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HISTORY

→ CYO ←

CAMP

Making a difference one child at a time

1946  2021

OCCIDENTAL, CALIFORNIA

CYO Occidental 75th Anniversary Summer Camp History

Disclaimer: Many thanks to everyone who provided inputs for this CYO Camp history project. It was compiled from a variety of sources – including some conflicting information and imperfect memories, so please consider this history a work in progress. Please also excuse a bit of plagiarism, unattributed information or important omissions. If you have suggestions or corrections to this information, please contact Bob Dougherty at bob_cyo@lahonda.com

Early Camping and Camp Don Bosco (up until 1950)

In the early 1930s, Father John V. Silva purchased 12 wooded acres on Salmon Creek near Occidental, California. Father Silva transformed the former picnic park into a wilderness camp geared primarily for groups of Boy Scouts and underprivileged teenage boys.

Father Silva called it Camp Don Bosco after an Italian 19th century Roman Catholic priest who dedicated his life to the betterment and education of disadvantaged youths and street children. John Bosco had been recently canonized in 1934.



By the start of World War II, the area had been developed into a site for rugged outdoor camping. The Camp had three tent cabins and a grotto chapel.

Father John V. Silva

Father Silva was pastor of St. Louis Bertrand Church in

Oakland in 1940, and by 1946 he found that his parochial duties absorbed almost all his time. He therefore donated the camp land to the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) of the Archdiocese of San Francisco, which was under the direction of Father Eugene J. Shea.

As a first step in the development of the property for a more permanent camp, the Archdiocese built a lodge (later known as Crazy Horse) to provide a dining hall, kitchen and staff quarters. For the next four years, groups of boys and girls used the camp, paying a small rental fee and providing their own staff. Eventually, a camp

program was established and operated by CYO under the direction of Thomas E. Lacey, Assistant CYO Director. In 1950 there was two ten-day sessions for boys and two ten-day sessions for girls.

Our Lady of the Redwoods (1951-1969)



Rev. Eugene Gallagher

Msgr. Eugene A. Gallagher was appointed Archdiocesan Director of CYO in the fall of 1951, and the development of the camp became a major CYO project. In 1951, some of the

property was cleared of timber and terraced to provide level areas to setup canvas tents, a playing field and a warehouse-recreation building. Msgr. Gallagher had the support of seminarians to help build many of the structures and staff the camp. Subsequently, an infirmary, candy store, and cabin for head counselors were built, and the dining lodge was winterized.



In 1952, the camp was christened Our Lady of the Redwoods (OLR). There were two CYO employees during those early years: Mrs. Carmel Rea (mother of CYO alumni Tim,

Mike, Marty and Scott Rea), secretary to Msgr. Gallagher, and Mr. Adrian Gilbert. Mr. Gilbert ran the CYO athletic programs and the summer day camp program in San Francisco for many years. The CYO day camps were located in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco, along with other locations in Marin, San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties. In 1952, the summer Camp also hosted a group of 20 deaf and hearing-impaired campers from Berkeley's California School for the Deaf.

In 1955, Camp now had 16 floored tents, each tent was 16 by 16 feet. There was one 13-day session for boys and two for girls, primarily funded through grants from the Guardsmen. The Guardsmen were formed in 1947 to help disadvantaged children in the Bay Area.

In 1956, the number of summer campers had increased from about 400 to 500, with two sessions for boys, two for girls and a special session to test out teenage camping.



(left to right) Sophie Thomas (asst. Girls Camp Director), Sister Vibiana (Girls Camp Director), and Linda Swedberg.

In the spring of 1956, CYO purchased 75 acres adjoining the original property because the facilities

were becoming too small for the growing number of campers. The ground was again cleared and terraced, and in the spring of 1957, a new area had been developed with facilities for 55 teenagers – separate and independent from the lower camp used for the younger 9-12 year-old campers. The new area was made up of tents with rented “convenience stations” and used a building called Madonna Vista as its dining facility. Some of the teen activities included croquet, volley ball, badminton, archery, ping pong and shuffleboard. Sister Vibiana was the Girl’s Camp Director during this time.



The original swimming hole before the pools were built

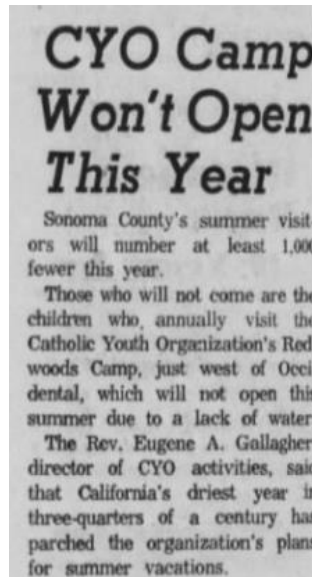
A 60 by 200 foot swimming hole was built

into, and used water from, Salmon Creek. It was later replaced with two more permanent pools around the late 1950s to early 1960s. Campers were required to exchange all money into Camp Script - brochures from the 1950s said that, “The camp store is open once each day for post-cards, stamps, candy, craft supplies and incidentals. Candy – buying is limited to 10¢ a day.” The girl campers were split into three units: Surfside for the youngest aged girls, Foreign Legion for the middle girls (said to be so named because “their tent-city reminded someone of an Algerian outpost”), and Teen Campers.



Photo of original tent cabins

By 1959, the CYO Board of Directors meeting minutes stated that the resident camp consisted of “five two-week sessions, serving 714 boys and girls from 118 parishes. There were 512 in the lower camp for 9 to 12 year-olds, and 202 boys and girls in teen camp.”



On April 14, 1961 a local newspaper announced that Camp would not be open that summer. (Some claim that Camp was also closed the previous year)

Camp’s growth started to raise the concern of a stable water supply that could support the increasing number of campers and staff. Water was drawn from Salmon Creek

and a well. In 1961, CYO Summer Camp was closed because of a severe drought.

In 1963, CYO purchased an additional 130 acres of land adjacent to the existing Camp. The purchase was largely due to the foresight of Monsignor Peter Armstrong who engaged the support of Archbishop Joseph T. McGucken.

The CYO Camp facilities was also utilized outside of the summer camping. The first CYO SEARCH for Christian Maturity youth retreat took place in March 1963 at the Camp Lodge. The retreat was led by Msgr. Armstrong for high school students. This was the first youth-to-youth program in the history of the Catholic Church in the United States – prior to that priests, nuns, brothers and teachers always led parish and Catholic high school retreats.

A SEARCH brochure from 1975-76 described SEARCH as, “an opportunity for young adults to gain a greater insight into the meaning of Christian community through the thoughts and words of those their own age.” The participants engaged in mass, discussion groups, lectures and songs. The SEARCH format is now the official retreat format in the United States and has spread to other countries - all this from a humble start in 1963 at the Lodge at CYO Camp. The building behind the Lodge, later called Jenner, was used as a dormitory for SEARCH participants.



Horseback riding was sometimes offered as a Camp activity

In 1964, Msgr. Armstrong was the Resident Camp Director of OLR, and Sister Maria, M.S.W. and Sister Michaela, M.S.W. were Girl Camp Directors. According to Camp brochures at the time, Camp had “10 and 12 day sessions, \$50 per child and discounts for additional children (e.g., \$150 for four children) ages 9-15...Activities include hiking, swimming, cookouts, overnights, campfires, crafts, horseback riding, etc. Horseback riding \$1.75 extra.” As for the staff, the brochure says that “Counselors are carefully selected university students and Seminarians trained by CYO professional staff and supplemented by Sisters of Social Service.” As with the SEARCH Program, Msgr. Armstrong believed in the youth-to-youth principle at CYO Camp – training young people to inspire and encourage other youth to become involved in their communities and spread Christian ideals.



Chuck Marcia, Camp Manager 1967-1991

Chuck Marcia started as the Camp Facilities Manager in 1967, responsible for the overall care and maintenance of the facilities. He oversaw a great deal of construction over the years as the Camp was growing. He was responsible for

the water system, ensuring it met State and County standards, and the sanitation of the swimming pools. Chuck was eventually responsible for the kitchen also - its health and safety inspections, food preparation and menus. Chuck retired in 1991.



Father Armstrong and Brother Arnold

Brother Arnold, Principal at Sacred Heart High School in San Francisco and close friend of Msgr. Armstrong, was also a fixture at CYO Camp throughout Msgr. Armstrong’s tenure there. Although Brother Arnold never had an official role at Camp, he helped out where needed, including driving the buses.

Monsignor Armstrong and Camp McGucken (1969-1971)

Msgr. Armstrong, with the help and support of the CYO Board of Directors, developed plans for a year-round facility, which could serve as both a summer camp and a retreat center during the rest of the year. CYO purchased an additional 130 acres of land adjacent to the existing Camp, but funds were still needed to develop the land.



Msgr. Armstrong (left) promoting the new McGucken Center

A variety of fundraisers were organized for both camperships and to pay for the new Camp land and its improvements. Award dinners, rummage sales, candy sales, teen club events, magazine subscriptions, and parish festivals raised money for Camp.

Funds also came from the Guardsmen Group and the annual CYO Golf Tournament, which was the oldest golf tournament in the San Francisco Bay Area. Some of the events featured celebrities like entertainer Bob Hope and Hall of Fame golfer Ken Venturi. Golf was



popular, and in 1958 all the campers were required to take at least two golf lessons.

Madlyn Smyth Day (r) and Archbishop McGucken

Other funds came from Madlyn Smyth Day and her fundraising efforts. Day was a civic leader, consultant and volunteer for many charitable organizations. She was a member of the CYO Board of Trustees and raised millions of dollars to benefit at-risk youth, including for CYO Camp. The Camp Chapel was named Smyth Chapel, after Madlyn's first husband. Madlyn later married Curtis Day, who continued to be a benefactor of CYO Camp after Madlyn's death.



(left to right) Bob Hope, Archbishop McGucken, San Francisco Mayor Joe Alioto at 1970 CYO Banquet

Pauline Harney was another benefactor and Benjamin H. Swig, former owner of the Fairmont Hotels, was also instrumental in raising money for the new Camp. Kay and Alfred Cleary Sr., former Vice-Chairman of the CYO Board of Trustees, along with their son Alfred J. Cleary III, were also important and consistent benefactors of Camp.

As the new Camp was being developed, workers told of finding Indian remains, but development was allowed to continue. On May 3, 1969, the new CYO Camp and Center was finally dedicated by Archbishop Joseph T. McGucken, after whom the new facility and

Camp was named. The new state-of-the-art facility was completed to give additional children from different socio-economic backgrounds a camping experience under the redwoods and create an inclusive community for the children to experience nature and grow. The new facility consisted of a lodge (with a dining room, kitchen and downstairs dormitory), nine cabins with a capacity of 22 each, a special cabin for teenagers (which accommodated 50 campers), two swimming pools, a large recreation field, and a lake.



The new cabins each had a capacity for 22 campers (1969)

In June of 1969, CYO was able to offer camping for 450 young people each session. Our Lady of the Redwoods was used for the girl campers and the new Camp McGucken for the boy campers. The Camp staff, however, just called them Girls Camp and Boys Camp. Since the new Lodge dining area could seat over 800, both boys and girls ate together there. The girl campers were bussed to the boys' side for meals.



Lake George was created for the new Camp to provide both recreation and water.

A three-acre lake, named after an apocryphal local alligator named George, reduced the concern about the water supply, although sufficient water is still an ongoing concern.

In 1969, Camp brochures stated that the cost per session was \$65/child. Horseback riding was an additional "\$2.50 or one book of Blue Chip Stamps plus 50¢." (Blue Chip Stamps was a merchant loyalty program where the number of stamps given was in proportion to a purchase. Books filled with these stamps could be traded for merchandise).



By 1971 the tent cabins on the girls' side of Camp were replaced with open air cabins. (shown)

Camp staff weren't required to be Catholic, but were asked to accept and live Christian values and standards, acknowledging that they were responsible for the health, welfare and happiness of the campers.

The Outdoor Chapel in Boys Camp



An outdoor chapel was built in the new camp in 1971, large enough to contain all campers and staff. A parking lot was cleared above the Chapel and a narrow road to the altar area was created where Msgr. Armstrong and later Msgr. Harriman would drive the CYO jeep, often laden with speakers and other materials for mass. Nestled in a grove of redwoods, the Chapel has been used as a place of worship, play, inspiration, song, celebration and renewal. In the 1970s and 1980s, rotating Camp groups would select a mass theme, create vestments for the priest, and make other preparations for the celebration of mass.

The Chapel was completely rebuilt in 2011-2013 with funding from Alfred J. Cleary III, material and labor donations through Steve Cline, and help from many other Camp alumni donors.

The Two Camps Mature (1971-1979)

In 1971, girl and boy campers were each divided into 4 units by gender – the youngest girls' unit (6-8 years old) was named Surfside, who stayed in the dorm-style building, called Jenner, behind Crazy Horse. The next age-group was

Quicksilver (9-10 years old), who stayed in the cabins up the road on Quicksilver Row. The next age-group was Strawberry Fields (11-12 years old) who stayed in cabins near Salmon Creek across from the swimming pools. The teen girls (13-16 years old) resided in an area called Wildwood, up the road on the way to the new Camp. Some of the units, like Strawberry Fields and Aquarius, were said to have been named around 1969 out of the San Francisco hippie movement.



Inside the new Boys' Camp cabins, which were also used as part of the new year-round facility

The boys were similarly divided into 4 age-group

units. The youngest was named Aquarius (6-8 years old) (called Moon Shadow in 1975), next was Freestone (9-10 years old), next was Middle Earth (11-12 years old), and finally the Boys Teen Campers (13-14 years old), which was later named Ghetto and then Tripoli.

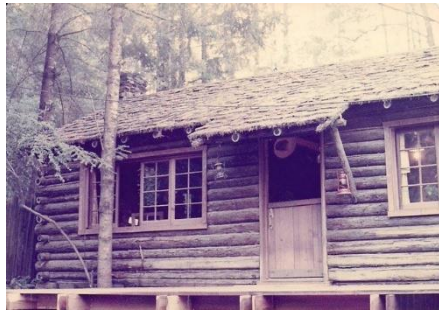
The original cabins weren't well insulated, but winter retreats encouraged upgrades so the McGucken Center could become a comfortable year-round facility. Summer camp attendance thrived during these years, sometimes with over 500 campers and 120 staff for each of the five 10- day sessions.



Tek Moira, where the nurses resided in the 1970s-1980s

There was some shuffling where supporting staff lived in the 1970s-1980s on the girls' side of Camp, but in general: the bus drivers settled in Okinawa, nurses lived in Tek Moira, male maintenance crew lived in Gray House, male lifeguards and the heads of maintenance lived in Crow's Nest. Madonna Vista housed some of the male supporting staff until the mid-1970s when it was torn down.

Tek Moira has been spelled both Tek Moria and Tek Mora in some early documents, but the origin of the name is not known, so the preferred spelling has been lost. Many of the female supporting staff lived in Penthouse, which was previously called the infirmary or Pill Hill. Today it is called Fort Ross, named after both the cultural history of the area and the long-time Director of Youth Ministry, Chuck Ross, who lived there before he passed away.



Log Cabin

Msgr. Armstrong lived in Log Cabin before moving to the Vatican on the other side of Camp. Eventually the female Camp leaders (Head Counselors and Head of Girls Camp) lived in Log Cabin. Near Log Cabin was an outdoor chapel, which had been used since the 1950s. Near Okinawa is the original Camp grotto chapel where mass was held in the 1940s.

At the bottom of the McGucken Camp hill near the Bohemian Highway is a 19th Century building named "The Vatican" where Camp priests resided. Nearby was a trailer and a small house where Camp Manager Chuck Marcia and his family lived. The kitchen crew lived in the quarters behind the new Lodge kitchen. The male Head Counselors lived in various places, including an area below the main Lodge, called Hole in the Wall.



"The Vatican" photo c.1898

In May of 1975,

Thaddaeus W. Wyatt donated 139 acres to CYO for use as a natural camping area. It included a house near Dutch Bill Creek adjacent to the Bohemian Highway, and the property contained a portion of the old Northwestern Pacific Railroad line and tunnel. This land, seven miles from CYO Camp, was used for overnight

camping, as well as the overnight survival experience. The property was sold in 1995.

On a windy summer day in 1976, a tree fell and destroyed two Strawberry field cabins - luckily no one was in the cabins at the time. After that summer, logging removed other trees that could threaten cabins. A new logging road was built that started near Log Cabin and bypassed Tek Moira on the way to Wildwood and Eagles Nest.

The cost to run and maintain Camp continued to rise. The number of days of Camp sessions varied in these years from 7, 8, 10, 12 to 14 days. Prices increased from \$50 per child for a 10-day session in 1964 to \$385 in 1992. Activities over the years also changed somewhat, but often included nature study, swimming, archery, arts and crafts, hikes, campfires, canoeing, horseback riding, and overnights. These overnights were sometimes to one of several local beaches or the Wyatt property.

Monsignor Harriman and Camp Armstrong(1979-1985)



Msgr. Harriman at a mass in the outdoor Chapel

In September of 1975, Msgr. Michael D. Harriman, the Associate

Director of CYO, became the Director of the winter program at McGucken Center. In 1979, Msgr. Armstrong left CYO Camp to be the pastor at St. Pius Church in Redwood City, which was the location of his first pastoral assignment in 1954. His role as Director of CYO was replaced by Michael Marovich. In the fall of



1979, the name of Camp was changed to CYO Camp Armstrong. It had been renamed to honor and acknowledge Monsignor Peter Armstrong, who devoted 20 years of service to Camp and championed its expansion.

Msgr. Harriman around 1983

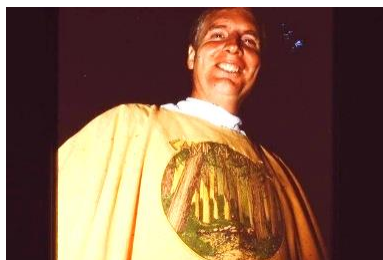
Msgr. Harriman assumed Msgr. Armstrong's role as Director of Camp. During Msgr. Harriman and Mike Marovich's tenure, a deaf program from St. Benedict's was introduced, Caritas Creek environmental education program merged with CYO, a Ropes Course was built, the Boys Camp cabins were updated, and CYO transportation replaced charter buses that brought children to and from Camp.



An equestrian program was re-introduced in 1983

An equestrian program was also reintroduced under the leadership of Andre Morrow. In 1983, the new equestrian center included 20 paddocks, 2 riding rings and a full-size tack room with adjoining decks. Junior wranglers from the teen camps were assigned a horse to care for and ride daily. 1989 was the last year to have the equestrian program.

Although Camp was under different leadership, its goals remained the same. The 1983 Staff Manual stated that the primary objective of CYO Camp Armstrong was "to bring the camper closer to God to assist him in developing a true and sincere love of his fellow man. This is accomplished, in the first place, by experiential religious education in an atmosphere that is informal and free from pressure. Secondly, by the example of a good Christian life led by all the staff members." The manual goes on with the secondary objectives of having the Camp atmosphere contribute to the child's social growth, character formation, and skills necessary for practical living. Msgr. Harriman took these Camp goals seriously, continuing to provide an outdoor camping experience for underprivileged campers, and Camp thrived under his leadership.



Father David Ghiorso, Associate Director and Chaplain.

In 1986, Msgr. Harriman became pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Church in San Francisco. In honor of his contributions to Camp, one of the most beautiful trails on the McGucken Center property and Harriman Hall were built and named in his honor. This meeting hall is used by retreat groups, providing a more intimate setting than the Lodge, which is still used by larger groups. With Msgr. Harriman's departure came a restructuring of the administration, but not without his input and contribution. Father David Ghiorso replaced Father Harriman as Associate Director of Youth Activities of CYO and Camp chaplain.

Paula Pardini and CYO Outdoor Ministry(1985-2000)



Paula Pardini

Mike Marovich continued as General Director and Tim Hanretty as Director of McGucken Center, while Paula Pardini, an educator, childcare specialist and co-creator of Caritas Creek, was named Director of Outdoor Ministry in 1985. This role included Camp Armstrong, Caritas Creek Environmental Education Program and the Ropes Adventures. Paula had been a camper in the late 1950s at OLR and a Wildwood counselor in 1964.



Programs and activities evolved under the leadership of Paula Pardini.

Paula helped start the Mendocino based Caritas Creek program in 1975, which began to use the CYO Camp facilities in the Spring of 1978. This was the first time that a woman had been promoted to this high of a leadership position at Camp, and Paula had the knowledge, experience and enthusiasm needed for success.

With administrative changes came a restructuring of the Outdoor Ministry program. Through Paula Pardini's earlier contacts with Msgr. Harriman, CYO and Caritas Creek formed a partnership in 1984. Caritas ran the school-year program and CYO provided financial and facility-related backing. Msgr. Harriman and Mike Marovich recognized the need for CYO Camp to make a transition to the next level of promoting child development. With Paula Pardini aboard, CYO Outdoor Ministries stepped up professionally from not just being a fun outlet for children but also a place for child development in an outdoor setting. The new staff were frequently college educated and older than in the past.



The new staff was now older and frequently college educated

Around 1986, camper units became coed. The 7-9 year old unit was called Huckleberry Hollow, the 10-11 year old group called Woodridge, the 12-13 year old group called Stepping Stone, and the oldest 14-16 year old group called Wildwood. Between 1985 to 2005, teen boys lived in Tentville, near the Wildwood area. A Camp Counselor in Training (CIT) Program was developed and a Child Advocate position was established.

Paula Pardini left CYO in 2000 but the Camp's popularity and high evaluation marks continued under Paula's assistant Paul Raia.

The Campaign for Children and Youth in 1989 began the process to renovate much of Camp. The Camp continued to evolve to meet the needs of summertime campers, retreats and private groups. Steve Grant became Associate Director of McGucken Center, and the Center began a transformation and upgrades to maintain its status as a state-of-the-art facility. The Lodge kitchen facilities have been upgraded, and the pools and bathhouses have been renovated. The Day House, named for major contributors Madlyn and Curtis Day, was built to house administrative staff and guests at the McGucken Center. The low Ropes Adventure Course created in 1993 remain and it

has been supplemented by the Challenge Course trail. In the late 1990s, what used to be called Girls Camp was changed to Miwok Village and the boys side to Coyote Hills (The Miwok were the indigenous people who lived in the area.).

Catholic Charities and Camp Changes (2000-2017)



Paul Raia and Rick Garcia

Paul Raia became the Executive Director of Outdoor Ministry in 2000. About this time Camp Armstrong was renamed to CYO Camp. CYO completed its merger with Catholic Charities in 2004 and wanted to ensure the facilities could continue to provide year-round outdoor experiences for kids and retreat opportunities for community adult groups. In 2005, CYO Camp closed down the Stepping Stone unit on the Miwok side of Camp.

About 2007, there was a split between CCCYO



and Caritas Creek, and Jim Wilford became Executive Director that year. With the help of Lou Reynaud, Caritas

Creek and CYO staff merged again in 2010. Paul Raia became the Associate Director of CYO and Director of Caritas Creek in 2015.

In 2011 The CYO Camp Alumni group was launched under the leadership of alumni Louis Reynaud and Caren Normandin. In 2012 and 2013, the alumni group rebuilt the outdoor chapel on the Coyote Hills side of Camp and later rebuilt the grotto chapel on the Miwok side of Camp.'

Year-round staff are now living in some of the buildings on the Miwok side – including Tek Moira, Gray House, (recently restored), Crow's Nest, and Fort Ross. A large tree fell onto Crazy Horse in 2012, but it has been rebuilt and temporarily divided into several living quarters.



Rick Garcia (l) and Emily Wood Ordway

Today CYO Camp is thriving with outstanding programs and exemplary staffing of Summer Camp, Caritas Creek, Outdoor Education and the Retreat Center.

In 2015 Rick Garcia became CYO Camp and Retreat Center Director. Current leadership consists of Rick Garcia (CYO Camp Director), Paul Raia (CYO Camp Associate Director and Director of Caritas Creek), and Emily Wood Ordway (Summer Camp and Retreat Center Manager).

Over the past 25 years, the current main campus of CYO Camp has been fully renovated with remodeling of the Lodge, 24 new cabins, the Day House apartments, along with many other improvements. In addition, in 2016-2017 Catholic Charities has been investing in deferred maintenance for staff housing, paint and roofs on the 24 new cabins, and a new roof on the Lodge.

In 2017, Alumni Golf Day was created as an annual Camp fundraising event under the leadership of alumnus Lou Reynaud. This re-connected Camp with the original annual CYO Golf Tournament, the oldest golf tournament in the San Francisco Bay Area.

COVID, Fires and the Future (2017-Present)

In October 2017 the nearby Tubbs Fire burned 37,000 acres, and it killed at least 22 people in Sonoma County. Camp closed for three weeks, but it was not damaged by the fire. Camp hosted the LA/Long Beach and Compton fire crews during the fire.

In October 2019 the Kinkaid fire burned 78,000 acres in Sonoma County. Camp cancelled activities for a week, but again hosted the Long Beach and Compton fire crews. Camp was again spared from these nearby fires.

The Walbridge Fire was part of the 2020 LNU Lightning Complex wildfires, which burned 363,000 acres over two months in northwestern Sonoma County. Luckily, the Walbridge and other fires over the previous few years never reached Camp.



Because of the COVID-19 epidemic, the last Camp group left in March 2020, but

Camp was still able to host day campers using COVID-19 protocols. The Guardsman work weekend in March 2021 was the first group back at Camp.

In spite of the pandemic and nearby fires, a \$2.2 million water tank and distribution system was completed in 2021. This year the Alumni Group also renovated Our Lady of the Redwoods Grotto Chapel, the only structure remaining from the original Camp Bosco.

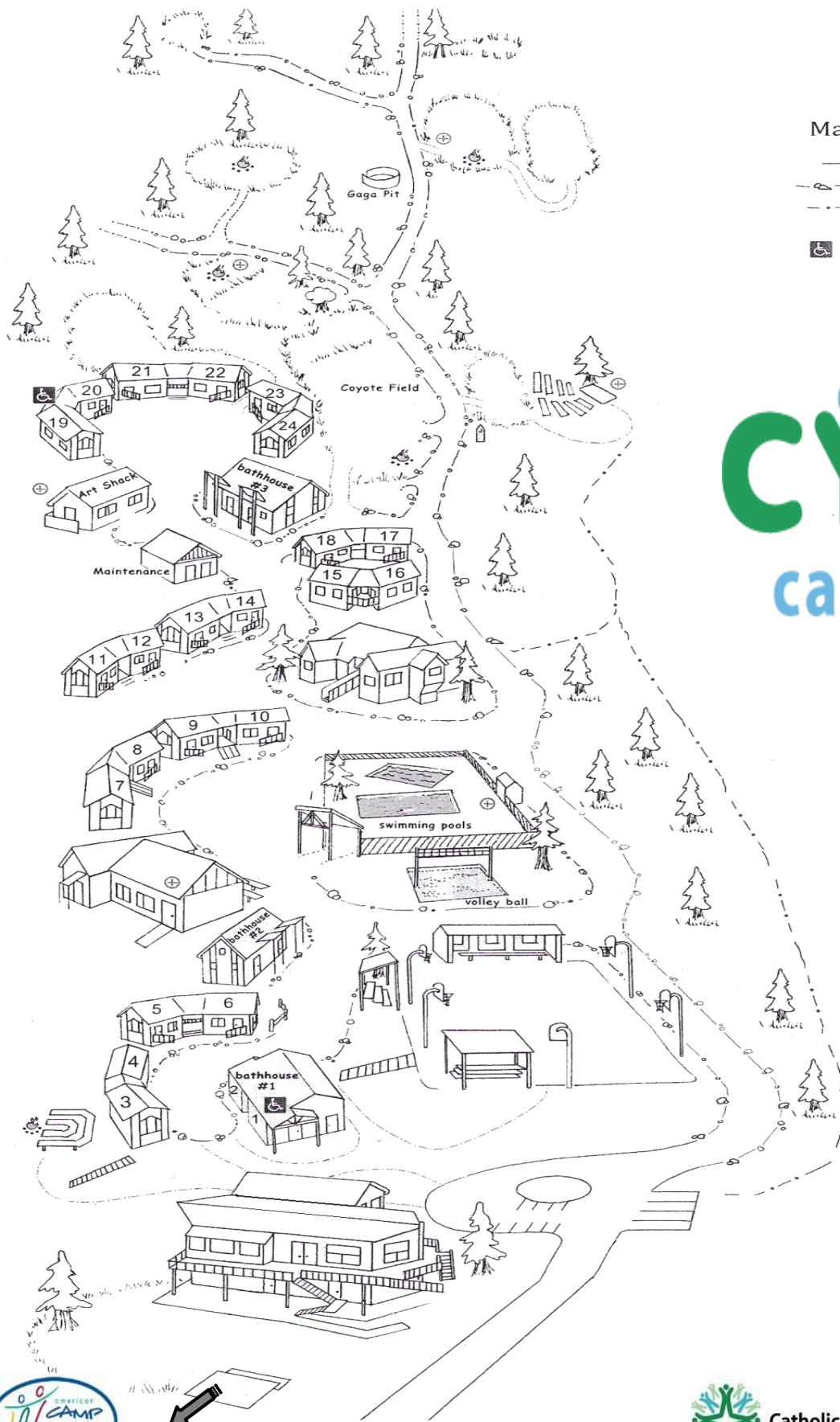


The Grotto Chapel was restored in 2021.

However, there are still concerns that need to be addressed to

ensure the sustainment and legacy of CYO Camp for future generations. CYO Camp Director Rick Garcia's vision of CYO Camp is for it to be a state-of-the-art facility and, with the alumni's help, be financially sustainable to continue to improve Camp facilities and have a sustainable campership program so that children of all demographics are able to experience the magic of this place we love so much!

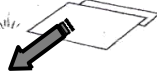
CYO Camp – Making a difference one child at a time



Map Legend

- pavement
- - - dirt road
- . - . foot path
- ⊕ First aid kit
- ♿ handicap access

CYO
camp



Catholic Charities CYO

Coyote Hills Side

(formerly called Camp McGucken or Boys Camp)

This side of camp has changed dramatically since it was originally built in 1969. The Camp is now coed and the cabins are heated and insulated, which makes them more suitable for year-round usage.

A) Vatican (not shown) – This historic structure was formally used to house the residing priest and was a location to host events, like the annual Guardsmen BBQ. It is not clear when it was built, but a photograph from 1898 exists of the building. Rick Garcia, CYO Camp Director, now lives there.

B) Lake George (not shown) – Besides being the home of an apocryphal alligator, this is the site of canoe activities and has supplied water to both sides of Camp since 1969. The Lake is fed by a creek, and during the outdoor education program a pond study is conducted there. A craft house was also located nearby.

C) Main Lodge – the Lodge, a showpiece of the new Boys Camp in 1969, is currently the recognized gathering place for all programs sponsored by CYO Camp. Meals are served here for all campers and staff. The deck has since been replaced, a new floor was installed a couple years ago, and a new roof and skylights have been installed.

D) Cleary Village – Cabins marked 1-6 are Cleary Village, named after the family of benefactors Al Cleary III and his father Al Cleary, Sr. The Cleary family provided funds to build these cabins, along with the road up to the basketball courts, various vehicles and equipment, and the meadow in front of the Lodge. These cabins are used by the younger campers, Freestone, during the summer, and they house school groups during outdoor education.

E) Harriman Hall – This meeting hall, named after Msgr. Michael Harriman, is used by retreat groups, providing a more intimate setting than the Lodge, which can be used by larger groups. There is also a small amphitheater attached.

F) Guardsman Village – Cabins 7-10 is Guardsmen Village, named after the Guardsmen organization that has been helping at-risk youth by raising funds for CYO camperships and other youth programs. These cabins, along with cabins marked 11-14, are used by the Middle Earth campers during summer, and they house school groups during outdoor education.

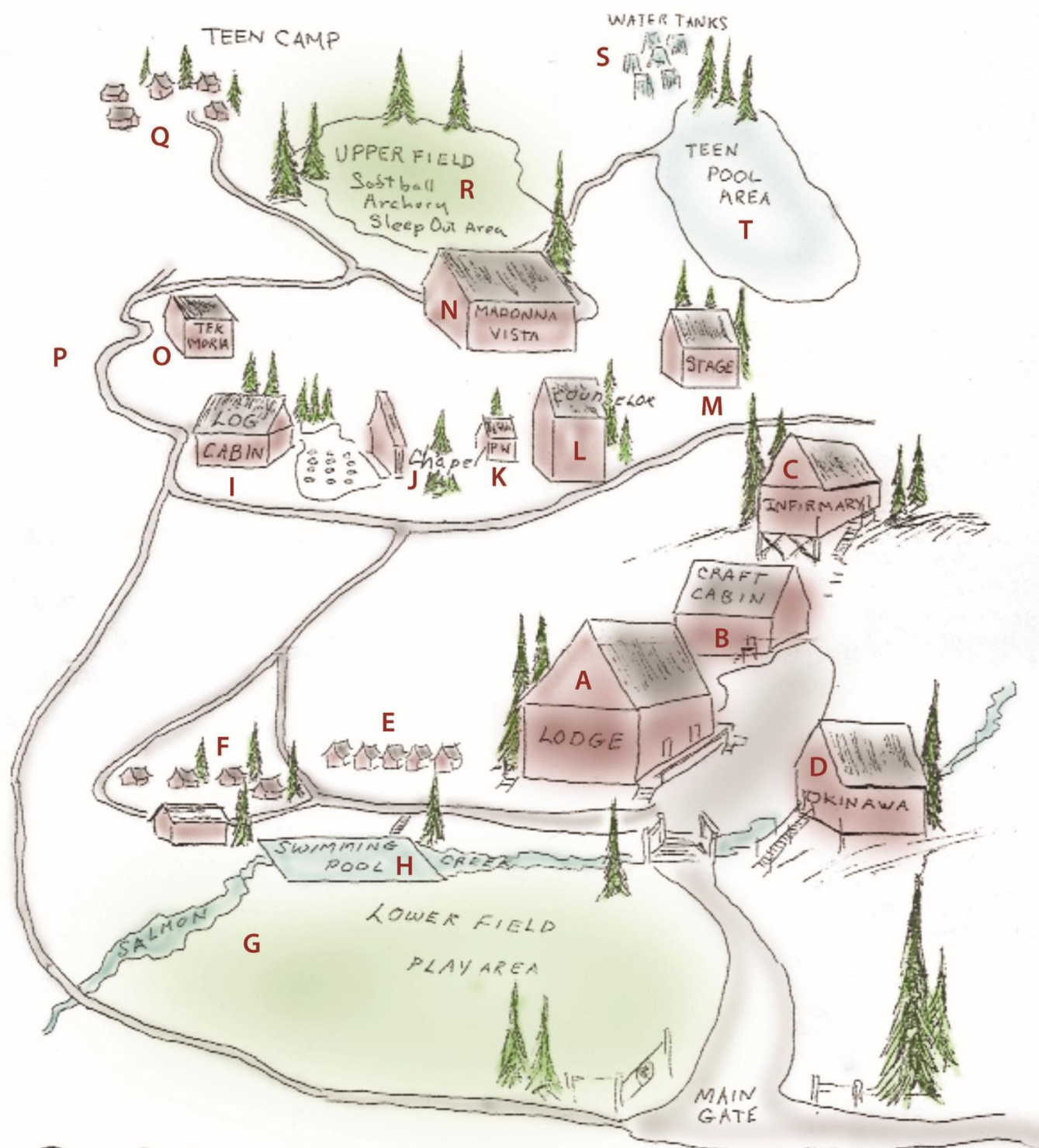
G) Day House – The Day House, named after CYO benefactor Madlyn Smyth Day, is split into two independent sides – one side with condo-type facilities and one with bedrooms and a shared bathroom. It is used for housing teachers throughout the outdoor education season and VIPs & visiting priests primarily on weekends.

H) Wildwood – Cabins 15-24 are used by the Wildwood teen campers during summer camp and used throughout the school year by Caritas and retreat groups.

I) Chapel – The Outdoor Chapel, nestled on a hillside in a redwood grove, was built in 1971. A parking lot was developed on top and a small road was created, originally so that Msgr. Armstrong could drive his jeep to the altar at the bottom. The Chapel was completely rebuilt in 2011-2013 by devoted alumni under the direction of Bruce Blagsvedt, Camp Facilities Manager.

J) Gaga Pit – Gaga is a variant of dodgeball played with one ball. The Gaga pit is a fenced area where the game is played.

K) Labyrinth and Challenge Course (not shown) – To the left of the Gaga pit is a labyrinth built from the Crazy Horse fireplacebricks after a tree fell through the building a couple years ago. It is a place that can be used for spiritual meditative walks. The Challenge Course Trail is along a fire road that parallels the left side of the map going down to Lake George. The Challenge Course was designed to build community amongst the participants.



OUR LADY OF THE REDWOODS
CYO CAMP
occidental, california

Our Lady of the Redwoods CYOCamp (The Miwok side, formally called Girls Camp side)

This map was created just after the additional 75 acres was purchased in 1956 to expand CYO Camp and build a separate teen area. For former Camp staff who were here before 1969, this was the whole CYO Camp, and for many staff here after 1969, this was known as Girl's Camp. For those who staffed since the mid-1980's, this side of camp is now known as Miwok. (The notes below are from a variety of sometimes conflicting sources, so this history is a work in progress.)

A) Lodge – This was the main kitchen and dining facility for Camp. It was named Crazy Horse after it was no longer used as a dining lodge. It was later used for housing the youngest girl's unit Surfside and activities, including Arts & Crafts. It has now been split into three sections to house staff.

B) Craft Cabin – This building was used for Arts and Crafts until it was replaced by a storage building located between Log Cabin and Tek Moira (at location "P"). In the 1950s, it was used for other activities, like boxing matches. The building was later renamed Jenner, housing the youngest girl unit, Surfside.

C) Infirmary – Also called Pill Hill, this was where the nurses were once located. By the early 1970s, the nurses had moved to Tek Moira and the Girl's Camp Director and Head Counselors plus female supporting staff, such as the lifeguards, lived there and it was re-named Penthouse. It is now called Fort Ross.

D) Okinawa – This building was used by the nuns who were the Directors of Girls Camp. Eventually, the Transportation Group lived there. The name "Okinawa" is seen in Camp documents from the 1950s.

E) Girl's Cabins – The youngest girls originally lived here. The canvas tent cabins were eventually replaced with open air wooden cabins and it was referred to as Quicksilver row (9-10 year old campers).

F) Girl's Cabins - Tent cabins here originally housed the middle-aged girl Group, called Foreign Legion. The area was later used by the Strawberry Fields (11-12 year old campers) unit. The area is now called Stepping Stone.

G) Lower Field Play Area – Two swimming pools were built on the left side of the field to replace the swimming hole shown on the other side of Salmon Creek at location H. The rest of the Play Field is still there and was used both as a bus stop for campers and for field sports.

H) Swimming Pool - Salmon Creek filled the original swimming hole before the two nearby permanent pools were built.

I) Log Cabin – This log cabin originally housed the priest Director of Camp, later Head Counselors and the Head of Girl's Camp, and more recently the Director of Outdoor Ministry, Paula Pardini. It is now in disrepair and no longer habitable.

J) Chapel – This was an outdoor chapel with a simple altar within a triangular structure about 12 feet tall. The priest would come from his Log Cabin residence to celebrate daily mass there. The chapel was replaced by a larger outdoor chapel area when the Boy's side of Camp (now called Coyote Hills) was opened.

K) Crow's Nest – This was an uninsulated garage-like structure with a small deck in front built around a redwood tree originally used for storage. Later, supporting staff lived here - originally kitchen assistants, pot washers and table setters, and then Heads of Maintenance and male life guards. Later Outdoor education staff occupied it during the school year - it went unoccupied for a while - but it is currently being renovated to house Caritas Creek program staff.

L) Counselor – This building, built in the late 1950s, originally housed Head Counselors and Camp Directors. It was later called Gray House and housed the male Maintenance crew. By the mid-1980's, leadership staff were housed there during the summer and outdoor education program staff during the school year.

M) Stage – A few people who worked at the early Camp had vague recollections of a structure here - one source said it was used to celebrate mass for groups larger than the Chapel near Log Cabin could support.

N) Madonna Vista – This was the dining lodge for teen campers and then turned into a building to house supporting staff. The building was torn down in the early 1970s. The name “Madonna Vista” is seen in early documents from the 1950s.

O) Tek Moira – Seminarians lived here until it became the Infirmary. The name “Tek Moira” is seen in Camp documents from the 1950s. The origin of the name is not known.

P) Craft House – After the youngest girl unit (Surfside) moved into the original Craft House (building labeled “B”), this building was used for Arts and Crafts. The building was an open storage-type structure, and staff and campers would write their names in various colors on the walls. During the mid- 1980’s the name was changed to Salmon Creek Arts and Crafts Shack.

Q) Teen Camp – Originally Teen Camp consisted of tent cabins with portable toilets. Primitive wooden cabins and a concrete bath house eventually replaced these. The area was later named Wildwood and housed the teen girls. It was used to house teen campers until 2006, but the structures would now need repairs to house campers.

R) Upper Field – A field in this area was used by the teen campers for softball, archery and sleep-overs. In the mid-1980’s the name was changed to Orion’s Landing and provides a campfire pit for gathering during the school year and a sleepover area during summer camp.

S) Water tanks – Water was pumped to redwood storage tanks and gravity-fed into Camp. When the additional Boys Camp acreage, including Lake George was purchased, water was pumped from the Lake first to a concrete tank and gravity fed back down to these redwood water tanks to supply Girls Camp (now Miwok). These tanks are no longer there.

T) “Teen Pool Area” – Although the concept of a teen pool was discussed in 1958, the area was never developed as such. Instead, the area was used for overnight camping and was called Eagle’s nest. Another nearby area down the trail from Eagle’s nest was called Sleepy Hollow and was also used for sleepovers.

U) Grotto Chapel – This chapel was the only remaining part of the original Camp Bosco. Daily mass was performed by Father Silva there. It soon was too small for all the campers and staff, and another chapel (Item J) was built near Log Cabin. This structure was torn down and most masses are typically held at the Chapel on the Coyote Hills side (Item I)



Msgr. Armstrong and Msgr. Harriman jointly celebrating mass at the Outdoor Chapel

This history was compiled by Bob Dougherty for CYO Camp’s 75th Anniversary, 2021

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