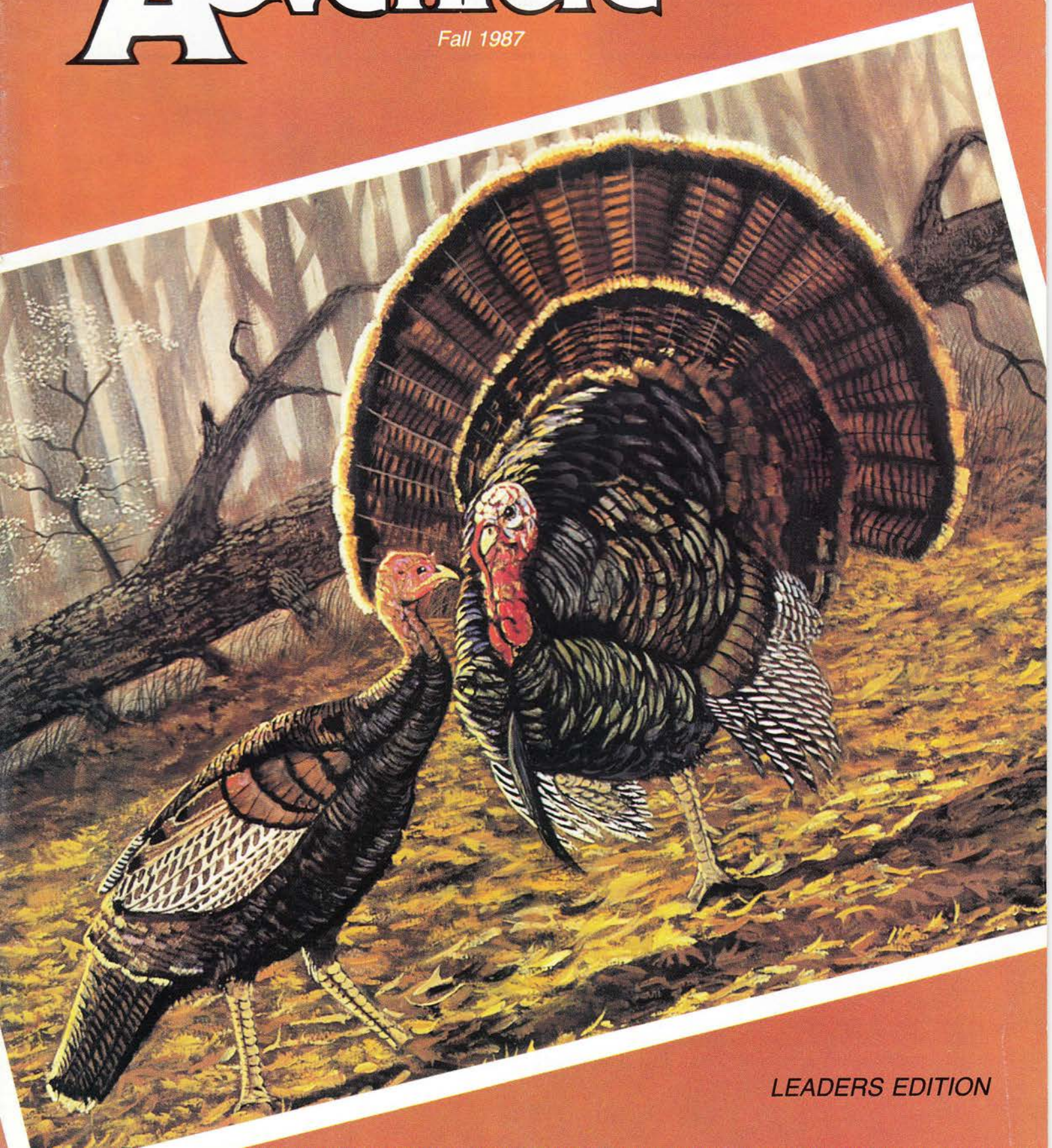


High Adventure

Fall 1987

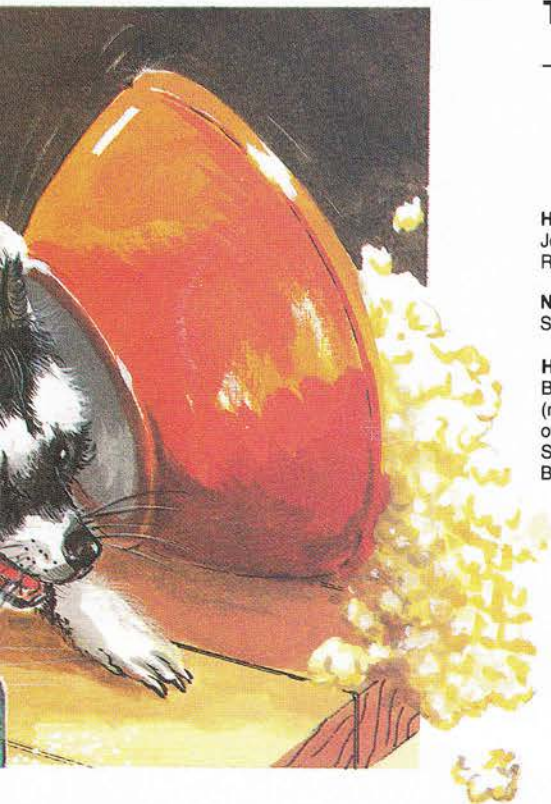
A ROYAL RANGERS MAGAZINE
FOR BOYS



LEADERS EDITION

High Adventure

FALL 1987



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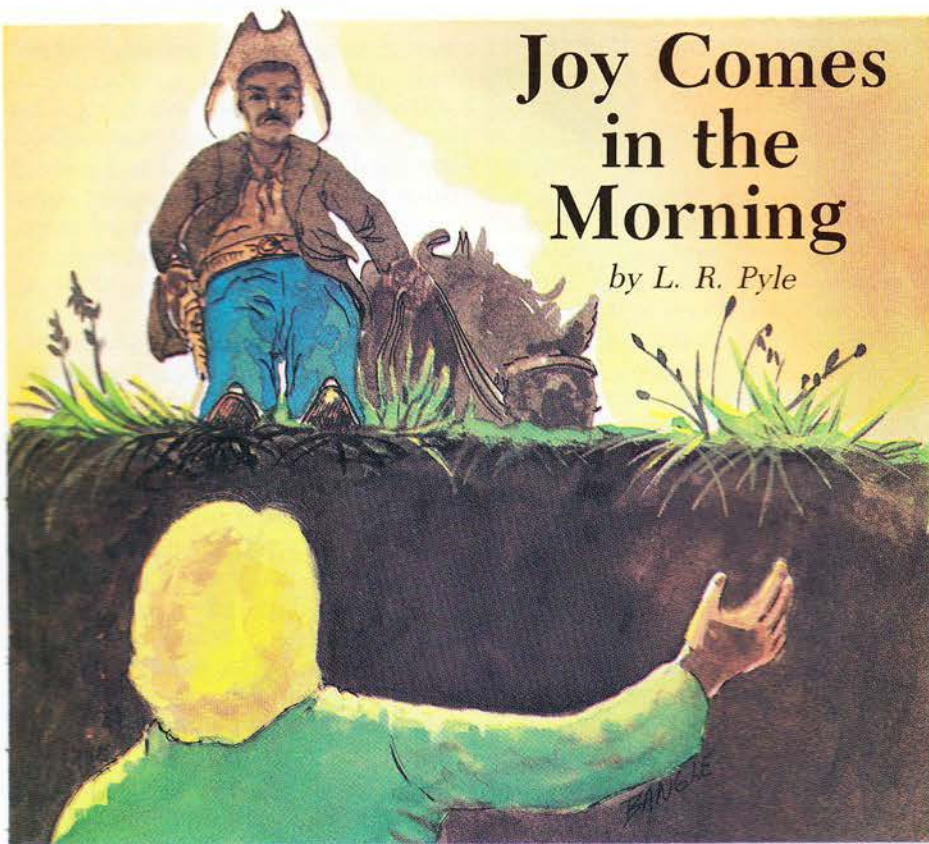
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HIGH ADVENTURE

Joy Comes in the Morning

by L. R. Pyle



The low, evening sun cast a long, skinny shadow down the rugged bank, right to the edge of the water—Mazy's water. Sandy Bowers stared at it wide-mouthed. He was a tall, blond, wiry boy, just coming to manhood. His broad shoulders, thin waist, and no hips were like most of the young cowboys in southern New Mexico. Mazy Markor was his guardian and friend—the lady who had taken him in 8 years before when his eastern bred parents had succumbed to a bout of fever. The old widow lady had raised him like her own.

From age 10 Sandy grew up in Las Cruces. He worked in Mazy's boarding house and ran her cattle on her barren land west of town. He grew up loving the desert, the cattle (which were few because the desert claimed herd after herd), and the fix-up work around the sprawling adobe house. The long hours out in the hot sun, the riding, the working, the dry pungent smells of the desert made even the long sessions of Bible reading endurable. Every evening Mazy was prone to afflict him with these sessions.

Ten thousand acres of desert could support plenty of jack rabbits and coyotes, but not cattle—not a ranch—at least, not without a source of water. Time and again, Mazy had told him, "If we just had water, Sandy. If we just had water."

Now he stood on the hot sandy bank of a shallow draw, staring at clear, spar-

klung water. Water he had never seen before. Water that would support the ranch Mazy had wanted.

The sand on the bank of the pool was churned up by the tracks of cattle. "Ten, eleven, fifteen," he mumbled as he counted the hoof prints. "Why, there must be twenty-five head out here, maybe more." He clucked his tongue—a grimace tweaking his lips. "Now I find it."

Five days before Mazy had closed the house and put the land on the market. She was offering it at three cents an acre. "I'm too old and I'm broke," she said as they sat together on the hard packed dirt of the veranda, enjoying the evening breeze. "Besides, I want to go back East and see my sister before one of us dies." A wet glistening tear filled her eye but she turned quickly away.

A few days later, a man showed up at the door offering to buy the land. Mazy started to agree, but suddenly refused, as she glanced uncomfortably at Sandy. Sandy knew the problem. She didn't want to leave him with nothing.

James Fowler, the buyer, said he wanted to settle the deal within a day. Mazy hedged. That decided it for Sandy. He left her a note and rode out in the morning, heading toward Silver City. That evening he found the gully.

A deep voice brought his mind back, "I was wondering where you disappeared to."

Sandy looked up. Fowler, tall, well

dressed, stood on the rim of the draw. Something in his stance, or his voice, brought chills to Sandy's back. Sandy pointed toward the pool. "Looks like the land's a bit more valuable than we first thought."

Sandy took a step up the slope but Fowler moved over to block his way. "Let's talk, Bowers. Maybe we could work a deal here. A partnership, perhaps."

Sandy stepped back to the bottom of the draw and stared up at the man. He cocked an eye at him. "What kind of partnership?" He realized what his subconscious had seen right away: Fowler had approached so the sun was at his back. His coat was pulled back behind his pistol. There was no cover to either side.

"A good one, Bowers," Fowler answered, smiling. "And a quick one. You just relax out here for a few days, long enough for me to buy the land. Then you come back to town and tell them all about the water—and the cattle. That'll drive the price to fifty cents an acre or maybe a dollar. It'll make a tidy profit."

"You mean, buy it out from under Mazy without telling her about the water?"

"You catch on quick." Fowler's hand dropped casually to the butt of his pistol. "Look, Bowers, I knew about this water a week ago when I started trying to buy the land. Your stumbling on it has made it complicated but I'll still get it."

Sandy slipped another step sideways trying to get the sun out from behind the man. Fowler stepped with him.

Sandy spoke again, "Look, Fowler, Mazy's put 15 years and a thousand dollars into this desert. She deserves better than this. I'll just go back and let her know about the water, if you don't mind."

Fowler shrugged his shoulders, grinned, and said, "I don't mind."

Fowler's hand flashed forward. Sandy dove sideways, fear crawled up his back. Something whacked him in the back of the head, driving him down into the sandy bank. Streams of pain raced through his head, enveloping him in a thick, cottony darkness.

He awoke in darkness. It was cold—very cold. He curled his legs and reached for his covers. There were none. Like a bad dream, the shooting scene flashed through his mind. He pushed himself up, spinning in the sand to find Fowler. Lights exploded in the darkness. Blackness crowded his vision.

Nausea overwhelmed him and he fell back to the sand. The pain in his head caused him to wretch and pant.

After several minutes, he pulled himself to the water's edge. His shaking hands scooped up cold water and dribbled it on the back of his head. Its coldness pierced him as it ran into the wound. Slowly he probed the wound with his fingers. He discovered that the hard, smooth bone of his skull had been laid bare by the ripping bullet.

Sandy sat up slowly, wobbling back and forth. The blood-encrusted shirt crinkled with each movement. Where he had fallen, a large dark patch stained the sand. He'd lost some blood.

Only the stars illuminated the desert. He shivered. Nothing in the dimly lit scene moved. No horse snorted or stamped. He was alone.

Sandy struggled to his feet but fell back. With groaning effort, he forced his way back up, struggling for balance and consciousness. A shiver convulsed him, sending waves of pain through his head again. He staggered toward the rim of the draw.

Grayness spread over the East. Dawn. Slowly, he wagged his head back and forth. He had to get back to town before Mazy sold the land.

The previous day's journey passed through his mind. He had traveled 20, dry rugged miles. His head sagged between his shoulders and he dropped down to his knees. It had been a rough trip on horseback. It would be impossible on foot.

The bright crest of the sun broke over the horizon. The yellow blaze began to swallow up the remnant of the night chill. Temperatures on the rocks would soon climb to 90, then to 100, then . . .

His head throbbed. He had a terrible thirst—the blood loss, probably. His stomach ached—no food for 16 hours. His legs felt weak and wobbly.

Twenty miles!

Sandy staggered down into the shrinking line of shade. He sank to his knees at the water's edge and pounded weakly at the sand. "It's all my fault," he cried out. "It's all my fault."

A Scripture verse came up from deep in his mind. It was one that Mazy had read to him many times after his parents had died. "Crying lasts for the night but joy comes in the morning."

Sandy laughed bitterly. "Not this morning," he spat. "Nothing is coming to this place but heat and defeat." A thought rang clearly, unbidden, "And the stage from Lordsburg."

Excitement rattled his chest and he

stood up, looking south. Out there, about four miles away, was the road from Lordsburg to Las Cruces. The stage should pass that point around eight in the morning. He had 2 hours—2 hours to go 4 miles. That he could do.

The blackness of the night sky was replaced by a brilliant blue. The bright sun flooded the land with white-hot light. Sandy looked over at the wisps of steam still rising from the shaded water. He then looked at the brown, arid, broken land to his south. With a deep breath, he squared his shoulders, and trudged off.



The pools of shade, gathered at the bases of the hillocks and boulders, evaporated with the rising sun. Hot air shimmered off the brown, jagged hillsides, making the scene dance and jump. All living things sought refuge from the blaze. Even the pointed, rugged plants curled up, striving to hide their water from the pillaging sun. Only Sandy Bowers moved in the brown, wavering landscape. His weak, staggering steps scraped at the rough surface. His burning skin poured out more and more of his precious fluid in futile ransom to the rising sun.

It seemed like hours—tortured hours. Or had it only been minutes? He tripped, falling flat on his face. He tried to rise but his arms refused to push. His legs refused to be drawn back under the dried-up load.

Sandy rolled over, gasping in pain and delirium. It was close to 8 o'clock! Fear leapt into his chest. He was only a hillock away! He was within sight of the stage road! The irrational thoughts quickened him. They drove him to his feet—drove him forward for another fif-

teen steps before his battered, wizened body quit.

His left foot slipped into a rut. That knee collapsed and he fell headlong onto the hard packed dirt. His forehead banged down, sending blinding waves of pain over him. He sprawled there, unable to rise, unable to see, unable to think. All strength was gone. All caring was gone.

Something choked him. Coldness—wetness pressed against his lips, forcing them open. His eyelids popped open and he struggled to focus on the whiskered face before him. The whiskeyed, foul breath of Charlie Dingle, the stage driver, acted like a restorative.

"Boy, you're alive!" Charlie's face broke into a wide grin. "I didn't think you was with us anymore when I seen you sprawled in the road."

Sandy lifted his hands to the canteen and tipped it greedily. The water splashed into his mouth, down over his cheeks, and onto his neck.

"Time, Charlie?" he croaked. "Time?"

Charlie cocked an eye at him but he pulled his big, silver watch from his vest pocket and peered at it. He blew dust from the clouded face. "'Pears to be eight-fifteen."

Sandy nodded. He gulped more water. "Charlie, got to get to Las Cruces." He coughed. "By noon?"

"I don't know, Sandy. That's a fur piece in this heat. I ain't due in till 2:00 p.m. Whar's yer horse?"

Sandy croaked out the story, swigging water after each sentence. When he got to the shooting, Charlie spat. "That low-down cuss. You git in the coach, boy. We'll see about gettin' you there pronto."

Charlie lifted him from the dirt and put him in the stage. Sandy passed out as Charlie climbed back onto the driver's seat.

The coach quit bouncing. Sandy's eyes popped open again. They had stopped. He glanced out the window. They weren't in town; broken, brown desert still surrounded them.

Charlie's voice rang from up on the seat, "Miss Mazy, what you doin' out in the desert like this?"

Mazy's voice brought Sandy straight up. "Charlie, Sandy's horse came home last night late without him. The saddle and bridle were gone. I'm afraid somethin' bad has happened."

Sandy smiled and leaned forward. Before he touched the knob, she spoke again, "Mr. Fowler and I came out to see if we could backtrack the horse. No luck I'm afraid."

The smile left Sandy's face and he leaned back into the shadows quickly. He peered out, staying well back from the window. Fowler stood just behind her, his pistol plain on his hip. He had to get Mazy away before he or Charlie could move. He rapped on the stage roof lightly, then he spoke in a subdued voice, "Don't do nothin' til I can get to Mazy."

Charlie stamped his foot in acknowledgement. "Nosey passenger," he yelled to the two on the road. "Miss Mazy, ya say his horse come back in the evenin'?"

"Late, Charlie, late. Must a been about midnight. I'm worried, Charlie. I know he's out here hurt somewheres. I'm worried sick. I spent the whole night aworryin' and acryin'."

The Scripture verse flew into Sandy's mouth. He started to blurt it out but changed to a squeaky falsetto, "But joy comes in the morning."

Mazy's mouth dropped open and she took a step forward, "What di . . . ?" Her face puzzled up and she squinted, trying to see into the darkness of the coach. Fowler stepped forward also, his brow knitting. His hand dropped to the butt of his pistol.

As he grabbed the doorhandle, Sandy quoted in falsetto, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend."

Mazy's perplexity increased as she walked several feet closer to the stage, leaving Fowler alone. Sandy heard the scraping of Charlie's shotgun on the floor boards and he yelled in his own voice, "But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful."

Mazy's eyebrows flew up as Sandy exploded out of the coach at her. Fowler's hand jerked forward. Sandy tackled the old lady around the shoulders, dragging her toward the ground. He rolled in the air, taking the impact for both of them on his neck and shoulders. The back of his head struck the road; darkness washed over him. From far away, a gun boomed.

He awoke as strong hands lifted him from the back of Mazy's buggy and put him on a stretcher. He fought to focus his unwilling eyes. Finally Mazy's wrinkled, smiling face congealed out of the haze. She laughed when she recognized the life in him. Sandy's eyes darted from side to side. The old woman leaned close, still smiling broadly. "The sheriff got him, boy." Then she shook her head. "I guess all that Scripture readin' did some good. But, to tell the truth, I didn't think you were listenin'."

Sandy smiled and patted her hand. "I didn't think I was either."

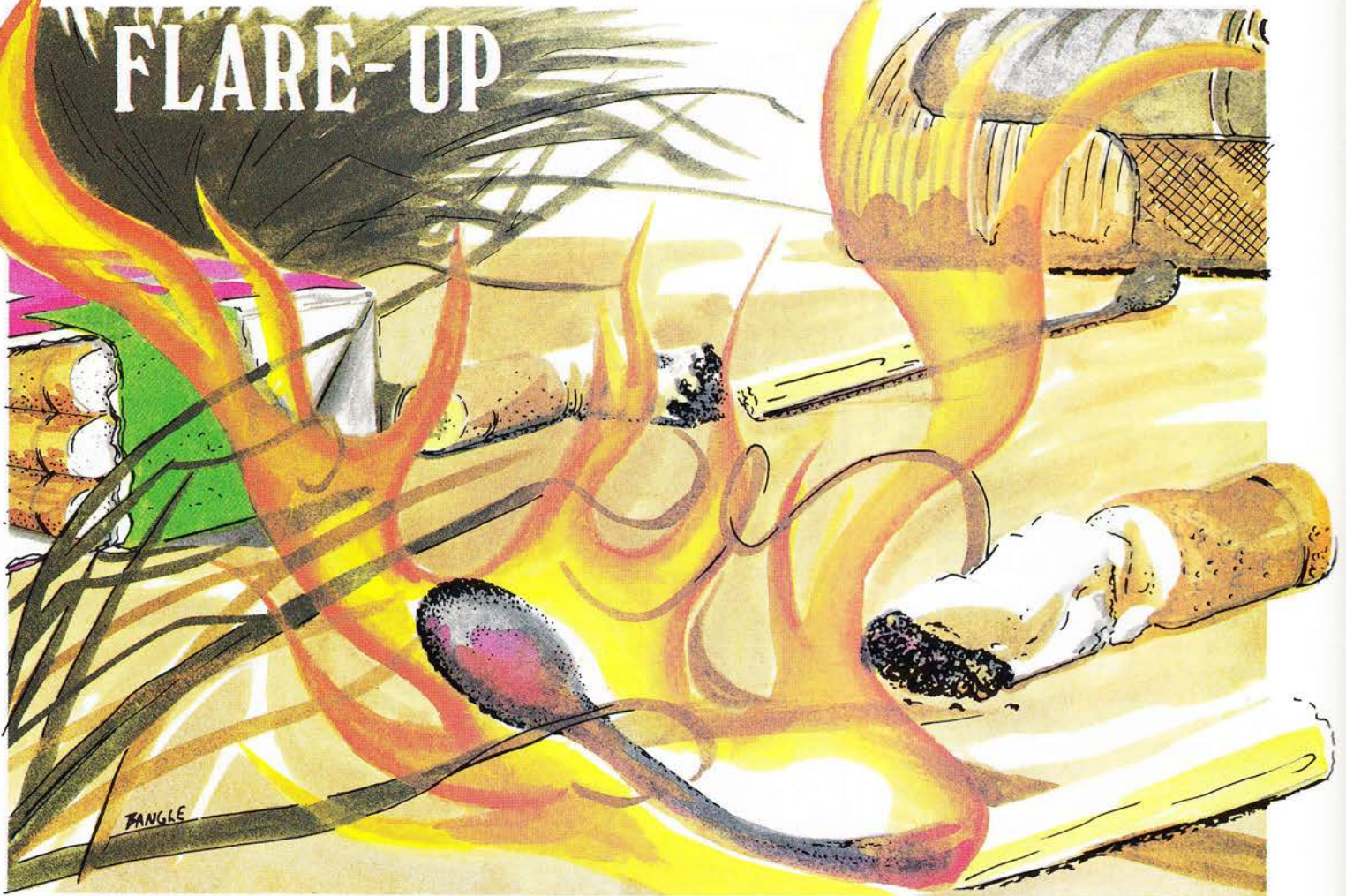


You can make some beautiful prints off of ordinary wood. You don't need fancy wood. If your father has some ordinary boards, these can be used. Look for a board with real nice grain to it. Grain is what you call the lines running through the wood. When you have some nice pieces, get a stamp pad and a print roller. You do not really need a print roller, but if you can get one it helps.

Take the side of the board you want to print and face it up toward you on a hard surface. Now with your print roller get the surface moist with ink from the stamp pad. If you do not have the print roller, just press the stamp pad on the board. Now quickly take a piece of paper and carefully place on the board. Be careful not to move it once it is on the

wood because it can smear your print. Hold the paper secure with one hand and with the other press the paper over the board so its surface prints on the paper. Remove the paper and you have a beautiful print. If your first print doesn't come out the way you expected it to, don't despair. Quickly take another piece of paper and place it on the wood and repeat the process. There is usually enough ink left on the wood to get another print off of it. You can try different colors of stamp pads like red or blue. Be on the lookout for nice pieces of wood at lumber yards or even at a friend's house. These prints are easy to make and will beautify your room or even a wall. You can frame them and they become works of art.

FLARE-UP



by Fred Murphy

Nothing seemed to be going right for me. The old Firebird I had bought, that I was so proud of, needed a complete rewiring job. The tires were almost bald, and I had been warned by the police to get better ones or take it off the road. Now the mufflers had blown! I certainly couldn't risk further operation without correcting the faults I had been told about.

So I stomped out the back door. It slammed behind me with a crash. My old dog jumped up eagerly and licked my hand. He sensed that he might be of some comfort, and that perhaps I might even take him for a walk in the woods. I kicked at him gently. He and I had shared many such moments of frustration in our years of growing up together.

I said under my breath, "Okay squirrels, look out!"

My old collie's tail almost waved off as I went for the small rifle in the back shed. We headed up the dirt road to the mountain behind the house. I never really aimed at squirrels, but they didn't know that. My dog was always exuber-

ant over the game of chasing and barking.

The squirrels had been chattering their heads off, but the minute we started into the bush there was an unnatural hush. Despite my angry mood, I almost laughed aloud at the sudden quiet. I suppose the squirrels knew from previous experience with humans and dogs that trouble was brewing for them.

As we crawled under a barbed wire fence there was a whrrr. A ruffed grouse took off and flapped heavily to a tree in front of us. It was likely one of the family of six which had marched, like an army, across our strawberry patch in the early summer. They had stripped it clean. The grouse seemed to have no fear of us because we had left them unmolested from season to season. This one was probably an offspring of the big fat female who had smashed into our picture window a few years ago. She broke the glass but only stunned herself. The grouse had sandy sunning spots all over the little hill just behind the house. I had apparently disturbed its mid-afternoon nap in one of them.

The collie looked at me hopefully. He wanted to run after it and bark, but I

grunted, "No!" So he raced on ahead up the road.

We turned off the worn path and started through the thick brush and windfalls. Before long my muscles began to ache with strain. The anger drained out of me from the effort of steady climbing. As we neared the top of the hill I could feel a brisk breeze at the back of my neck. It felt good after the heat of both my anger and the climb.

I flopped down under the shade of a huge old spruce tree. My dog collapsed panting beside me with his tongue lolling out of the corner of his mouth. As we sat there cooling off we heard the faint sound of giggling and muffled muttering. The dog's ears were up and listening, but I told him to stay and keep still while I investigated the sounds.

Some distance away three young boys were snorting and choking behind a big jack pine tree. They had a package of cigarettes almost empty on the ground beside them. Evidently, they had come up here to smoke. I remembered the times when some of my chums and I had experimented in the same way, and we had found it distasteful and "yucky."

As I watched, one of them suddenly

MULE DAY

by "Wild Bill" Yancey

The morning was sunny, but cold and brisk, as the people with their mules and wagons began to gather and line up in their designated areas. This may seem like a description of an old west wagon train, but in fact it was the staging area for the annual Mule Day Parade held in Columbia, Tennessee, in April. This annual event is just part of the weekend activities. People come from all over to compete in the parade, mule pulling, mule showing, and mule auction.



These Mule Day festivities originated back in the 1940s when the farmers would bring their mules into town to sell or trade to get ready for spring planting.

You might ask, "What's this got to do with Royal Rangers?"

Well, this will mark our first year to have a Royal Rangers entry in the parade. We had thirty Royal Rangers from Columbia Section and from Nashville, Gallatin, and Brentwood representing the Nashville Section. This year's parade had 45,000-plus spectators and television and radio coverage. So you see, this is a great opportunity to witness to many people. We're excited about the potential this has of *reaching, teaching, and keeping* boys for our Master Ranger, Jesus Christ.

We're shooting for 100-plus boys in next year's parade to help sow the seed so that others may come to know the Lord as their personal Savior too.

tossed a lighted match on the ground. Instantly the dry browned grass flared into flame. Before I could run to the spot, the fire had jumped from the tall grass to the lower branches of the jack pine. The dried needles and the dead trunk moss exploded into flames.

My dog dashed towards us, barking furiously. I yelled, "Good dog, good dog!" I hoped that his noisy barking would attract the attention of people down in the village.

The kids panicked and ran down the hill, screaming, "Fire, fire!"

I tried to beat out the burning grass with an old 1 x 6 board that I found nearby, but the fire had already spread too far and too fast for my single effort.

What a relief I felt when I heard the fire siren wail and then saw the three boys racing back up the hill with shovels. The boys had shouted until the village alarm had been pulled. Now they banged furiously at the fiercely flaring grass and trees.

Fortunately, a lumber road nearby was passable so the fire engine was able to reach the spot quickly. The fire was soon put out with the speed and know-how of trained firemen.

Needless to say, the young boys had learned their lesson. The collie and I stumbled downhill, dirty and sweaty from our fire-fighting efforts. I thought that if the car mufflers hadn't blown when they did, and I hadn't stormed out the door when I did, the whole hillside might have raged into a holocaust. We would have had neither our home nor a car to worry about.

My temper had more than chilled when we reached the back porch. The dog and I collapsed, singed and weary, with sighs of relief.

As I reviewed the situation I realized how preoccupied I had become with my car. I had let it take first place in my life.

Suddenly, I remembered how I had criticized the Israelites when they had made a golden calf to worship. I was beginning to do the same thing by making an idol of my Firebird.

"O Lord, help me to put first things first," I prayed, "and thank You for sparing all of us from fire!"

As I brushed my dog's matted and sooty fur, I muttered soothingly to both of us, "I'll take that gas jockey job at the service station. With the money I earn there and the experience I'll gain I can soon have the Firebird in good shape again."



PLANTING A TREE

by Gerald W. Young



A tree is one of the most enduring of God's creations and one of our most valuable natural resources.

There are trees in America that are 4,000 years old, trees towering to 275 feet and measuring 115 feet around the trunk. About 10% of a tree is underground where its root system has formed.

There are almost 1,200 tree species.

In your own community there are undoubtedly trees that were old when your grandfather was young. Perhaps you can encourage him to tell you about them.

Trees have an odd characteristic in that they record their own birthdays by creating annual rings in their trunks. These can be observed by examining a cross section of a newly-cut tree.

Trees provide beauty and inspiration. Trees provide paper, material for homes, schools, churches, landscaping, and dozens of other needs, including pencils. Trees are used in soil erosion control. Some trees bear fruit and provide such byproducts as gum, rubber, and mulch. Trees are used for firewood. Trees help to purify the air we breathe.

Trees in our environment nurture our minds, our bodies, and our spirits.

The world would be quite a different place without trees. And the shame of it is, trees are disappearing from the face of the earth at an alarming rate.

There are many reasons for this. They include the growth and sprawl of cities, the extension of vast road systems, and the clearing of forests, sometimes with-

out adequate forest renewal programs. Trees are lost through such natural disasters as floods, droughts, heavy snowfall, storms, and fire. Trees are dying in many areas because of a lack of concern about water and air pollution.

Saving our trees presents a tremendous challenge to society. But important and effective stops can be taken *now*—by you as an individual, along with family, church and school groups, and your local community.

There are three considerations in launching a tree project:

1. Do not destroy any tree unless it is absolutely necessary.

2. Take good care of existing trees by providing proper care, such as food and water and protection from fungus and insects.

3. *Plant a new, young tree.*

Interesting and unusual ways have been used by individuals to maintain and improve tree life. A young man in Ohio discovered that on the family farm

“Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.”

—Joyce Kilmer

there were 50 species of trees. His dedicated purpose now is to make certain none of these die out. A rancher in Utah has planted around his home one each of every type of tree native to his state. Some years ago the developer of a large housing community in New York created a “World Court of Trees,” in which he planted 150 trees collected from 40 countries. A nurseryman in the Midwest has spent years improving tree life by developing new varieties: a thornless locust, a maple that bears crimson leaves, a redbud that produces white flowers. He has also perfected a system for injecting a tree with a chemical which will protect it against insect attack.

The easiest way for *you* to start is to obtain a single tree and plant it—near

your home, in the neighborhood, on the church grounds, near your school, or somewhere else (always with the permission of the landowner). And, of course, you will want to choose a place where you can provide continuing care to the tree.

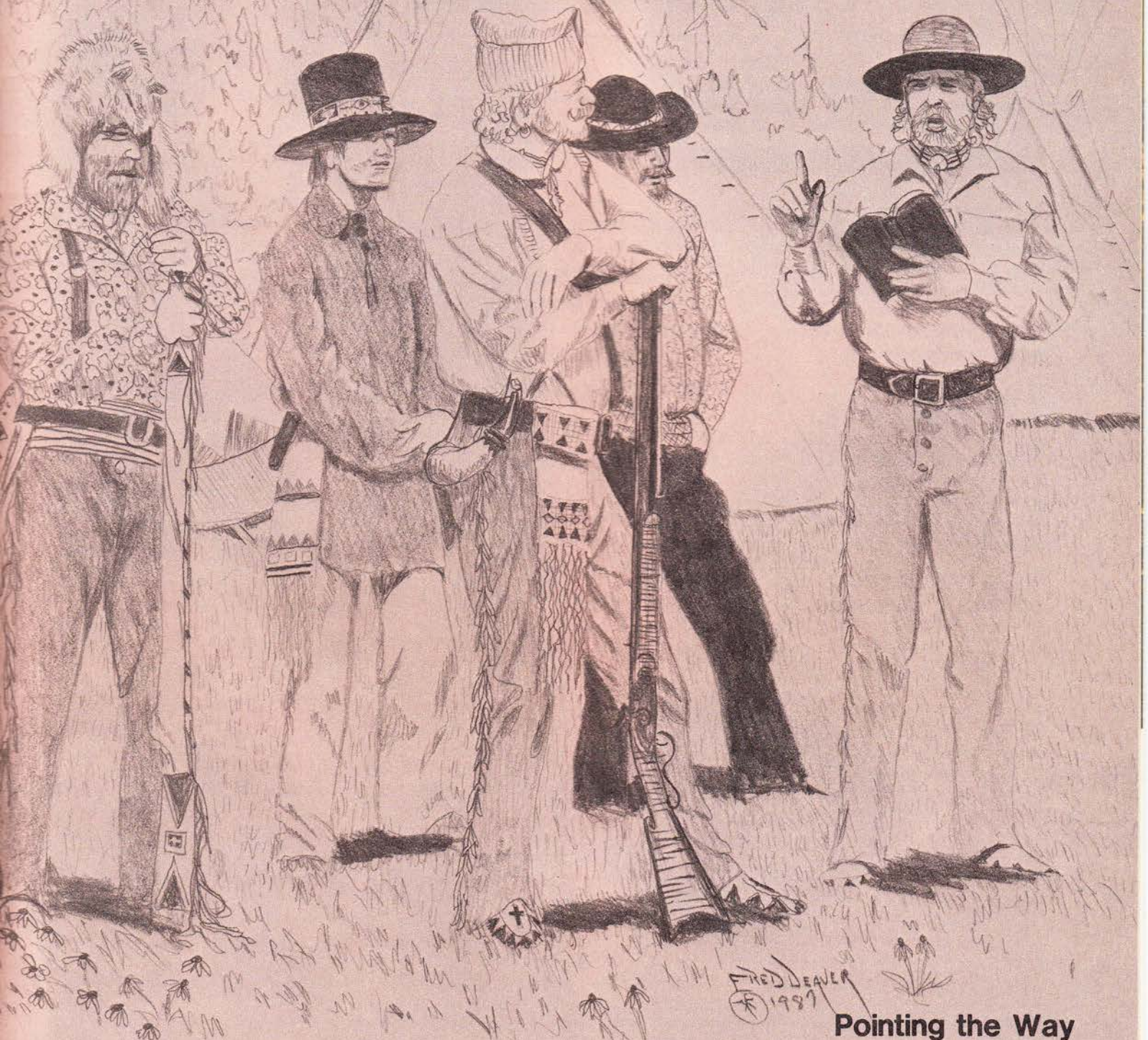
One of your parents, a science teacher, a church official, your Royal Rangers leader, or a neighborhood nurseryman will help you select the type and size of tree most appropriate for the setting which you choose. The nurseryman, particularly, will be glad to give you planting instructions.

Trees can successfully be planted in spring or fall. You might choose a special day, such as your birthday or that of a parent or friend. As the result of a father-son cooperative effort, a tree will grow into a living, enduring monument to a caring, loving relationship. A tree planted in the school yard, with the assistance of your classmates, will provide an excellent place for future reunions. You can plant a tree down along the creek to mark the spot where you caught your first fish, or the place in the park where you hit your first home run. The possibilities are limited only by your own imagination.

Planting a tree expresses your faith and confidence in the future. It expresses your love for others, in that you are doing something which can be appreciated by coming generations. Planting a tree can be a way of praising God, our Creator.

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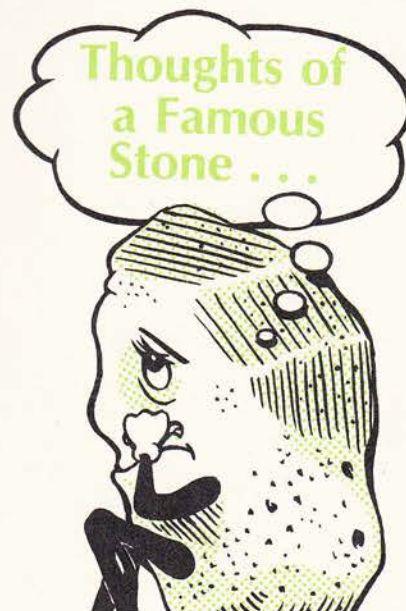
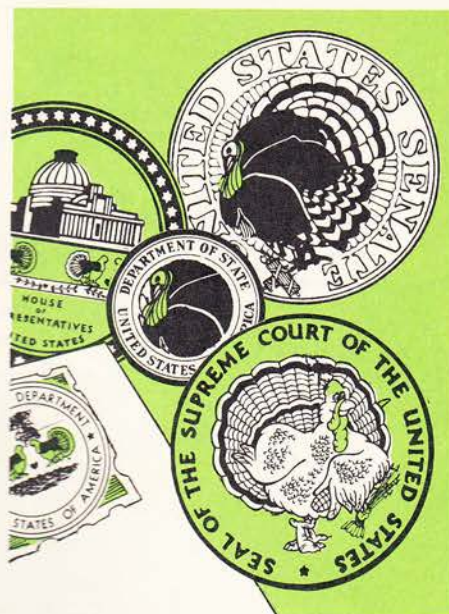
Pointing the Way
National FCF Rendezvous, June 28-July 2, 1988
National Royal Rangers Training Center, Eagle Rock, Missouri

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What About Handicapped Boys?

by John Barnes

From time to time compassionate commanders write the National Office and ask questions similar to the following: What about handicapped boys? Is there a place for them in the Royal Rangers ministry? If so, how do you deal with the matter of advancement requirements?

In response I give the following suggestions?

BECOME FAMILIAR WITH THE NEED

Not only must the leader show love and understanding, he must become thoroughly familiar with each boy's handicap. There are several different types and levels of handicaps. For example, there are five levels of mental retardation. You must zero in on the needs and limitations of each individual.

In addition to observing the boy, you should also discuss and consult with the parents. There are a number of agencies that would be glad to provide you with additional information. A few are listed here: (Some of these may have an office in your city.)

American Foundation for the Blind
15 West 15th Street
New York, NY 10011

Association for the Aid of Crippled Children
345 East 46th Street
New York, NY 10017

Association for Children With Learning Disabilities
5225 Grace Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15236

Council for Exceptional Children
120201 16th Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20036

Muscular Dystrophy Association of America
810 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10011

President's Committee on Mental Retardation
300 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20201

United Cerebral Palsy Association, Inc.
66 East 34th Street
New York, NY 10016

Assemblies of God Ministries to the Deaf & Blind
1445 Boonville Avenue
Springfield, MO 65802

Sometimes a leader needs more than compassion and good intentions. In some cases you will need special training or orientation. The agencies involved with a particular handicap will be happy to assist you on how and where you can learn more. There are also a number of excellent books and pamphlets available. In most cases your local library will be able to assist you.

AWARENESS

You probably will never fully understand the problems of the handicapped by reading a book or pamphlet. The truth is, if you are able-bodied, you will never understand what it means to be handicapped. You will probably learn more by working directly with the handicapped, by becoming their friend.

One common lack of awareness is demonstrated by people who raise their voices when talking to a blind person. Blind individuals often have greater hearing ability than seeing persons. You might like to try one of the following ideas on yourself or the boys in your group. This may develop some sense of awareness. At least you will be aware of some of their frustrations.

1. Wear a blindfold for an hour while carrying out your daily routine.
2. Immobilize your writing hand by strapping it to your side, or immobilize one of your legs—then carry out your daily routine.
3. Muffle your ears for one hour.

The Boy Scouts of America have published an excellent pamphlet entitled, *Handicapped Awareness*. The pamphlet is geared to boys. However, it provides excellent resource materials for leaders.

ADDITIONAL LEADERS

Some handicapped boys will need a lot of personal attention. For this reason you may need additional leaders. Carefully analyze the situation. If it is ob-



vious that your present leadership cannot give the time needed without affecting the overall outpost, you will need to expand your leadership.

LIMITED ACTIVITIES

It is obvious that some handicapped boys will be limited in certain activities. A leader will, however, make a great mistake by being overprotective. Let the boys do as much as they are capable of doing. With patience and understanding, it is amazing what they can achieve.

You may need to enlist the assistance and understanding of the able-bodied boys in your group. Handicapped boys should never be made to feel that they are unwanted, or that they are a burden or liability. They have the same desire for fun and adventure as any other boy.

Should handicapped boys be required to complete advancement requirements to receive advancement recognition? Yes! We would do a boy a deep injustice if we allowed him to take shortcuts because he is handicapped. These boys have the same desire to achieve and experience the same joy when being recognized as able-bodied boys. Shortcuts would deprive the boy. We must not take away their pleasure in self-achievement.

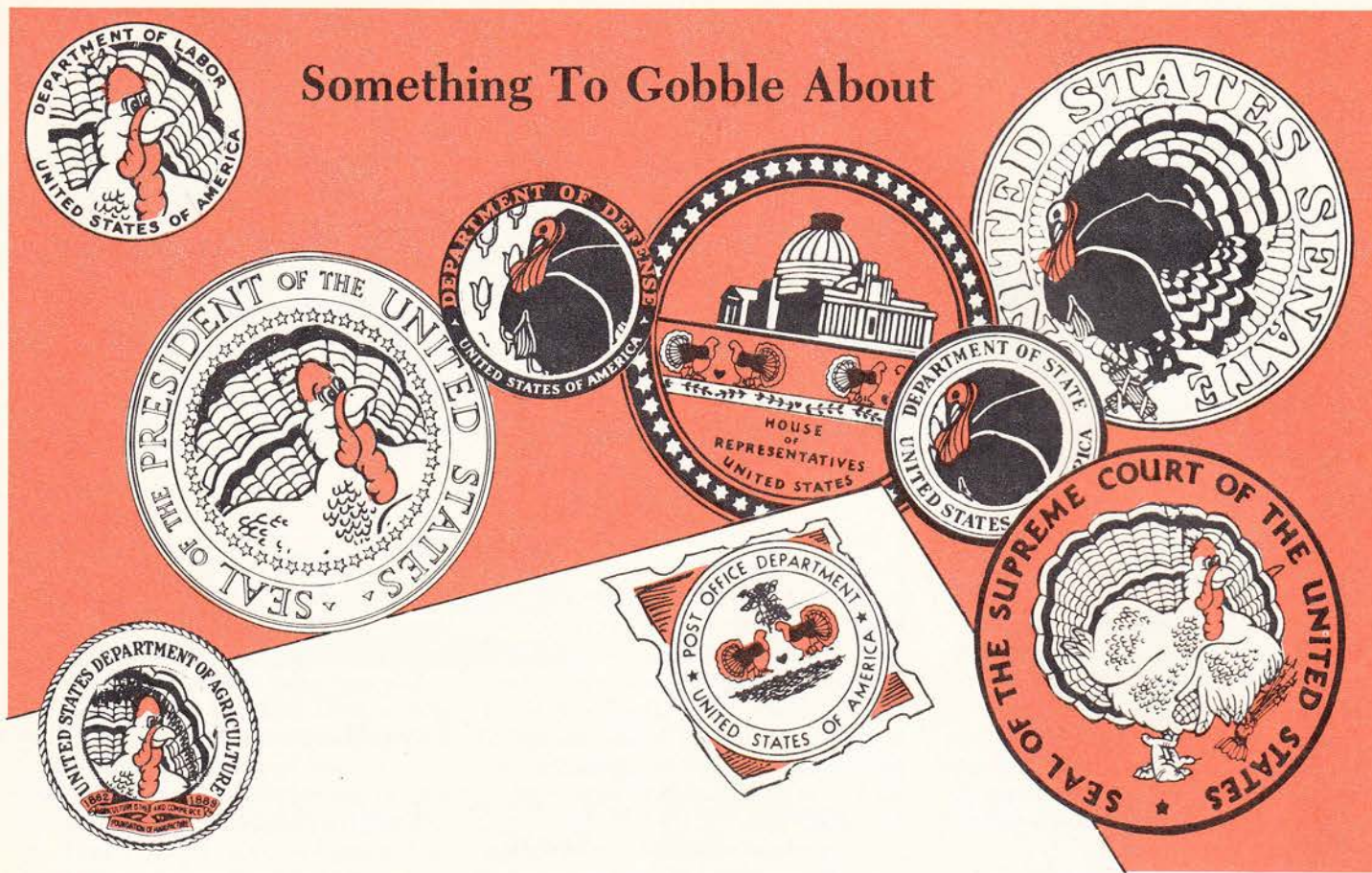
What if the boy absolutely cannot fulfill the requirements? In this case the commander should substitute (not eliminate) similar requirements that are reachable. These substitute requirements are left to the conscious discretion of the local commander. He is perhaps more familiar with the capability of the boy than anyone else. The commander may also wish to consult with the senior commander, the outpost council, or the pastor.

ASK FOR HELP

Many of the agencies listed are ready to assist you in your work with the handicapped. Make an appointment by phone to visit the agency. Ask questions—better still, write down your questions in advance. Part of the purpose of these organizations is to educate the public to the needs of the people they serve.

If the national Royal Rangers Office can be of assistance, please contact us.

Something To Gobble About



Wild turkeys, a Thanksgiving staple for American colonists, were threatened with extinction only a few decades ago. But today, according to *National Wildlife* magazine, these agile and elusive birds have staged a remarkable comeback, due to the perseverance of both scientists and conservationists.

Long before the Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, millions of wild turkeys ranged North America. Apparently, the birds showed little wariness toward humans and were easy targets for the Indians. Among many tribes, in fact, it was considered beneath the dignity of the adults to hunt the birds; the task was usually assigned to children. At the first Thanksgiving celebration in 1621, Indians donated "great stores of wild Turkeys" as their share of the feast.

Gradually, wild turkeys learned to avoid people, but soon after the arrival of Europeans they faced another problem—loss of habitat. As the colonists expanded their settlements across the continent, the turkey's woodland habitat increasingly disappeared—and with it, so did the birds.

By the late 19th century, the creature had been eliminated from much of its original 39-state range, causing one naturalist to write that the wild turkey would soon be "as extinct as the dodo."

Fortunately, this gloomy scenario never came to pass.

Although only 30,000 turkeys were alive by the end of World War II, today they are thriving in their natural habitat, and some 2 million birds inhabit forests in every state except Alaska. "It's one of the most dramatic wildlife management success stories in recent history," says one expert.

At modern Thanksgiving dinners, most of us dine on turkeys that are descended from creatures once domesticated by the Aztecs. These dumpier, shorter-legged cousins of the wild turkey were introduced into Europe in the early 1500's by Cortes, after his conquest of Mexico. Eventually, European colonists brought domesticated turkeys back to the New World.

Many people underestimate wild turkeys, but these are truly extraordinary birds. For one thing, they are considerably more agile than their overstuffed domestic cousins. Most heavy birds must go through some ungainly running and flapping to overcome gravity. But the wild turkey, even though it can weigh as much as 25 pounds, is capable of instant vertical takeoff—an impressive feat for any creature, and certainly for North America's largest game bird.

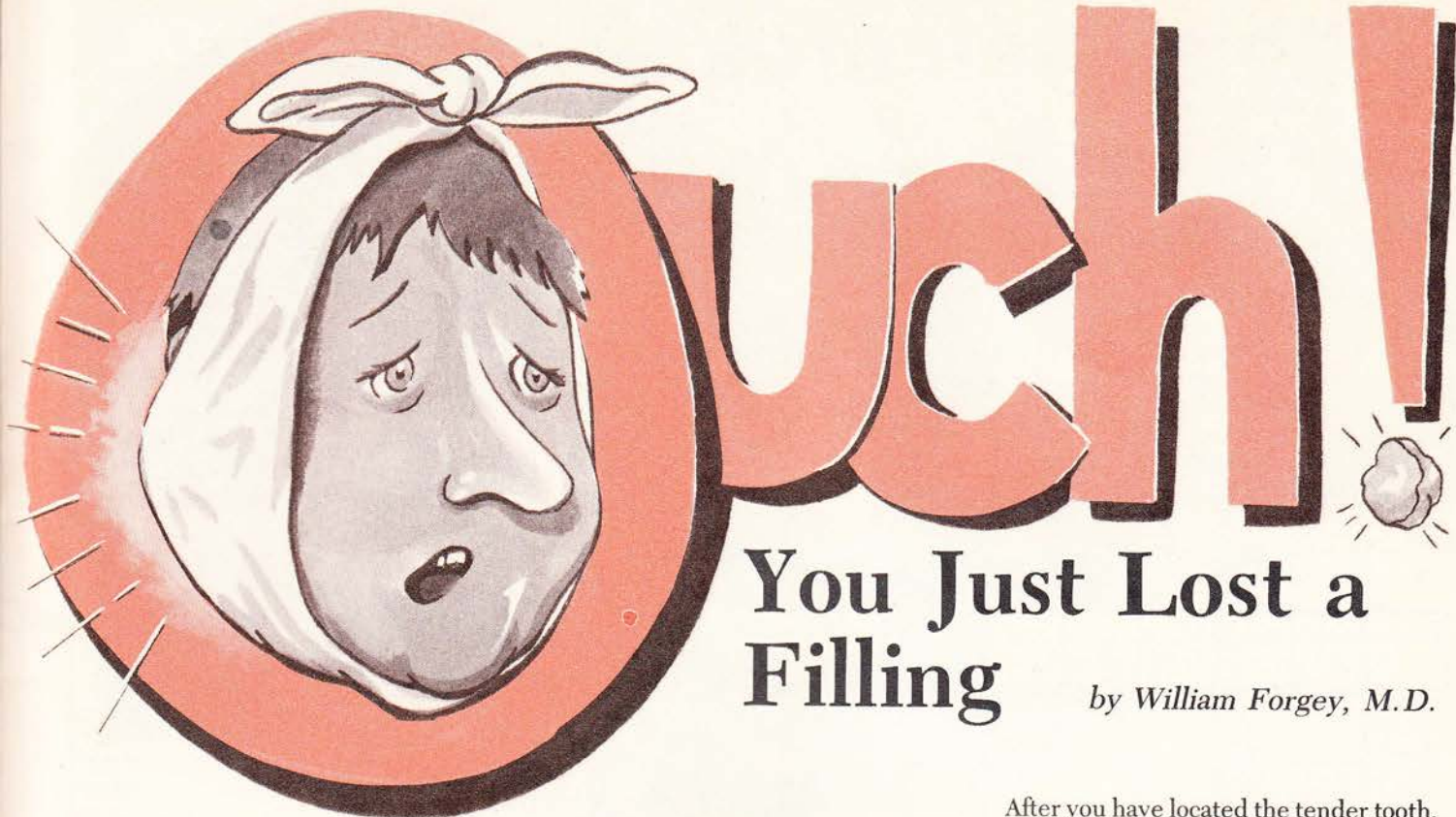
Moreover, wild turkeys are built for

speed. Biologists commonly clock turkey flight at 38 to 42 miles per hour—about the same as the streamlined red-tailed hawk. Even on the ground, a wild gobbler can dash faster than all but the best human runners, although over long distances the birds will tire easily. According to one expert, "It is one of the craftiest, most elusive creatures around. A sportsman would be hardpressed these days to find a more challenging game bird."

The wild turkey's virtues led Benjamin Franklin to recommend its adoption as the national symbol over the bald eagle. Franklin called the turkey "a much more respectable bird and a true native of America." He conceded that the wild turkey was "a little vain and silly," but maintained that it was nevertheless a "bird of courage" that "would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British guards who should presume to invade his farmyard with a red coat on."

If the Founding Fathers had heeded Franklin's advice, the wild turkey would today adorn our stamps, documents, and currency. Two hundred years later, we are just now rediscovering the talents of this remarkable bird.◆

—from *National Wildlife*, a bimonthly publication of the National Wildlife Federation.



You Just Lost a Filling

by William Forgey, M.D.

What is the first thing you do when you lose a filling from your tooth? That's right, you spend the rest of the day exploring the vacuous hole with your tongue. This never happens at an opportune time or place. After a few days of pain you'll wish you hiked with your dentist. Next time pack a Tooth Ache Gel or eugenol in your first aid kit. Percogesic, an over-the-counter pain killer, will also help. But what about that hole? By the second day, your tongue will be sore and swollen from nosing around in the cavity.

What you need is a lost filling replacement kit, for wilderness use. The kit, available from Indiana Camp Supply and a few other mail order catalogs, consists of eugenol and zinc oxide powder (not the ointment.) Dry the cavity bed thoroughly with a gauze pad. Place

several drops of eugenol on the cavity to deaden the pain. Mix the zinc oxide powder with eugenol in about equal parts until a putty is formed. This always takes considerable more zinc oxide than at first would seem necessary. Pack this putty into the cavity and allow to set over the next 24 hours. Obviously avoid biting on this side. See a dentist as soon as possible. The loss of the filling may mean that extension of the cavity or weakening of the tooth structure has occurred.

You don't need to lose a filling to have severe dental pain. Discomfort from a cavity can be so severe you cannot tell which tooth is the offender. In that case, tap each tooth in turn until the offending one is reached—a tap on it will elicit strong pain. Sometimes a piece of ice is a good locator. The intense cold creates a sharp pain at the exposed nerve site.

After you have located the tender tooth, dry it and try to clean out any cavity found. Apply Tooth Ache Gel, or eugenol to the cavity to produce direct relief. (These tooth gels consist of benzocain and benzalkonium chloride formulated with a special base that prevents their washing away in saliva.) Aspirin, Tylenol, or Percogesic will help further reduce pain.

If your gums begin to swell, a dental abscess may be involved. Sometimes the entire jaw may become swollen. Toothache gels will be ineffective. It is time to get professional help. You may have to cut your trip short. If a doctor or dentist can't be reached, antibiotics may buy you time until you reach home. When planning long trips away from home, it is a good idea to get a clean bill of health from your dentist and your doctor. ♦

OUTDOOR MEDICINE

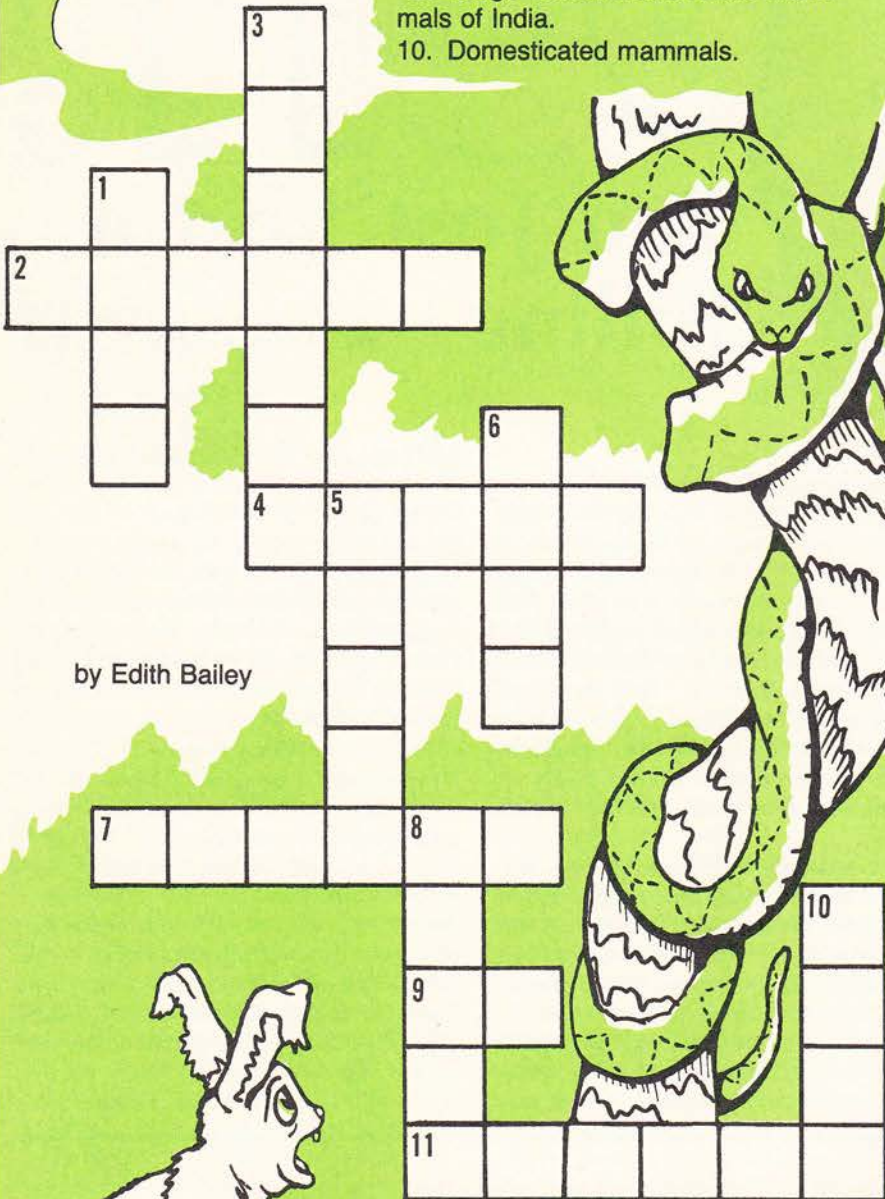
National FCF Rendezvous
June 28-July 2, 1988
Eagle Rock, MO

Bible Creatures



DOWN

1. A mammal with a beard and horns.
3. Wild dog-like mammals of Africa.
5. Domesticated mammal used for transportation and riding.
6. A hooved mammal with antlers.
8. Large carnivorous feline mammals of India.
10. Domesticated mammals.



by Edith Bailey



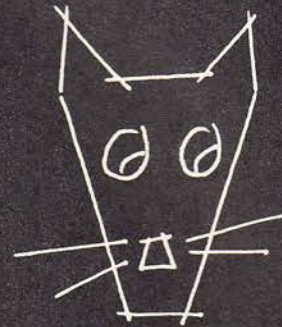
ACROSS

2. A beast of burden.
4. A mammal raised for its wool and meat.
7. Humpback mammals.
9. A bovine mammal.
10. Deceitful reptiles.

Answers to Bible Creatures on page 14.

BLACKBOARD RELAYS

by Ruth Snowden



Use 2 blackboards or one divided in half. The players are separated into two teams. They are told to draw something, a dog, for example. Each player runs to the board. He draws one line (straight or curved). The first team to produce something recognizable, wins.

THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE

by Jim Childers

He's a cheerful fellow,
liked by most,
But he's the man
who wasn't there.

He knows the woods
and camping lore,
But he's the man
who wasn't there.

He's good with boys
and close with men,
But he's the man
who wasn't there.

He's all these things
and many more,
The man
who wasn't there.

But of all these things
he really is,
**HE'S THE MAN
WHO WASN'T THERE.**

TRUE OR FALSE: A PAPER CLIP CAN FLY



by Janet M. Taylor

An eye-catching experiment perfect for a curious mind can be done with some tape, thread, a paper clip, and a magnet. Called the "paper clip kite," this exhibit of magnetic attraction is a special illustration of how Jesus' love for us keeps us close to Him in circumstances that are difficult!

Cut a piece of sewing thread about 26 inches long and tie it to an ordinary paper clip. Tape a magnet to the side of a window or ledge about eighteen inches from the bottom corner. (Good magnets can be salvaged from the inside of old speakers!) Place the paper clip on the magnet, and pull the string downward and outward. Tape the edge of the string to the bottom ledge (again about eighteen inches out), so that the paper

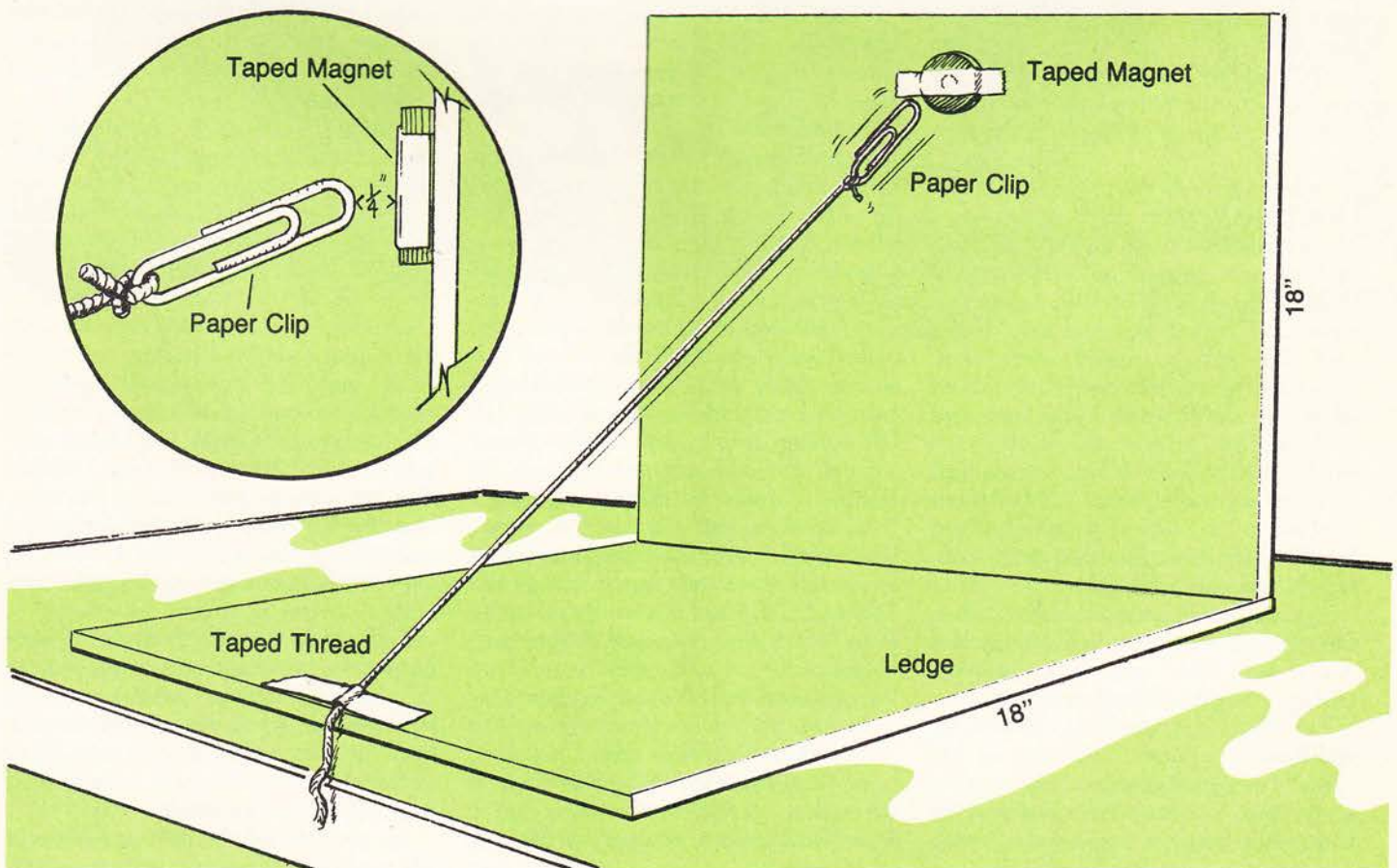
clip is one-quarter of an inch away from the magnet. The paper clip will appear to be flying by itself. Actually the magnet's pull will be drawing it, and will make the thread straight and tight. See how far the paper clip can be pulled away from the magnet before it falls.

Once your paper clip is flying, see what materials can be placed between the paper clip and the magnet without affecting the magnetic attraction. Try several layers of paper, keys, rulers, or coins to find which items cause a break in the magnet's hold on the paper clip.

Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans, "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor

depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38,39, *New International Version*). That little paper clip reminds us that we can maintain our faith and walk only as we are close to Christ. The magnet reminds us that Christ's "pull," or "hold," on us is sure, and very little can come between to break off His influence in the life of the Christian.

Even though there is nothing visible between the paper clip and the magnet, we know there is a force drawing the two together. Even though we are unable to see Jesus right now with our own eyes, we know the Holy Spirit is tugging at our hearts, keeping us close and free from a fall! ♦



THE KILLDEER

by E. J. Neely

Tod leaned out of his Grandmother Buchanan's kitchen window. Linny, his mother, and Aunt Carrie, her sister, peeled potatoes to feed the "Baron B" threshers.

Early that morning, before Sam, Tod's father, had left to help with the threshing, Carrie had rushed over to tell them Grandmother Buchanan had hurt her ankle. Carrie needed Linny to come the instant Grandfather Buchanan left for town. They sent the old man on an errand every time any of the Fetters came to the "Baron B." Tod and his mother were Fetters.

Tod looked at his mother for an answer to the question he had just asked. His mother patted his arm.

"No, Tod. You're too young to go to the river alone."

His aunt nodded. "Too many rattlers this time of year. If your grandfather wasn't so stubborn, you could go with him."

Tod wouldn't have gone with his grandfather. After what happened at the pageant, he never wanted to see him again.

Tod had gone to the pageant with the Elders from the next ranch. His parents had wanted him to go and see the land as it had once been. The old Butterfield Stage with its six matched mules had equaled anything Tod had ever imagined. He was so excited when Mrs. Elder and he started down the stadium steps, he didn't notice his aunt and grandmother ahead of them. He wouldn't have known his grandfather; he'd never seen him. The Elders stopped to let a line of people pass out an aisle. Mrs. Elder reached out, touching the old man's shoulder.

"Baron, here's your grandson." Then she gasped and her hands clutched deeply into Tod's arm as she saw the outraged face glowering at them.

The old man gritted out, "I have no grandson!"

Tod's aunt and grandmother stood as if petrified. Suddenly they came to life and grabbed the old man's arms to push him past the staring people.

Mrs. Elder cried all the way home. Mr. Elder raved, "You ought to have your head examined!"

At the ranch, Tod's mother patted Mrs. Elder. "It's all right dear, you didn't know."

"I knew, but I thought it had all blown over. We've seen you and Tod go over there."

"We never go when Father's home," Linny had explained.

Tod's hands froze on the windowsill. At that moment, the sound of hoof beats rattled along the roadway. His grandmother heard from upstairs and called down. "Baron started to town. What's he coming back for?"

"He probably forgot his wallet," Aunt Carrie replied, trying to push Tod and Linny into the pantry, even though their jeep stood outside in plain sight.

Linny, her face grim, put her arm around Tod. "No, Carrie. This time I'm going to stand up to him. Ever since we came back out here we've been hiding from Father."

Grandfather Buchanan had disowned Linny when she married Sam Fetter. The old quarrel had been over the stream flowing through Fetters' land. Grandfather Buchanan needed water for his cattle during a drought. Sam's father, with too many cattle of his own, placed guards at the fence to keep Buchanan cattle out. The "Baron B" lost half the herd and had to sell what was left and go into wheat and sorghum. Though he still prospered from the change, Baron never forgave.

Now, after ten years in the Army, Sam Fetter had brought his family home to operate the family ranch next to the "Baron B." He had felt ten years in the army were enough, and Linny was homesick for her mother and sister. Too, they wanted Tod to know his heritage.

As Grandfather Buchanan opened the screen door, his wife called, "Baron, come carry me down to the parlor where it's cooler." Tod knew she was trying to draw Grandfather away from them to avoid a scene.

The old man swept through the kitchen and stomped up the back stairs. He carried Grandmother to the big davenport beside the parlor window. He then walked within two feet of Linny to pick up his wallet, without a sign of recognition.

Linny touched her father's arm. "Father, this is Tod, my son, your grandson."

The old man's bitter eyes blazed into Tod's. "I disowned you," he said fiercely, and strode to the door, his bootheels cracking on the linoleum.

Tod stared at the towering man, so full of hate. He couldn't imagine that man, with his burning eyes, had ever been a boy. Yet his mother had often told him stories of how Grandfather had led his father's wagon across the mountains and plains. Back East Tod had wished for his grandfather. He wanted to know him, to have his grandfather teach him the bird calls his mother said he knew so well.

Now Tod, wishing he'd never set eyes on him, screamed out, "And I disown you," as the old man opened the door.

Beyond them, out on the edge of the field, a killdeer cried as if in answer. The old man's squinted eyes widened. He stared at Tod, then he was gone.

Blindly, Tod made his way through the dining room and parlor, out to the front porch. He stood there, watching the killdeer hop across the dry stubble at the edge of the field. The black markings on the bird's white breast looked like his grandfather's string tie crisscrossing his shirt front. Suddenly Tod grabbed a stone and threw it. The killdeer ran screaming into the tall, rusty grain.

Tod's eyes burned. Something hard formed in his chest. He jumped from the porch and started running, straight through the grain, across three fields, until he reached the stile separating Fetters from the "Baron B." He wanted to be off Buchanan land.

He could smell the cool sweetness of the river, and temptation overcame him.



Settling on a flat rock, he rolled up his jeans and stuffed his socks into his boots. Feet dangling in the cool water, he heard the killdeer call again. He tried to imitate the cry, and listened for an answer.

Instead, his skin chilled at the ominous sound of rattling. Three feet from him an immense snake coiled.

There was a rush of hooves at the water's edge. "Don't move, Tod," his grandfather's voice ordered. His whip cracked, lashing the snake through the air into the stream where it moved frantically and then floated away.

Reaching down, his grandfather scooped him up into his arms. "You're too little to be down here alone."

Tod pushed against the big chest. He

succeeded in getting his head out far enough to look up into the weathered face. "This is Fetters land you're on. You aren't to trespass here."

His grandfather placed him in the saddle and took up the reins. "When I saw you back there, I knew you were as much Buchanan as you were Fetters. I was on my way back to the ranch to apologize to you and to Linny when I heard you scream."

"I didn't scream. I was trying to imitate a killdeer."

The old man smiled. "I learned the killdeer cry long ago. I could teach you."

Tod remembered all the stories his grandfather had to tell, all the places they could go together. He turned to

look at the old man. The big shoulders were hunched forward, the worn hands tense. He was too young, and his grandfather was too old. Slowly, he put out one hand and touched his grandfather's gnarled hand.

"Tod, do you suppose if we rode back to the ranch together we could make your mother understand that I'm sorry? I'd like all of you to re-own me, if that's possible."

On the way back to the ranch they passed Mrs. Elder at her mailbox, and she waved. Tod wondered what she thought of them, shrieking at the tops of their voices. Together, Tod and his grandfather were imitating the killdeer's lonely cry. ◆

IF YOU KNOW WHERE TO LOOK . . .

By J. Russell Slack

You're going camping. But this time you feel a bit adventurous so you're not taking much food along. You want to live off the land, you say. In the desert.

Wait a minute! The desert is a hot, barren wasteland—a dry and desolate kind of “no man's land.” A place like that is fit only for some insects, a few small rodents and reptiles, and an occasional roadrunner or two. Right? Well, not necessarily. In fact, the desert not only has enough food and water for many kinds of plants and animals, but it can also provide food for us. It can—if we know where to look for it.

The Papago Indians know where to look; they've been looking for (and finding) desert food for thousands of years. The name, “Papago,” was given to them by other Indians and means “Beans-Eating People.” It refers to their use of the tepary bean as a food staple. The tepary is but one of many desert foods they have learned to take advantage of.

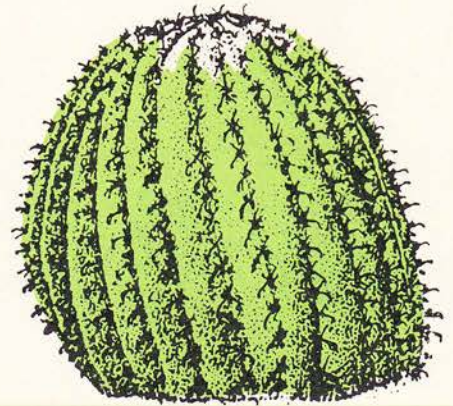
“The Desert People” is what they call themselves. It seems a better name considering their unique culture. Their culture is based upon living successfully by using to the fullest whatever the desert had to offer them. Sure, they had crops too—crops such as beans, maize, and pumpkins. But even in good years, about three-fourths of their food supply came from native desert plants and animals.

The men hunted antelope, deer, jackrabbits

and cottontails, mountain sheep, pecaries (wild pigs), pack rats, and some birds. Though they hunted all of these animals and others, they killed only those which they intended to eat. While the men hunted game, the women gathered fruit and buds of the prickly pear cacti; fruit from the saguaro and organ pipi cacti; cholla buds, fruit, and joints; ironwood and palo verde seeds; mesquite beans, and the seeds and roots of other plants. When they could find them, they also pit-baked the centers or crowns of agaves.

For more information on edible desert vegetation, please read below. *Bon appetite!*

1. All cactus fruits are edible. Some fruits, such as the saguaro, break open. Their contents can then be easily removed. Others can be turned over a flame to singe off the spines. They are then peeled and eaten. You can also eat the seeds of old, dried-up cactus. The Papago did it this way: They ground them using two stones, the large base rock called a *metate* and the hand-held, smaller grinding rock, the *mano*. The ground seeds would form a powder to be eaten plain or mixed with water to form *pinole*.
2. The leguminous bean-bearing trees of the pea family comprise a large group from which food may be gathered. The main Southwest desert members of this group are the screwbean and honey mes-



Certain barrel cacti, depending upon the species, may reach 9-12 feet in height, but most kinds range between 2-5 feet tall. If needed, they can be cut open and the inner pulp mashed to get the moisture they contain. (But chew and spit it out, swallowing it can make you ill).

quite trees and the ironwood, palo verde, and acacia trees. These are all small, bearing large crops of bean pods which can be boiled and eaten when green and tender. They may also be eaten raw in small amounts when green. The dry mature beans are hard, like cactus seeds, and must be ground. The meal produced this way can be either made into cakes for baking or cooked with water for a gruel (mush, if you prefer!).

3. The Papagos baked the central heart of the agave plant in hot coals in the ground. To get the heart from these plants, dig a pit, and fill it with plenty of coals. It's a fairly big operation to cook the heart. The Indians started their fires at night and let the agaves bake all night long.

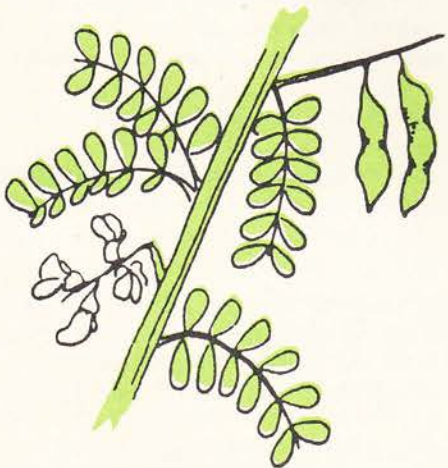


The saguaro cactus, reaching up to 50 feet in height, is the largest cactus found in the U.S. It can weigh as much as 8-10 tons and live 150-200 years.

Desert living was never easy for the Papagos. But if they worked hard together, they could usually support themselves. Each family member did his or her part for the good of all. Despite being so familiar with the land, they all knew the danger of venturing very far into the desert alone. The Papagos were well aware of the desert's seemingly harsh treatment of those who fail to show it the respect it deserves. They also knew—and received—the many rewards it offered those who would only take the time to get to know it. There is enough out there for all of us—that is, if you know where to look!



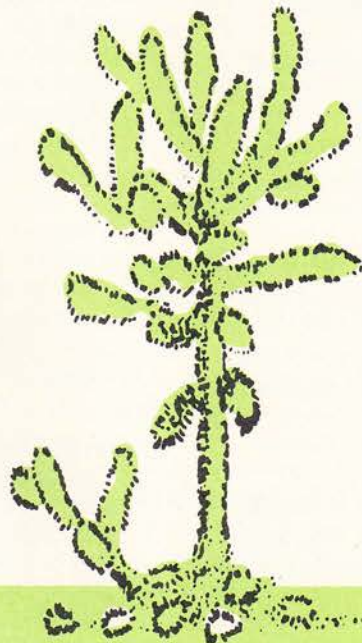
Prickly pear may be the best known of the cacti. They are found in many places besides the U.S. where they originate. The edible fruit turn dark red when ripe and can be very sweet.



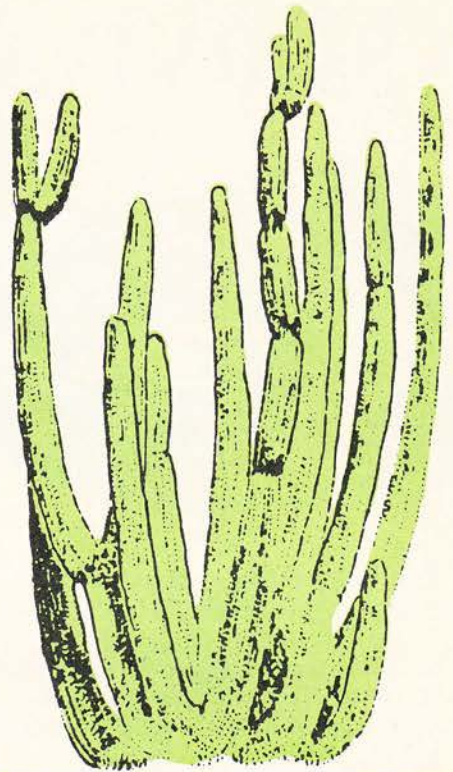
The ironwood tree, with blue-green leaves, purple, peatypie flowers and gray bark, reaches a height of 30 feet. It occurs in lower, warmer elevations such as those of southern California and Sonora.



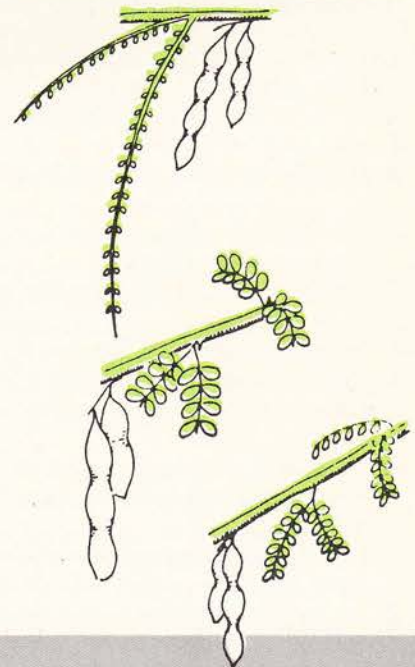
The lechuguilla (an agave), symbol of the Chihuahuan Desert, is very plentiful on limestone cliffs and arid mesas. The individual leaves each have a terminal spine and are about 8-16 inches long. The flower stalk reaches a height of 6-13 feet.



Cholla cacti have many cylindrical joints supported by a main trunk. The heavily spined joints can be easily knocked loose and become attached to the unobservant passerby, animal or human.



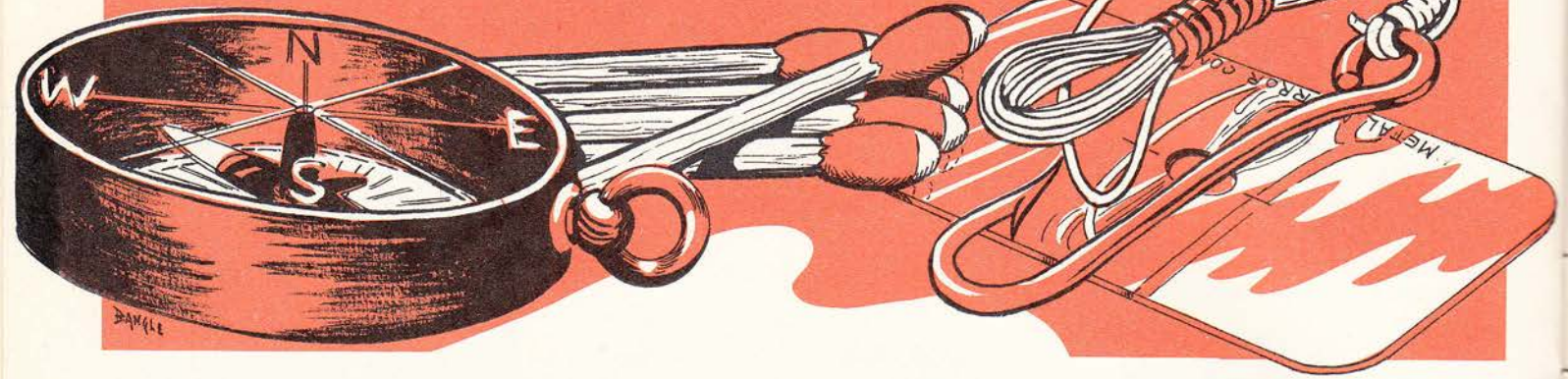
The organ pipe cactus is made up of many columnar branches 9-20 feet in height. Ranging south in Baja and Sonora, it barely enters U.S. land in southwestern Arizona.



Palo verde (green stick) trees only produce leaves when moisture conditions are favorable. So their green trunks and branches handle most of the photosynthesis for the trees. The Mexican palo verde (top) reaches 45-50 feet. The blue palo verde (center) reaches about 30 feet. The foot-hill palo verde (bottom) reaches about 26 feet in height.

SURVIVAL TIPS

by Warren Bebout



Before Going Into Unknown Territory—

1. Get expert advice on any area you are going into for the first time.
2. Study the best available maps beforehand.
3. Never travel without a compass.
4. Tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return.
5. Be observant—note landmarks such as lakes, fire towers, high hills, unusual shaped trees, or rocks.
6. Check the slope of the land and the direction in which streams flow.
7. Look back occasionally for a view of the return route.
8. Above all, refer to your compass every so often.
9. Keep track of the direction in which you are headed.

If You Should Lose Your Way—

1. Keep calm; don't panic.
2. Sit down and take time to survey your situation.
3. Plan your next move.
4. It might be wisest to sit tight and wait to be found.

If You Are on Your Own—

1. Try to orient yourself.
2. Climb a hill and see whether you can spot a familiar landmark.
3. Note the position of the sun.
4. Check the reliable North Star at night.
5. Do not leave the area until you have chosen a logical direction to go.
6. Hold your course by lining up trees, two at a time. When you reach the first, align the second with a third, and so on.
7. Follow a logging road or a stream.
8. Keep moving in a downhill direction.

If you have no compass—use your watch as a direction finder. Hold it level, with the hour hand pointing toward the sun. A line drawn halfway between 12 and the hour hand (clockwise from 12) will point south.

If You Decide To Stay in One Place—

1. Do what you can to attract attention.
2. Help searchers pinpoint your location.
3. Sound off at intervals, three shouts, or three of any sounds are an international distress signal.
4. Find a large clearing and set three signal fires.
5. Send sun-flash signals with a mirror.

6. Spell out "S.O.S." on the ground large enough to be seen from the air with rocks or large limbs.

If It Appears You Will Have To Spend the Night in the Open, Then—

1. Select your campsite well before dark.
2. Try to find one that offers protection from wind and weather.
3. Allow plenty of time to gather a night's supply of firewood.
4. Build an improvised shelter such as a lean-to from 1" diameter poles lashed with fishing line, vines, or whatever is at hand. Evergreens usually make the best thatching material, although leafy branches, bark slabs, or bunches of grass will do too. Pack them as tightly as possible to stop all leaks.
5. You may well need a large fire to stave off the chill and also serve as a signal.
6. Build your fire in front of the lean-to which will gather and reflect the heat.
7. Otherwise, if it can be safely done, build a fire 6 feet long by 2 feet wide. After it has burned for several hours, the ground under it will have heated enough to stay warm most of the night. Scrape the coals to one side and make a pine bough bed on the heated earth.
8. In the desert take shelter during the day and travel at night.
9. Crouch in the shadow of a creek bank or a large rock.
10. Build a lean-to of sticks and brush or extra clothing.

Emergency Food—

1. Practically all fish, frogs, turtles, eels, and crawfish are edible. A patient person can spear or scoop these from the shallows, if hook and line are not at hand.
2. Try to build an animal snare trap to catch wild game to eat.
3. Look for berries, nuts, or honey in season.
4. Ignore mushrooms, as they have no food value and may be poisonous. Locusts, grasshoppers, bees, ants, worms, and grubs are nourishing foods. Toast them over an open fire or broil in a pan. All grasses are edible. Fern sprouts, raw or broiled, are safe and quite tasty. Water is more important than food. Drink it sparingly. Game trails will help you find water. ◆

An Indoor Royal Rangers Devotion

by Dave Franklin

PURPOSE: To illustrate God's forgiveness of sin.

ITEMS NEEDED: A medium-size bowl $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water, a salt shaker, a pepper shaker, a drop or two of dish soap, and a Bible.

DEVOTION:

COMMANDER: "This bowl full of water represents a life as God created it. It is *full* and it is *useful*. God creates our lives just like that: He fills us with useful talent to be used for Him. Colossians 1:9-11 says: "... that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness." We should fill our life with:

Knowledge, wisdom, spiritual understanding, good works, knowledge of God, God's power, patience, long-suffering, and joyfulness."

While talking to younger boys, this list could be summed up by talking about "good works." Discussion could start by asking, "What are some good works that Christians can do?"

VISUAL AID: While briefly talking about the things that we should fill our lives with, begin to shake salt into the bowl for each idea mentioned that reflects the good works of Christians.

Note: You can't get too much salt in the bowl to hurt the illustration; (neither can you do too many good works).

COMMANDER: A personal illustration of an individual that knew the Lord and turned from Him would be helpful at this time. *Example:* "A boy once knew the Lord and did many good things, but other boys influenced him to steal, cheat, and lie. These "small sins" began to add up until finally he was caught committing great crimes. The life God gave him was once clean and pure, full of:

Knowledge, wisdom, spiritual understanding, good works, knowledge of God, God's power, patience, long-suffering, and joyfulness.

But as sin came into his life, his heart became black with sin." Discussion could again begin with, "What are some sins that stain our hearts?"

VISUAL AID: While talking about the ugly sins (large or small) that stain our hearts, begin shaking the pepper on the water. Start very slowly on the edge, and then finally cover the surface of the water, representing the terrible effect of a sin-stained life.

COMMANDER: "Can a heart that is full of sin be clean again? Psalm 51:7-11 says, 'Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.' God will offer a person power to resist the temptations of sin. God will also offer salvation to a sinful heart. Although our lives still bear the scars of sin at times, He will purge our hearts of sin."

VISUAL AID: During the salvation appeal, you should wet your finger with the dish soap. The best way to do this unnoticed is to smear a thin layer of the dish soap on the bottom of the pepper shaker. While you're speaking about God's grace and power to forgive sin, touch your index finger on the soap in preparation for your final point.

COMMANDER: "Boys, if you allow Jesus to come into your life, He will cleanse you from your sin (1 John 1:9). God will take away your sins."

VISUAL AID: As you tell the boys that Jesus will take their sins away, use your finger to represent God coming from above to touch the "sinful life" which is the bowl full of peppered water. As you touch the water in the center, *immediately* the pepper on the surface will go to the edge of the bowl. Practice this *before* you do it in front of the boys. Don't spend time talking about what happened; *go on*.

COMMANDER: "See what a difference God can make in your life?" Close with an invitation for boys to come to the Lord. ◆

Thoughts of
a Famous
Stone . . .



by Sharon Lee Roberts

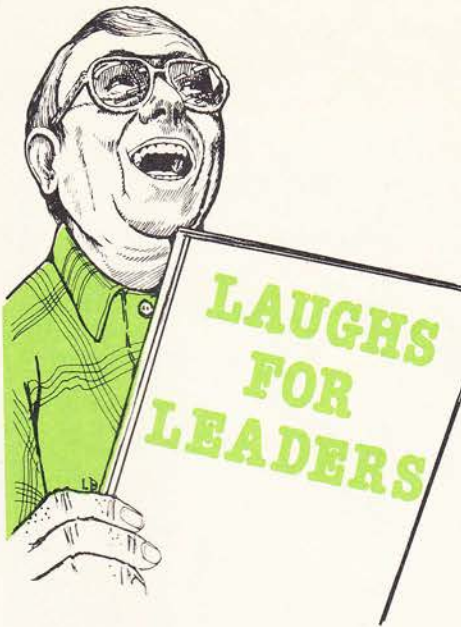
Oh, no! Here comes David! "Not me, David I don't want to be the stone you use against Goliath." Oh, why does he have to show his bravery at my expense? Those fancy slingshooters never think about us. . . .

Uh-oh, here he is. Oh, great!—I'm in the sling. I can't look. He's starting to spin me. I'm starting to get dizzy.

I just had an awful thought. I'm certainly not going to knock that giant out. I'm just going to bruise him a little. He's not going to like that one bit. He's going to pick me up and throw me against the ground. Look at his hands! "Why didn't you pick my cousin, David? He's bigger."

Well, here I go . . . Swoosh! Oh, I'm so dizzy. Hey! What happened? Everyone's clapping. We won! Wow! It was nothing, really. It's all in the landing, you know. Oh, I think I'm going to faint. I'm coming down with a terrible headache. . . .

National FCF Rendezvous
June 28-July 2, 1988
Eagle Rock, MO



Two boys were talking about how great their dads were when the first boy said: "Your dad couldn't hold a candle to what my dad does."

"What does your dad do?" the second boy asked.

"He makes gunpowder."

Henry Leabo
Lancaster, CA

A man walked into a pet shop and asked for five mice, three rats, and 100 roaches. The pet shop clerk said, "I can give you the mice, but not the rats or cockroaches. What do you want them for?"

My landlady is evicting me, and she told me to leave the apartment exactly as I found it."

Martha J. Beckman
Mission Hills, CA

One day two men took their dog duck hunting. After a couple of hours and no luck, one of the men spoke up.

"You know, we've been out here all morning and haven't gotten a single duck!" he said.

"Yeah," replied his partner. "Maybe it's because we haven't been throwing the dog up high enough."

Henry Leabo
Lancaster, CA

Don: "What time do ducks get up?"

Tom: At the quack of dawn."

Henry Leabo
Lancaster, CA

King Arthur: "I once visited a castle and saw a bed 20 feet long."

Merlin: "Sounds like a lot of bunk to me."

Henry Leabo
Lancaster, CA

Did you hear about the gorilla who invented a bell that would ring whenever a score was made in table tennis? He called it the King Kong Ping Pong Ding Dong.

Martha J. Beckman
Mission Hills, CA

Joe: What do you get when you cross a pig and a centipede?

Moe: Bacon and legs.

Henry Leabo
Lancaster, CA

Cowboy: "I broke three horses this morning."

Dude: "My, how careless of you!"

Henry Leabo
Lancaster, CA

Joe: "What do you get when you cross an elephant with a watch dog?"

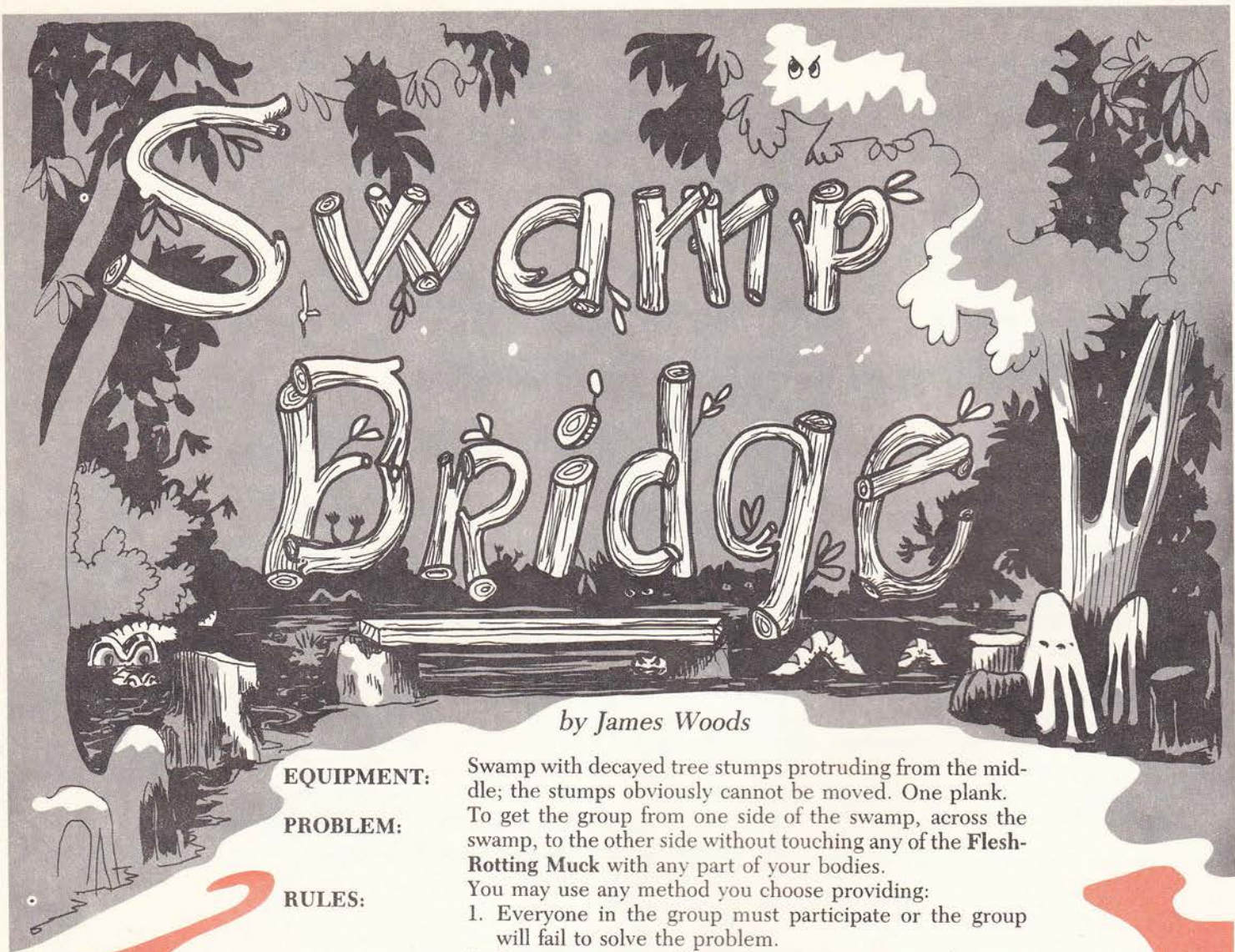
Moe: "A nervous mailman."

Henry Leabo
Lancaster, CA

Then there was the guy who was so poor his idea of a square meal was a cracker.

Henry Leabo
Lancaster, CA





by James Woods

EQUIPMENT:

PROBLEM:

RULES:

Swamp with decayed tree stumps protruding from the middle; the stumps obviously cannot be moved. One plank.

To get the group from one side of the swamp, to the other side without touching any of the **Flesh-Rotting Muck** with any part of your bodies.

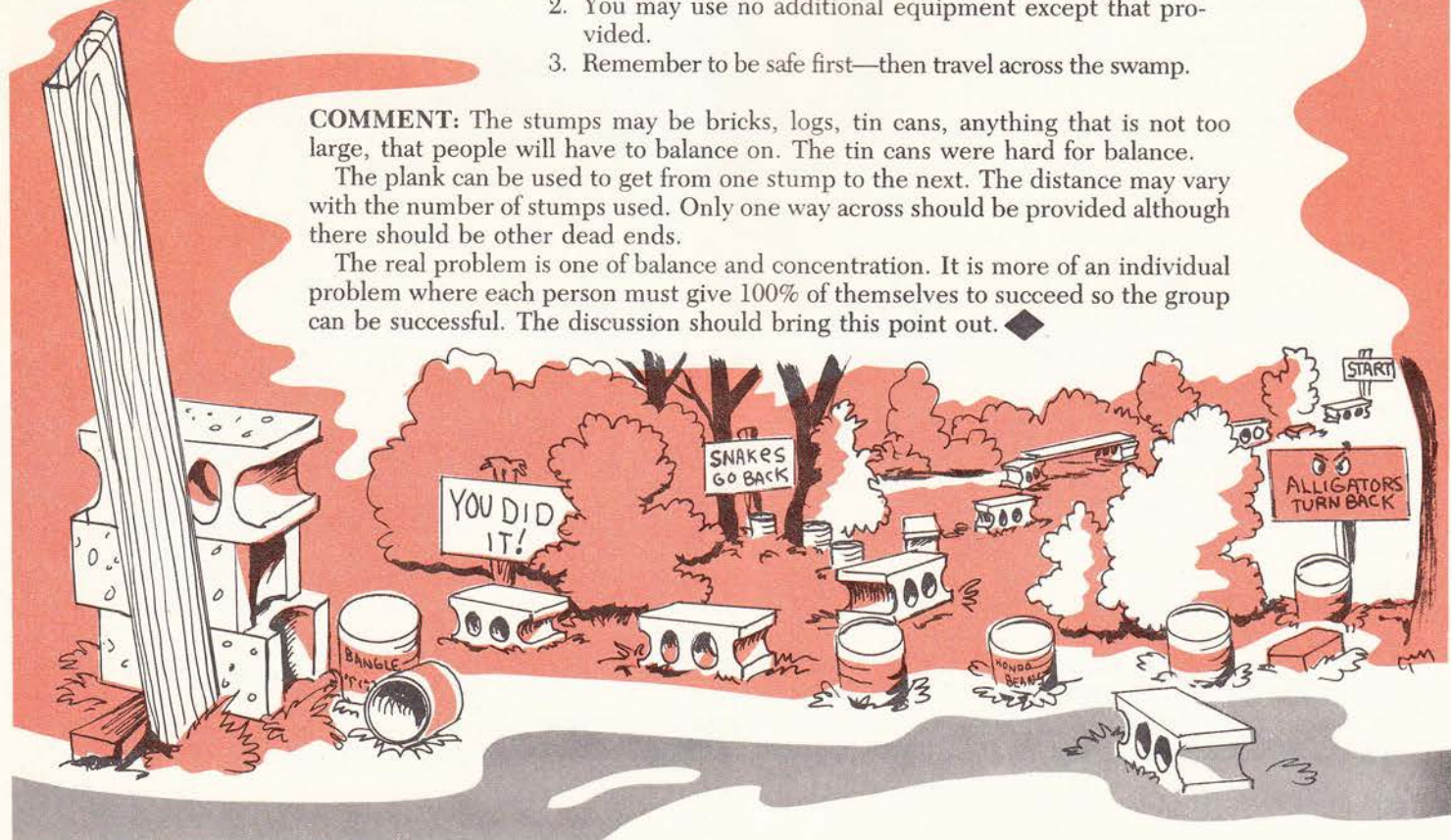
You may use any method you choose providing:

1. Everyone in the group must participate or the group will fail to solve the problem.
2. You may use no additional equipment except that provided.
3. Remember to be safe first—then travel across the swamp.

COMMENT: The stumps may be bricks, logs, tin cans, anything that is not too large, that people will have to balance on. The tin cans were hard for balance.

The plank can be used to get from one stump to the next. The distance may vary with the number of stumps used. Only one way across should be provided although there should be other dead ends.

The real problem is one of balance and concentration. It is more of an individual problem where each person must give 100% of themselves to succeed so the group can be successful. The discussion should bring this point out. ◆



Howdy, Pilgrim.

My old horse Speck and me are shor
lookin forward to seein ya'll at the
National Rendezvous at Eagle Rock.



NATIONAL FCF RENDEZVOUS

June 28-July 2, 1988, at Eagle Rock, Missouri

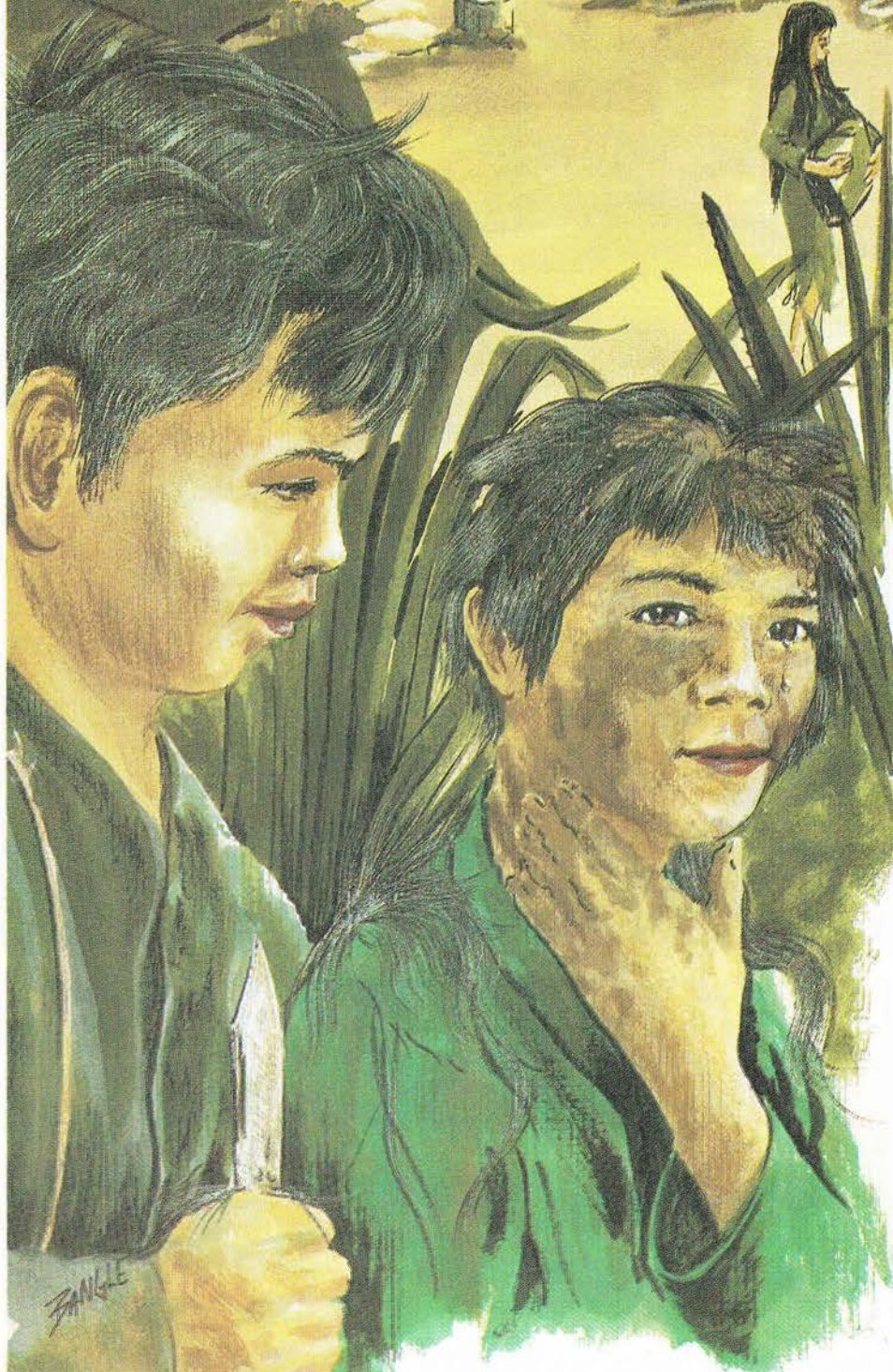
Theme: Pointing the Way

**The site is the Buckskin Glade Area of the
National Royal Rangers Training Center.**

I Saw My Sister Cry

by Colleen Reece

Based on a true story



Mai clung to me as the crowd pressed closer. I tried to steady her, knowing her trembling would not stop until we were free. Free! Would we ever be free? For one terrible moment I wondered—could we make it? It had been so long in coming. Yet our world had not always been this way. . .

“Ying,” laughing eyes shone from my twin’s face, “where is my present? I am 16 today.”

I could not help laughing back at her. “So am I.”

“Oh, but it’s more important for a girl.”

My eyes must have opened wider, for she rushed on, “I feel as if I am no longer a child today, but a woman.”

Something in her voice depressed me. I walked to the window and looked out, not seeing the people below or the heavy jungle growth or houses in the distance. “You will need to be a woman if we are in the path of the invaders.”

“Don’t be sour, Ying. The oppressors will not come here.” She threw her head back proudly. “Our families have led this village for years. No one would dare try to harm us.”

“That’s what Chouhn thought.”

The next moment I hated myself for reminding her. Chouhn had been our favorite cousin. He lived many miles from us, but we got word attackers had come in the night. They set a torch to Chouhn’s home. He tried to resist and had been killed as his family stood helplessly by.

"Why?" Mai burst out. "Why can't we be left alone?"

"Perhaps we will be." I tried to coax a smile from her. "That was many miles away, as you said. Now, let us laugh and sing. Today is our birthday."

Her face lit up again. I felt suddenly old seeing how she dropped her seriousness. She was no woman, still a child. Yet I would hate to see enemy soldiers catch looks at her. Even if she was my twin, Mai was the most beautiful girl in the village.

"Mai, do you know people from other places call us the 'smiling people'?" I asked.

"Of course." She came closer to me, eyes dancing. Then as the late sun threw shadows in the window, a shadow came to the dancing eyes, stilling them. "What other people do not know is that sometimes mouths smile, but only to hide eyes that cannot cry."

It startled me, this bit of wisdom from Mai. Perhaps she was right. She was growing into a woman.

Mai looked even more of a woman after we had eaten the feast in honor of our birthdays. The white jade pendant that she had received glistened in her smooth brown hand. And her smile was not only on her lips.

It was a smile I would remember all through the long horror that followed. Soldiers—many of them. Our home in flames. Our family scattered and fleeing in many directions, not knowing whether the others were alive. I managed to keep Mai with me as we crept into the heavy plant growth and away from the burning remains of what had been home. We stumbled blindly, not knowing which way to go. The sound of breaking twigs told us we were being pursued. Mai's now-pale face shone through the dim light. She must not be captured! If she was—I would not think of it. Yet the sounds behind us were getting closer.

"Mai," my voice shook, "you must make yourself ugly. The soldiers—if we are captured . . ."

Understanding added new hor-

ror to her face, but without a word she scooped up dark earth from the ground and rubbed it into her face. "Do you have a knife?"

At my confusion she whispered impatiently, "My hair. Chop it off." It was one of the worst moments for me, cutting the long, silky hair that made her beautiful. Jagged strokes left it uneven, and Mai rubbed more earth through her hair. There was no danger of her being thought beautiful now.

We had barely moved away from the pile of dark hair when we were discovered. There was no chance even to run. I saw Mai struggling with a man trying to lift her on a horse. As he saw her face, he threw her back. "Pah! No one will want this one. Take her and see she causes no trouble!"

It is hard to remember all that happened. Days and weeks in a camp, waiting, watching, fearing daily Mai would be harmed. Then one night she whispered, "We must get away. A boat is going if we can get to it."

"But how?"

"There is an opening under the fence where something has been digging." I could feel her shaking hand clutch mine. "There are men here who see past my dirt."

I was frozen. She was no longer safe. When the camp was still, we slipped away; Mai first, then me. Somehow we managed to find the hole and slip through. A great storm had come up. It was raining so hard no one would be able to follow. It was tough going, but we made it.

The boat was crowded. We kept finding those who were running for their lives. We could not leave them behind. To do so would be leaving them to die of hunger, sickness, and worse.

Now it was so crowded no one could sit. For many days we had stood. For 3 days there had been no food. Those who had brought food gladly shared what they had. It was gone. My belly was swollen from hunger. Yet others were worse off. Some had been sick when we started. And always we wondered—where were our mother, father, sis-

ters, brothers? Had they been lucky? Would we ever see them again?

"Ying." Mai's voice, her fingers on my arm, brought me back from a world of bitterness. "Look!" The dead eyes I had grown accustomed to held a spark.

I turned. There it lay, shrouded in a mist. America. We had made it!

"Mai," I tried again. "Mai, we made it. We are free!"

Her lips quivered, turned up, smiled for the first time since that night of our birthday. Yet her eyes remained still. Were they hiding the tears she would not shed?

The mass of land that was America grew bigger, looming over us. What would we find? Welcome? Hatred? Mai turned to look over her shoulder.

"No, Mai. We cannot look back." I forced her to look toward the land we were now approaching.

Fingers suddenly filled with strength dug into my arm. I followed her look. A crowd of people stood on the shore. Strong arms were helping secure our boat. One by one we were helped out. But it was not a stranger who lifted Mai.

It was our father!

Close behind him stood our mother, our sisters, and our brothers. How had they come? I could not ask the question; not then. Later we would hear how they managed to get away as the soldiers pursued Mai and me.

"We're free. Free!" I fell to the earth, kissed the dirt on the land that would harbor us—together. Nothing else mattered. Not loss of home and country. Not even loss of Mai's precious jade, taken when we had been captured.

Mai stood above me, the morning sun making her chopped hair bright. The smile that had begun when she saw America, then our family, crept upward.

A woman held out a tiny American flag to us. "Welcome to our country."

I looked at Mai. Her smile had gone.

For the first time, I saw my sister cry.

LET'S HEAR IT FOR

The fire had been burning for a while now and Billy Stewart figured it was time. Pocketing his jackknife, he carefully lifted the sharpened willow stick and slowly, so he wouldn't split the outer skin, speared the all-beef frankfurter. Satisfied the frank was safely impaled, he approached the fire.

He found, however, that every time he extended the willow the smoke raced up his arm and swirled about his head. His eyes stung and tears began to run down his cheeks. Coughing and choking, he moved about the fire trying to avoid the acrid, hot smoke which followed him at every turn.

The fingers of his extended hand were starting to get hot and he realized that while the weiner was barely warm, his fingers were turning pink and starting to take on that well-done look. Then it happened.

With all of his jumping around he had dislodged the weiner. It fell with a quiet plop into the fire; it swelled up black and blistered, and like an overripe plum, burst its skin and bubbled its juices into the hot ashes. Finally, the frank spat rather insultingly at him once, and died.

Bill, of course, doesn't exist. But he certainly could, for how many of us have been in a similar situation? Have you ever tried to breathe smoke? Doesn't work very well, does it?

Maybe you remember walking into a room full of people who were smoking. Remember how that blue smoke irritated your eyes, making them red and sore? You have to take a breath, but instead of precious oxygen, it feels as if someone has a stranglehold on your air supply.

Smoke in all forms, and from many sources, be it from cigarettes, industrial burning, or from the fire in your backyard as you attempt to roast weiners, can be a real irritant. It makes our clothes smell and our eyes and throats react strongly against it.

It can have its deadly side too, as there is not a fireman around that wouldn't tell you it's almost always the heavy smoke that consumes and overcomes a person long before the hot flames of a fire get to them.

But it has its uses too. Smoke has



by
Brian
Young

been used by man ever since the cave-man experienced fire for the first time. Smoke signals were probably one of the earliest forms of communication. Indian tribes used to signal to each other this way. Many a downed pilot has been rescued when sharp eyes in the search plane spotted the red smoke from his burning flare. How about the smell of bacon doing its thing in the frying pan? This smell is largely a result of the smoked curing that has been done to it. Bacon, hams, corned beef, fish, and other kinds of meat are put into smoke houses with different kinds of wood material which, when burned, give the meat its distinct flavor. Smoking is one of the oldest ways of preserving meat. It keeps out harmful bacteria and gives the meat a pleasant taste.

When the tender vegetable shoots first poke through the ground and the fragile buds of orchard trees launch their early spring beginnings there is always a real threat from frost. This is when smudge pots are used. These are containers or pots of burning, smokey material set up around the orchards providing a layer of warmth against the cold.

Smoke is used a lot during wartime, as do our police now, in the form of smoke screens. Soldiers were able to advance, practically unseen, protected from their enemies behind the thick, dense walls of a smoke screen.

By gently blowing smoke into the beehives, beekeepers have found that it has a calming effect on the bees, making them dozy and enabling the keeper to remove the honey without too much fear of getting stung.

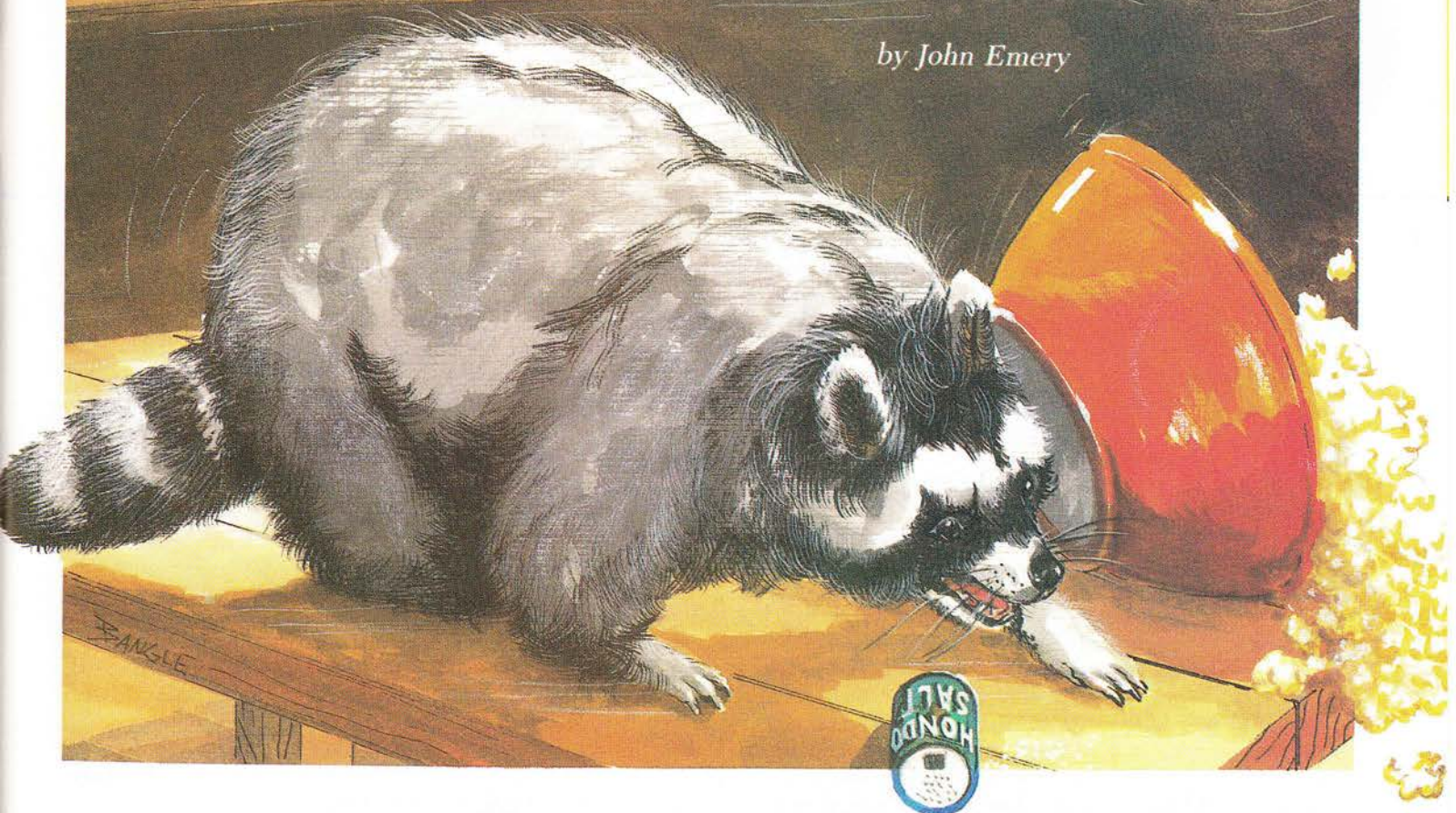
But most important is that when smoke goes up into the air it turns into a gas called carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is a very valuable ingredient to plants that must have it for their survival, and in turn they give us back our precious oxygen.

So, strangely enough, the very thing that chokes us and makes us gasp for air can, in a roundabout way, give us back our oxygen.

So maybe it's something to think about, and the next time you want to roast those fat franks in your backyard—well, maybe cut yourself a longer willow.

Coon Dog of the Ozarks

by John Emery



"Leland, I want to go coon hunting with you tonight," Basil pleaded with his older brother, as he absentmindedly raked his fork through the food on his plate.

"I've already told you, Basil, not this hunt," Leland answered sternly, slathering a hunk of cornbread with butter.

"I won't be a drag. I promise to keep up. I'm always chasing down rabbits with my dog Mystery."

"I'll take you some other night," Leland said, ladling more ham and beans on his plate. "Tonight I've got to prove my hounds are better than Harvey's. He claims to have the best hounds in the Ozarks. I aim for my redbones to show up his blue ticks."

"How do you know his hounds are not better than yours?" Basil asked, a tone of resentment flaring in his voice.

"I've seen his hounds. They're fat and

lazy. He overfeeds them," Leland retorted, pouring himself another glass of milk. "Smart hunters don't overfeed their hunting dogs."

"Eat your supper, Basil," his mother scolded. "I declare for a growing boy of twelve you sure have skimpy eating habits. No wonder you're so thin. Besides, I don't want you out on a chilly night like this. You stay home and do your school work."

"There's Harvey now," Leland said as he peered out the window.

Basil raced outside to see the blue tick hounds. "Hi, Harvey," Basil greeted.

"Howdy, Basil," the lean young man greeted back.

"Boy! They're beautiful," Basil exclaimed. "Will they let me pet them?"

"Sure. They love to be petted," Harvey answered.

"Hounds will hunt better if they're

not petted," Leland said, appearing in the doorway with an apple in his hand. "Wait here, Harvey. I'll fetch my hounds from the barn."

"Pet them, Basil," Harvey said. "It won't keep my hounds from hunting. They're well-trained."

Basil admired the heavy, silky fur of the blue ticks. Their coats were so clean, thick, and deep. He enjoyed caressing them.

Leland came back leading the two lean redbones. Their ribs and backbones were outlined against gaunt hides.

"Good grief?" Harvey muttered. "Don't you ever feed them?"

After they left, Basil moped into the house. He couldn't get into his school work. He'd rather be down on the creek where adventure was.

"Mama, can I take a lantern out to
(Continued on page 14)

Coon Dog . . .

(Continued from page 13)

Persimmon Hill?" he pleaded. "There I can at least hear the hounds."

"It's too cold out tonight, Basil," she cautioned. "And you'd be out there alone."

"I'll take Mystery with me, and you can see the lantern from the house," he persisted.

"Well, okay, but mind you don't go beyond Persimmon Hill," she said. "I may come looking for you."

Basil hung the lantern on a limb where his mother could see it from the house. He sat down with his back to the same tree, facing the creek. Mystery lay beside him. They couldn't hear any sound down on the creek.

"I wonder why we don't hear them, Mystery. Surely they'd run across something by now."

Just then they heard the long-drawn-out voice of a hound, followed by the baying of the other hounds and the encouraging whoops of the hunters.

"Listen to that, Mystery!" Basil exclaimed with excitement. "It's the music of the wild. I sure wish we were down there. Don't you wish you were a coonhound?"

Mystery moved closer and licked his hand as though he understood what the boy was saying.

"I'm only joking, Mystery. I like you just like you are. You're my best friend. I remember the night you first came to me. An awful blizzard was howling outside our home, and I was telling God how scared and lonely I was. Then I heard a scratching and whining at the door. I opened the door and there you were. Just a little collie puppy, and you were wet and shivering. I picked you up and brought you in by the stove. Mama poured warm milk in a bowl. You flagged your tail and swayed your hips as you eagerly lapped up the milk. Mama said, 'It sure is a mystery where he came from in a storm like this.' So we called you Mystery. I've always known that God sent you to me, because He knew I needed a friend. And you're the best."

The baying of the hounds would fade out, open up again, then stop.

"Mystery, it sounds like they're trying to work out a cold trail," Basil said. Then he felt of the ground and noticed that it was starting to freeze. "They picked a bad night to hunt. They should have gone last night. Coons like to prowl just before a storm. The ground is too cold for the hounds to pick up the scent."

Suddenly Mystery sprang to his feet and dashed off into the darkness. He

started *ki-yi-yipping* like he always did when chasing a rabbit. Basil snatched the lantern down and ran after him. Basil heard a loud squeal and snarling and growling. Reaching the scene he found Mystery with his jaws fastened on the neck of a huge coon.

"Wow, Mystery! A big old coon! You caught him on the ground! You killed him!" Basil blurted, so thrilled he was trembling with triumph as he took the limp coon from Mystery.

Basil beamed with pride as he toted his prize into the house and tossed it into the firewood box.

His mother and sisters had finished their chores and were sitting around munching fresh, buttered popcorn. The popcorn filled the room with a pleasant smell.

Between bites of popcorn, with keyed-up emotions, Basil began telling the tall tale of his thrilling adventure. They each stared at the big coon, then at their little hero. With bulging eyes and mouths agape they listened intently. He held his audience spellbound.

Suddenly there was a commotion in the woodbox. Then a wild, live coon leaped from the woodbox. The girls screamed.

The coon jumped on a table, skidded into the popcorn bowl, sending it crashing to the floor. Popcorn scattered everywhere like loose marbles poured out of a bag. The girls kept screaming.

Basil's mother was swiping the air with the top end of a broom trying to club the brute. On one of her backswings she knocked the kerosene lamp over, breaking the globe, and plunging the room into darkness except for dim moonlight glimmering through the windows. The girls screamed louder. Fortunately the swish of the blow fanned the flame out. So there was no danger of the house catching fire.

A loud crash of shattering glass momentarily hushed the screaming and scuffling melee, as a huge ball of fur went catapulting through a window.

Basil had the door open and was yelling for Mystery. His mother grabbed him by the collar, jerked him back, and slammed the door.

She said, "Young man, you're not getting out of this house anymore tonight."

Another lamp was lit, and the girls started sweeping up the mess. About that time Leland and Harvey came stamping in.

"Well, we didn't have any luck," Leland bitterly complained. "The ground was too cold, the coons are holed up for a coming storm, and Harvey's dogs

didn't want to hunt. So we only got one old possum."

"Huh!" Harvey retorted. "My hounds are straight coonhounds and there weren't any coons out tonight. Your hungry hounds were chasing rabbits, birds, or anything that might allow them a meal. I think once they were trying to tree an old owl. He kept hooting first on one side of the creek, then on the other. I think he was teasing the hounds. It sounded like he was saying, 'Coomm-onn-an-get-me, coomm-onn-an-get-me.'"

The girls and their mother laughed at Harvey's funny impersonation of a hoot owl. Even Basil came chuckling out of his pouting corner. The fact that they only got one old possum perked up his morale anyway. He'd come home with a real live coon.

"H-how did that w-window get b-broken?" Leland stammered.

"A big coon jumped through it," his mother answered.

"Mama, you mean to tell me that a coon jumped right through that window into the house?"

"No, Leland. I mean to tell you that a coon jumped right through that window *out* of the house."

"How did it get *into* the house?"

"Your coon huntin' little brother brought it in," she said. "Surely it left a fresh trail. You've got four hounds, and I need you boys to buy me a new windowpane; so get after it!"

"Loose the hounds, Harvey," Leland shouted, jerking the door open. "Let's go after him!"

When the door was opened they could hear the sharp, rapid voice of Mystery off in the distance.

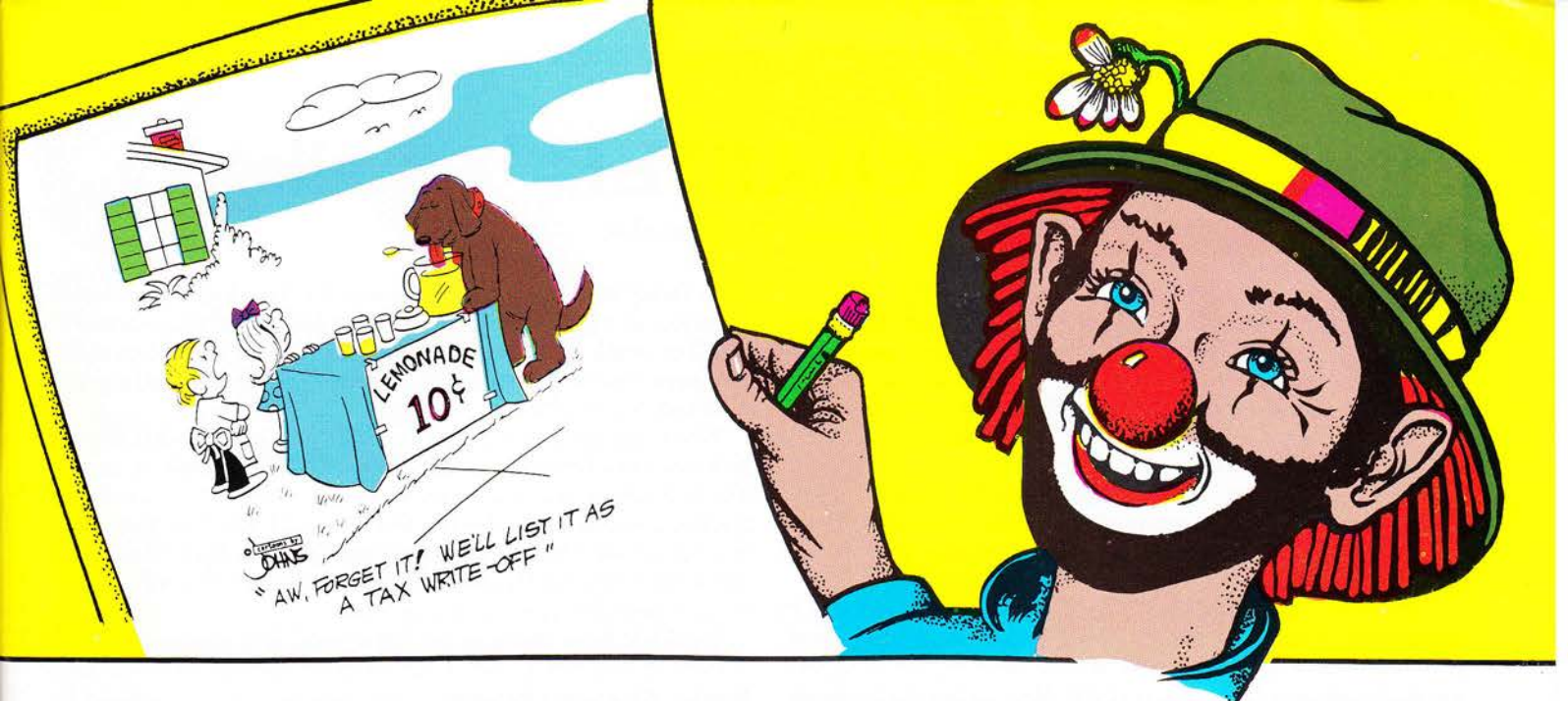
"Hear that?" Basil yelled. "Don't bother with the hounds. The best coon dog in the Ozarks has already got that old coon treed. 'Mama, I'll buy you a new window.'"

Basil sped through the open doorway and out into the night. Grabbing an ax at the woodpile, he raced on.

Basil's mother ran outside hollering, "Basil! Basil, you come back here!"

But Basil only had ears for Mystery's voice. He went thrashing down the middle of a cane patch. Cane stalks popped and cracked in all directions as he plowed his way through, moving just as fast as he could pick his skinny legs up, stretch them out, and put them down again.

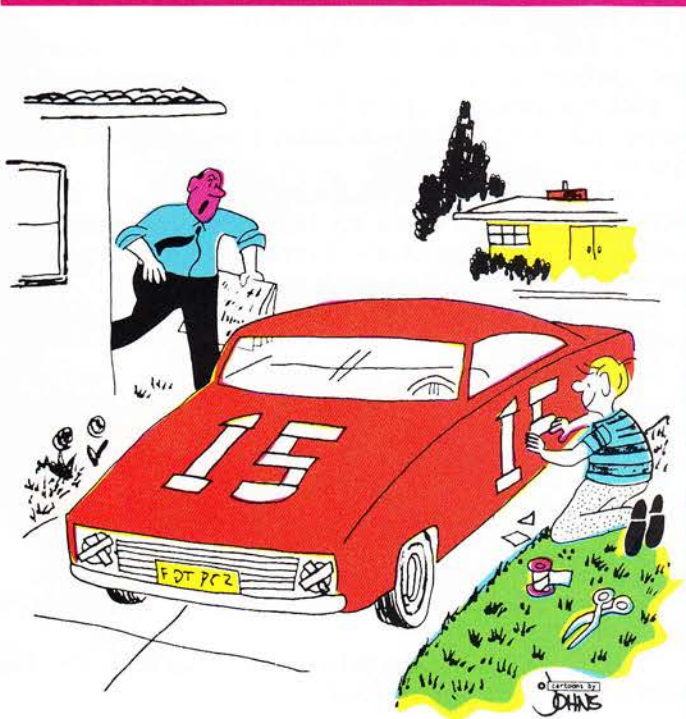
"I'll buy you a new window, Mama!" he shouted over his shoulder. Then he yelled in his shrill voice, "Hold 'im, boy! I'm coming, Mystery! Hold 'im, boy!"



Landlord: "We like to keep it quiet around here. Do you have any children?"
 New Tenant: "No."
 Landlord: "A piano, trumpet, drum, or dog?"
 New Tenant: "No."
 Landlord: "A stereo or television set?"
 New Tenant: "No, but I have a fountain pen that scratches sometimes."
 Hostess (smiling): "Yes, our dog is just like one of the family."
 Visitor: "Which one?"

Child: "My teacher asked me if I had any brothers or sisters."
 Mother: "How nice of her to take an interest in you."
 Child: "Yes, and when I told her I was an only child, she said, 'Thank goodness!'"
 "I'm really glad you came," said Jimmy to the guest. "Now Daddy can do the trick he said he would do."
 "And what might that be?" asked the guest.
 "Well," said Jimmy, "he said if you came he would climb the wall."

A young girl was all praises for her first-aid training.
 "I'm so grateful," she said. "Last night there was a horrible accident in front of our house. An old man was knocked down by a car and hurt badly. He was bleeding all over. That's when my first-aid training came in handy. I remembered to put my head between my knees to keep from fainting."
 Jokes in this issue courtesy of:
 F. Matranga
 Port Charlotte, Florida



"NOW JUST A MINUTE, YOUNG MAN! EXACTLY WHY DID YOU WANT TO BORROW THE CAR?"



"THAT MAY BE TRUE, BUT WHO'S GOING TO DESIGN AND BUILD THESE COMPUTERS THAT'LL DO ALL THE MATH IN THE FUTURE?"

CHARTER: an allegory

by Lauren D. Greenlee

I went into the presence of the King.

I wasn't at all sure I'd be allowed in, but I had heard one of the King's aides, a person just like me, make an announcement the day before. He'd come up to my friends and me and said, "Look, the King is making an offer to the general public. He says that anyone who wants to, can be adopted into His family. This offer is free!"

My friends were amazed. "Adopted into the King's family?" I heard someone mutter in disbelief. "That's impossible. There has to be a catch." I knew his unspoken thought: *What would the King want with us? We weren't worth anything.*

"It's true," said the aide. "That's my job. I'm supposed to spread this message so that everyone gets a chance to hear it. It's a wonderful offer; isn't it? Can you believe, the King told me that most people don't accept it?" His excited chatter broke off as my friends shuffled uninterestedly away.

I was left with him. "Ummm. . ." My curiosity overcame my desire to act "cool" and reject the message along with my friends. "What about this offer? What is the catch, anyway?" I asked.

"No catch," he said. "Look, I have the offer in writing, signed by the King himself." He pulled a letter from his pocket and showed it to me. This is what it said:

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE KING—

Greetings!

An offer is being extended to everyone, both rich and poor, bond and free.

I, The Royal King, wish to adopt YOU into My kingdom. In My family there are My Father, My royal Comforter, and Myself. You will become a part of this family.

I am gentle and humble, not a harsh taskmaster, and I hereby promise never to leave you or forsake you. I will not abandon you under any circumstances. No, I will come to you. Even if your own mother or father should forget you, I never will. The King has declared it.

Anyone wishing to accept My offer is instructed to come to Me personally and simply ask. My office is always open.

Love, with all My heart,
THE KING

I was astounded! "This is a great offer!" I gasped. "But first I'd like to get to know the Man. Could you arrange an interview?"

"The King's office is always open—that's His motto," replied the aide. "Come on!"

We walked to the King's palace—His house—and the aide went in first. To my great surprise, after He had heard my name announced, His Majesty stopped whatever He was doing and I heard Him say, "Send him right in!" So I was ushered into the presence of the Almighty King.

I could not raise my eyes to His. I kept staring at the floor, and I couldn't think of a single thing to say. Gently then, He took my chin and cupped it in His hands, and raised my face to look at His. Our eyes met.

His gaze was tender, and He had the most loving expression on His face that I had ever seen. Then I saw with shock that He had deep wounds on His hands and feet, and I remembered

something about His being beaten by the Supreme Court because, as a judge himself, the King had refused to sentence us all to death for our crimes. He had elected instead to have our punishment inflicted upon himself. So He had taken the beatings in our place.

When our eyes met, I had a sudden and inexplicable desire to know Him better, this Man who loved His people so much He had taken our punishment for us. He had never done anything wrong himself—His Father could attest to that. And his Father was High King. Why then was this Man who stood before me offering His life and His family name to *me*? In His eyes, I must be as good as a criminal!

But I felt hope rising in my heart until, in a moment of fear, I knew it was not to be. I wasn't good enough to be in His family. Who was I kidding?

I fell at His feet and sobbed my heart out. "I'm sorry," I cried. "I won't be any good for You. You won't be able to use me! Now, that aide of yours—"

"That aide of Mine was in this very room, just 3 months ago, saying the very same things to Me," He smiled. "If I can't use the humble ones to help Me, who can I use?"

"But You don't understand!" I sobbed. "My name is *Chris Sinner*." I looked up at Him, ashamed at my own confession.

"I know. But see, I have given you a new name. Your name is now Christian Spirit."

I gasped. The name He had given me was like His own. I was adopted!

"What did I do to deserve this?" I sniffled, rising up from the floor. He had taken my right hand.

"Nothing. You can never deserve My love—let's face it, I'm the King. There's nothing you or anyone could give Me that I don't already have. I own everything." This was true.

"But I do love you," He told me. "I loved you enough to put you here, in this town, right where you are."

That was amazing. The King knew who I was, knew my name, and where I lived even before I knew *Him*! In fact, He had even placed me there!

"Let's make this official, shall we?" He said to me. We went over to a little desk, where my aide friend was standing. He smiled at me, and suddenly I realized why he was such a smiler—knowing the King really gives you joy!

The King took out a large book, and opened it to a blank page. He took a pen and dipped it in ink that was red—so red it looked like blood. He wrote down my new name in the Book. So now, even to the King, I wasn't Chris Sinner anymore.

I saw a sign above the desk which read:

The Almighty King
Requests the honor of your presence
At a dinner

To be given in His honor.

"When is the banquet?" I asked the King, and pointed to the sign.

"When? Why, it's going to happen any day now. But don't worry, because, when it's time—

I'LL COME AND GET YOU!"