

F R O N T I E R S M E N

O R D E A L

I D E A S

CONFIDENTIAL

IDEAS FOR FRONTIERSMEN ORDEAL

The following is a list of stunts and skills to be used in the Frontiersmen Camping Fraternity ordeal. Also listed is a special installation ceremony. It may be necessary to adjust some of these ideas to different situations, or new ones may be added. The ordeal should be kept confidential in order to give it more meaning to new members.

PLEASE NOTE: If possible, a member should be assigned to each candidate. He will serve as an "agitator" (advisor). He will assist in putting the candidate through each part of the initiation. After the ordeal he will take his candidate to the place where he is to "bed down" for the night.

SUGGESTED STUNTS AND TESTS

A WORD OF CAUTION: Each stunt and test should be carefully planned and supervised to avoid any accidents or physical injury. Also avoid undue (physical) harassment. It is best to confine all harassment to mental and verbal.

1. Stalking: Select a stick for each candidate about six inches long. The candidate's name should be written in bold letters on his stick. Place the sticks in a small clearing in the woods. The area should be clear enough for sticks to be visible. (A flat stump is good if available.) The sticks should be illuminated with a lantern or some other type of light. In the outlying area surrounding the clearing several Frontiersmen Camping Fraternity members are posted to guard the sticks. (They are the "Indians.")

The new candidates are required to stalk or crawl past the "Indians" and grab their stick without being tagged. Once the stick is in his hand, the candidate has passed the test. (An occasional war whoop from the "Indians" will add more excitement to the test.) You may give the candidates more than one chance. This will test the candidate's ability to stalk. Let them keep their "stalking stick." Later they may carve and varnish them, then attach the stick to a leather thong and wear it around their neck during future F.C.F. ceremonies. Some members have painted these and added colorful beads. They make nice souvenirs.

This event is a "must" and should be conducted during the first part of the ordeal.

Instruct the candidates to carry the sticks with them throughout the remainder of the initiation.

2. Walk the Foot Log: Place a foot log over a ditch at least four to five feet deep. Show this to the candidates in advance. Without their knowledge, place a similar log on the ground nearby. Each candidate is blindfolded and instructed to walk the foot log with the assistance of two leaders. But, instead of the real foot log, he is directed to the log lying on the ground. The secret is for the leaders assisting the candidate to squat down slowly while leading the boy out onto the log. This will give him the feeling of being in the air over the ditch. About halfway across, he is shoved off the log. The shock of falling six inches instead of several feet is quite an experience. This stunt demonstrates balance and courage.

3. Balloon Race: Place a balloon between the knees of each boy. The boys then proceed to run a designated course without dropping or bursting the balloon. If balloons are dropped or burst, the boy must start again at the beginning. A time limit is set for running the course. This demonstrates physical coordination.

For variation, the candidate places his hands in his pockets and rolls over a large log with the balloon still between his knees.

4. Eat the Worms: Explain that a good Frontiersman must learn to find and eat survival food. Continue to explain that anything that walks, crawls, swims, wiggles or flies is a source of survival food. Tell the story about the man who had a meal with the natives of a certain country. First he was served the unborn embryo of an animal, then the belly muscles of another animal. Then they made a paste from the secretion of the mammary glands of another animal and spread it over a slab of substance made from the seeds of a plant. Sounds terrible, doesn't it?! Then explain that what you have just described is breakfast, composed of eggs, bacon, and buttered toast -- that most of their queasy ideas are all in their heads. Next produce a container of worms and declare that worms are a good survival food. Let each candidate get a good look at the worms. Instruct them that the best way to eat the worms is to hold their nose, tilt back their head, and swallow them whole. Explain that you will assist them by dropping the worms into their mouth.

Just before giving a worm to the first man, switch the container with a container full of large, long macaroni that has been precooked and dyed with food coloring to look like worms. Wiggle the macaroni as you drop it into their mouth. The realism is uncanny! Be prepared for some gagging. This will demonstrate courage and obedience.

5. Search for Water: Explain that early frontiersmen had to hunt for water sometimes under adverse circumstances. Give each candidate a paper cup and explain that there is a water source, such as a stream, lake, etc. some distance away. Explain that they must go to the water source alone, in the dark and fill the cup with water. They must return with the cup full of water. It is a test of finding direction at night and of real physical coordination to get back with a full cup of water. If the cup is 3/4 full, it should be accepted. The terrain over which they travel should be as rugged as possible.
6. Find Your Clothes: Explain that men of the frontier sometimes had to dress in a hurry. Have each candidate remove his shirt and trousers and stack them in a heap. Explain that as a test of their speed and alertness, they will be lined up several yards away from their clothes. At a given signal they will rush to the clothes pile, find their own clothes, dress, and return to the line -- all in a given time limit. Before giving the signal, mix the clothes up in a jumble. For added fun, you may hide one or two articles of clothing.
7. Over the Cliff: If a high, steep cliff is available in the area, you can develop a mock-up rope climbing ordeal. Hang a rope over the edge and imply that the candidates will be climbing down the rope and back up again. Line the candidates up -- back some distance from the edge of the cliff (far enough so they will be unable to observe what is happening). Lead the candidates, one at a time, to the edge of the cliff. Instead of climbing

down the rope, the candidate is instructed to lie on his stomach and make sounds as though he were struggling down and up the rope. The F.C.F. members may also shout down the cliff as though encouraging him in his progress. They may use such phrases as, "Don't go too fast; you'll burn your hands" or "Keep your feet against the cliff and lean out." If carefully planned and implemented, this event can be very realistic and will test their courage. Be very cautious to avoid any accidents.

8. Puppy in the Dark: Each candidate is assigned a leader. The leader and his "puppy" (candidate) will agree on prearranged sounds which will indicate left, right, back-up, go forward, etc. The candidate is then blindfolded and led around a certain course on his hands and knees, guided only by the sounds given by his leader. This will test alertness to sounds. As a grand finale, lead them all to the same spot at the same time. Be prepared for headbutting and other topsy-turvy conditions.

KEEP IT BRIEF! May we stress again that only a few stunts or tests should be selected and that the ordeal be kept to a time limit of two hours.

INSTALLATION CEREMONY

For better effect, this ceremony should be conducted at night just before the new members spend the night alone in the woods.

Present members should be seated around a campfire with new candidates standing outside the circle.

Leader: "During frontier days, when a frontiersman was asked if he knew another man, oft' times he would answer, 'Yes, we have shared many fires together.' This meant he had been closely associated with the man by camping with him in the rugged wilderness. Close ties of friendship were often developed among these men who shared fellowship around campfires on the early American frontier. For this reason, the blazing campfire has become the symbol of the Frontiersmen Camping Fraternity. It also becomes a part of our ceremony to admit new members into our fellowship.

You, _____ (leader should call all candidates by name) have proven your worthiness of membership in this brotherhood. We now invite you to come and share this fire with us. This act, in turn, will entitle you to all the privileges of this organization." (When the boys are seated, the leader continues.) "All old and new members will lift their hands toward the fire and repeat after me: 'I share with you the warmth and glow of this campfire. These crimson flames are a symbol of the fellowship and adventure in camping. They also remind me that I should endeavor at all times to share with you the warmth of Christian friendship, and to share with others the light of my Christian testimony. I also promise to do my best to keep alive the spirit of F.C.F. in my personal life and to observe at all times the principles of the Royal Rangers program.'"

The new members are then presented with the Frontiersmen Camping Fraternity insignia and given proper congratulations. This insignia is worn over the right pocket of the uniform just above the name tab.

After presenting each new member with his fraternity pin, the leader proceeds with something similar to the following:

"Now that you have become a member of the Frontiersmen Camping Fraternity, your first act as a new member will be to spend the night alone with only your basic camping gear. May we suggest you use this occasion as a time for deep meditation. Out in the woods alone with God, take time to give serious thought to your personal relationship with Christ and your future. The Bible tells how a young man named Jacob spent a night alone in a strange land and received an outstanding vision. David, a young shepherd boy, spent many nights alone in the wilderness and no doubt received on those occasions, inspiration to write many of the Psalms. Moses also spent much time alone in the backside of the desert preparing himself for future service. Paul, the Apostle, also spent time alone in isolation praying for guidance regarding his future ministry. The Lord Jesus, Himself, spent many nights alone with God in prayer and meditation. It is our hope that this night you spend alone will not only be a test of camping ability, but a spiritual experience for you."

Just before the new members leave to spend the night alone, the leaders and other members will have a time of prayer for each of them.