

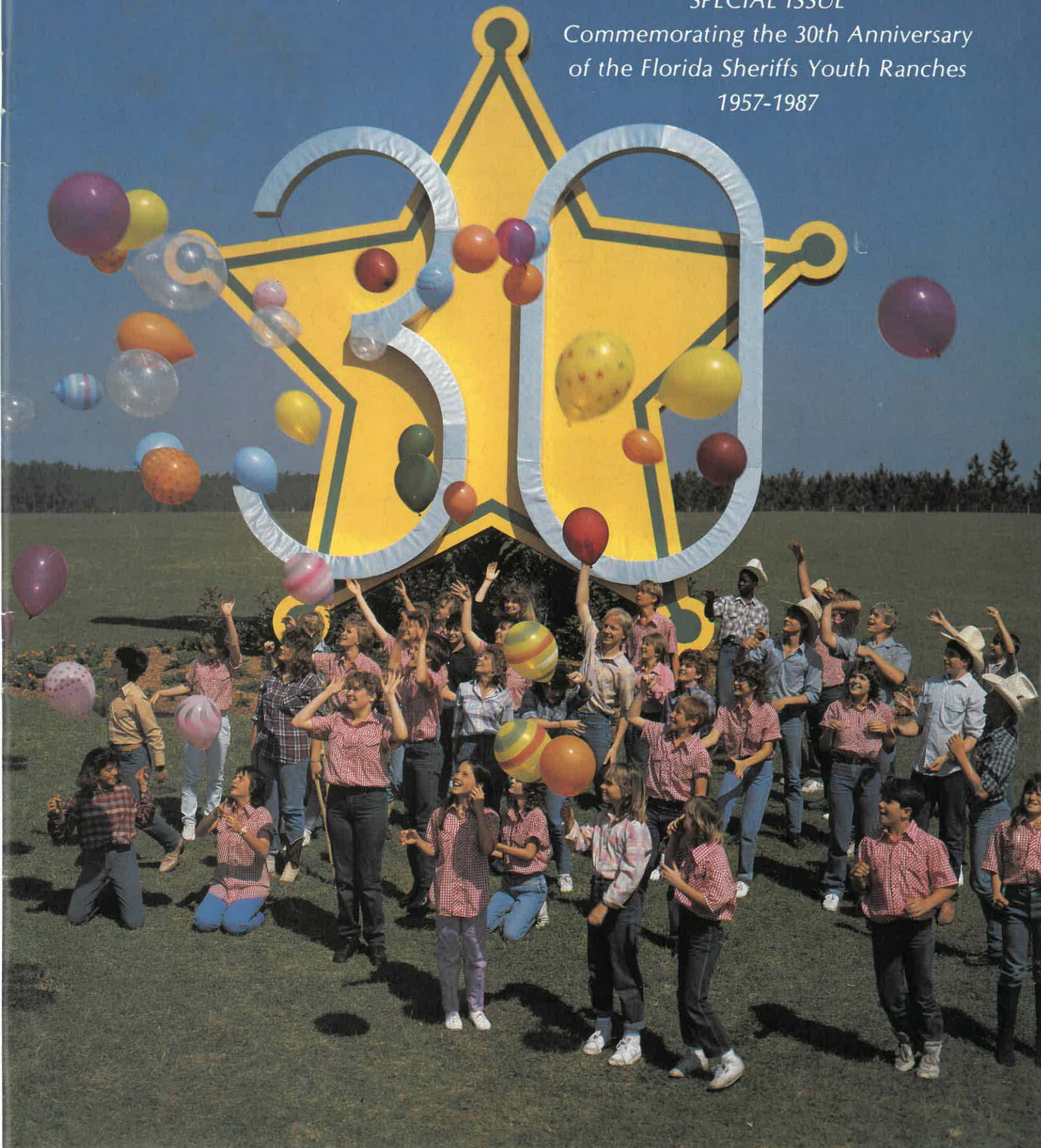


THE RANCHER

A PUBLICATION OF THE FLORIDA SHERIFFS YOUTH RANCHES, BOYS RANCH, FLORIDA 32060

SPECIAL ISSUE

*Commemorating the 30th Anniversary
of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches
1957-1987*



How the cover was created

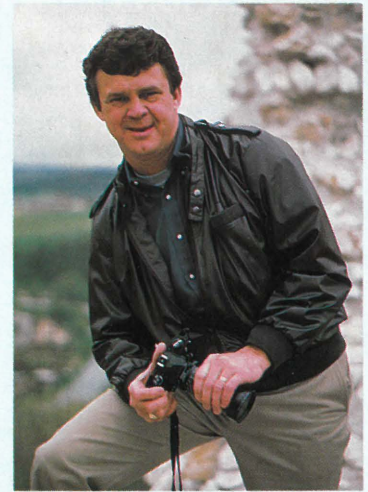


While foundation work was in progress for the 30-foot star, J.B. Brettingen (kneeling) explained his design to Kenny Gilley, Boys Ranch Supervisor of Maintenance.

J.B. "Jim" Brettingen designed the 30-foot star pictured on the cover of this issue; then he enlisted his wife, Helen, as his helper, and, with an occasional assist from Boys Ranch maintenance workers, he built it on high ground overlooking the Boys Ranch horse show arena to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches.

After the job was completed, Live Oak Photographer Ed "Skip" Weigel "shot" the cover photo, with enthusiastic youngsters from the Boys Ranch, Girls Villa (now Youth Villa), and Youth Ranch as models.

The Brettingens are former Youth Ranches employees, and Weigel is a skilled professional whose career behind the camera spans more than a quarter century.



Photographer Ed "Skip" Weigel.



Erected as the focal point of a three-day celebration marking the 30th Anniversary of the Youth Ranches, this giant star was designed to remain on view for many years to come as a symbol of success.

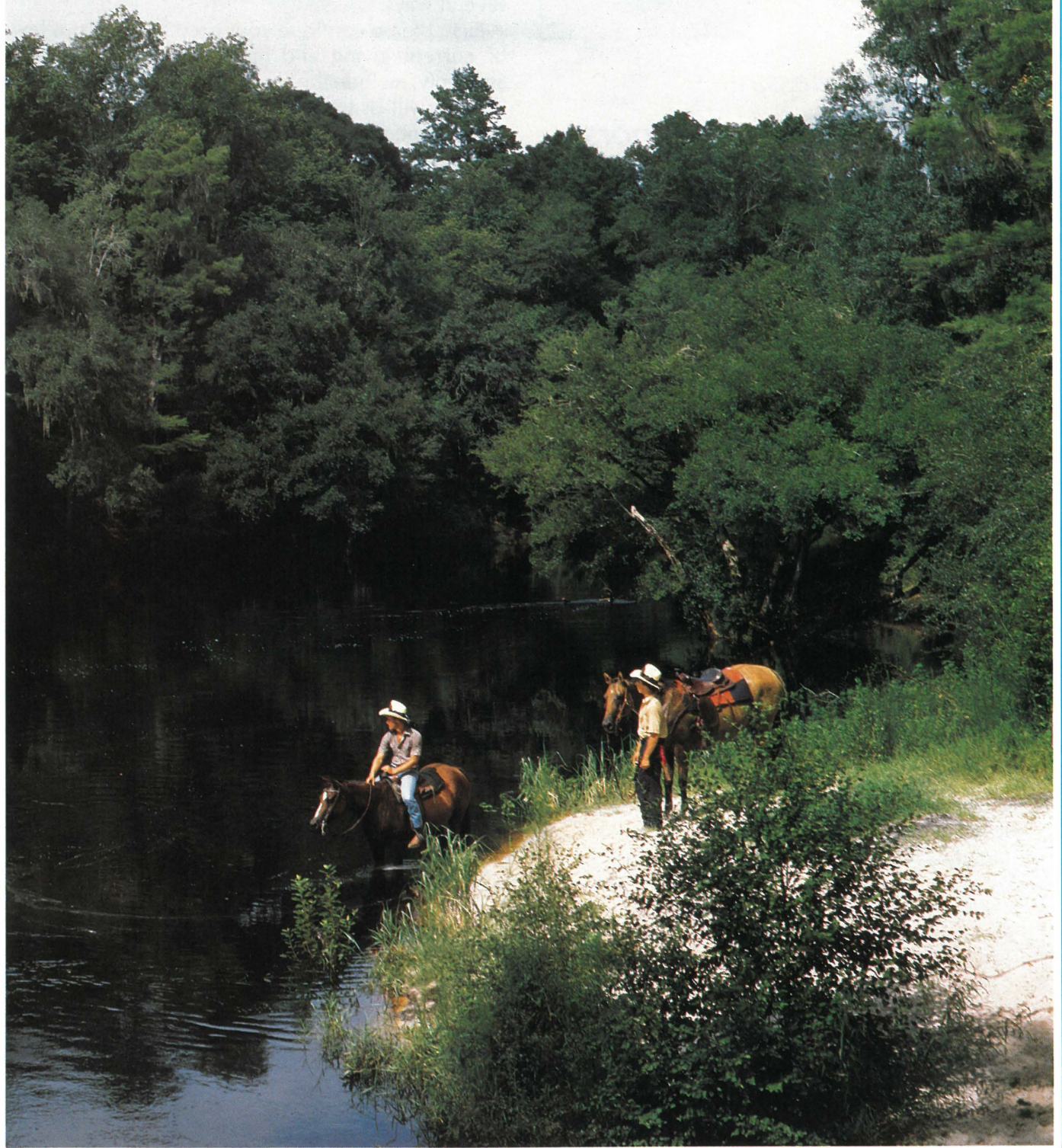
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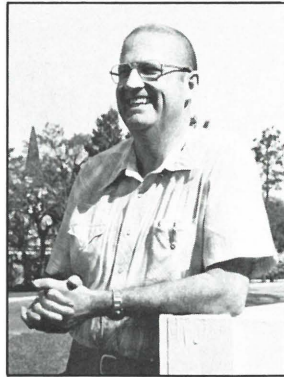
THIRTY YEARS OF PROGRESS

A history of the
Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches



President's Perspective

A message from
Harry K. Weaver, President
of the Florida Sheriffs
Youth Ranches



A message to our "family" of donors

Thirty successful years of providing quality care for many of Florida's troubled boys and girls and their families is a great accomplishment. God has been good and generous to us.

Since the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch idea was conceived in 1957, the Youth Ranches has been instrumental in redirecting the lives of over 3,600 boys and girls to help them mature in a more productive and socially acceptable manner. These 3,600 plus boys and girls have lived on one of our five campuses for a period of time.

Many, many hundreds of other boys and girls and their families (we do not have an accurate count) have been helped to overcome their problems through individual counseling in their homes and communities.

Miraculously, the great work of the staff, Sheriffs, donors, Board, and friends has been accomplished primarily through voluntary gifts.

**Extra copies
can be requested**

Five years ago when we published the 25th Anniversary issue of *The Rancher*, many people asked us to send copies to friends or relatives, and we did it — free of charge.

This time we are ordering a large press run, and we will be pleased to again provide free extra copies. Please address requests to:

Circulation Department
The Rancher
Boys Ranch, FL 32060

Among our most difficult decisions each day is to decide which boy or girl on our long waiting list should be enrolled into residential care. We make every effort to select the boy or girl who has the greatest need and can benefit most from our wide spectrum of services.

During our next thirty years of care, I am asking that you assist in eliminating the waiting list of deserving boys and girls; and you can do this in several ways.

First, please continue your present generous level of current giving and increase it when you can. Secondly, include the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches in your will or trust or some other deferred giving instrument. Thirdly, support the Youth Ranches Endowment program, which will help to secure the future of the Youth Ranches excellent programs for Florida's troubled boys and girls.

Lastly, I am asking that you spread the good word about our great work. Invite a friend, neighbor, or Florida newcomer to join in our effort. Urge them to visit one or more of our campuses and to make inquiry about the Youth Ranches generally. If you give us their names and addresses, we will send information or make a visit.

The Sheriffs, Board, staff, boys and girls join me in saying thank you to our donor family for a very productive, progressive, and successful thirty years of dedicated and committed service to a substantial portion of Florida's troubled boys and girls.

THE RANCHER

Volume 23, No. 3, Fall 1987

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THE RANCHER is published quarterly, in February, May, August, and November, by the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, a non-profit corporation, Boys Ranch, Florida, 32060. This is a free publication.

ISSN# 0739-6980



Sheriffs were impressed when they visited the proposed Boys Ranch site on the Suwannee River in 1957. In this group are (from left) Kelly Weaver and J.L. McMullen, from Live Oak; Sheriffs Jim Turner, Hugh Lewis, Bill Joyce, and Willis McCall; Tommy Musgrove, original owner of the proposed site; Sheriffs Rodney Thursby and Ed Blackburn, Jr., and Florida Sheriffs Bureau Director Don McLeod, who was formerly Sheriff of Marion County.

In the Beginning

By Carl Stauffer
Editor of *The Rancher*

When a group of Sheriffs went to the Suwannee River in search of a site for a proposed boys ranch in 1957, I tagged along. I was a former newspaper editor and reporter who had just been hired as the Florida Sheriffs Association's Field Secretary.

One of my duties was to observe Sheriffs in their natural habitat, and publish a tabloid newspaper, called THE SHERIFF'S STAR, which explained their behavior to the masses. Later the tabloid evolved into an award winning magazine, and this "Sheriff watcher's" title was elevated to Executive Director.

I remember riding down a rutted trail to the river with six Sheriffs, one former Sheriff, a photographer and three local men. We were in Suwannee County, about 11 miles north of Live Oak, the county seat.

This was really out in the boondocks. Signs of human habitation were sparse. When we reached

the wild and beautiful Suwannee River, it just kept rollin' along, sparkling in the sun and throwing off reflected colors.

I was impressed. So were the Sheriffs (I found out later), but they were playing their cards close to their vests and not saying much.

Hugh Lewis, the Sheriff of Suwannee County, was doing the best he could in his quiet, affable way to sell his fellow Sheriffs on accepting this site. Helping him with the low-key sales pitch were Tommy Musgrove, a prosperous Suwannee County farmer; and J.L. McMullen, a Suwannee County businessman with proven political skills.

Musgrove had formerly owned the riverfront property where we were standing. It was a 20-acre parcel he had given to the Live Oak Elks Club years earlier as a youth camp site. The Elks had not done anything with the camp project, and now both the Elks and Musgrove were saying they were willing to give the land to the Sheriffs. Musgrove, whose farm was nearby, was also offering to give the Sheriffs 120 additional acres adjoining the riverfront land.

The Sheriffs walked and looked and talked. They were merely on an inspection tour this day and had

no authority to make a deal. A photographer took several random shots then lined up the Sheriffs and Suwannee County people on the edge of the river for a final picture. Just before the camera shutter clicked, Florida Sheriffs Bureau Director Don McLeod climbed out over the water on a willow tree limb.

The symbolism escaped me then, but now I know we were all going out on a limb symbolically. This was Camelot on the Suwannee, the beginning of something big, the start of an adventure weighted down with idealism, and none of us realized this brief riverfront tableau would evolve into the present Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Inc., a unique statewide network of child care services and facilities.

I was watching from the wings when the curtain went up on act one, scene one, that far off day in 1957 on the banks of the Suwannee River. However, act one had been preceded by some prologue scenes that I did not witness.

One of these occurred in June 1955 when Sheriffs Ed Blackburn, Jr., and Don McLeod went to Amarillo, Texas, to pick up two prisoners who had held up a supermarket in Ocala.

While they were in Amarillo, Blackburn and McLeod met Curtis Travis, a deputy sheriff who spent a day showing them the local sights. Travis casually mentioned a boys ranch, established by former wrestler Cal Farley, as an interesting place to visit in the Amarillo area. The two Florida Sheriffs didn't ask Travis to arrange a tour, but the passing mention of a boys ranch stuck in their minds.

Next day Blackburn and McLeod started driving back to Florida with two teenage armed robbery suspects in the back seat. One prisoner was a 16-year-old girl who was pregnant. The other was an 18-year-old youth with a tube in his side draining a bullet wound he had received in an escape attempt. His leg was in a cast because he had also broken his ankle.

Perhaps the plight of the two young fugitives triggered a train of thought for the two Sheriffs. In any event, as they were riding along they began wondering out loud about the possibility of establishing a boys ranch in Florida.

"If an ex-wrestler could start on a shoestring and build a successful home for unwanted and neglected boys," said Blackburn, "surely the Florida Sheriffs Association could do the same thing." McLeod agreed.

After returning to Florida, McLeod and Blackburn continued to discuss a boys ranch from time to time, but their ideas continued to simmer on the back



Curtis Travis (center), the Texas deputy sheriff whose chance remarks in 1955 led to the founding of the Boys Ranch in 1957, was a special guest when the Boys Ranch celebrated its 20th anniversary. Pictured with him are former Sheriff Ed Blackburn, Jr., (left) and Wrestling Promoter Eddie Graham, a Florida Sheriffs Youth Fund board member. (The Youth Fund later became the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Inc.)

burner until December 1955. Then, Blackburn finally brought up the subject of a boys ranch at a Florida Sheriffs Association Board of Directors meeting. The Board liked the idea, but there were no funds available to finance it; and no action was taken.

During 1956 the financial situation remained unchanged. Sheriffs Association income was limited to the modest dues paid by Sheriffs, and a dribble of profit from advertising in a "yearbook" the Association had been publishing for several decades.

Early in 1957 the Sheriffs Association abolished the sale of advertising as a source of revenue, and launched a new fund raising project which allowed civilians to become dues paying honorary members of the Association.

Within a few months thousands of Florida citizens had paid \$10 apiece to join the Sheriffs Association, and Treasurer John P. Hall, the Sheriff of Clay County, began to use black ink exclusively in his ledger books.

By the time the Association assembled in Sarasota June 20 and 21, 1957, for its annual conference, there were surplus profits totaling \$5,000 and Sheriffs were looking for some worthwhile projects to finance.

Blackburn, McLeod and others quickly revived the dormant boys ranch idea, and a projects committee was appointed to study the feasibility.

Birth of Boys Ranch was fast-paced event

To fully appreciate what happened next, it is necessary to recognize that Sheriffs are men of action. They are accustomed to making quick decisions, and therefore when they were confronted with the Boys Ranch proposal they didn't waste any time making up their minds. A home for needy and worthy boys seemed like an excellent idea, so they simply went ahead and founded one in a burst of impulsive enthusiasm.

They were undaunted by the fact that they had only \$5,000 with which to start their project. They were unconcerned about their total lack of experience in the business of running a child care facility.

Less bold individuals would have hired professional planners, consulted financial experts and conducted extensive surveys. But, the Boys Ranch founders were not built that way. A prudent, carefully weighed approach was not their style.

Instead, their fast-moving sequel of events went like this:

June 20, 21, 1957 — Boys Ranch idea discussed briefly at Sarasota conference.

June 29 — Projects Committee recommends that \$5,000 be placed in a special Boys Ranch Trust Fund. (Discussion time prior to making recommendation: less than one hour.)

July 23 — Sheriffs Association Board of Directors approves the Project Committee's recommendation and begins search for site. (Board meeting lasted about one hour.)

September — Search narrows to the Suwannee River location offered by Musgrove and the Elks.

October 2 — Sheriffs Association meets in St. Petersburg and passes a trust agreement putting the project in the hands of a board of trustees. Suwannee River site approved. Agreement reached to purchase 582 acres in addition to the 140 donated acres. (This was another short meeting.)

October 18 — Boys Ranch Board of Trustees held first meeting in Live Oak. Sheriff John Spottswood elected chairman. Blackburn appointed non-paid executive director to raise funds and supervise preliminary work on the Ranch site; \$13,000 borrowed from each of two Live Oak banks in order to purchase 582 acres. Down payments made on property. Mortgages signed. Trustees gained possession of 722 scenic, unspoiled acres to build dream on. (All this was accomplished in less than three hours.)

Looking back on this series of events 30 years later, it seems incredible that the Boys Ranch progressed from a nebulous idea to a full-blown reality in just



The Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch Board of Trustees held its first meeting in the Gold Leaf Restaurant, Live Oak, on October 18, 1957. Present were (from left): Florida Sheriffs Association Attorney John A. Madigan, Jr.; Sheriff Hugh Lewis; Florida Sheriffs Bureau Director Don McLeod; and Sheriffs John P. Hall, John Spottswood, Maurice Linton, Odell Carlton, Hagan Parrish, Emmett Shelby and Sid Saunders.

four months. However, that's the way it happened, and the pace did not slacken.

Blackburn was partly responsible for keeping up the momentum. Although there were many responsibilities demanding his attention at the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Department, he somehow managed to devote a considerable amount of time to his duties as Executive Director of the Boys Ranch. He literally "stumped the state" making speeches, talking to the news media, buttonholing prospective donors, otherwise spreading the word about the Sheriffs Association's



Construction of Boys Ranch roads began in 1957.

new project.

Sheriffs backed him up by raising cash donations and soliciting gifts of livestock and farm supplies. Treasurer John P. Hall was soon able to report a steady flow of cash contributions.

Meanwhile, Boys Ranch roads were being built. Specialists from the University of Florida and government agencies were making soil tests in preparation for a full-scale agricultural program. Eighty acres south of the riverfront were being cleared of scrub trees and undergrowth. Pasture fences were being built, and Gainesville architect Myrl Hanes was working on a master plan to determine the location of the first buildings.

On the fund raising front, ideas were germinating at an accelerating rate. The first publicity poster, a photograph of a Sheriff leading a young boy through the Boys Ranch entrance, was approved by the Board of Trustees. Acting on suggestions from Blackburn, the Board also approved awarding "Founders' Club" certificates to donors who gave \$100 or more in cash or materials; and Florida Sheriffs Association Lifetime Honorary Memberships to those who contributed \$1,000 or more.

A 1958 ruling by the U.S. Department of Internal Revenue that Boys Ranch donations were deductible for income tax purposes also stimulated the flow of gifts. So did the creation of a Memorial Fund which permitted donors to give gifts in memory of deceased friends and relatives.

When April 1958 rolled around, Blackburn announced: "The pastures are green. Bring on your livestock." Farmers responded with donations of cattle and hogs. Two miniature Shetland ponies pulling a miniature chuck wagon were also delivered to the Ranch by Col. Tom Parker, manager of singer Elvis Presley. There were no boys available to ride the Shetlands at this point. Nevertheless, the ponies generated valuable publicity for the Ranch by appearing in numerous parades around the state.



Miniature Shetland ponies pulling a miniature chuck wagon were donated to the Boys Ranch by singer Elvis Presley and his manager Col. Tom Parker. Sheriff Hugh Lewis (left) accepted the gift from Col. Parker (right). The driver is "Pop" Barrett, builder of the chuck wagon.



We received a "bonus" when one of the Shetlands gave birth to a colt.

A place “where unwanted boys will be wanted”

By the middle of 1958 there were roads, pastures and a scattering of livestock to give evidence that the Boys Ranch was getting “on the map.” There were no boys or buildings yet, but this deficiency was soon to be remedied.

Armed with a long-handled shovel painted bright gold, an aggregation of Sheriffs — most of them Ranch Trustees — gathered at the Ranch site on August 1, 1958, to break ground for the first building. It was to be a residence cottage for 20 boys under the care of a married couple employed as cottage parents, and the estimated cost was \$60,000.

The ceremony was simple, but laden with historical significance. It opened with an invocation in which the Ranch was described as an effort “beyond the call of duty to make a better world.” Cub Scouts raised the American flag on a new pole erected by the Live Oak Elks Club, while a small audience of Sheriffs and interested citizens sang the National Anthem.

Looking out over land freshly scarred by clearing operations, Sheriff John Spottswood, Chairman of the Ranch trustees, delivered a short address. “This site,” he said, “is destined to become a home for the homeless where unwanted boys will be wanted, where the needy child will be needed, and where the friendless will find a friend.

“Here, with God’s blessing and the continued help of the people of this community and state, will come the unloved youngsters who at worst face a life of crime, and at best a future of futility.”



The first publicity poster depicted a Sheriff (George Watts) leading a boy (Robert Stauffer, son of the Sheriffs Association’s Field Secretary) into the Boys Ranch.

Spottswood said the Ranch would not be a detention home or a reform school for delinquents, but rather a haven where unfortunate youngsters would find “guidance, a sense of belonging, and a home of their own to help them avoid the pitfalls of delinquency.”

Sheriff Blackburn was given the honor of turning the first spadeful of earth. Then the shovel was passed on to Spottswood and other members of the Board of Trustees.

Next day, August 2, 1958, Vincent M. Jones, a farm-bred vocational agriculture instructor from Live Oak, went to work as the first Resident Manager of the Boys Ranch. The Trustees had hired him to develop a scientific farming program and plan a



Ground was broken for the first Boys Ranch building on August 1, 1958, with Sheriff Ed Blackburn, Jr., accepting the honor of turning the first shovelful. Trustees awaiting their turns are (from left) Sheriff Hugh Lewis, W. F. Edwards, Sheriff Leslie Bessenger, Sheriff John Spottswood, and J. L. McMullen.

detailed child care scenario with vocational overtones. However, supervising construction of the first building was to be his number one priority.

Jones wasted no time getting started, and when the Trustees returned on October 3, 1958, to celebrate the first anniversary of the Boys Ranch, the construction project was about 40 percent completed.

The anniversary celebration featured a ceremony dedicating the first building in memory of Pinellas County Sheriff Sid Saunders, who had been a founder of the Ranch and served briefly as President of the Florida Sheriffs Association before his sudden death in February, 1958. Governor LeRoy Collins and Juvenile Court Judge Marion W. Gooding were the principle speakers.

Judge Gooding declared that juvenile misbehavior was the gravest problem facing our country, and he described the Boys Ranch as “a tremendous stride in the direction of the proper handling of a portion of the problem.”

Governor Collins told the dedication audience that most people think of Sheriffs as “rough and tough men,” but the Boys Ranch project

showed that they were actually (in the words of songwriter Stephen Collins Foster) “dear hearts and gentle people.”

“They have conceived here,” said Collins, “a project that will help needy boys to become fine men.”

Widely acclaimed, the Boys Ranch was rapidly approaching the most important day in its history — the day when the first boys would arrive and Sheriffs could announce: “We are open for business.”

But, in the closing weeks of 1958 there were many preliminary details that still needed attention. An accountant was employed to perform an independent audit of the financial records and set up an efficient bookkeeping system. An admissions committee began screening applications in order to select the first boys to be admitted. Construction workers were being pushed to complete the first residence cottage.

In January 1959, the first cottage parents were hired and moved into a small apartment in one wing of Saunders Cottage. The remainder of the large H-shaped building was being readied as living quarters for 20 boys.

The great experiment — the first venture of its kind orchestrated by law enforcement officers — was about to begin, and Sheriffs were in a buoyant mood as they gathered in Orlando, January 14, 15, and 16, 1959, for the Annual Mid-Winter Conference of the Florida Sheriffs Association.

Past-President John Spottswood presented a progress report in which he listed many accomplishments of the Sheriffs Association. “In these things we take great pride,” he said, “but closest to our hearts . . . is the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch. To me this project exemplifies the spirit in which our Association is facing up to the



Dedication rites for Saunders Cottage, the first building constructed at the Boys Ranch, were held on October 1, 1958.

The landscape was bleak and unattractive when Saunders Cottage was completed early in 1959. What a contrast to the color picture of the same cottage taken in 1987.



responsibilities of modern law enforcement.

“On the rolling acres of the Ranch we intend to provide a home where worthy and needy boys can learn to better serve their state and nation as good citizens. We feel that in this and other ways it is our duty to do everthing possible to curb the steadily rising teen-age crime rate.”

During conference business sesions, Spottswood was elected Chairman of the Association’s Board of Directors, while Blackburn was elected to succeed Spottswood as Chairman of the Boys Ranch Board of Trustees. Blackburn was also requested to continue his duties as the non-paid Executive Director of the Boys Ranch and he agreed to do so.

The Trustees elected Pinellas County Sheriff Don Genung as their Secretary and J.L. McMullen as their Treasurer. They also voted to purchase for \$50 an acre, a 40-acre tract described as “the hole in the doughnut” because it was surrounded by Boys Ranch property. This purchase gave the Ranch an unbroken expanse of 762 acres and set the stage for a banner year of steady progress.

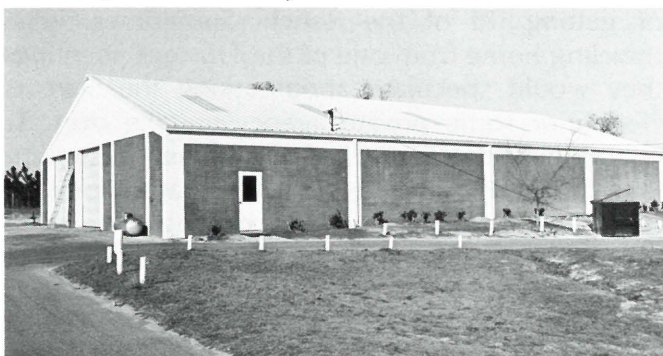
In February 1959, the first boys arrived. In March, the Trustees published a financial statement showing that cash and non-cash donations were averaging over \$10,000 per month — enough to pay operating costs and continue the construction of new facilities.

Additional boys were admitted during the spring and summer, and at the end of August the enrollment totaled 24. Ranch Manager Jones and his small staff had their hands full trying to develop a well rounded program that balanced work and play, a good education and religious training. Fortunately they were getting some help from the nearby community of Live Oak where the boys attended public school and the churches of their choice.

Four new buildings were completed during 1959. These included a second residence cottage for boys, a Ranch Manager’s residence, a Farm Superin-



The original Boys Ranch Warehouse (above) and the renovated version which is a memorial to the late Don McLeod, one of the Boys Ranch founders.



tendent’s residence, and a metal warehouse that functioned as a rudimentary vocational training center.

Days of doubt and despair

When members of the Board of Trustees met on December 29, 1959, to adopt an ambitious budget for 1960, optimism prevailed. They provided \$72,968 for operating funds, estimating that this amount would allow the enrollment to be increased to 32 boys. They also appropriated \$20,900 for farm and soil improvement; \$30,000 for a swimming pool, baseball diamond and tennis courts; and \$40,000 to build residence cottage number three.

There were no serious financial headaches in those days. Sheriffs had discovered that raising funds for a Boys Ranch and building facilities for a Boys Ranch were relatively easy. However, they were soon to find out that running a Boys Ranch was something else — an experience that could try men's souls.

Management problems seemed to multiply during 1960 and 1961. The Ranch had four different managers during that period, all of them will endowed with energy, compassion and dedication, and all equally inexperienced in the difficult business of running a residential child care facility.

The Trustees struggled manfully to keep the project moving forward on an even keel, but they too were inexperienced. They were adrift in uncharted seas and there were no manuals available to tell them how to raise boys in a group setting.

Ironically, the four most active members of the board had no experience in raising boys. Three of them had each raised a daughter, and the fourth was childless. However, it is doubtful that personal experience as fathers of sons would have helped very much. The Trustees were discovering a vast difference between raising children in a normal home and raising boys from poverty and lack of parental guidance.

At times Sheriffs actually discussed the possibility of getting rid of the Ranch. Sometimes, while traveling home from one of the Trustees' meetings, they would speculate about asking the State of Florida or some private agency to take over. To contemplate defeat seemed to ease their frustration, but they never quite became desperate enough to take positive steps toward abandoning the project.

Instead, they sought the advice of experienced experts and they tried to profit from their own mistakes. They persevered through many days of doubt and despair, and the Boys Ranch survived.

An important turning point came in December 1961, when Harry K. Weaver, 32, a federal court probation officer from Tallahassee, was hired to run

the Ranch. He was a graduate of Florida State University and had been in charge of the industrial arts program at the Florida School for Boys, at Marianna, before becoming a probation officer.

Weaver's title was Administrator, but he actually became a jack-of-all-trades as he worked night and day to "pick up the pieces" and get the Boys Ranch running smoothly again. He had come to the Ranch looking for new challenges, and he found them exploding all around him like land mines — in the laundry, in the kitchen, on the farm, and in the residence cottages.

The Ranch was understaffed. Morale was low. Some of the staff members had not had a day off for six months. The situation was just short of chaos and consequently the Administrator's office chair began to gather dust while the Administrator bounced from crisis to crisis. He alternated between washing clothes in the laundry, cooking meals in the kitchen, running the farm, and playing foster father in residence cottages thrown in disorder by the energy and mischief of 44 boys.

For a while Weaver functioned as "relief man" for anyone who needed a day off, and he managed to hold back a staff mutiny with one hand while reaching out with the other in search of additional qualified personnel. Eventually the staff was brought up to the desired level, and there were whole days without a major crisis. By the end of 1962, the Ranch had settled into a pattern of stable progress that is still continuing today.



Governor LeRoy Collins was inducted as "Honorary Rancher" when youngsters from the Boys Ranch visited Florida's Capitol in 1960.



Swimming in the Suwannee River was great fun, but dangerous, and Boys Ranch Trustees gave high priority to building a pool which was completed in 1961. Photo was taken in 1965.

The salubrious * sixties, 1961-1969

The sixties were a time when it was fun to just sit back and watch the Boys Ranch grow.

In 1961 we built the third residence cottage and dedicated cottage number two in memory of Marion County Sheriff F. L. McGehee. For our boys the most exciting event was completion of a \$30,000 olympic-size swimming pool. They had been swimming in the Suwannee, but tricky currents, occasional flooding and shifting sand bars made that a risky business.

This was the year we filmed our first color-sound movie of the Ranch. We did it experimentally, hoping it would be helpful in fund raising efforts. It worked, and we have since updated it numerous times.

Some Alabama Sheriffs dropped in for a visit in 1961 and apparently liked what they saw. Next time we heard from them they were starting the Alabama Sheriffs Boys Ranch. Georgia Sheriffs were our first imitators. Alabama was number two.

We heard from Elvis Presley and his manager, Col. Tom Parker, again. This time they were offering us a rustic, backwoods style house that had been used in the filming of an Elvis movie in central Florida. We accepted with alacrity, and Levy County Sheriff Jim Turner arranged to have the building moved to the Boys Ranch free of charge.



The year 1962 was a year of "firsts." We got our first taste of nation-wide recognition when the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge awarded the Boys Ranch a George Washington Medal for typifying "the American Way of Life."

Rancher Lloyd deGerald completed training at Tallahassee Barber College and became the first boy to go out into the world on his own.

Our first large bequest (\$28,441) was received from the estate of onetime Polish immigrant Agnes A. Torrey, who died childless in Monticello.

We purchased our first big bus in 1962, and the way we paid for it demonstrated once again that Sheriffs are impulsive men of action.

On two different occasions, Boys Ranch Administrator Harry Weaver had told the Trustees that a bus was urgently needed for educational and recrea-

** Don't bother to look it up. Salubrious simply means "conducive to well-being; wholesome; healthful." A better, but less alliterative, word could be found to describe this "golden age" of Boys Ranch progress. However, histories tend to become dry recitations of facts and an occasional arcane word accomplishes two things: (1) It spices up the rhetoric; and (2) it gives a scholarly sheen to the historian's image.*



Our first big bus solved many transportation problems and enabled us to schedule educational and recreational trips.

tional trips, but each time he had gotten the same answer: "Sorry, no funds available."

After the second turndown, Sheriffs Ed Blackburn and Rodney Thursby came to the rescue by pledging to raise the necessary \$6,000.

Thursby decided to carry out his part of the deal by selling Boys Ranch bumper strips in Volusia County. He launched the campaign with a 15-minute trial run in which he sold 18. Then volunteers fanned out countywide and speedily reached their goal of \$3,000.

Across the state, in Hillsborough County, Blackburn raised his half of the purchase price without delay by sponsoring a benefit softball game and jalopy race.

Soon Weaver was getting assurances from Blackburn and Thursby that he could go ahead and order the bus.

Another 1962 acquisition was a residence cottage donated by Col. Robert Pentland, Jr., Miami banker, sportsman and financier who developed a strong affinity for the Ranch, and served it in many ways for many days. We dedicated the new cottage in memory of his mother on November 4, 1962.

This was the second substantial addition to Boys Ranch facilities in 1962. The first was a dairy science building which was dedicated on February 24, in memory of Max Weintraub, a Roumanian farm boy who came to America at the age of 16 to seek his fortune.

Mr. Weintraub believed America was the land of opportunity, and proved it by climbing the ladder of success in true Horatio Alger fashion. After he died in Miami Beach, in 1962, a substantial bequest from



The rustic building donated by singer Elvis Presley and his manager, Col. Tom Parker in 1961, was used as a barber shop and canteen until 1976 when it became the headquarters of the Boys Ranch Alumni Association.

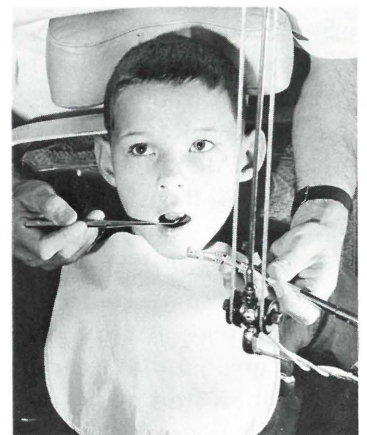
his estate provided the funds we needed to start a dairy science project.

Our tide of good fortune was running strong and a unique offer from members of the Jacksonville Dental Society helped it along. They told us if we would take our boys to Jacksonville periodically, they would give them free dental care.

We snapped up their offer in a hurry, and had no difficulty working out the logistics of it, now that we were the owners of a new 66-passenger bus. Nineteen years later we are still scheduling dental care trips to Jacksonville, and the value of this gift now totals well over \$200,000. We'll never know the true value because we never receive any bills.

News that they were going to get free dental care didn't excite our boys, some of whom had never been in a dentist's chair before coming to the Ranch, but a 1963 visit to the Florida Legislature, in Tallahassee, certainly did. They received an ovation from the lawmakers and ate lunch with Governor Farris Bryant.

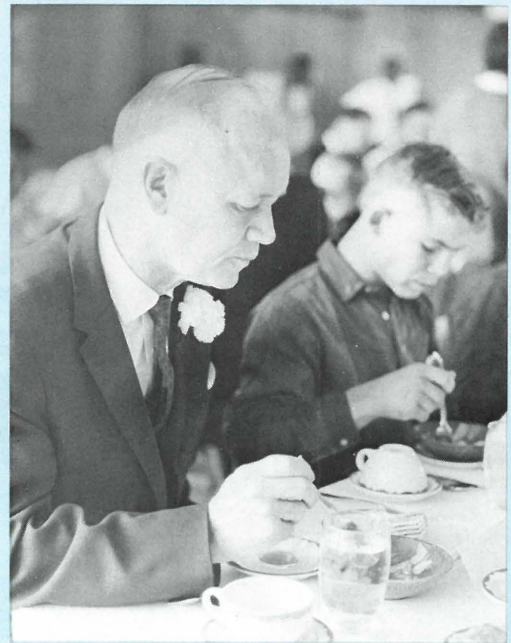
Since 1968, Residents of the Boys Ranch have received free dental care from the Jacksonville Dental Society.





The Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch received its first parade exposure in Broward County (Ft. Lauderdale) in 1960 as a result of the efforts of Otto Hettesheimer, who is pictured here on the parade float, and was a Deputy Sheriff in the Broward County Sheriffs Office. Otto and his wife, Bertha, were early volunteer supporters of the Boys Ranch and were responsible for many substantial gifts.

Pentland Cottage was dedicated on November 4, 1962. This is a current picture of it.



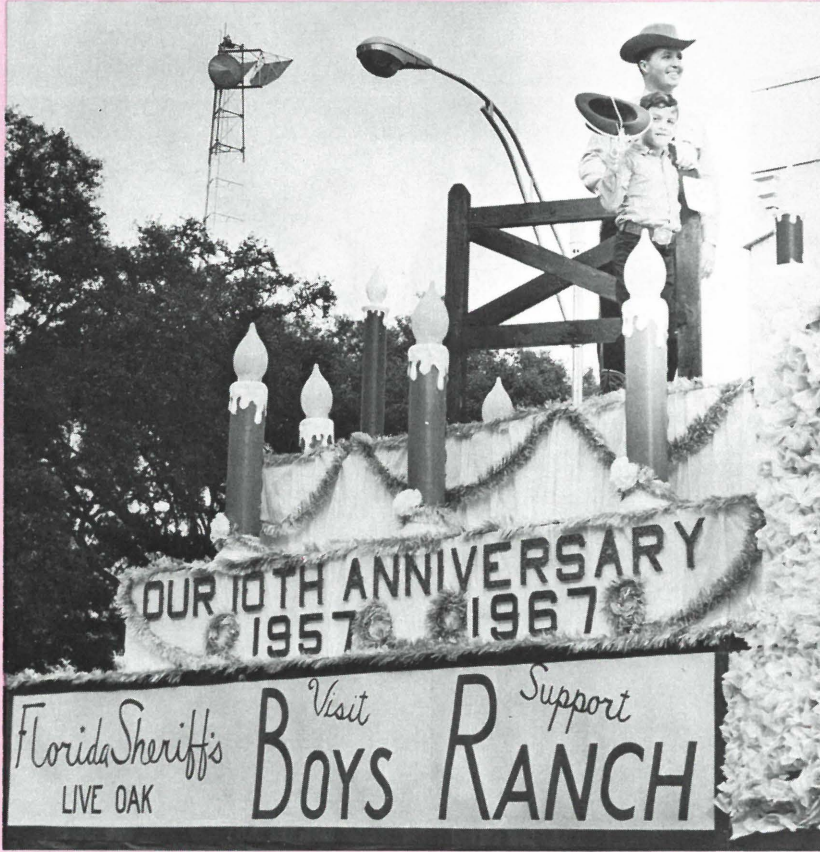
Eating lunch with Governor Farris Bryant was one of the highlights of a 1963 visit to the Florida Legislature.



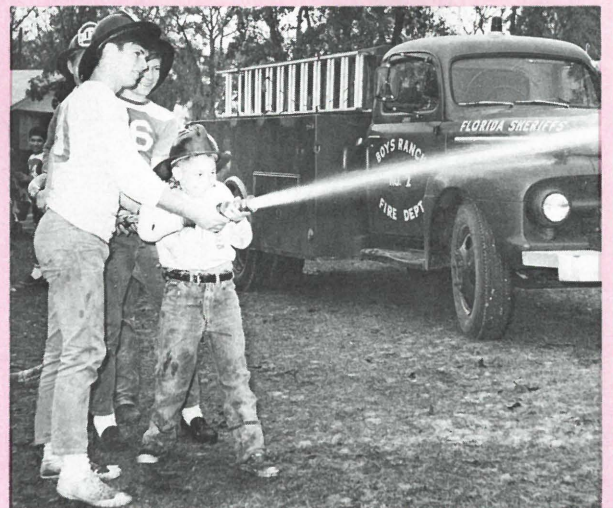
In 1962 the Freedoms Foundation at Valley Forge awarded a George Washington Medal to the Boys Ranch for typifying "the American Way of Life."



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 1960s . . .



We publicized our 10th Anniversary by entering this float in a parade that followed the inauguration of Governor Claude Kirk, January 3, 1967. Deputy Sheriff Buddy Phillips, who later became Sheriff of Suwannee County, and Rancher Donny Michael rode on the float.



In the best of times everything rhymes

In the 1960s the Boys Ranch began receiving widespread public acclaim, and a steady flow of contributions. The management problems that had formerly caused deep concern had been solved. There was no more talk of turning the Boys Ranch over to the State of Florida or some private agency. Enthusiasm was running high among the Sheriffs who were actively supporting it.

So pleased with the way things were going was Sheriff Ed Blackburn, Jr., that he did something entirely out of character; something he had not done since the courting days of his youth when he had been noted for less than immortal valentine messages.

One night in 1963 Blackburn sat down at his dining room table — sat there in his pajamas just before bedtime — and composed a poem that summed up for him what the Boys Ranch was all about.

Titled “The Winner,” Blackburn’s poem was reprinted many times to help publicize the Boys Ranch, and it is still being quoted almost 25 years later. It goes like this:



It's every boy's hope
To reach up his hand,
And find there a grip
That he'll understand

In every boy's heart
There's a burn running deep
For a friend tired and true,
Whose love he will keep

And should the boy win
This goal of his life,
His soul soon will lift
From its moment of strife

But finally when passed
A trophy from above,
The real winner will be
Him who gave love!



The Boys Ranch brought out the dreamer in Blackburn and aroused deep wellsprings of emotion that might not otherwise have been exposed to public view. It was kind of a catalyst, and those who became involved with it ran the risk of having their lives transformed in surprising ways.

The Boys Ranch was capable of turning hard-nosed Sheriffs into sentimental softies; under-privileged boys into bright, eager achievers; and ordinary folks into extraordinary philanthropists.

Many heart-warming things happened to nurture bonds of kind affection between the boys at the Ranch and the loyal friends all over Florida who were sustaining the Ranch with their dollars, their prayers and their deep concern.

Hundreds deserve special mention, but the brevity of this history will allow only a few typical examples.

In 1965, Teresa Terhune was an 81-year-old widow living in a Clearwater nursing home. Under these circumstances she should have been content to drift serenely into the twilight of her lifetime, but she wasn't — not by a long shot! She was too busy keeping in touch with the 60 Ranchers she had “adopted” to do any serene drifting.

Every boy living at the Ranch at the time could expect to receive a birthday card from “Mother Terhune” with a quarter enclosed. And, between birthdays he could also count on receiving Christmas, Easter, and Thanksgiving cards.

In her room at the nursing home “Mother



From the beginning Ranchers were taught to work and play, study and pray. In this 1963 photo they were cleaning up the debris around a construction site.

Terhune" had a "Boys Ranch Desk" where she kept pictures of her boys and a record of their birthdays. Many hours of many days she spent there writing notes, addressing envelopes, signing cards and wrapping quarters.

An aging woman with less spirit and grit would have found these labors too burdensome to sustain, but keeping in touch with Ranchers seemed to stimulate rather than exhaust "Mother Terhune." It gave her a reason for living and may have accounted for the fact that she had an active life well into her 80s.

Eventually the cards stopped coming, but memories of this uncommon silver-haired lady continued to stay alive. Long after her death some of her boys (they were men now with families and adult responsibilities) got together at a meeting of the Boys Ranch Alumni Association and voted to give her the Association's coveted "Our Friend" award posthumously. There was a feeling that a message was sent to her that day, but not through the U.S. Mail.

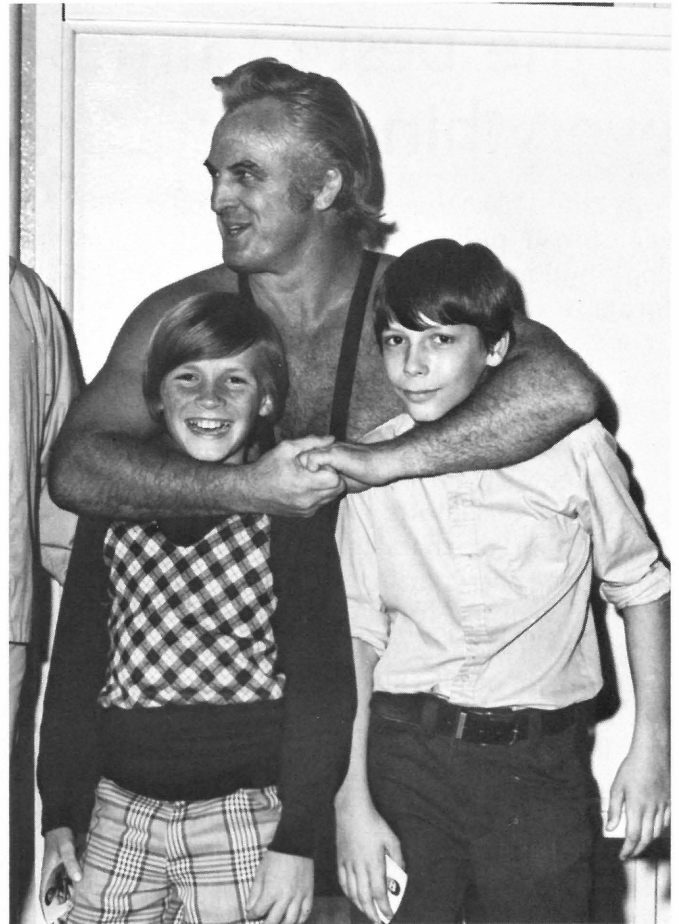
On a par with "Mother Terhune" in our catalogue of caring, sharing friends is a man the Ranchers called their "secret Santa Claus." In the 1960s this modest fellow would send the Boys Ranch sufficient five-dollar bills to provide one for each boy's Christmas stocking. And, to conceal his identity, he would arrange to have the cash delivered by Sheriff Dale Carson.

Year after year the five-dollar bills arrived on schedule, even though our growing enrollment increased the donor's annual outlay from \$100 to \$500. Our curiosity also continued to grow, and it was at a high pitch in 1967 when Major A.D. Tomasello, a Bartow resident, decided to reveal his identity so he could establish a \$10,000 scholarship fund at the Boys Ranch in memory of his wife, Dodie. We learned later that she had been an admirer of the Boys Ranch and had originally suggested the cash Christmas gifts.

When our Ranchers discovered the identity of their benefactor, who was then the dean of lobbyists in the Florida Legislature and also the Director of Public Relations of the Florida Trucking Association, they wondered if the unmasked Santa would continue to put five-dollar bills in their Christmas stockings.

The next Christmas he did, and the Christmas after that. Then came the sad news that "the Major" had died, and everyone assumed the "secret Santa" story had come to an end.

It hadn't, however. Some of the Major's business associates established a \$25,000 Christmas Fund and



Our boys never doubted that Wrestling Impresario Eddie Graham was their loyal friend.

requested that the income be used each year to provide the customary Christmas stocking cash. So, although the Major was gone, memories of his generosity continued to linger on.

Wrestling impresario Eddie Graham was another long time friend of the Ranch who occupied a special niche. During the early days of the project, the benefit wrestling matches he promoted provided a substantial source of income for the Ranch. These fund raisers have continued, and they, together with other activities, have produced more than \$75,000 for the benefit of "Eddie's boys and girls."

It seems metaphorically correct to say that the Boys Ranch had a "hammer lock" on the interest and concern of Eddie Graham for almost 30 years, and he responded by contributing his time and talents in many ways.

He served for many years on the Boys Ranch Board of Trustees and the Youth Fund Board of Directors. He also encouraged other members of the wrestling fraternity to become active supporters of the Ranch, and he demonstrated to our boys in many ways the fact that he was their loyal friend.



Construction of the Boys Ranch chapel was begun in 1964. Color photo was taken in 1987.

In mid-1960s:

Boys Ranch was hit by a building boom

Spectacular growth became the dominant theme in 1964 when the Boys Ranch trustees announced plans for a \$200,000 building boom that included a \$90,000 cafetorium, a \$50,000 all-faiths chapel, a \$10,000 cattle and horse barn, and a \$50,000 residence cottage.

The trustees didn't have the necessary funds, but they forged ahead with characteristic aplomb, and large cash donations materialized as if by magic.

When Cape Kennedy expansion resulting from "moon shot" preparations wiped out the North Canaveral Chamber of Commerce, officials of the defunct organization voted to give their bank balance to charity, and the Boys Ranch netted \$12,000. To this the trustees added donations that had accumulated in the Boys Ranch Memorial Fund, then announced they had sufficient cash to build the proposed all-faiths chapel.

Financing the horse and cattle barn was equally simple. Sheriff Joe Crevassee, Jr., came up with a major portion of the necessary cash by turning over to the Boys Ranch some funds that had been raised by the Gainesville Roping Club and the Alachua County Junior Deputy Sheriff League in benefit horse shows. Then he obtained pledges from various Gainesville sources to provide the required balance.

Raising \$90,000 for the cafetorium — a combination cafeteria and auditorium — wasn't quite that simple. Nevertheless, Sheriff Ed



Yarbrough, Chairman of the Boys Ranch Trustees, made it look easy and simple.

Coached by Col. Bob Pentland, a generous benefactor from Miami, and Joe Diaz, a Tampa businessman fired up with Boys Ranch loyalty, Yarbrough appointed a cafetorium fund raising committee that included A.D. Davis, chain store executive; Cecil Webb, milling magnate; and Syde Deeb, a prominent building contractor. Diaz and Pentland rounded out the line-up.

Persuading busy men of this calibre to attend a meeting was not easy, but Diaz managed to do it after many phone calls; and the committee held its first and only meeting in Jacksonville, February 5, 1964, during the annual Mid-Winter Conference of the Florida Sheriffs Association.

Sitting in on the meeting were members of the J.J. Swick family who had accepted a memorial resolution passed by the Sheriffs Association earlier in the day. Mr. and Mrs. J.J. Swick had recently perished in Jacksonville's Hotel Roosevelt fire, and the resolution cited them for their past generosity toward the Boys Ranch.

Following a game plan he had suggested to Yarbrough, Pentland led off the meeting with a large pledge. Reluctant to be outpledged, other members

of the committee offered even higher amounts. Then the Swick family members said they would donate a large amount to the project, if the trustees would agree to name the cafetorium in memory of the elder Swicks killed in the hotel fire.

This offer was accepted and the committee meeting adjourned. A spectator who clocked the action said the committee had raised \$90,000 in just 15 minutes.

In subsequent weeks, pledges from other sources provided adequate financing for residence cottage number five, and thus all goals of the proposed \$200,000 building boom were achieved in less than a year.

Construction work began almost immediately, and on September 27, 1964, a festive crowd of some 2,000 people gathered at the Boys Ranch to dedicate the Jim and Rena Swick Cafetorium.

"Endow us, dear Lord, with the ability to complete this great vision," said Sheriff Ed Blackburn, Jr., in a dedicatory prayer. Later, as he was walking through the crowd, Charles Mendez, wealthy trucking firm executive from Tampa, came up to him and pledged \$30,000 to complete a partially constructed residence cottage.

Dedication rites for the Jim and Rena Swick Memorial Cafetorium were held on September 27, 1964. Color photo below is a 1987 picture of the cafetorium.

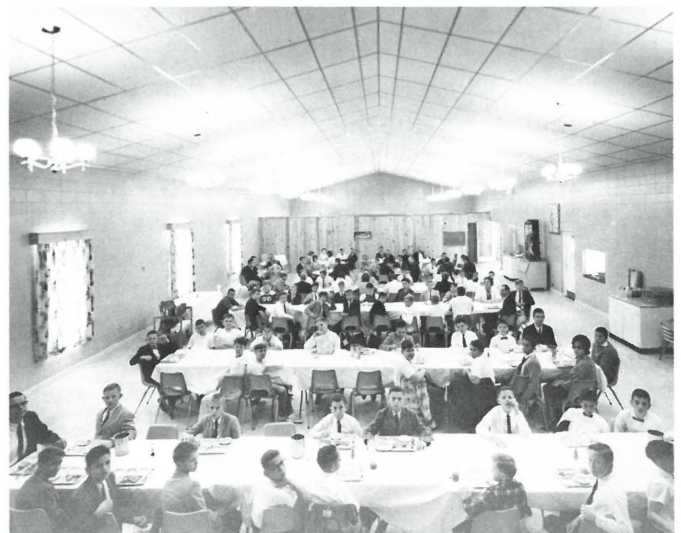


These were the salubrious sixties, and the Boys Ranch was benefiting from an exquisite epidemic of generosity. 'Twas indeed a memorable decade.

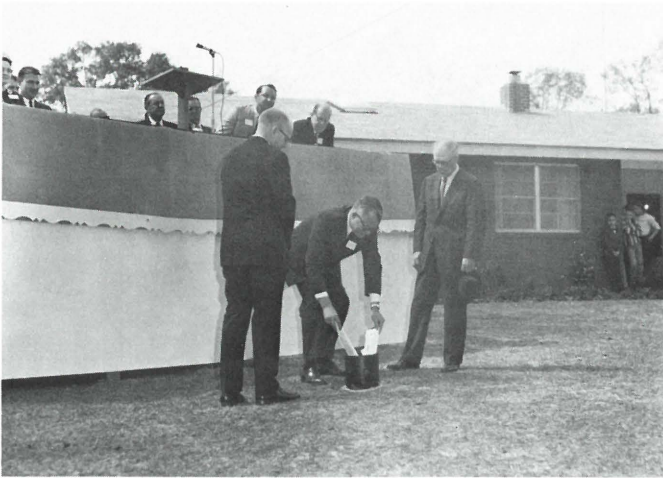
In 1960 the Boys Ranch had been a faltering, problem-plagued "home" for needy and worthy boys with 737 acres of land, limited facilities, and a doubtful future.

And now, at the end of the decade, it was a self-contained community with its own telephone, water and sewer systems, firehouse, gymnasium, medical and dental clinic, chapel, recreational facilities, administration building, paved streets, fire hydrants, street lights, landing strip, laundry and successful agricultural programs.

In just ten years the campus had almost tripled in size and now covered 2,537 acres. The enrollment had increased to a record high of nearly 100 boys.



Interior view of Cafetorium taken in 1965.



With bankers John A. Adicks and George W. Harmony as witnesses, Treasurer J. L. McMullen burned the Boys Ranch mortgages on April 5, 1964. The Ranch was then debt-free.



Lewis Cottage was dedicated in 1964. Photo was taken in 1987.

Dedication rites were held on October 1, 1967, for the Boys Ranch Fire Station, which was built with funds raised by the Florida State Firemen's Association. Color inset photo was taken in 1982.





Mr. and Mrs. James P. Towey, benefactors responsible for the James P. Towey Foundation Memorial Medical and Dental Clinic posed for a picture in front of the clinic when it was dedicated in 1968. Color photo above shows the clinic as it appears today.



The Joe and Frances Diaz Administration Building was completed in 1969.



Generous contributions from Mr. and Mrs. Fred Conn, of Tampa, made possible the construction of Conn Cottage at the Boys Ranch in 1969.



The Carleton and Suzanna Tweed Gymnasium, a \$230,000 gift to the Boys Ranch, was dedicated on October 12, 1969.

Family Social Workers began to play a vital role in 1965

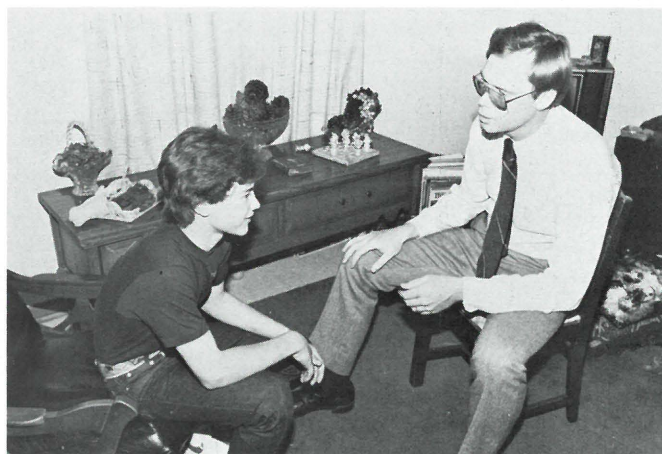
Early in 1965, we created a new Social Service Department to provide counseling, screen applicants for admission, and otherwise enhance our ability to give youngsters "a better break."

Jim Strayer, a well qualified social worker with an MSW degree from Florida State University, was hired as the first Social Services Director. His wife, Betty, who had equally good social work credentials, assisted him part-time.

Since then, Strayer has been promoted to Youth Ranches Vice President for Youth Services, and the staff of Family Social Workers (FSWs) has increased to 12. The FSWs cover the state of Florida by regions, following up on "Requests for Service;" performing background studies; counseling youngsters and families; and preparing documentation for judicial reviews.

When a youngster is admitted to residential care, a FSW continues counseling with the family to assist with problems and to encourage changes in the home environment that will enable the youngster to return home at some future time. Working simultaneously with the youngsters in residential care and the families "back home" enhances the helping process and tends to reduce the length of stay in residential care.

Using a program titled "Systematic Training for Effective Parenting" (STEP), FSWs prepare family members for a reunion with youngsters who are



Youth Ranches Unit Director Dru Thompson counsels with Rancher.

ready to leave residential care. Families continue to receive support and assistance from FSWs after youngsters have left residential care. We call this "After-Care Services."

On the average, youngsters in care will be reunited with their families within a year, but there are always those who have no suitable place to go. The fact that we are licensed to arrange foster care or adoptions enables us to help them explore numerous alternatives.

The nature of the services FSWs provides, and the element of confidentiality that enters into their work prevent them from receiving as much publicity as other Youth Ranches staff members. Nevertheless, they play a vital role in our ministry of mercy.

During the 1985-86 fiscal year FSWs responded to 703 requests for service; carried combined case loads of 364 youngsters in residence and 249 in after-care; and provided services to an average of 1,185 individuals (youth and families) through family counseling.

PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 60s



When Wally Edwards was graduated from North Florida Junior College in 1965 the cheering section included three couples from the Boys Ranch staff. They are, from left: Mr. and Mrs. Jim Strayer, Mr. and Mrs. John Schmutz, and Mr. and Mrs. Jim Brettingen.



During a trip to Washington in 1964 Ranchers had lunch with (from left) U.S. Representative Don Fuqua, Sheriff Ed Blackburn, Jr., Speaker of the House John McCormack, Sheriff Don Genung and Senator Spessard Holland.

Boys Ranch is self-contained community

Located near Live Oak, and midway between Tallahassee and Jacksonville, the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch is a self-contained community with its own water and sewer systems, paved streets, post office, school, library, firehouse and medical-dental clinic. The Suwannee River (see upper right corner of aerial photo) forms its north border.

Sports and recreation facilities include a gymnasium, playing fields for baseball, football and soccer, a swimming pool, tennis courts, a horse show arena and an arts and craft center. A cafetorium that serves a dual purpose as a dining hall and auditorium is frequently used for concerts, movies, banquets and other types of entertainment.

Other campus structures include an all-faiths chapel, vehicle repair shops, a maintenance shop, a guest house, an administration building, nine residence cottages that provide family-style living for 108 boys, farm buildings, an alumni center and staff residences.

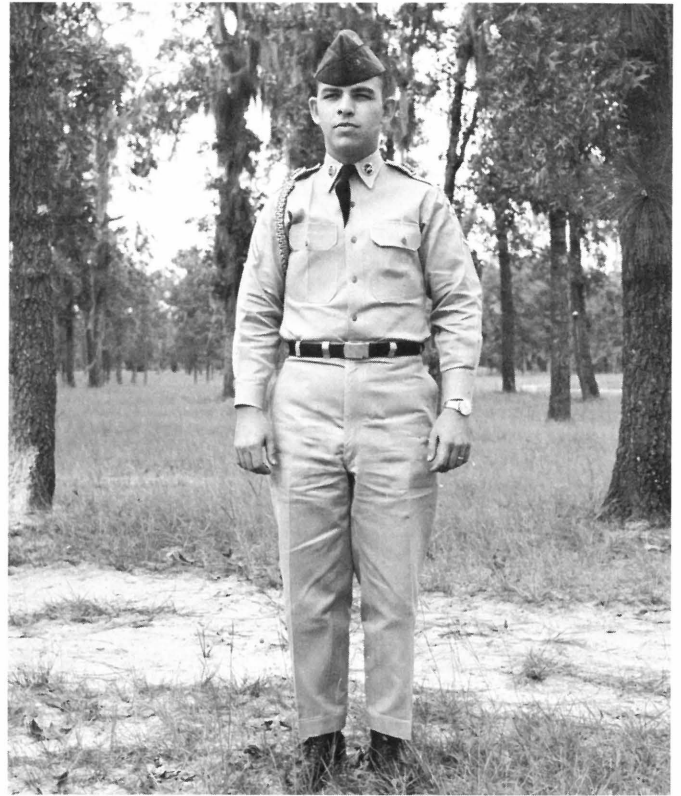
A major portion of the Boys Ranch acreage is devoted to agriculture, with beef cattle and pine trees as the principal crops. Horses are also pastured here for recreational purposes, and also for lessons in horsemanship.







Wally Edwards, now a U.S. Marine headed for Viet Nam, was married to the former Joyce Hilton in the Boys Ranch chapel on November 12, 1966. Theirs was the first wedding in the chapel.



Former Rancher Buddy McHenry was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for heroism in 1966, while serving in Viet Nam.

Some things we would rather forget

The 1960s produced many happy memories, but there are some we would rather forget — especially those involving the undeclared war in Viet Nam which brought pain, great risks and mental anguish to some of our “boys.”

By the end of 1966, we had at least ten former Ranchers “over there in the thick of it.” One of them was Wally Edwards, who had become the first Rancher to obtain a college degree when he was graduated from North Florida Junior College in 1965.

Wally enlisted in the U.S. Marines after graduation, married the former Joyce Hilton in the Boys Ranch Chapel on November 12, 1966, and was on his way to “Nam” a few weeks later.

By this time former Rancher Royal E. (Buddy) McHenry was already a combat veteran. He was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star for heroism after he helped to repel a guerilla attack on enlisted men’s billets in Saigon.

Reports received at the Boys Ranch revealed that Buddy had been wounded by weapons fire and a bomb explosion, but insisted on helping to take care

of his wounded buddies, and would not allow his own wounds to be treated until all of the casualties had been evacuated.

In August 1967, we learned that former Rancher Mike Edwards, brother of Wally and one of our star athletes, had been wounded in both legs, and had been transferred to the states for surgery and skin grafts. He was awarded the Purple Heart.

Staff Sgt. Bob Malone was one of our most decorated former Ranchers. He enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1967, and went to Viet Nam as a paratrooper. After his first tour of duty he reenlisted, requested to be returned to Viet Nam, and was assigned to the famous “Green Berets.”

Later, when he visited the Boys Ranch, he was wearing an imposing cluster of ribbons that included the Air Medal (for 150 helicopter missions), the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star with Valor “V” for heroism under fire, the National Defense Ribbon, a Vietnamese Service Medal, and a Good Conduct Medal with overseas bar.

In 1968 Boys Ranch officials had reason to be

worried about Air Force Sgt. Jerry Willard. He was pulling extremely hazardous duty making air drops of supplies to ground forces under heavy anti-aircraft fire. He narrowly escaped death when the C-130 on which he was a crewman was shot down in flames, but he survived the crash without serious injuries and was recommended for the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart and the Air Force Cross.

Near the end of 1969, Jerry returned to the Boys Ranch, and married Jeanne Schmutz, the daughter of his former cottage parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Schmutz. Wedding attendants included Wally Edwards, who by that time was in the printing business, and Mike Edwards, who was then employed as a deputy sheriff in Hillsborough County.

Former Ranchers Bob Malone (left) and Mike Edwards visited the Boys Ranch after serving in Viet Nam. Mike was awarded the Purple Heart and transferred to the U.S. for treatment of wounds. Bob was one of our most decorated Viet Nam veterans.



Facelift for a familiar landmark

One of the early improvements at the Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch was a water system fed by a sky-piercing water tower. In the beginning it was simply a necessary fixture designed to serve current needs and accommodate future growth. Since then, its bulbous tank thrusting high above the rolling woods and farmlands of the Suwannee River Valley has become many things for many people:

* A landmark for airborne pilots seeking to establish their bearings;

* A symbol of high aspirations for youngsters down below whose lives are being salvaged from valleys of desperation and despair;

* A friendly beacon for returning alumni in search of their roots.

We do not take lightly the fact that the old landmark has collected a patina of symbolic values aside from its utilitarian virtues. Consequently, it seemed appropriate that we should hire painters to give it a facelift in time for the Youth Ranches' 30th Birthday Party — and that is precisely what we did.

Big decision: Sheriffs “adopted” Girls Villa in 1969



As they neared the end of the 1960s, Sheriffs were undecided about their future course of action.

The Boys Ranch was 75 percent complete. Voluntary gifts — the sole source of revenue — were adequate to keep it going and growing. It was successful and financially secure.

Some Sheriffs were in favor of simply completing the Boys Ranch master plan and then leveling off. They were content to coast along for a while on the momentum created by the phenomenal growth the Boys Ranch had experienced since 1957.

Others wanted to start a second child care facility — perhaps one that would offer to needy and worthy girls the same benefits the Boys Ranch was giving to needy and worthy boys.

A friendly debate developed, and it might have gone on for years if the Sunshine State Women’s Chamber of Commerce (SSWCC), a Madeira Beach organization, hadn’t gotten involved.

Around 1967 the SSWCC ladies translated their admiration for the Boys Ranch into a project to raise funds for a similar facility to benefit girls. They called their proposed child care facility Girls Villa, and began raising funds by holding cake sales, “white elephant” sales, and square dance jamborees.

It was hard work, and by the time they had raised \$10,000 they began to realize that their small organization was not capable of financing the proposed Girls Villa. At that point they began urging the Sheriffs Association to take over the project.

Politely, but firmly, the Association officials turned them down, explaining that they already had their

We repainted the sign on our surrey to include the Boys Ranch and Girls Villa before entering it in a Tallahassee parade in 1971.

hands full with the fast-growing Boys Ranch, and they weren’t financially able to take on another project.

The ladies from the SSWCC were disappointed, but not discouraged. They continued to raise funds, and they also “politicked” Sheriffs individually to persuade them that taking over the Girls Villa project was a super idea.

One by one influential Sheriffs got aboard the Girls Villa bandwagon, and they constituted a solid majority on September 19, 1969, when the Sheriffs Association voted to adopt the project.

After that, progress was swift. A site near Bartow was chosen in 1971. The first buildings were completed in 1972; and the first girls were admitted shortly thereafter.

Steady growth continued until a planned capacity of 50 girls was attained.

In 1986 a decision was reached to make the Girls Villa a co-ed facility and change the name to Florida Sheriffs Youth Villa. The first boys were admitted in 1987.



Located in a rural setting near Bartow, the Youth Villa (formerly the Girls Villa) offers a wide variety of outdoor activities.



The Villa Activity Center provides a chapel, a learning center, a large recreation room with kitchen facilities for banquets and celebrations, and a swimming pool.



One of five residence cottages at the Villa.



Canoeing and water skiing are popular forms of recreation due to the convenience of two lakes bordering the Villa campus.

Heading out to the highway to catch a school bus is a familiar routine for Villa residents attending public schools. However, many youngsters arrive at the Villa unprepared to enter school at the appropriate grade level because they have been deprived of normal schooling. For their benefit we provide a learning center on campus where intense remedial courses enable them to "catch up" to their peers. Once their academic disabilities have been remedied, they have many educational opportunities from which they can choose due to the excellent secondary schools, vocational schools and colleges in the area.





These photos highlight the fact that the former Girls Villa became the Youth Villa after boys were admitted for the first time in mid-1987.



Former Girls Villa is now the Youth Villa

The beautifully landscaped, lakeside campus of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Villa (formerly the Girls Villa until boys were admitted for the first time in mid-1987) is located in Central Florida, near Bartow.

Its facilities include five residence cottages with a capacity of 50 youngsters, an administration building, staff residences, riding stables, a maintenance shop, a boat house, tennis and volleyball courts and a softball field; also an activity center that provides an auditorium, a kitchen for group meals, a swimming pool, a chapel, schoolrooms, a fitness center, an arts and crafts studio and a library.

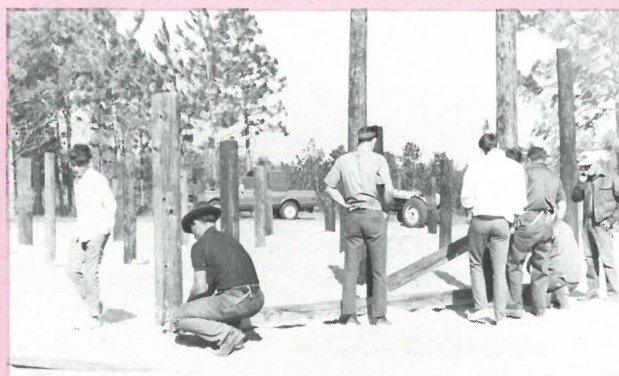




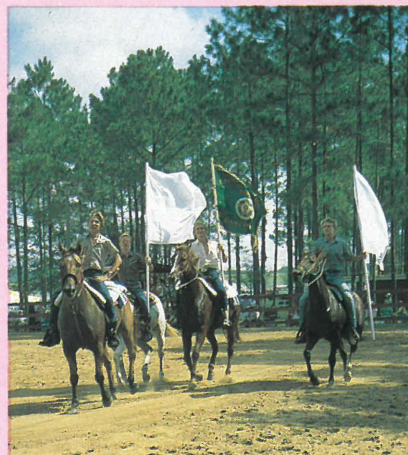
PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 1970s . . .

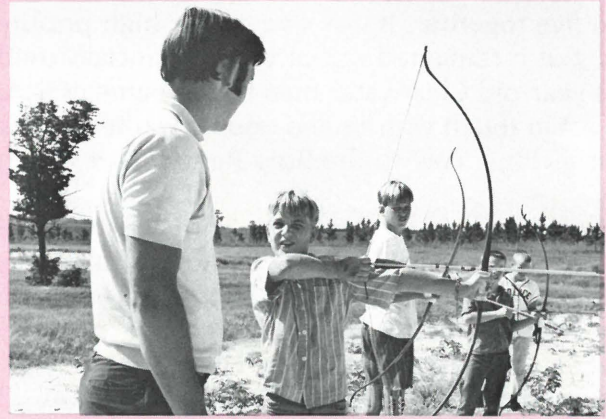
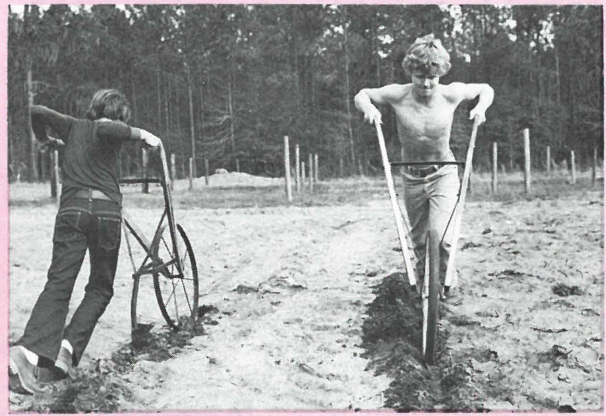


The Boys Ranch acquired its own post office in 1970 and the first "Boys Ranch, Florida 32060" postmarks went into the mail on June 26.



Near the end of 1970 the Clay County Mavericks Saddle Club built a \$6,000 horse show arena at the Boys Ranch. They provided labor, supplies and equipment. Horse shows in the Mavericks Arena have become a traditional feature of Boys Ranch anniversary celebrations.





The Elvis Presley building formerly used as a canteen and barber shop became the Boys Ranch Alumni Association headquarters in 1976. Alumni Association volunteers are shown sprucing it up with a paint job.

A mammoth birthday cake with simulated flaming candles was constructed near the horse show arena in 1977 to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the Boys Ranch.

Youth Ranch began after we visited a man who wanted to give us a cow

Not long after the Florida Sheriffs Girls Villa opened for business in 1972 we began to see the need for a new facility where brothers and sisters could live together. It was one of our high priority goals, but it remained out of reach financially until an 80-year-old Clearwater man by the name of D.A. Salls got in touch with us and said he wanted to talk about giving a cow to the Boys Ranch. That was in 1975.

When Youth Fund President Harry Weaver and Vice President Don Genung went to see Salls, they discovered that he and his wife, Catherine, lived in a large house on a substantial piece of property between Clearwater and Safety Harbor.

It turned out that the Salls were financially well off and raising cattle was a hobby, rather than a business. It also became apparent that they had more than an idle interest in the Boys Ranch and Girls Villa. They asked many questions, and the first visit developed into a whole string of visits.

As the talks progressed, the Salls' offer of one cow was increased to three cows, and eventually they decided to donate their entire herd of 54 Charolais cattle to the Boys Ranch.

After the cattle were transported to the Boys Ranch the dialogue could have ended, but it didn't. More talks were held.

The Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranch is located near Clearwater in an urban setting. This aerial photograph shows facilities that include an administration building, staff residences, three residence cottages for boys and girls, a fishing pond, a maintenance building, a softball field, tennis courts, and an activity center that encompasses a swimming pool, a chapel, an auditorium, school rooms, woodworking shop, and arts and crafts facilities. The Youth Ranch site was originally the residential property of Mr. and Mrs. D.A. Salls, and they donated their home and property in 1976. Since then shopping centers and residences have been built in this area without interfering with the programs and function of this facility.

"Our house is too big for just the two of us," the Salls told Weaver and Genung, and said they didn't know what to do. Weaver suggested it could be used as a house for boys and girls — particularly brothers and sisters who seldom had an opportunity to see each other because they were housed some 200 miles apart at the Boys Ranch and Girls Villa.

Eventually the talks began focusing on arrangements for the Salls to donate their home and surrounding acres as a Youth Ranch site. Once these details were worked out, additional land was purchased adjoining the donated land, and by 1976 the Youth Ranch was an actual project, rather than just a proposal.

After the Salls moved out, their home was remodeled to accommodate ten youngsters and a married couple employed as cottage parents. The first youngsters were admitted in 1978, and construction of additional facilities began almost immediately.

Since then the campus has been completed, and our first venture in co-ed child care has been deemed a singular success.

Nevertheless, we still have difficulty believing that this amazing success story began with four people discussing a cow.

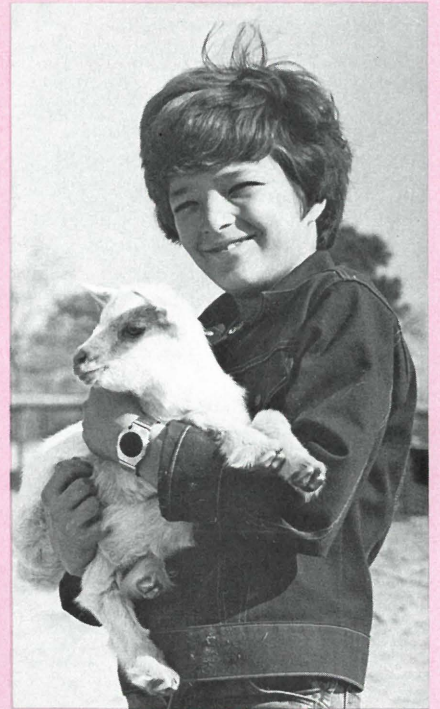


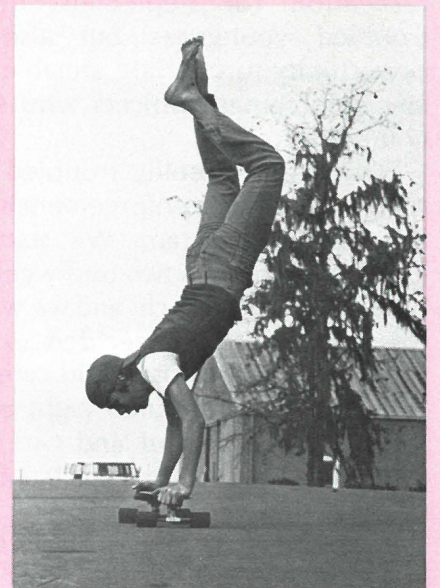
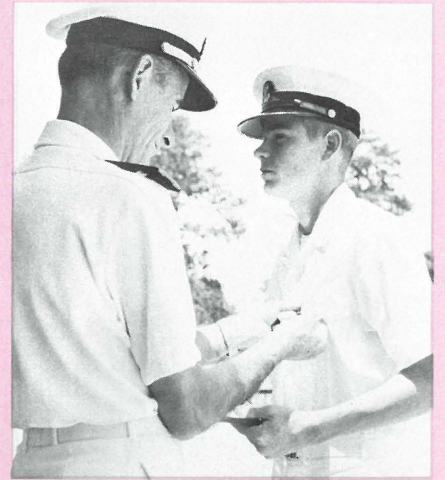
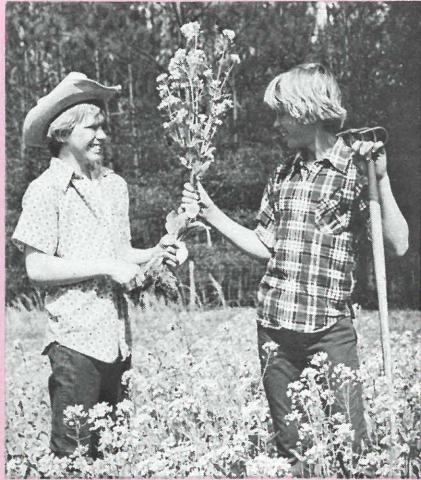


Former Salls home was renovated for use as the first residence cottage.



PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 70s...







Camping added to our line-up of services in the 1980s

During the 1980s we have developed a camping program that not only provides wholesome recreation for neglected, unsupervised, and troubled youngsters but also gives them an opportunity to cultivate amiable relationships with law enforcement officers who serve as volunteer counselors.

Erasing any hostility troubled youngsters might harbor toward law enforcement is one of the goals of this unique program. We started it in 1981 by enrolling 40 boys in two one-week camping sessions held at the Boys Ranch, and we were so pleased with the results that we decided to make camping a permanent part of our child care spectrum.

In 1982 we scheduled eight one-week camping sessions at Boy Scout and Girl Scout reservations around the state and enrolled over 250 boys and girls.

Not long after that summer session ended, we acquired a camp near DeLand that had formerly been used by Girl Scouts and named it the Florida

Sheriffs Youth Camp. Currently these facilities are being used for summer camping sessions and also for year 'round wilderness camping.

In 1986 we obtained a 182-acre site north of Inglis (in Levy County) and began operating a second wilderness camping program on it. We named this facility Caruth Camp in honor of Mr. and Mrs. W.W. Caruth, Jr., whose generosity enabled us to create this newest child care program. The Caruths live in Dallas, Texas, but are the owners of the Plantation Inn and Golf Resort, in Crystal River, Florida, and visit there frequently. Prior to making a site available for our second wilderness camp program, they demonstrated their interest in our child care activities by donating a bulldozer.

Recently we added 60 acres to Caruth Camp — a gift from Georgia Pacific. We also purchased 40 acres adjoining the Youth Camp so we could create stables and pastures for the horseback riding phase of our camping program.



The deep, cool spring at Caruth Camp is ideal for swimming and fishing.



Our Youth Camp gives youngsters an opportunity to cultivate amiable relationships with law enforcement officers.

Accreditation achieved in 1983

The Florida Sheriffs Youth Fund (which later became the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches) was accredited by the National Association of Homes for Children (NAHC) in 1983 following a detailed evaluation and inspection procedure.

The NAHC at that time represented more than 400 residential child care agencies with a combined enrollment of more than 30,000 troubled girls and boys. Its standards were recognized as the highest in the field of residential group child care, and it was a point of pride for us that we were the first agency in Florida, and one of less than 15 nationwide to achieve accreditation.

Getting NAHC sanction was not easy. The process required, first, an extensive self-study requiring us to evaluate our degree of compliance with 200 specific standards. These involved not only our child care programs, but also the functions of our governing board, fiscal accountability, personnel practices, organization and administration, buildings, grounds

and equipment; also our fund-raising practices.

Later we were visited by a peer review team consisting of seven professional child care agency administrators. They inspected our programs thoroughly for almost a week, then submitted a detailed report to the NAHC Accreditation Commission.

We waited almost four months before receiving notification that we were accredited. It was a big moment for everyone involved in the Youth Ranches saga, and it was tempered by the sobering knowledge that we had to maintain our level of excellence in order to remain accredited.

It is the NAHC's policy to reevaluate accredited agencies every five years. Consequently, we will be "under the microscope" again in 1988. The next review will be conducted by the Council on Accreditation, an agency with which the NAHC Accreditation Commission merged.

Boards of Associates are “friend raisers”

It is no accident that the child care programs of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches bask in a friendly “climate” of public opinion. Much of the credit for this benevolent environment belongs to the Boards of Associates that function as “friend raisers” rather than fund raisers for the Boys Ranch, Youth Villa, Youth Ranch, Youth Camp, and Caruth Camp.

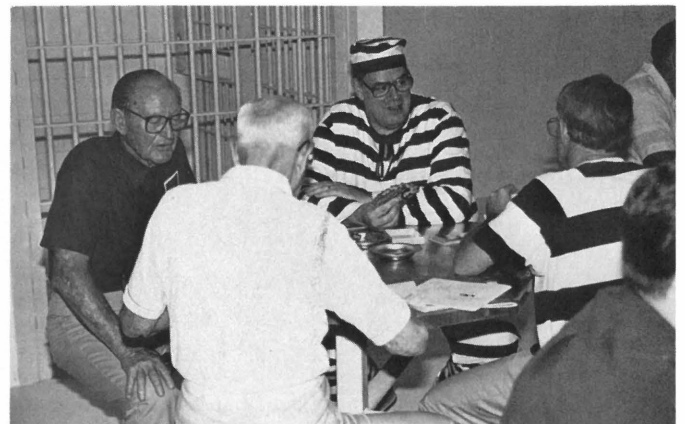
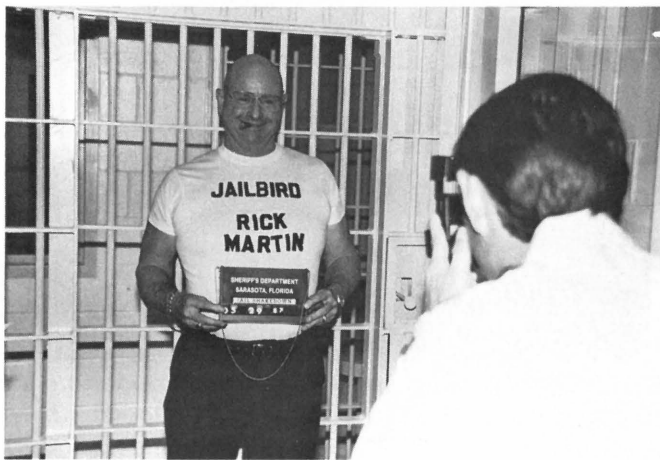
Each residential care program has a board composed of local citizens who qualify as opinion holders and molders. These carefully selected board members are requested to help us maintain open lines of communication with the public; give advice

to us when we are facing major issues; and serve as good will ambassadors for the Youth Ranches.

To help them achieve their mission, we try to acquaint them thoroughly with our program, our philosophy, our staff, and our children.

Experience has shown that when we perform our part of the “bargain” conscientiously, better public understanding and acceptance of our programs just naturally results.

The boards are advisory and supportive, and have no policy making power, but they pack a potent public relations punch.



Law abiding citizens paid \$50 apiece for the privilege of being fingerprinted, photographed and locked up overnight; and the Youth Ranches netted over \$14,000.

Question:

How far will friends go to help the Youth Ranches?

Answer: To jail

On May 29, 1987, over 100 people, none of whom was charged with a crime, paid \$50 apiece to spend a night in the new Sarasota County Jail.

This unique “incarceration of the innocents” gave Sarasota County Sheriff Geoff Monge an opportunity to put the new jail through a “shakedown” to make certain all the state-of-the-art equipment was in working order before the real inmates were admitted.

It also added one more example to the long list of unique ways in which funds have been raised for the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches. In this case, \$40 of each \$50 paid by the voluntary guests constituted a donation, and the balance of \$10 covered expenses of the venture.

Helping the Youth Ranches is an almost universal

impulse, and it causes our friends to do some amazing things.

Recently a physician told us we could have his \$180,000 beach house if we would move it. The catch was, it had to be moved by barge on the Gulf of Mexico, but we did it; and the donor paid the moving expenses.

One of our good friends who was dieting signed up fellow-dieters and got them to pledge \$25 to us every time they cheated.

For 30 years we have benefited from an endless variety of gifts and givers. Bruised and battered professional wrestlers, for instance, slam each other around the ring, then send us the profits.

Elderly men of a gentler sort who played their harmonicas for pay at parties got into the habit of sending us their profits years ago.

A state prison convict sent money to us and a note. “If there had been a Boys Ranch when I was growing

up," he wrote, "I might not be where I am today."

An elderly widow in a retirement community sold her diamond ring — a treasured memento of a long marriage — and gave the money to us.

"When my husband put that ring on my finger 51 years ago, it was with the hope of a future family," she wrote, "and we did have a very happy family by adopting two lovely, otherwise homeless boys. Now I feel I would like to have the ring continue its work by helping some other homeless boys."

We could write a book — volumes in fact — about the generous people who support us with gifts and services. And, because we depend upon voluntary gifts for our survival, we keep searching in vain for adequate words to describe how deeply we are indebted to them.



Sarasota County Sheriff Geoff Monge (right) was the host for "Slumber in the Slammer," and Youth Ranches President Harry K. Weaver was one of the voluntary "jailbirds."

New Dimensions, Part I:

Prescott challenge encouraged us to establish an endowment fund

At least 80 percent of our annual income is derived from private gifts, a source that fluctuates substantially from year to year. Because of this, we have become aware that permanent endowment funding is one of our most critical needs, and, in fact, the key to long-term financial stability.

By a fortunate coincidence, Mr. and Mrs. W.H. Prescott, Jr., loyal friends impressed with results achieved by the Boys Ranch, reached the same conclusion after making their own independent

review of our financial statements, and this prompted them to issue a challenge. Raise \$1 million, they said, and we will give you an additional \$200,000 through the Prescott Foundation.

Meeting this challenge became one of our primary financial goals during 1986, and we achieved it. Consequently, Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches now has an Endowment Fund which — if brought to full maturity by future gifts — will ultimately provide at least half of our operating expenses, and give us the financial stability we need to carry out our long range objectives.

New Dimensions, Part II:

Indiantown project will extend our outreach

A proposed South Florida Youth Ranch and Youth Camp progressed beyond the talking stage in 1983 when we acquired a 3,709-acre site near Indiantown, a Martin County community west of Stuart and northwest of West Palm Beach.

During subsequent years, land use surveys were made and a master land utilization plan was completed, but several factors prevented us from starting construction of facilities. One was the lack of sufficient funding for a venture of this magnitude. Another was the Caruth Camp project which

became more financially feasible than the Indiantown project after the patrons, Mr. and Mrs. W.W. Caruth, Jr., not only offered an attractive Central Florida site, but also provided substantial cash gifts to be used as "start up" funds.

Caruth Camp developed at a fast pace during 1986, and is now "in business," while the Indiantown project has remained "on hold." Nevertheless, we have made a commitment to establish a residential care facility in South Florida, and we intend to proceed with it as soon as we are financially able.

New Dimensions, Part III:

Youth Ranches Foundation chartered in 1986

The Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches Foundation, Inc., was approved by the Florida Sheriffs Association and chartered as a Florida corporation in 1986.

Its mission is to secure, through systematic marketing and public information programs, sufficient funds to provide for the orderly growth and development of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches. At all times this mission will be pursued in a manner that is consistent with the statewide level of need and with the efforts of other parties on behalf of the Youth Ranches.

The Foundation's 15-member Board of Directors

and its President, who is the chief executive officer, are required to manage, invest and distribute the funds that are raised "in accordance with the highest standards of prudence and professional care."

Youth Ranches President Harry K. Weaver was appointed as the first President of the Foundation in 1986. He reports to, and acts for, the Board; but the charter prohibits him from being a member of the Board.

One of the initial actions taken by the Board was to apply to the Internal Revenue Service for 501 (c) (3) status in order to make gifts to the Foundation deductible for income tax purposes.



Opp Store No.1, located in Live Oak, opened early in 1987 with 15,000 square feet of retailing floor space and 9,600 square feet of storage.

New Dimensions, Part IV:

New "Opp Stores" sell surplus merchandise

Throughout our history we have accepted an amazing variety of non-cash gifts — cars, trucks, boats, horses, furniture, clothing, silverware, jewelry, antiques, etc. Many of these items have been put to use in our child care programs. Those that were surplus, or did not fit our needs, have been sold at auctions and rummage sales held several times a year at our Central Office site adjacent to the Boys Ranch campus.

These periodic sales developed into such a valuable source of revenue, and became so well attended in spite of their remote rural location, that we decided to move our retailing to a more accessible location and operate it on a six-days-a-week schedule.

To implement this decision, we acquired the former Greens' Furniture Warehouse on busy U.S. Route 90, 1½ miles east of Live Oak, near the end of 1986. Then we filled it with surplus merchandise, and opened the first Youth Ranches Opportunity Store early in 1987.

Business has been brisk, in spite of an intentional lack of advertising to avoid being swamped with customers in the initial months, and now we are contemplating the possibility of additional outlets around Florida.

We have begun calling these outlets "Opp Stores," and we have been advising our loyal supporters to "watch for an Opp Store near you."

Meanwhile, we are continuing to hold our



Behind the scenes, workers carefully inspect, tag and sometimes launder surplus merchandise before it goes on sale.

traditional surplus merchandise auctions periodically at the Central Office warehouse nine miles north of Live Oak.

The non-cash gifts that are sold in our retailing ventures have always been an important factor in sustaining the momentum of Youth Ranches progress. In fact, the first gift we received at the beginning of the Youth Ranches saga in 1957 was a non-cash item — a piece of Suwannee River Valley property upon which the Boys Ranch was built.

In the beginning, we were able to use almost every non-cash gift we received. After a while a surplus developed, and we began to store items for later use. Soon we ran out of storage space.

In the 1960s we experimented with Boys Ranch auctions as a means of marketing some of the surplus, and we held simultaneous rummage sales to dispose of books, toys, clothing, housewares and other items too small, or of too little value, to auction.

Both projects were so successful that we were encouraged to build a large central warehouse adjacent to the Boys Ranch so we could provide safe, adequate storage for non-cash gifts as well as a comfortable, sheltered environment for bargain hunters.

The volume of non-cash gifts is amazing. We are currently using over \$100,000 worth of clothing, furniture, motor vehicles, etc., annually in Youth Ranches programs, and yet we have sufficient surplus to operate our Opp Store and auctions.



The Youth Ranches fleet of trucks used to pick up non-cash gifts all over the state includes a 1987 GMC tractor and three 42-foot semi-trailers.



Shoppers find an almost endless variety of items at bargain prices.



Customers visiting Opp Store #1 have many opportunities to inspect and try out the merchandise. The store is a "happy hunting ground" for browsers, and the merchandise appeals to shoppers of all ages.

THE FLORIDA SHERIFFS YOUTH RANCHES IS . . .



A charitable, non-profit corporation, sponsored by the Florida Sheriffs Association, to manage and operate the Boys Ranch, Youth Villa, Youth Ranch, Youth Camps, and any other Youth programs that might later be developed by the Florida Sheriffs Association. An important function of the Youth Ranches is the raising, receiving, budgeting, and disbursing of funds for its programs. The Youth Ranches and its programs are supported almost entirely by voluntary gifts. Gifts and bequests can be made to the Youth Ranches for the exclusive benefit of any single program, such as the Boys Ranch, Youth Villa, Youth Ranch, Youth Camp, or Caruth Camp, or they may be made without restriction, to be distributed among existing programs as most needed or to be used for the development of new programs at the discretion of the Governing Board. Youth Ranches Central Offices are co-located with the Boys Ranch.

MAILING ADDRESS — Florida Sheriffs Youth
Ranches, Boys Ranch, Florida, 32060
Telephone: 904/842-5501

BOYS RANCH IS . . .

A residential group child care program for Florida's neglected, unsupervised, and troubled boys between the ages of eight and eighteen. It is not an institution for juvenile delinquents. The Boys Ranch is sponsored by the Florida Sheriffs Association and operated by the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches. It was founded in 1957 and currently has approximately 108 boys in residence at any given time. The Boys Ranch is located in North Florida, about half-way between Jacksonville and Tallahassee and nine miles north of the town of Live Oak on County Rd. 795. Telephone: 904/842-5555

YOUTH VILLA IS . . .

A similar program for boys and girls located two miles east of Bartow, Florida, on Route 60. Originally conceived by the Sunshine State Women's Chamber of Commerce of Madeira Beach, Florida, the Youth Villa was adopted as a project of the Florida Sheriffs Association in 1970. The first buildings were completed and the first children admitted in 1972. There are approximately 50 boys and girls in residence at any given time. Telephone: 813/533-0371



YOUTH RANCH IS . . .

A residential group child care program of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches. It was founded in 1976 and opened in 1978. It is located just east of the intersection of the McMullen-Booth Road and County Road 102 (Enterprise Road) near Clearwater, Florida. The Youth Ranch has approximately 30 boys and girls in residence at any given time. It provides care in a homelike environment for brothers and sisters who are neglected, unsupervised and troubled boys and girls. Telephone: 813/725-4761

YOUTH CAMP IS . . .

A facility which operates a Wilderness Camping Program and a Summer Camping Program for boys and girls. The 200-acre campsite is located one mile northeast of Barberville, near DeLand. Campers are normally selected from among boys and girls who have had Requests for Service submitted to the Youth Ranches on their behalf. Many of these youngsters are already on the waiting list for admission to Youth Ranches residential facilities. The camping program was initiated in 1981 and moved to its present location in late 1982. Ph: 904/749-9999

CARUTH CAMP IS . . .

A Wilderness Program for an eventual capacity of 54 boys and girls situated on an approximately 240-acre site 14 miles north of Crystal River, off U.S. Highway 19, near Inglis. This program was established through the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. W. W. Caruth, Jr., of Dallas, Texas. The Caruths are the owners of The Plantation Inn and Golf Resort in Crystal River. The program began in 1986. Telephone: 904/447-2304

About Your Estate Planning

Many of our friends have thoughtfully made provision in their estate planning for our boys and girls. If you are considering a gift of this nature or if you would just like to know more about the many and varied opportunities for sharing, we can help. At your invitation, it would be our privilege and pleasure to visit you in your home. If you prefer, you are welcome to visit us or we can furnish information by mail or telephone, whatever is most practical and convenient. Through estate planning which includes the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, you can help boys and girls at any or all of our facilities as you choose.

You can make a charitable gift and receive an income . . .

Gift Annuities are paying a fixed rate of income up to 14 percent annually depending upon the age of the annuitant. Our Pooled Income Fund pays a flexible rate depending upon both age and financial market conditions. You can protect yourself and your loved ones financially, while at the same time helping dependent, neglected, or homeless boys and girls.

For information, simply fill out the coupon below and mail it in the postage-paid envelope found elsewhere in this magazine.

Please send literature about:
 Wills
 Gift Annuities
 Pooled Income Fund
 Endowment Fund
 Trusts
 Other _____
 Visit me when you are in my area.

Address inquiries to:
Harry K. Weaver,
President
Florida Sheriffs
Youth Ranches
Boys Ranch, Florida,
32060
Telephone:
(A/C 904) 842-5501

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Zip _____ Telephone No. _____

*The proper form for a bequest is as follows:
I bequeath to the Florida Sheriffs Youth
Ranches, Inc., Boys Ranch, Florida, 32060 . . .*

Facts About Our Finances

Copies of the most recent Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches Annual Report are available for the asking. Address your request to Harry Weaver, President, Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Boys Ranch, Florida, 32060.

Telephone Your Gift

To improve our services to you, the Youth Ranches now accepts memorial and honor gifts by telephone. We'll send an acknowledgment card to the bereaved party or person being honored the day we receive your call — before your gift arrives — so that the message of your thoughtfulness will not be delayed. Call (904) 842-5501.

Youth Ranches Speaker's Bureau

Do you need a program for your club, church, or other type organization? We would welcome the opportunity to share the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches story with your group. Wherever you are in Florida, you are not too far away for one of our speakers to accept your invitation, and we have a 14½ minute color/sound film all about the Youth Ranches. Give us a call at (904) 842-5501 or write to the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Boys Ranch, Florida, 32060.

NEW ADDRESS?

Americans are on the move, and keeping up with changes of address is a six-aspirin headache. Some of our subscribers (bless them) send us their new addresses. Others let the U.S. Postal Service notify us, and the Postal Service charges us 25 cents for each new address. If you have a new address, please help us to keep our budget in balance by clipping out this form, filling it out and mailing it to:

Circulation Dept.
THE RANCHER
Boys Ranch, FL 32060

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

In this space, please attach your RANCHER mailing label with the old address and fill in the new address above. Also do the same with name changes and corrections.

Major milestones in the progress of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches since 1957

- 1957 — Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch receives its charter
- 1959 — First youngsters enrolled at the Boys Ranch
- 1965 — Social Service Department created
- 1970 — Girls Villa “adopted” as a project by the Florida Sheriffs Association
- 1972 — First girls enrolled at the Villa
- 1976 — Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranch founded as our first co-ed facility
- 1976 — Expanded family services network established as outgrowth of the Boys Ranch Social Service Department created 11 years earlier
- 1977 — Boys Ranch, Girls Villa and Youth Ranch merged into Florida Sheriffs Youth Fund, a single legal entity
- 1978 — First youngsters enrolled at the Youth Ranch
- 1979 — Deerfield Beach Field Office opens
- 1981 — Camping program initiated on a trial basis
- 1982 — Florida Sheriffs Youth Camp founded
- 1983 — Wilderness camping program begins
- 1983 — Stuart Field Office opens
- 1983 — Site near Indiantown acquired for future South Florida Youth Ranch and Youth Camp
- 1983 — Youth Fund accredited by National Association of Homes for Children (NAHC)
- 1986 — Caruth Camp established through gifts from Mr. and Mrs. W.W. Caruth, Jr.
- 1986 — Florida Sheriffs Youth Fund, Inc., becomes Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Inc.
- 1986 — Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches Foundation chartered
- 1986 — Youth Ranches Endowment Fund responds successfully to “million-dollar challenge” initiated by Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Prescott, Jr.
- 1986 — Fort Myers Field Office opens
- 1987 — Florida Sheriffs Girls Villa becomes Florida Sheriffs Youth Villa after Youth Ranches Board decides to enroll boys and girls
- 1987 — First Youth Ranches Opp Store opens near Live Oak as retail outlet for sale of surplus donated merchandise
- 1987 — Deerfield Beach Office relocates to Ft. Lauderdale



Having fun is fundamental

When the Youth Ranches saga began 30 years ago, teaching youngsters to work and play, study and pray was chosen as a prime objective. Having fun was then — and is still — one of the basic benefits offered to troubled boys and girls striving to overcome the burden of bad breaks or erase the memories of unfortunate experiences.

Our Mission:

In 30 years our ability to achieve it has been enhanced tremendously

When the Boys Ranch was founded in 1957, its basic purpose was simply to provide a home for dependent, neglected, troubled and homeless boys who were in the age range from 8 through 17 and who had not been adjudicated delinquent.

Thirty years later we are still striving to serve as many children in this category as funds will permit, but our outreach has been extended to include girls, and we are also attempting to assist and strengthen the families of these children with appropriate counseling.

It has always been our goal to provide opportunities for our youngsters to resolve their personal conflicts, find their identities, and learn proper values as they work toward a law abiding, productive and secure future.

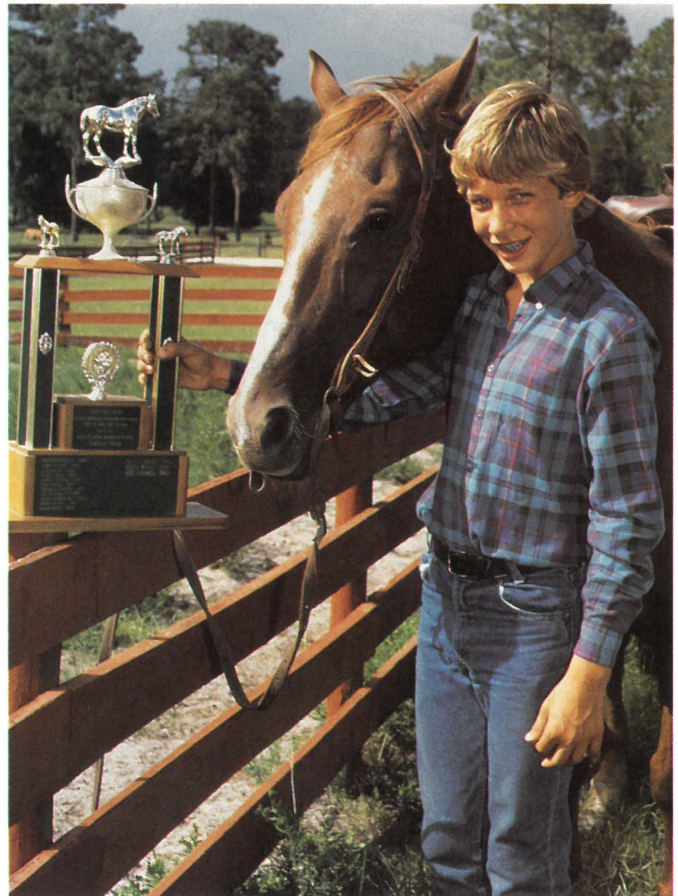
However, our ability to achieve this goal has been enhanced tremendously by thirty years of experience and by our willingness to adopt

progressive improvements in the field of child care.

Currently we are accomplishing our mission through multi-service child care centers and field offices located strategically throughout the state; also by offering residential care, camping, foster care, adoption, after care, and individual and family counseling.

The Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches, Inc., remains committed to an aggressive financial development and public relations effort to underwrite the existing child care programs and to provide for responsible program growth consistent with the statewide level of projected need.

These efforts will focus upon the Youth Ranches' key areas of strength and opportunity, including an endowment fund, wills and estate planning, speaking engagements, public appearances, and special projects.





Youngsters saw lawmakers pass “happy birthday” resolutions

The Florida Legislature, on May 19, 1987, passed resolutions recognizing the 30th Anniversary of the Florida Sheriffs Youth Ranches and praising the Sheriffs, staff members and contributors who have been responsible for its success.

With a delegation of our youngsters as spectators, the lawmakers described the Youth Ranches as “one of the state’s finest charitable institutions,” and as an “outstanding contribution to the welfare of the state generally.”

While in Tallahassee, the Youth Ranches boys and girls toured the Capitol and other points of interest. During part of the tour they had as guides Marion County Sheriff Don Moreland, current chairman of the Youth Ranches Board of Directors; and former Hillsborough County Sheriff Ed Blackburn, Jr., one

A tour of Florida’s high-rise capitol took Youth Ranches youngsters from the “great seal” in the ground level rotunda to the observatory on the top floor.



of the founders of the Boys Ranch and its first Executive Director.

Because of his past experience as a member of the House of Representatives, Blackburn was particularly helpful in explaining Florida’s lawmaking process to our boys and girls.

FLORIDA SHERIFFS YOUTH RANCHES
BOYS RANCH, FLORIDA 32060

Address Correction Requested

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