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SERVING CATHOLIC AND OTHER CHRISTIAN YOUTH  
WITH A CHRIST CENTERED RETREAT FACILITY

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# EAGLE'S WINGS HAPPENINGS

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## All Fired Up

Msgr. Elmer Holtman



I am really intrigued by fire, an element so simple and common, and yet so vital in our lives.

This more than usual chilling winter we have been having often finds me lounging in my chair, sipping my morning coffee and mesmerized by flames flickering through the glass of my wood burning heater. The wonderful radiating heat could rival that of any respectful nursing home.

As I allowed the glowing flames and the heat therapy to take over my mind, my attention was soon focused on the diminishing logs being consumed by the hungry

flames. They were being totally transformed and being turned into a dust of ashes ready to become a soil builder in my garden.

In my meditative mode I was taken back to several weeks ago when I was out cutting and gathering the fire wood from the trees that had died since our drought. Some wood was not even fit to take home, it had been dead too long and already rotted. About all it could do now is just feed a brush fire.

Soon my thoughts began to make some comparisons. Maybe our spiritual lives could be the same way. We have a choice of just

existing and going through the motions until we are all deteriorated, dead and useless; or allowing ourselves to take some risks, catch fire and be consumed in service of our family and church community where God's love radiates from us and warms family and friends. People will notice when we catch fire and begin paying it forward with random acts of kindness done in a spirit of joy.

We have the choice to be consumed for others or rot in our own selfishness. "I have come to light a fire on the earth. How I wish the blaze were ignited!" (Lk 12:49)



## 1st Qtr 10 Years Ago

Deacon Curt Haffner

The dream had begun. We were incorporated as Eagle's Wings Retreat Center, Inc. The retreat center had received its first land donation of 25 acres but a functioning retreat center was far from a reality. Curt and Katie Haffner were not even living on the property yet. That didn't happen until June. There was so much to do and we were definitely sailing in uncharted waters.

Our beginning organization structure was small. The President was Katie, the Vice-President was Joe Noonan and Curt Haffner was the Treasurer and Secretary. The retreat center address was the current Eagle's Wings address but the office for the retreat center was in an extra bedroom in Curt and Katie's house in Temple, TX. where they were still living.

We knew as a non-profit we would need help with funding and would need a tax-exempt status if private donors were going to participate. We immediately began the process of filing for a 501 (c) (3) status as a Texas nonprofit organization. It was tedious and the amount of paperwork was extensive but we finished it by late January and filed it with a prayer to the IRS.

We also needed to have an identity; a logo that matched our name. Even if it was only temporary we had to have something for letterhead. So we created our own logo. Thank goodness Curt had friends from his previous corporate life who were graphic artists. It was obvious from Curt's first attempt that the **first logo** would need improving.



Curt, Katie and Joe during those first months of 2004 would meet and talk about what the retreat center should look like and who it should serve and how we might get all of this done. There were so many possibilities. So many potential directions we could take.

God was letting us talk but he already had a plan in mind. We just did not know or understand it yet.

March arrived and so did another blessing. We received, in record time, our 501(c)(3) status. We were now a tax exempt organization and could ask for donations as a public charity. This was a major hurdle but there were plenty more just ahead.

We continually wondered if we were truly doing what God was asking of us. Was this really the place He wanted His retreat center? Late in March while hiking at the retreat center with some friends, their son and a friend of his, God answered us in a very solid way. The two boys discovered a rock formation that when viewed from a certain angle is clearly an eagle. This hilltop is now called Eagle Mountain. We have no doubt that God was letting us know we were in the right place and doing the right thing. We were slowly learning that we just needed to trust that God's plan was unfolding. We just had to do the work and continue to ask for God's assistance.

The 1st quarter came and the 1st quarter ended. Eagle's Wings was starting to grow.



**Volunteers of the Year 2013  
Jim Balsam & Jim Welch**



**St. Austin School**

### Service Wish List

- Altar Linen Care
- Cut Down Trees
- Paint the Pump House
- Re-Varnish Chapel Doors
- Trim out Cedar Growth
- Stain the Cross on the Chapel
- Kitchen Volunteers

Call 512-715-0017



**Troop of St. George Service Project**



**St. Thomas More  
Service Project**



**St. Austin School Service Project**

## Our Blessings Flowed...Donors Respond Generously to our 2013 Wish List!



**Goals for our soccer field**



**New pressure washer and repaired  
backhoe hydraulics**



**Out with the Old**



**In with the New**

# Does Eagle's Wings still need donations?

**Deacon Curt Haffner**

Occasionally we are asked if Eagle's Wings Retreat Center still needs donations if we are not doing any major construction. The answer is yes please. We have chosen to wait a few years before continuing the master plan for the retreat center. There is approximately another \$1,500,000 of building left to do but the Board of Directors determined that EWRC needed to first maximize use of current facilities and through excellence in scheduling and logistics and make certain that the experience of retreatants at EWRC was the best possible.

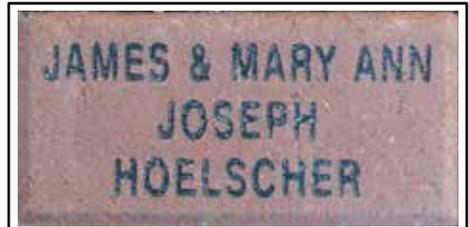
However, there are continually small projects that help us improve current facilities and infrastructure. These are not paid for out of the income from the operating budget

but through the generosity of Eagle's Wings supporters.

We also work very hard at controlling our costs but as everyone is aware utilities etc. continue to rise. We've also had to add staff to keep up with the day to day operations of Eagle's Wings.

Last, but not least, we hope to establish a "fund" that will provide monies for individuals and/or groups who need assistance to be able to come on retreat. We want to make certain that everyone who wants to come on retreat is able to.

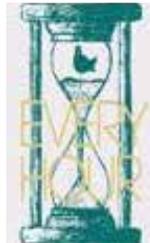
We are deeply appreciative of everyone who has helped Eagle's Wings become a reality. We will always need assistance to keep it a reality. Thank you!



You too can have an inscribed brick! Only 47 left! Donate \$200 & we will give you a brick with your choice of inscription (48 spaces).

## Save The Date:

**Godstock**



**April 26-27**

for info go to:

[www.ewrc.org](http://www.ewrc.org)

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