyterian Church hold a joint meeting to consider sponsoring a Boy Scouts of America troop. They agree to sponsor such a troop and eventually the pastor's son, J. Stuart Pearce, Jr., becomes its first scoutmaster. This troop, Troop 10, will be active into the 1980s and be one of the area's leading units.

7/14/28 The second annual Valley Scout Encampment at Camp Perry is attended by 300 scouts who will be there ten days.

8/26/28 Camp Perry is officially dedicated in an elaborate ceremony.

12/7/28 G. E. Van Berg of Mercedes and a Valley engineer is to be president of the RGV Boy Scout Council.

4/16/37 District Scouter Myrlin Johnson announces that Harlingen is but $100 short of its quota of $1,250 set as part of the $11,000 fund raising campaign to continue scouting in the Valley. Paul G. Greenwood, local attorney, is finance chairman of the drive.
10/18/42  The Sea Scouts have their meeting facility at 218 N. 2nd Street.

March 1961  It was in this month that the Harlingen Air Force Base hosted its last Explorer Boy Scout air encampment. The Base was about to be closed.

1/5/63  Lynn Yantis, 38, is appointed Boy Scout Executive for District 2 (Harlingen, Combes, La Feria, Santa Rosa, and Primera) and 6 (Sebastian, Lyford, and Raymondville). In 1940 he formed the first Explorer Post in Harlingen. In 1941 he joined the Sea Scout Ship in Brownsville. He served three years in the Navy and was discharged as an aviation cadet. Graduating from Trinity College in 1948, he entered professional scouting in 1953. He married Virginia Mapes of San Antonio and the First Methodist member has three children.

The next month numerous scout supported take out a large ad to promote scouting. It points out that in this the 53rd anniversary of Scouting in America the local council serves 4,800 scouts and is assisted by 1,500 scouter volunteers.

1995  The Rio Grande Council (Boy Scouts) conduct the first annual winter camp at Camp Charles F. Perry.

5/14/99  The Boy Scouts of America Rio Grande Council dedicates its new facility at 6912 W. Expressway 83. Designed by Labunski and Associates, the 81,000 square foot one story building is named the Vance D. and Mary Lee Raimond Scout Center in honor of two individuals in the community who had done so much for scouting. To its immediate west at 6914 is the American Red Cross South Texas Chapter building also named for the Raimonds.

6/05  Mike Mares becomes District Executive of the Rio Grande Council of the Boy Scouts of America. This Brownsville resident has been involved with scouting for five years. In his first year in the position he will help raise a record $110,000 for the council.