

THE PILOT CLUB OF CANYON LAKE, INC.

Written history provided by

Cassandra Lathe - President 1976-1977 and 1983-1984

(Author and date written unknown)

Canyon Lake was built in the middle 60's in the sparsely settled hills of Comal County, 17 miles from the city of New Braunfels, Texas. As the waters began to fill the lake, which many predicted would never happen, the properties began to sell and the people started to move into the community.

By 1969 it became evident that the lake, built for conservation purposes, was becoming a resort area, businesses moved in to capitalize on the tourist trade. These newcomers were scattered around the 80 miles of shoreline and began constructing homes within the subdivisions which had begun to develop.

Bea Martin moved into the community from Victoria, commuting to San Antonio work, she was invited to join the Pilot Club of San Antonio. Not wanting to drive to San Antonio and being a member of the Luncheon Pilot Club of Victoria, she asked the San Antonio Pilots to charter a club at the lake. Extension Chairman Claribelle Smiley felt there were not enough career girls at the lake. Not to be outdone, Bea made a list of all the career women at the lake and borrowing the classification guide from San Antonio, gave each a classification. There were some 75 names on the list with 15 classifications. When this list was turned over to the San Antonio Club, they condescended to request of Pilot International authorization to make a survey.

Since there was no city near the lake, PI insisted the club called The Pilot Club of Comal County, and it was chartered as such on April 16, 1970, with 25 members. Under the leadership of President Marie Heaton, the club began to function in the homes of members as there were no large public buildings to be used.

The first months found the membership making and selling sandwiches at the public parks around the lake over the 4th of July to make money to send the president to the PI convention in Miami, Florida. A flood hit the neighboring town of San Marcos and caused much devastation. The Community Services Chairman, Gladys Smith was there with a car load of supplies before the waters had receded. The members assisted the Volunteer Fire Department with their annual money making bar-b-que. A local family was hit by illness and the breadwinner was unable to work. The Pilots paid the utility bills for several months until the family could get back on their feet. Pilots made and served coffee to cleanup crews gathering trash around the lake area.

During that time a Bridge Marathon was started and proved quite successful. This activity was so popular it is still a yearly project of the club. The membership voted to make gold and green pant suits with the Pilot emblem to wear to functions in order for the population at the lake to become aware of the club. The emblems were special ordered from a firm in Dallas, however, it was necessary to order in lots of 125 and there were only 25 members. The extra emblems were sold to the neighboring clubs in San Antonio, Corpus Christi, Victoria, Houston and the club continued to order and resell, until we were able to buy them from Pilot International.

The first project voted by the club was to beautify the entrances to the lake. This was not too popular with the club as the area was already beautiful beyond words and the members, many had never heard of Pilot, were mostly unresponsive to the project (and were hesitant to drive around the lake alone at night to the meetings) so they began to fall by the wayside.

The club voted to stage a fashion show and it turned into such fun and profit that it still remains the most popular of the fundraising activities. Each October this show is presented to the people of the area with the New Braunfels merchants eager to furnish the fashions.

In February 1971, without warning, the president resigned leaving a sinking ship with 16 members. These members voted to send 2 delegates to the District 8 convention, but found they could not be seated if the club remained below charter strength. Under the leadership of Vice President, Bea Martin, the remaining members were encouraged to work getting new members and, by convention time enough new members were recruited to enable the delegates to go to the convention with heads held high. At the District Convention in Houston, in 1972 the club was awarded the status for having the largest percentage of increase in membership, and what a thrill for Membership Chairman, Peggy Parrock and the entire club. In July, at the PI Convention, an award was received for having the largest increase in Pilot International.

In the fall of 1971, the official visitor, Lucille Puderbaugh, was given a tour of the lake area and asked what her thoughts would be on a new project for the club that would have more appeal to the members and the community. After some thought, she suggested a library, and, at the meeting that evening, the vote was unanimous to forget the beautification project and get to work toward a community library. This struck the heart string of the residents and the weekends who had begun to flood the club with books. However, there still were no buildings available and it was to take time to amass a bank account sufficient to purchase property and to construct a building. Finally, a local couple, Mr. & Mrs. Bill Sparkman donated the use of a small building which they were using and the many hours of work began. The New Braunfels library donated a book return box and other small items. The VFW local post gave a flag to fly over the

building, and members and co-Pilots gave many hours of work to get ready for the formal opening of the PILOT COMMUNITY LIBRARY in May of 1972.

The library operated until the early part of 1974 when they lost the use of the building, the books were moved and stored in the Parrock-Stanley warehouse and the Pilots immediately began looking for a location and the ways and means to purchase land and construct a building to house the library. During the presidency of Faye Holden, Mr. Harry Preston was persuaded to donate land in memory of his mother, Tye Preston, and the library would be called The Tye Preston Memorial Library.

In the summer of 1973, at the beginning of President Fay's term of office, her Community Service Chairman, Elizabeth Parks agreed to work out a project for senior citizens and such a project was begun at the Oak Crest Nursing Home in New Braunfels. Each month the Pilots held a bingo game and furnished prizes which are purchased from the sale of recyclable aluminum cans, collected and saved by persons in the lake area. At Christmas and Easter, the senior citizens at the home were given a party with appropriate gifts for everyone. The Pilot members donated gifts at Christmas so that each person at the home received a special present in addition to the bingo prizes. In 1975, a cassette tape of the Old Testament was presented to the home for their listening pleasure. The club members assisted the home in setting up their activity room where the guests could busy themselves during their stay. Pilots gave materials and notions for this project and, under the direction of Peggy Parrock, sell the items. Proceeds from the sales are divided between the makers and the home for replacing the materials. This gives the senior citizens additional income for their small needs and is a source of pleasure for those who can still use their hands.

Under the leadership of President Bette Heard, with the library fast becoming a reality, the ground work was begun by inviting the aid of the community, by forming a Library Board, chartered under the laws of Texas – a separation from the Pilot Club, but still supported in part by the Pilots.

The Pilots, ever looking for more ways to raise funds, started sponsoring a Spring Festival which draws people from miles around the lake and surrounding communities. The members began donating polyester scraps, which were used to make lap afghans for the senior citizens in the nursing home.

Also, this was the year when the club requested and was granted permission to change the name of the club to THE PILOT CLUB OF CANYON LAKE.

In 1975, with Jean Patty as President, the club voted to incorporate. The president brought back from Pilot International Convention a ribbon for having the highest percentage in increasing membership.

By 1975 the Canyon Lake Chamber of Commerce had received permission from the Post Office Department to change the local post office designation to Canyon Lake, Texas. Public buildings were beginning to spring – the Canyon Lake Bank, First Federal Savings and Loan Association, Times Guardian Newspaper, motels, real estate offices, shopping centers, electric Coop, doctors' offices and the Tye Preston Library Board was chartered under the laws of Texas.

Along with the growing community, the Pilot Club has grown to a membership of 50 with the goal for the year to exceed the Mother Club of San Antonio.

In 1976 the club has received permission to charter an Anchor Club at the new Smithson Valley High School and is thinking toward a compass at the college in San Marcos and a Pilot Club in New Braunfels. The Pilot Club of Canyon Lake has truly grown and received acceptance of the community to the point where it is an honor to be invited to join. Under the leadership of President Cassandra Lathe, it is expected the club will reach new heights not only in the community but also in Pilot International.

The Pilots are quite busy with their annual Style Show, Spring Festival, County Fair Food booth, Wurstfest, and other fund raising projects such as selling merchandise sole through the Pilot Log, bake sales, pecan sales, recyclable cans, Bridge Marathon, auctions, etc. With these funds available, the club has come to the aid of families who have lost their homes from fires, floods, and their health through serious illnesses or injury or in any way we can be of assistance. We have recently begun assisting the Red Cross X-ray on its first visit to the area.

Together with being busy Pilots working for the good of the community the members have taken time to entertain their Co-Pilots with special emphasis on special Pilot dates, programs and holidays, and of course the Co-Pilots are always included in our attendance at all out of town meetings, such as workshops, District and Ra Meeting and Pilot International Convention.

Respectfully submitted,

(Name has been torn off document)