

His victims say Walls set up world of drink, smut, sex -- and fear Scout leader got boys to view parents as enemy

SANDY DAVIS
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

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(Editor's note: This is the second in a series of articles about Jack Walls III of Lonoke, a former Boy Scout leader who was convicted in 1998 of raping six boys. It details the experiences of several of Walls' victims and gives some insight into how Walls was able to use the boys for his own sexual gratification. The details were obtained from police investigative files and interviews.)

LONOKE -- Three decades ago, a 12-year-old Lonoke boy was invited to Jack Walls' house.

The boy had been with Walls in scouting since he was 7, but this would be the first time he would be alone with Walls, who was about 22 at the time.

"Everyone left but me and he took me upstairs," the man said. "He said he needed to show me something. He pulled out some Playboy magazines and showed them to me."

Walls then solicited sex from the boy, who turned him down.

The boy was upset and told his father about the incident. His father told Walls' employer, Mack McCrary, owner of McCrary's Farm Supply in Lonoke. McCrary promptly fired Walls.

This is the first documented incident of Charles "Jack" Walls III, now 52, soliciting sex from a child. The boy is the first of what authorities have estimated to be from 100 to 150 boys Walls would solicit sex from or sexually abuse until he was stopped 28 years later and arrested in 1997.

During those 28 years, there is no evidence that any of the boys ever came forward to denounce Walls. The boys began to speak openly of their association with him only when Lonoke Police Chief Charles Peckat opened an investigation and arrested Walls in October 1997.

Walls used lies, deceit and sometimes threats to manipulate the boys, according to statements from the boys taken by police. They also told of Walls plying them with pornography and alcoholic beverages.

He also encouraged the boys to confide in him, convincing many of them that he understood them better than their parents and cared more about them than their parents did.

By 1976, Walls had lured several boys, mostly Boy Scouts from his troop, into what would later be known as Walls' "group." These boys, who are now in their 30s and early 40s, would be the first generation of Walls' victims.

Police records document some of the early experiences Walls had with young boys beginning in the early 1970s. For some it ended quickly. For others, it dragged on for years.

In 1976, one 13-year-old boy had his first experiences with Walls.

The boy said he was told by another friend that Walls "needed young boys to come over to his house" so a woman could have oral sex with them.

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"Jack told me that when he was young, a girl had come to his house and seduced him in his kitchen," said the man, now in his late 30s. "Jack said that since then, the girl had blackmailed him by saying that she would tell if he did not get more young boys for her."

Walls told the boy he "never knew when she would call. He told me to be ready for his call."

IN THE ATTIC

It wasn't long before Walls called the boy.

"At that time, Jack had an unfinished area in the attic of his house," he said. "I went up to the attic where Jack told me the girl was waiting. He told me that I had to be blindfolded... then he tied my hands with a piece of cloth. He told me not to move my hands and keep them above my head because I would scare her if I moved. Jack told me that when she came into the room, I was not to touch her."

Soon afterward, someone entered the room and had oral sex with the boy.

Walls called the boy a few days later and told him the girl wanted to see the boy again.

Again, the same thing happened with the "girl."

Afterward, Walls offered the boy a job cleaning Walls' guns. "He told me I'd have to clean them up there in the attic, and I would need to check with my parents because I might have to work at night," he said. "My parents could not figure out why Jack had offered me the job," but they gave their son permission to take it.

PORNO MOVIE

During a subsequent visit to Walls' house, he said, "Jack had a porno movie. ... It was a black-and-white movie with no voices."

Walls then asked to fondle the boy and did so.

After that, Walls made a new proposition, saying he would give the boy money to fondle him. Their visits continued. Walls also said he would pay the boy for pictures of his erect sexual organ.

"I think he offered me \$2 to \$3 per picture," the man said. "He also measured [the organ] with a small cloth measuring tape. ... He also provided me with wine."

Walls once asked the boy if it would bother him to have sex on Sundays. "I guess that he said that because he knew I went to church with his wife," he said.

Within a week, Walls drove the boy out to the Walls' family farm.

"We shot snakes... and after a while we took a break. Jack got a book out and began to read it aloud to me. It was about a boy having sex with his sister."

During another encounter, Walls asked the boy "if my sister and I were friends, and then he told me I should have sex with her."

At the same time, similar sexual encounters were occurring between Walls and other friends of the boy. One of the boys, while tied up and waiting for the woman, peeked out from behind his blindfold and saw that it was Walls performing the sex acts. Walls was wearing a woman's wig and smelled of "perfume," the boy said.

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As the years passed, the first known boy from whom Walls solicited sex said he avoided Walls.

But in the early 1990s, the man ran into Walls at a party.

Walls "asked me when I was going to help out with the Boy Scouts," the man said. "I just told him I didn't have time. Jack poked me in the chest with his finger. ... When he poked me in the chest the second time, I left the party."

The man said he never came forward with information about Walls' activities, even when Walls was first accused of soliciting sex from Doug Hogan of Carlisle in 1992.

"I stayed out of the first allegation because it was a [civil] lawsuit instead of criminal charges. ... I was never contacted in relation to the incident," the man said.

A NEW GENERATION

As the first boys Walls abused grew up and disassociated themselves from him, a new generation of boys had been born in Lonoke and were abused by Walls in the 1980s and 1990s.

As the years passed, Walls apparently grew bolder and more reckless, sexually abusing some boys as young as 7. He spent time with the children, opening a dialogue with them and questioning them about their lives with their families.

In most instances, the boys would inadvertently give Walls personal information during these often lengthy conversations by which he could drive a wedge between them and their families. He told them that their parents did not understand them but that he did.

"He said our parents treated us like little kids but he didn't. We could drink, read pornography and have sex when we were with him. He gave us gifts, took us on trips and so much more," one boy said. "Then he would go over and talk to our parents because they were having trouble with us. They thought he was helping. It was a joke. He made us hate them."

The sexual encounters also became more open. No longer were the boys abused in the attic; now sexual acts took place in Walls' living room, in the boys' homes and at camp-outs where other Boy Scouts and their leaders were nearby. Many of the sexual assaults occurred on the Walls' family farm.

Walls still was not concerned about being caught, the boys said.

"He also wasn't ashamed of what he was," one boy said in a statement to police.

Several boys explained in their statements to police that they were selected to be in the elite Boy Scout Order of the Arrow or Brotherhood, of which Walls, married and the father of three daughters, was one of several leaders in Lonoke.

The boys danced Indian dances in the Order of the Arrow, at times draped only in loincloths that Walls made.

The final step was to be initiated into the "group."

"Initiation meant you had sex with Jack," one boy said. "Then you were part of the group."

The benefits to being a member of the group were great, at least to a young boy, they have said.

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"We got alcohol -- all that we wanted -- dirty books, we got to shoot guns. ... We masturbated together -- group masturbation -- oral sex on each other and on Jack, and Jack on us... and sometimes Jack provided us with a whore," said one boy, who told police he was first sexually abused by Walls at the age of 10.

A woman, now 36, told police she had group sex with the boys as well as Walls.

Many of the boys interviewed by police said parties with the woman were well-known and occurred between the 1980s and 1990s.

The woman told police in 1997 that "the boys are not lying; listen to them."

No one at the state Department of Human Services has ever interviewed the woman, even though her accounts of sexually abusing young boys have been a part of the police record for the last two years.

"There is no statute of limitations on sexual abuse of a child in DHS," one Department of Human Services employee said recently. "It's hard to understand why no one has done anything about her."

In 1992, Walls' activities almost were exposed. He began threatening some of the boys directly and indirectly.

"He put my son in a hole at a dumpsite," one boy's father said. "He threw dirt on him and said, 'This is what's going to happen to you if you tell.' "

He told other boys that he had burned a man alive.

"That's why I was so scared of him," one boy said. "That's why we never did anything [to make him mad]. I always did what he told us to do. [I] never tried to make him mad, didn't want to."

And whenever Walls believed he might be exposed, he sent his troop of Scouts into action.

They have admitted to spray painting and throwing eggs at the home of a man that Walls did not like, as well as killing a tree on the man's property.

"We hated him, too, because Jack hated him," another boy said. "That's the way it was. Whatever Jack said was the way it was. If he was obsessed over something, so were we.

"It was sex, but it was a lot more."

Not only did Walls teach some of the boys how to use guns, "he taught some of us how to make bombs, napalm, and other weapons," one boy said. "There were several of us that were his picks for that."

Several boys have admitted they tried to kill Doug Hogan and his father Cledis Hogan of Carlisle after the two tried to have sexual abuse charges filed against Walls in 1993. Doug Hogan claimed Walls solicited sex from him during a Dec. 29-30, 1992, camp-out on Walls' farm in Lonoke County.

Although the Hogans said they often believed they were followed during that time, nothing ever happened to them, they told police.

THE CODE OF SILENCE ENDS

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After six years of being sexually abused, one of the boys, who was 16 at the time, broke 30 years of silence after he said he watched Walls give his younger brother an article of camouflage clothing.

"I knew he was going to be next," the boy told his father on July 30, 1997. "I wasn't going to let that happen."

Within a day, a second boy put a gun to Walls' head as Walls was washing his car. The young man, who had been sexually abused by Walls since he was about 7, took Walls to a neighbor's home where the parents of both young men were visiting. He made Walls tell the parents what Walls had done to the boys.

"Jack looked at him as if he could kill him," one of the young man's parents said. "A few seconds later Jack admitted it was all true."

The boy was disarmed by his father, and the angry youth left the house.

The families were struggling to absorb the magnitude of what happened. At first they considered allowing Walls to sign himself into a clinic and get help.

"We didn't want to hurt his wife and children," one family member said, pointing out that Lonoke is a "small town where everyone knows everyone."

But two things would change their minds.

One was a letter, written Aug. 1, 1997, and coming from a Little Rock psychiatric clinic, that came one day after the boys began telling bits and pieces of their terrible secret.

The letter, a copy of which was obtained by the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, stated in part:

"We feel that once weekly sessions for approximately 10 to 12 weeks will be adequate to address [Walls'] current problems."

That did not sit well with the parents.

"We weren't experts, but we knew it was going to take a lot more than that," one father said. "That was insulting."

And as the hours passed, the horrifying details of what had happened began spilling from the boys.

One of the parents contacted the Human Services Department's Child Abuse Hotline and, unlike what happened in 1992, the agency acted promptly by notifying the police.

The boys told their parents on July 30 and 31, 1997. In only a little more than six months, Walls was sentenced to four life terms and two 40-year terms in prison by Circuit-Chancery Judge Lance Hanshaw of Lonoke on six charges of rape.

Those sentences were overturned March 4 by the Arkansas Supreme Court, who said Hanshaw made improper statements during a Jan 22, 1998, sentencing hearing. No new hearing date has been set.

Peckat, the Lonoke police chief who was a 21-year veteran of the North Little Rock Police Department, was hired by Lonoke on July 7, 1997.

"I was just getting adjusted when this happened," he said.

Peckat and Lonoke Police Department criminal investigator Christopher L. Campbell began an aggressive investigation. As one boy spoke up, the police learned about other boys who allegedly had been abused and began contacting them.

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Police records show that, at first, many of the boys were reluctant to admit anything had happened and some denied anything had happened. Later, though, the boys would come back, one by one, and add to or change their stories. Some talked to Peckat and Campbell on numerous occasions.

"It's embarrassing," one boy said. Another said he did not want people to think he was a homosexual.

In October 1997, the police had enough information to obtain a search warrant for Walls' home.

During their search, officers found pornography, a blond wig and notes Walls had written to prepare for the 1994 Carlisle Municipal Court case concerning the Hogan allegations. Officers also found a copy of the state criminal code for sexual offenses and a stolen gun.

The pornography included videotapes, magazines and books, including well-worn copies of "The Scoutmaster's Wife," "Boy Scout Mother," "Female Animal," "The Confessions of Slippery Jack" and "Lusty Dusty."

The police asked to have some of the items sent to the state Crime Laboratory in Little Rock for analysis, but Prosecuting Attorney Larry Cook of Cabot balked.

In a letter to Judge Hanshaw, Peckat wrote that Cook "questioned me as to whether it was wise to send this evidence to the state Crime Laboratory."

Peckat also said that Cook was not helping obtain information from the Boy Scouts of America, who had been reluctant to turn over information they had collected. The Boy Scouts had received information about Walls' activities in January 1993 and severed its relationship with him in a matter of days.

Peckat also said in his letter to Hanshaw that Cook was resisting filing charges. Out of seven warrants prepared on behalf of seven boys, Cook said he was only "looking at two."

In the end, Cook filed two rape charges on behalf of two boys on Oct. 6, 1997.

The Lonoke Police Department, as well as the Hogan family, asked Cook to ensure that Walls be held in jail without bond. Cook asked for a \$100,000 bond.

Records show that Charles Walls Jr., Jack Walls' father, posted \$10,000 to the Lonoke County circuit clerk.

"The Lonoke Police Department has not received support, guidance, suggestions or communications from Larry Cook of the Prosecutors Office," Peckat wrote in his letter to Hanshaw. He asked that Cook be removed from the case and a special prosecutor appointed.

Cook removed himself from the case; he said he had a conflict after practicing law before Walls' father, who had formerly been a circuit and municipal judge. Betty Dickey of Pine Bluff was appointed as special prosecuting attorney to replace Cook.

She amended the charges against Walls on Nov. 5 and 14, 1997, to include six rape charges, two counts of violation of a minor in the first degree and two counts of solicitation to commit murder.

She also had Walls' bond raised to \$1 million, which he was unable to post. Walls was then incarcerated in the Lonoke jail.

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On Jan. 6, 1998, Walls pleaded guilty to five counts of rape and no contest to one count of raping Heath Stocks. The rest of the charges were dropped in a negotiated plea.

"He wasn't going to plead guilty to raping Heath Stocks," said Hubert Alexander of Jacksonville, Walls' attorney. "But the night before Jack was going to enter the pleas to the judge, he and Heath took a lie detector test. Jack failed and Heath passed."

VICTIMS TESTIFY

For some of the boys, the experience still was not over. On Jan 22, 1998, a victim impact hearing was held in Lonoke County Circuit Court, during which some of them took the stand and gave brief accounts of how Walls had changed their lives.

"He was not trying to make us into good people like the Boys Scouts should," one boy said. "He wasn't making us strong and responsible. He used Scouting as a way to get at us. I hurt my family. I was rebellious. I've had two DWIs. You don't know what it's like to have a secret like this. You can't tell anyone. You can't have communications really with anyone."

Stocks, who murdered his father, mother and sister in 1997, also testified, saying he had been victimized by Walls for 10 years.

Mothers and fathers also took the stand and told the judge how suddenly their sons changed at the age of 12 or 13 when they joined Walls' Boy Scout troop.

"It ruined our family," one mother said as tears streamed down her face. "This was my baby and I knew something was wrong, but I could not find out what it was, so I couldn't fix it."

One boy said that after his encounters with Walls, he felt "grown up" at the age of 12.

"Jack introduced me to drinking at 12. I felt since I was getting alcohol and doing the sexual activities, I felt older," he said. "I thought I should be doing what I wanted to do, but my parents were giving me a hard time. They were unreasonable. I hated my mother. She wouldn't let me do what I wanted. I felt there was something wrong with me around my friends. I started not caring about anything. My grades dropped, I quit sports."

There were threads of continuity throughout their testimonies -- the boys were angry and had separated themselves from their families, most saying they "hated" them in one fashion or another. Several had been in trouble with the law, and some said they had problems with alcohol.

After the hearing, one boy said, "What do you think happens when you start drinking at the age of 11? You become an alcoholic. He's ruined my life so far, I'm so messed up. But if it's the last thing I do, I'm going to get help."

One father chose to testify on behalf of his son, who was in prison. He laid his son's problems at the feet of Walls.

Another boy said later, "It wasn't just the sex. Jack spent so much time with us. You could talk to him about anything."

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The young man, who was first abused by Walls when he was 12 or 13 and is now a college honor student in his mid-20s, said it took him a long time to realize what happened was wrong.

"Many people would probably be ashamed of me," he said. "I don't know if it's taken me this long to realize that this should never have happened or if it's that I know so many people are coming forward."

Now, "I have a crutch to stand on... other shoulders to lean on."

Photo: Jack Walls III

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