

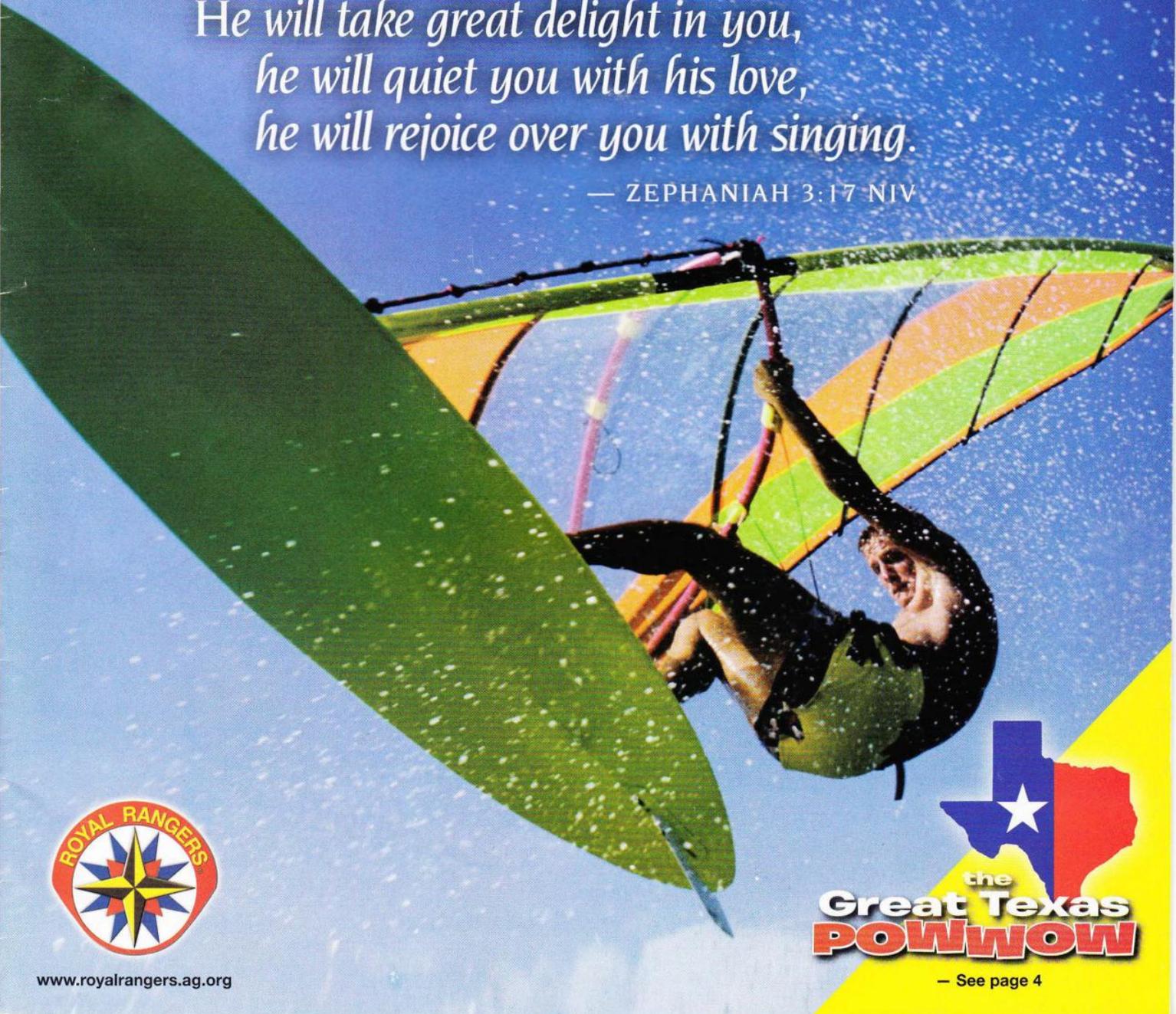


High Adventure

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF ROYAL RANGERS

*The Lord your God is with you,
he is mighty to save,
He will take great delight in you,
he will quiet you with his love,
he will rejoice over you with singing.*

— ZEPHANIAH 3:17 NIV



the
**Great Texas
POW WOW**

RR-QLC

A Tool for Learning & Growing!



RR-QLC is a continual cycle intended to keep Royal Rangers relevant by being responsive to regular cultural shifts.

QUESTION: We invite pastors, parents, boys (*Rangers & non-Rangers*), and the community at large to provide input to our ministry programs and events.

LEARN: We synthesize feedback received with other data.

CHANGE: We take action. Our ministry is true to its biblical purposes, yet evolves with the culture while influencing it. Then, the cycle begins again in perpetuity.

You know what FYI means (*"for your information"*). And you know what TMI stands for (*"too much information"*). Let me introduce you to **RR-QLC!**

RR-QLC stands for "*Royal Rangers—Question, Learn, and Change*". It is not a program or a theme. It is a leadership attitude and tool that enables Royal Rangers leaders to listen, learn, and pursue excellence in ministry. Learning leaders create a learning organization that embraces evaluation, which precedes improvement and growth.

The purpose of **RR-QLC** is:

- 1) To solicit input from the field (*by asking questions*)
- 2) To synthesize the information with other sources of data (*learning*)
- 3) To improve programs, events, and services in response to the feedback (*changing*)

By being responsive to the needs and interests of those we serve, Royal Rangers will remain relevant to boys in our ever-changing culture.

To initiate **RR-QLC**, the national Royal Rangers ministries office is requesting constant feedback about the program, publications, products, services, and key events using the following mediums:

- **INTERNET:** Pastors, parents, Ranger boys, non-Ranger boys, and others are invited to complete an on-line survey at www.royalrangers.org/qlc
- **E-MAIL:** Anyone at anytime is welcome to e-mail the national ministries office with suggestions and ideas. Send your comments to RR-QLC@ag.org.
- **SURVEYS:** Post-event and general surveys are used to collect timely and targeted feedback.
- **CONVERSATIONS:** Face-to-face, focused dialogue will also be sought as members of our staff have the opportunity to interface with boys, parents, leaders, pastors, and others around the country.

We invite **YOU** to be a part of this feedback process. **QLC** is open to everyone and we want to hear from **YOU!** Follow the links above to give us your feedback today!

Thank You for your participation!



High Adventure

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The Lord gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to the discerning.

— DANIEL 2:21



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Doug Marsh, Publications Manager
John Hicks, Editor-in-chief
Don Jones, Design
Ginger Casebeer, Technical Editor
Kendi Satterfield, Special Assistant

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the Great Texas POW WOW

by Ryan BEATY



Unforgettable Fun & Fellowship!



There was an intense, tangible excitement as I entered the campgrounds flanked by different flags that have flown over Texas throughout its history. For the first time in the history of Royal Rangers, all three Texas districts—North, South, and West Texas—came together for a joint powwow, the Great Texas Powwow. Over 1,200 boys and men, including guests from several states and two countries, gathered together at the North Texas District Royal Rangers Campground for a tremendous weekend of adventures, activities, and the power of God.

With three full days of camp activities, each day had a new opportunity to be awed and amazed. Friday was highlighted by a couple of different events. First, there was a battle reenactment presented through the joint efforts of the three Frontiersmen Camping Fellowship chapters. Cannon and musket fire, sword fights, and tremendous fanfare and color completed the reenactment. All of the boys walked away excited about what they had seen and excited about FCF. Later that morning, U.S. Army Blackhawk and Apache helicopters did a flyby. After some impressive aerial maneuvers, both of the warships landed in the parade field, giving the boys hands on opportunities to experience what it is like to be a soldier manning his station inside the helicopter. As impressive as the helicopters were, the pilots were equally impressed with the campout and made several remarks about how much they enjoyed being there and supported the Royal Rangers. The two military choppers were not the only helicopters to make an appearance at camp. On Saturday, "Life Flight," the local emergency medical services helicopter, also made an appearance, giving the boys similar hands on opportunities.

Saturday continued with an exciting performance by a three-man jet ski stunt team on the lake. The boys were amazed by the jumps, flips, side rides, and other stunts they performed. Of course, nothing made the boys happier than every time one of the riders would buzz the shoreline, dousing them with water. For some boys, it may have been the only bath they had all weekend!

Other than the shows, reenactments, and displays, there were numerous activities and competitions for the boys to participate in. They had the opportunity to tour one of the largest FCF villages ever assembled at a district camp. There were twenty-eight period shelters, lodging thirty-eight old timers and sixteen young bucks. Walking through the village, I saw eight trade demonstrations, three displays, and boys participating in five different activities. There was a Pinewood Derby competition, and patrols competed in games like "gladiator," soccer, and basketball. The younger boys had opportunities to hone their target shooting skills in archery while the older boys used paintball markers and smallbore rifles. Saturday was a real treat for the Expedition Rangers; they were allowed to go through the high ropes

course, which consisted of walking a tight rope, rappelling down a wall, and riding a 100-foot zip line.

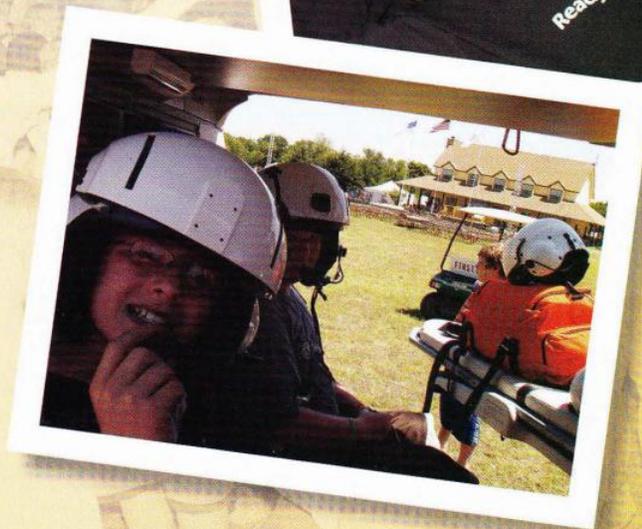
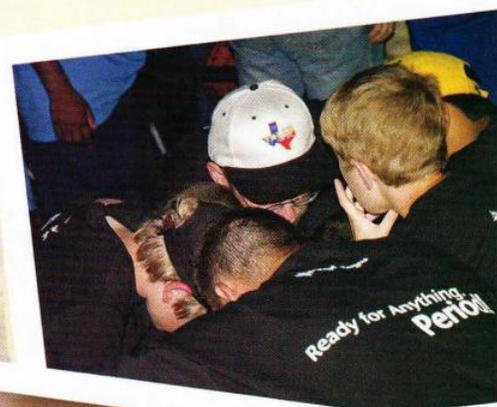
The most important part of the camp, however, was the spiritual emphasis. The camp staff prayed and fasted for weeks before the powwow. During the camp, they held constant prayer vigil with someone praying every minute of the camp. The camp's theme was "Choices," which was emphasized every night through colorful pageantry and a powerful delivery of the Word of God. On Thursday night with the Alamo as a backdrop, Pastor Steve Hill of Heartland World Ministries Church in Los Colinas, TX preached and the power of God fell. At one point over 200 boys and men were lying before the Lord as the Holy Spirit touched their lives. On Friday and Saturday nights, the Spirit moved in a powerful way as Evangelist Randy Ruiz called boys to boldness, peace, and power. Saturday night, everyone had the opportunity to be anointed with oil and to be prayed over by the FCF members and district staffs. Scores of lives were transformed for the glory of God.

The Great Texas Powwow was without a doubt an event that none of the campers will ever forget. Everyone was blessed by God through a powerful move of the Spirit, incredibly fun activities, and fellowship that developed lifelong friendships. I can't wait for the next one! *

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The Life of a Real Pirate

by Suzanne BARNES

Ahoy, mateys!

You've probably heard a few stories about pirates, maybe even seen a movie or two, but here's a true tale. It's about Sam Bellamy, a pirate ship captain back in the 1700s. Back then, being a pirate was a way of freedom for the poor and for people of different races.

Young Sam Bellamy sailed from England to the United States. When he arrived, he met Maria Hallett. The two fell in love. Maria's parents were wealthy farmers, and they didn't want their daughter to marry a poor man. Bellamy went out to seek his fortune and promised Maria that he would return when he had enough money for them to marry. He became Captain Sam Bellamy, a very successful pirate.

Captain Bellamy's crew was made up of African Americans, Native Americans, and other men who wanted a better way of life. Bellamy always extended an offer to join his crew when he and his pirates looted ships. Fifty-two ships were reported looted by Bellamy, and there may have been more.

In November 1716, Bellamy came upon the ship Bonetta from France. He extended the usual offer to join his crew, and a young passenger named John King wanted to go with him. He was between 8 and 11 years old. His mother didn't want her son to become a pirate, but she finally gave in and let him go. John King became one of the youngest pirates ever known.

In October of 1716, Bellamy came across a prison ship containing several men convicted of smuggling. Seven of the convicted men decided to join Bellamy's crew. At that point, Bellamy was captain of the Marianne. Later he captured the Sultana, and Bellamy became its captain while his friend took over on the Marianne. A few months later, the two ships came across a fast, new ship: the Whydah.

The Whydah was a slave ship run by Captain Prince. It was named after a slave-trading area in Western Africa. Built in 1716, it was headed back to England after her second voyage from Africa to Jamaica. Bellamy captured it east of Cuba. On board, Bellamy and his crew found 20,000 to 30,000 pieces of silver. Gold jewelry was also found and later cut up to divide among his crew. Some of Prince's crew decided to join the pirates. Then Bellamy gave Prince and his remaining crew the Sultana and enough supplies to reach the next port.

When Captain Bellamy and his crew approached a ship to loot, they raised the Jolly Roger. It was a black flag with a skull and crossbones design. Almost all pirate ships had this type of flag. The skull represented death and the crossbones meant resurrection. Flying this type of flag wasn't a threat. It meant that the pirates were dead in the eyes of the law. The pirates had their own laws.

Life on board the Whydah wasn't just about running the ship. They also played games such as checkers and backgammon. Game tokens were found in the wreckage. The pirates also put on plays to entertain one another. Everything was run by democracy. Every pirate had a vote, and all their treasure was divided equally.

In April 1717 a large storm off the East Coast of North America sank the Whydah. One hundred and forty-six men were on board, and 101 bodies washed ashore. There were only two survivors. Captain Bellamy wasn't one of them. Maria Hallett had waited for him, but he never returned.

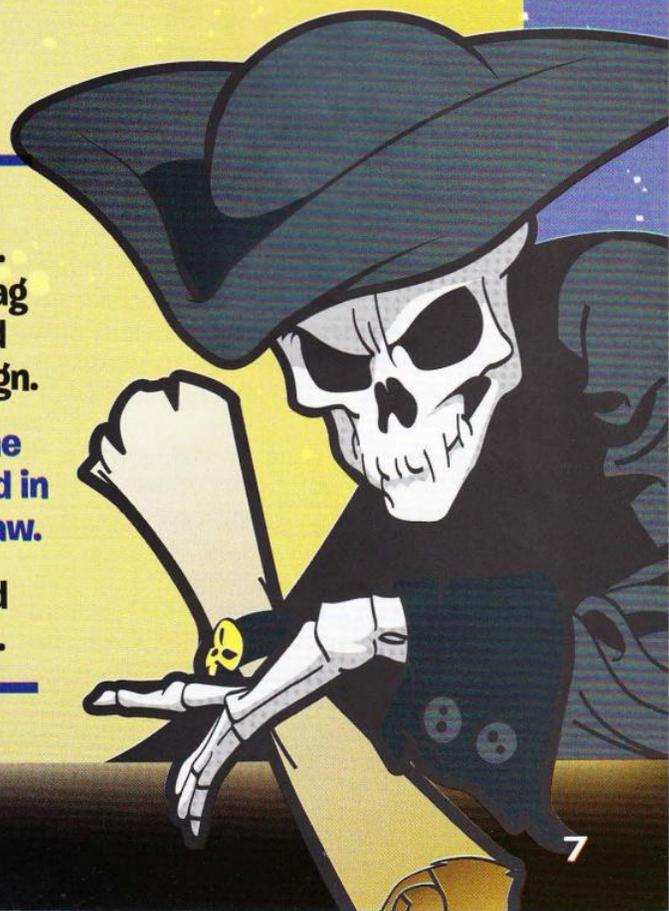
In July 1984, Barry Clifford found the first coin from the Whydah. Clifford and his crew had been searching for the ship for a long time. Skeptics argued that the coin wasn't definitely from the Whydah, but in 1985 Clifford and his crew found a bell which had "Whydah" printed on it. Since then, Clifford and his crew have found all sorts of treasure: cannons, pistols, cannon balls, plates, and many other items that give clues about the Whydah.

An exhibit of items found on the Whydah is currently in Cincinnati, Ohio, until January 3, 2008, when it moves on to Pennsylvania. *

**... they raised
the Jolly Roger.
It was a black flag
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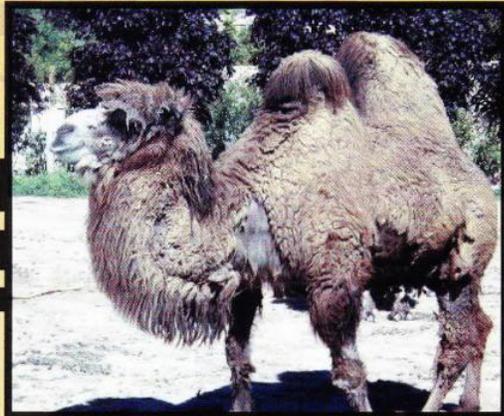
**It meant that the
pirates were dead in
the eyes of the law.**

**The pirates had
their own laws.**



Feature Creature

by Candyce A. PETERSEN



A Perfect, Awesome Design

CAMELS

For thousands of years, camels have carried riders and goods across the deserts of Asia and Africa. In Old Testament times, Abraham sent his servant by camel to find his son Isaac a wife. Later Isaac's son, the tricky Jacob, gave his brother, Esau, 30 camels (and their calves) as a peace offering—a most generous gift! Years later, Jacob's son Joseph was sold to slave traders who drove a caravan of camels to Egypt. Also, you might recall kings from the Far East who rode camels a very long distance to bring gifts to the Christ child.

Why were camels the chosen method of transportation in the dry, hot climate of the Bible lands?

The answer is simple: the Lord designed the camel so that it could travel for days without water or food. Not only that, but He equipped it so it could endure the sands and the worst weather conditions—sandstorms. But how can the camel go without food or water and endure the harshest of desert conditions?

Dubbed the “ships of the desert,” camels can go without water because they can store and conserve large quantities of water throughout their body cells. A thirsty camel can drink 50 gallons of water in a single day! That's quite a bit to store, even though an adult camel is 10 feet long and 7 feet tall to the top of its hump.

As for conserving or saving water, the camel insulates itself from the hot desert sun by storing all its fat in its hump. Then, too, having fat nowhere else on its body allows the camel to release heat easier.

A second factor affecting water conservation is the animal's fur. A short fur coat in the summer blocks out heat, and the light-colored fur of the Arabian (one-humped) camel reflects heat. Shorter hair on its sides and belly also allow body heat to escape.

A third factor is the camel's ability to regulate its temperature. During the cool desert nights, the camel's temperature drops as low as 93 degrees Fahrenheit. Then during the heat of the day its temperature rises. Not until the camel's temperature reaches 106 F and stops rising does the camel finally begin to sweat. Even then, its sweat is absorbed by its fur.

Other factors help the camel conserve water. Its long legs keep the body up from the hot sand so air can circulate below the body. What else? Camels use little water because they never pant; they urinate little; and their waste products are almost dry. Finally, camel nostrils drain into their mouths so the mucus is used to keep their mouths moist.

A working camel needs about 44 pounds of food a day. Camels eat grasses, thorns, branches, leaves, grains, dates, and other plants. They nibble on some of these as they cross the desert, and they graze at night while their owners rest. What nourishment they don't get during these feeding times they get from their body hump. The hump is filled with 100 pounds of fat. The fat breaks down and provides the additional energy the camel needs.

Water and food are now taken care of, so how did the Lord equip the camel to deal with the sand and the sandstorms? He gave them big, round, two-toed feet at the end of their long, thin legs. The padded sole of each foot spreads wide so that the camel's feet do not sink in the sand. Their long, thin necks that reach 12 feet into the air stretch above much of the blowing sand during the storms. He made their ears small and lined them with fur to filter out sand. He gave them bushy eyebrows and a double row of long eyelashes to trap more sand. In addition, God gave them three sets of eyelids. The third eyelid, thin and semi-transparent, swishes from side to side, like a windshield wiper—or would that be a sandshield wiper? Their noses and mouths have muscles that close them off tightly too.

So now you know. The reasons camels are so well-adapted to carry riders and goods across the desert are many and varied. Who else but our Almighty God could have created such a perfect, awesome design? *



HIGH ADVENTURE *Leader*

REACH • TEACH • KEEP BOYS FOR JESUS CHRIST



Our Pledge

With God's help,



OUR PLEDGE

“With God’s help,”

Royal Rangers are missional leaders.

— PART ONE IN A SERIES OF FOUR ARTICLES —

by Doug MARSH, National Commander

There is an old story of a father who removed the deteriorating wooden stairs leading into the family’s basement. With the wood scraps out of the way, he was ready to start building the new steps. Fortunately it was high noon when the electricity went out. The 5-year-old son was disconcerted, nonetheless, and desperately wanted to be with his father who now stood in a dark basement.

Standing at the door where there were once steps, the boy nervously called down into the blackness, “Dad, where are you?”

Not wanting his son to fall, he responded calmly, “I’m right below you.”

“Can I come down, Daddy?”

“Yes, if you jump.”

“But, Daddy, I can’t see you!”

“That’s OK because *I can see you and I’ll catch you.*”

The son cautiously stepped up to the edge. Not knowing exactly where his dad was, he bent his knees slightly, stretched out his arms, and began leaning forward until he tipped over the side. He had no lack of trust.

What a perfect picture of the Father’s dependability! As we look into the future of Royal Rangers ministry, we do not know what tomorrow holds. But *God can see and He will lead us, but we must depend on Him.* And, yes, of course, the father caught his son and comforted him in his arms.

The Lord’s Prayer gives us seven words that teach us to depend on God: “Father...give us today our daily bread” (Matthew 6: 9,11). Essentially, “Father, give us bread today!”

“FATHER”— the Source

By crying, “Father,” we acknowledge Him as our source. Jesus described himself as the vine, and you and me as the branches. He said, “No branch can bear fruit by itself; disconnected from Him (John 15:4-7). Picture the futility of plugging your computer’s power strip into itself. Trying to be fruitful or powerful in ministry on your own is equally futile, and, in fact, betrays a self-sufficient attitude that displeases God.

Effective ministry to young men starts and is sustained when we depend on our one and only Source. Jesus said, speaking of himself, “the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing” (John 5:19). The reason is because He wanted his efforts to produce eternal consequence, not just sweat. Too often we draft plans that are not born in the prayer room where we cry out, “Father, what are You doing?”

To rely on Him is not to diminish our own ability. To the contrary, it is saying, “Lord, my strength comes from You and I’m bringing it and my creativity under Your Lordship. Now, Father, please help me direct them for Your purposes.”

To serve and lead in this way renews our strength. That is why the prophet wrote, “Those who wait on the Lord will renew their strength, they will mount up with wings like eagles” (Isaiah 40:31, NKJV). Working on our own priorities will sap energies, but working on God’s timeline puts wind in our sails; our human efforts are maximized by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Depend on God; He is your Source!

- ▶ NOT the national or district office, as tireless as we all work to serve you!
- ▶ NOT the curriculum, as well developed as it is.
- ▶ NOT the training program, as important as it is you avail yourself of it.
- ▶ NOT the events, as creatively as we try to plan them.
- ▶ NOT the publishing house, as wide a product line they offer us.

Nothing can replace God and His strategy nor His provision to help you evangelize, equip, and empower every lost boy and young man in your community and beyond. And make no mistake that is your charge! (Matthew 28:19).

When was the last time you prayed, “Father, what are the plans and purposes for the young men You have placed in my care, for the unsaved in my community? God will never fail to answer if you ask.

“GIVE”— the Poverty

By pleading, “Give,” we acknowledge our poverty. Jesus said, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:3). Only someone who knows they are poor will stretch out their hand in desperation and say, “Please, sir, can you give me alms?” Bruce Winston says, “Being ‘poor in spirit’ is the opposite of being ‘rich in pride.’”

Picture yourself holding a beggar’s tin cup. If it is full of dirt, who is going to drop coins into it? Too often we approach God with all the answers, a cup full of worthlessness, full of our pride, full of our own solutions. But if we approach God with a humble “poor spirit,” a clean, empty cup, God will fill our hearts with Himself, our minds with winning ideas, strategies, and heaven-authored solutions that will make us rich builders of God’s Kingdom. Depending on God requires that we empty ourselves of ourselves so we can hold more of Him.

“US”—the Interdependence

By uttering, “Us,” we acknowledge our interdependence with one another. Leadership, and the Christian life in general, is not a solo but a team sport.

The Word calls us to:

- ▶ Care for each other (1 Corinthians 12:25).
- ▶ Help each other (Ecclesiastes 4:10).
- ▶ Pray for each other (James 5:16).
- ▶ Love each other (1 John 4:11).
- ▶ Confess our sins to each other (James 5:16).
- ▶ Grow in Christ-likeness together (Hebrews 10:25).
- ▶ And, yes, the Great Commission was issued to the corporate body; we are to link arms to evangelize the world (Mark 16:15).

Depending on God includes depending on each other. We honor God when others learn they can rely on us without question. Pastors, parents, and boys, in fact, entire families, are counting on you to care, to be helpful, to pray, to love, to listen, to grow, to reach the lost, just to name a few. When others can depend on your word, they will trust you and the God you represent.

Depending on God makes *you* dependable. As we all individually depend on God we become sources of strength for each other. If we have three chain links, one capable of holding 300 pounds, one 200 pounds, and one 100 pounds, how much can the three links hold in combination? Since a chain is only as strong as its weakest link, the answer is 100. Can you see that depending on God makes you and the entire body stronger?

“BREAD”— the Hunger

By asking for “Bread,” we acknowledge our hunger. Jesus said, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled” (Matthew 5:6). Have you ever been so hungry and thirsty that the fastest fast food restaurant seemed slow? Imagine, then, the pain the poor and homeless must feel on a regular basis. That is the kind of yearning God wants us to have for righteousness.

Jesus said, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work” (John 4:34). Righteousness is defined as actively doing the will of God. Adam was convinced to



*Sin breaks people's lives
and only the gospel can mend them.*

*No human plan can accomplish God's ultimate
purpose, "that none should perish" (2 Peter 3:9, NKJV).*

*In that light, we must hunger for God's plan
to develop righteousness in the lives of
desperately broken young men.*



hunger for self-gratification rather than thirst for God's will. As a result of sin, we live for the unholy trinity—me, myself, and I (James 4). A hunger for righteousness comes from God.

Nothing will make you hungry for God like getting your hands dirty in ministry. Feel that boy's loneliness and hurt. His father just went to jail for continually beating him and his mother, who is 7 months pregnant. The courts have judged his expectant mom unfit to be a mother to him and his 3 siblings because she is on hard drugs. His parents withheld him from school for fear a teacher would see and report the obvious abuse. When you look the consequences of sin in the face you will have no clue what to do or how to respond. That is when you will start asking God just how He plans to accomplish His perfect will in that boy and his family's life.

Sin breaks people's lives and only the gospel can mend them. No human plan can accomplish God's ultimate purpose, "that none should perish" (2 Peter 3:9, NKJV). In that light, we must hunger for God's plan to develop righteousness in the lives of desperately broken young men.

Your example is everything. You must fight the tendency to feed what the "I" wants rather than what the great "I Am" wants. As we depend on God to satisfy our own thirst for sin-breaking righteous living, He will, 1) satisfy us, and 2) make us springs of water "welling up for eternal life" for those around us (John 4:14).

"TODAY"— the Urgency

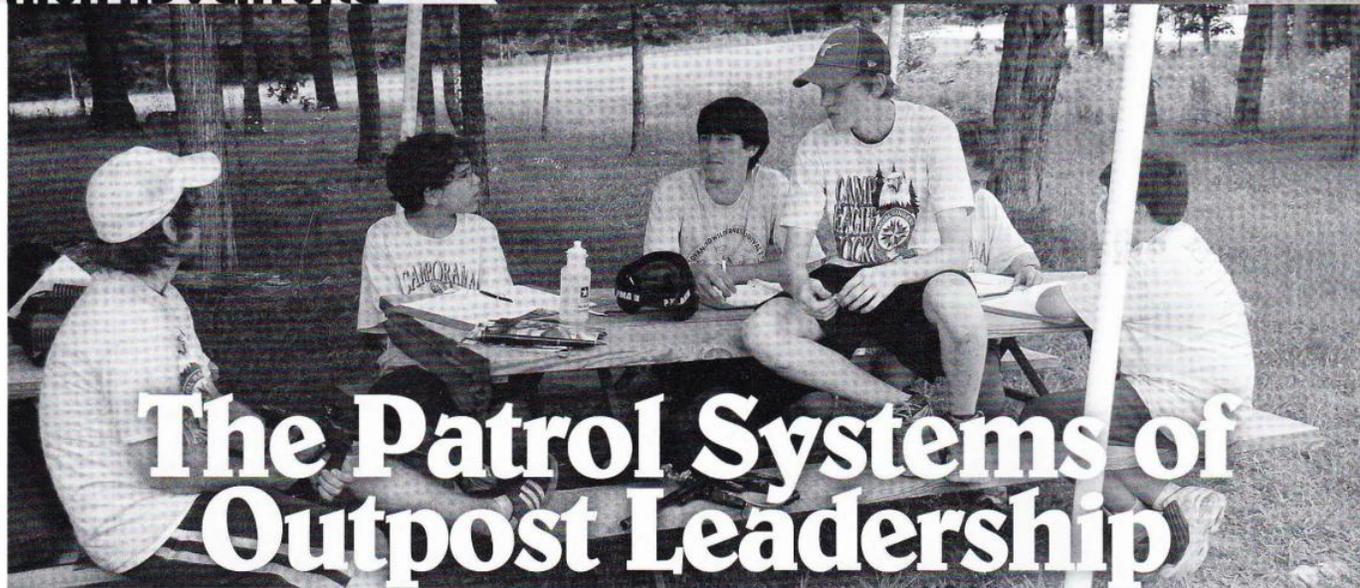
By shouting, "Today," we acknowledge the urgency of the hour. You and I desperately need God in the now all the time. Our attitude should be that of Jesus, "I must work while it is today" (John 9:4, paraphrase). This ministry we

have been called to, to evangelize the world, has life and death consequences. There is a hell to shun and a heaven to gain for every one of them. We need God's help to remain at the top of our game 24/7 because lives are in the balance. The great news is He has a daily supply of grace if we will simply ask for it and receive it.

In conclusion, the temptation of Royal Rangers' leadership is the devil's invitation to lead independently of God. It's a sinful ego thing—living for self or for God. To depend on God is to live for His glory; to be independent is to lead for my glory. Fundamentally it is not a question of whether we will depend on God or not, because we depend on Him like air. The real question is whether we will acknowledge it. Our highest call in life is to rely on Him, to make Jesus look good.

Singing that old church nursery song, as simple as it is, says it well, "Little ones to him belong, they are weak but He is strong." We are small in light of the perplexing problems young men face today. We feel like the disciples in Matthew 15, where Jesus instructed them to feed the huge crowd of people. They asked how can we "feed such a crowd?" (v. 33). As soon as they spoke the question they acknowledged their weakness and dependence on Him, and Jesus took over and multiplied the loaves and fish. We are weak, but He is strong; He will help us guide boys and young men through the challenges of the 21st century.

Our cry is, "Father, give us bread today!" Royal Rangers, when you recite our Pledge, "With God's help,..." you are making a radical commitment to depend on God unconditionally. Why? Because we are on a mission, a mission to evangelize the world, equip the next generation of Christlike men, and empower lifelong servants. To accomplish that, we *must* depend on Him. ✎



The Patrol Systems of Outpost Leadership

by Ryan BEATY

Since the inception of Royal Rangers, the patrol system has been one of our most distinguishable characteristics. Every powwow you attend has groups of young men marching in formation, carrying a flag that they crafted as a group, and singing a patrol song. Even commanders get into the act when they attend National Training Camp and are assigned to patrols in which they create flags, bolos, songs, and yells. It is always great to enter an outpost campsite and see the patrols camping together with their flags as their symbols of unity. In recent years however, many outposts have opted to stop using the patrol method. Commanders do all of the instructing in the weekly meetings and become so focused on accomplishing merits that other vital areas of Royal Rangers, such as the patrol method, are overlooked. The patrol system is not an aspect of Royal Rangers that should ever be overlooked, especially in light of National Commander Marsh's challenge that Royal Rangers be a "boy-led, adult facilitated ministry." That patrol system needs to be utilized in every outpost, and here is why.

The patrol gives the young men in the outpost a sense of belonging. They are part of a team. Everyone likes to be accepted into a group of people and develop friendship, and that is what the patrol system accomplishes. The young men in your outpost are allowed to choose together a patrol name, design a patrol flag they can all be proud of, and write a patrol song and yell. The young men can camp as patrols, do patrol service projects, and have patrol outings, without having the entire outpost involved. Many of the merit requirements are written so the patrol can accomplish them together as a group and all get individual credit. Friendship, which is such a huge part of Royal Rangers, is established and fostered within the patrols.

Young men gain leadership experience from being involved in the patrol system. Whether he

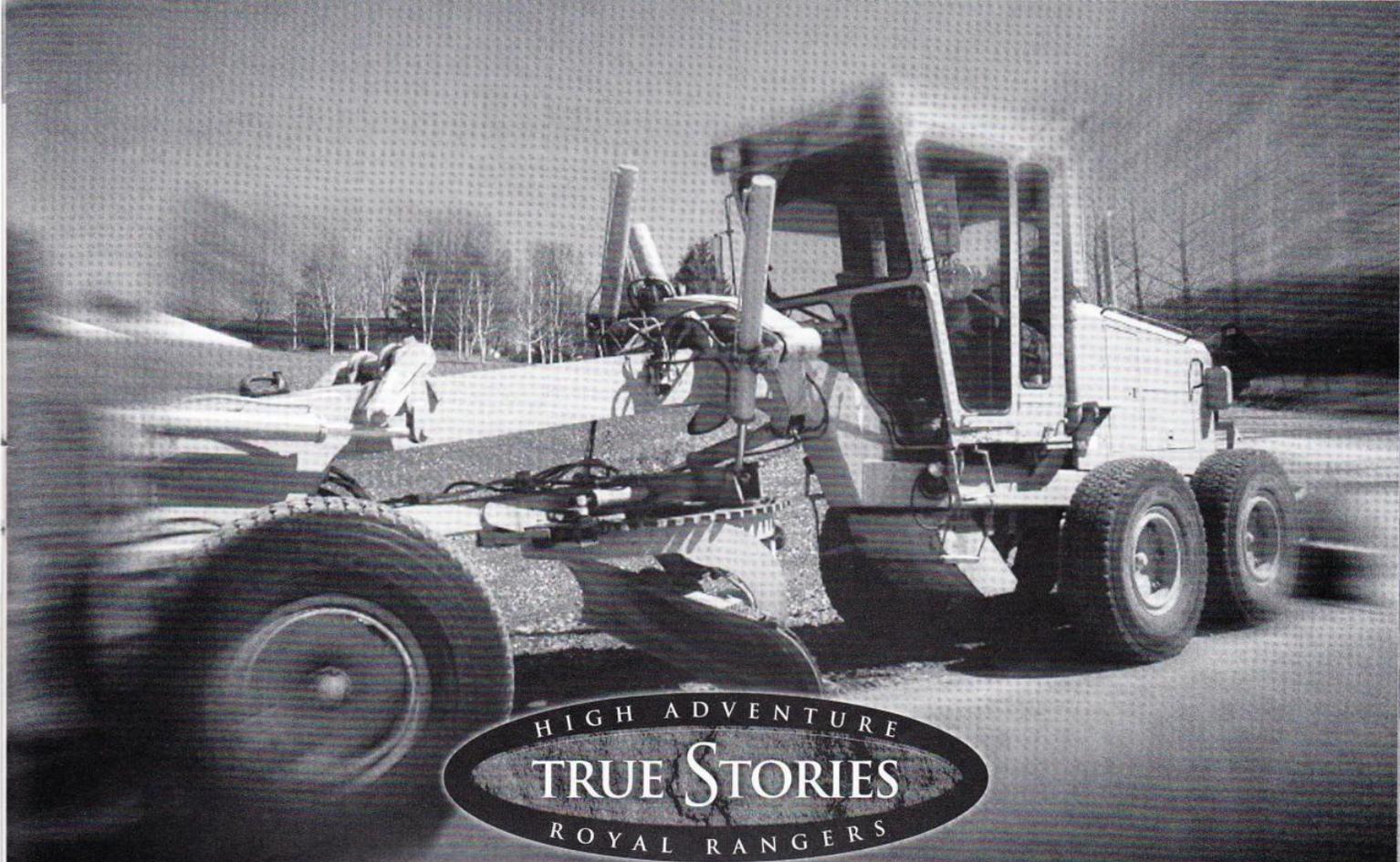
is a patrol guide, assistant guide, quartermaster, or scout, there are opportunities for each boy to gain leadership experience during every year. Servant leadership, the example that Christ patterned for us, is the building block of any leader, and it can be learned through the patrol system. Being in leadership will also inspire the young men to bring friends to the outpost. When they begin to be empowered to lead and are given opportunities to exhibit leadership traits, they will begin to invite their friends to attend, much in the same way they invite their friends to come watch them play a baseball game.

Ultimately the patrol method instills within the outpost a feeling of fun that is necessary for the outpost to grow and keep its young men.

Inter-patrol competitions are always a fun part of Royal Rangers events. Young men love competing together as teams to win games on campouts or win the game during the recreation time of the weekly meeting. They really do like doing activities together as a team. Harness the natural surge of team excitement by utilizing the patrol system in your outpost.

There are many ways that patrols have fun together other than competition. Allow your patrols to organize benefits for the less fortunate in your community. Encourage them to be a part of service projects. Great fun and satisfaction comes from a group who has accomplished a major undertaking, especially one that helps other people in the church or community. Encourage your patrols to adopt a highway, start a recycling program, or just help with items around the church.

The patrol system is key to the success of Royal Rangers. It is a part of the ministry that can and should be implemented in every church, no matter how big or small. This week, start a patrol and see where the excitement will take you. ☘



HIGH ADVENTURE
TRUE STORIES
ROYAL RANGERS

ONE TOUGH FRIDAY

— by Perry Siddle —

As Fridays go, this should be an easy one I think to myself. After checking the weather, I go back into the bedroom and put on 2 additional shirts, a light jacket, and long johns under my jeans. I say goodbye to my bride of three months.

Hopping into my company truck, I make the 20-minute commute to the office. I grab the blueprints and some other tools and head to the construction site, 45-minutes north of Midland, Texas. Since the job is still in the first phase of construction, my crew doesn't have anything to do, so I gave them the day off. It would just be me, laying out sidewalks, parking lots, and driveways.

As I finally pull into the site, I meet with my father, the company superintendent who is responsible for site operations. He is also the heavy equipment operator and is on a grader, smoothing out one of the main roads.

Parking the truck at an angle near the middle of the parking lot facing a main road to the northwest, I get out and rummage through my toolbox to find my tape measure, string line, hammer, and stakes. Although almost noon, it is not warm enough to remove any of my layers. I begin the tedious task of staking out the sidewalk and parking lot. Measuring off the corners closest to where the building will be, I drive in two stakes. I then measure the length of the north side of the parking lot and hammer in the stake.

As I am kneeling with my back to the truck, David, a former crewmember, walks up and says my truck is needed on the other side of the job to refuel a dirt mover. The truck carries a 100-gallon fuel tank in the front of the bed for this purpose. (He's a nice 18-year old, but he has a problem with alcohol and drugs. Since I didn't want any of my guys getting hurt because he was drunk or high, I asked my dad to move him to another crew. Firing the best friend of the owner's son was not an option!)

I tell David the keys are in the ignition and remind him to return the truck by lunchtime. I can't say I hear the truck start nor am I paying any attention since I just talked to David and I believe I am safe. But that is about to unfortunately change my life completely.

The rear bumper of the truck slams into the back of my head, throwing me forward. I must have lost consciousness for a brief second or two because I tell myself, "I have got to wake up; this is one of the worst nightmares ever!" Sadly, it is no nightmare and quickly goes from really bad to critical. Because of my size, 6'0" and 207 lbs, I can't fit under the rear end of the truck. Basically, I'm being pushed by the truck because David is driving backward.

I'm sort of in a ball shape against the rear of the truck. We drop down into the ditch, causing the truck to bounce. My body squeezes under the rear end, but before I can get past it, the truck slams down crushing me in half like a closed human pocketknife with my head wedged between my knees. Unfortunately, my body has never bent quite like this before; therefore, my chest cavity collapses temporarily, snapping ribs as if they were twigs. My ribs scrap my heart sac, causing deep contusions. Deep bruising on my lungs makes breathing difficult.

As we pop up on the road, the bounce frees me from

the terrible pain of the rear end, but my right leg becomes tangled in one of the rear tires. As I flip one last time, my right calf is pinned under the tire. The twisting of my body damages my right knee; however, the strain on my right hip is too great and pulls my leg out of the socket, twisting the leg backwards. Funny, I don't feel any more pain. I think to myself, "I'm either dead or my body is numb." I quickly decide I must be numb since I can still see the undercarriage of the truck.

Things move in a blur now as David accelerates down the road. It is interesting how quickly your mind works and how you can process data in a flash when needed. I know if I don't take some sort of action quickly that I'm about to be ground up into hamburger under the motor and front end of the truck. I grab the first thing I find—the drive shaft—bad choice. My hand quickly spins off the drive shaft, covering it in a coat of motor oil and crushing it against the bottom of the truck, breaking two fingers. "That didn't work," I think to myself. My right arm is stuck under me, and I can't seem to free it. I have no choice; I reach up with my injured hand and find something else to grab. This time it's the hot exhaust. With no other choice, I must hold on as long as possible. With a sudden jerk that tears the rotator cup, nerve ends, and ligaments in my left shoulder, the truck speeds down the road with me hanging on for dear life.

I've never been one to contemplate or worry about death. My approach has always been, don't spend energy worrying about things out of your control. Besides, as a Christian I know God is in control, which is good enough for me. Funny how being dragged down a street, holding onto an exhaust pipe and knowing that soon after you let go you'll die, changes things. I determine to hold on and figure the death thing can wait a little while longer. I conclude, however, that there is strength in fear. Proverbs 1:7 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." It is not that we live in fear of God but that we have a reverent respect for Him. As I'm being drug down the street, I have a lot of respect for the truck, especially the front end!

I don't know how far we've gone on this ride (maybe 100 feet), but I'm not sure I can hold on much longer. Suddenly, the truck comes to a skidding halt. I quickly release the exhaust, but I'm not sure if the ride is over. Was it all a dream? Am I about to wake up? The door

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opens, and David runs away as if he's scared. I grab the side of the truck with my right arm and slowly drag myself from under the truck enough to see my dad running towards me. I can't move anymore because my right leg that is wedged under the tire. My dad is a big man, intimidating to some. As he reaches me, he sees my leg stuck, grabs the side of the truck, and lifts it enough to free my leg. He pulls me out a little further. I think to myself, "Did I really just make it through this crazy ride?"

Later, dad told me he saw the accident while grading a side road. He quickly turned down the road we were on in an effort to stop David. When he finally got up next to the truck, David noticed he was screaming for him to stop. David stopped the truck and knew he was in big trouble by the look on my dad's face, which is why he got out of the truck and ran for his life!

On his knees, dad looks down on me. I can't recall my dad crying, but I can feel his warm tears land on my face. Another coworker runs up to help. With the internal injuries, speaking isn't easy, but I ask dad if I'm going to die. He cries harder and says everything will be okay. As I lie there, I never once ask God why. I don't ask Him to heal me or take away the pain. I do ask Him to forgive the sins I might have committed since I'm pretty sure I'm about to meet Him face-to-face. I drift in and out of consciousness. Every time I close my eyes or drift off, dad tells me to wake up. Breathing becomes painful, and I'm getting very cold now.

An elderly lady in a mobile home across from the construction site witnesses the accident and calls 9-1-1. The job site is 25 miles outside Midland. Under the best conditions, it would take an ambulance 30 minutes to arrive, but God knew that wouldn't do. Coincidentally, an ambulance was returning from delivering a patient to an elderly care facility north of our job site. Less than 5 minutes after dad stopped the truck, we hear sirens. (The doctor would later tell me that the magnitude of the injuries was so severe that if the EMTs hadn't arrived when they did I would have slipped into shock and died within 30 minutes.) After 20-30 minutes, the EMTs stabilize my vital signs and transport me to the hospital. It would appear the worst may be behind me as we speed off to the hospital.

The EMTs wheel me into a room that appears to be part of the emergency room. A tall, thin, elderly man in a doctor's smock and one nurse come into the room. He immediately shaves the back of my head and stitches my cuts, which stop the majority of the bleeding. He tells my dad he can take me home



because I'd be okay. (Now, I'm not the smartest guy in the world. However, if I'm a doctor and a young man is brought into the hospital by ambulance after being run over by a truck and is still coughing up blood, then I'm thinking there would be a huge liability associated with this poor medical diagnosis if I send him home!)

My dad isn't happy with the doctor's assessment and decision to send me home. He charges toward the doctor and with a very loud voice tells the doctor that his son is not leaving the hospital. The doctor almost falls backward trying to escape my dad's wrath. I sure am glad I am able to see the doctor's reaction. The nurse grabs him and runs out. Immediately, the room fills with other doctors and nurses. They quickly check my vitals and prep me for the first of many operations. Before being put to sleep in the operating room, I remember them not having to cut any of my clothes away; they were shredded by the gravelly road. The multiple layers of clothes certainly saved me from additional cuts!

I am in the intensive care unit all weekend. I only leave for x-rays or additional surgeries. By Monday,

three separate surgeons work to repair various injuries. Fortunately, I am stable enough to move to a room. The extent of the injuries makes it necessary for a nurse to check my vital signs and give me a shot of morphine for pain relief every two hours. Though it relieves the pain, the morphine has a terrible side affect—nightmares. The nightmare is always the same. I am being dragged down the street again; only this time Satan is driving. As he accelerates down the street he says, “You’re not getting away this time.” I fight and fight to wake up. As I let go of the exhaust pipe, I jerk awake, sweating profusely. My heart is racing, and I tell myself not to fall asleep. This goes on for days. I can force myself to stay awake during the day, but in the middle of the night, there is a time when exhaustion overtakes and the nightmare begins. I only sleep for 10-15 minutes at a time. I especially look forward to the nurse’s visit every two hours during the night not so much for the morphine but for the companionship. Nearly every nurse takes a cold washcloth and lays it on my forehead to cool me down. They urge me to sleep, but I can’t. I don’t tell anyone of my nightmares; I think real Christian men never let Satan drive! For whatever reason, I feel the nightmares are mine to battle.

Thursday night was terrible. Although I am exhausted, I do not want to fall asleep. The nurse comes into the room around midnight and stays as long as she can, but she has to move on to her other patients. I remember my wife, Lisa, had placed my Bible in a drawer near the bed; I ask the nurse to lay it on my lap. It fell open to Psalm 25; my eyes went straight to verse 16.

Psalm 25:16-22 16Turn to me and be gracious to me, for I am lonely and afflicted. 17The troubles of my heart have multiplied; free me from my anguish. 18Look upon my affliction and my distress and take away all my sins. 19See how my enemies have increased and how fiercely they hate me! 20Guard my life and rescue me; let me not be put to shame, for I take refuge in you. 21May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you. 22Redeem Israel, O God, from all their troubles!

After reading the verses, I cry out, “God guard my life and rescue me for my refuge is in You!” As a peace falls over me, I close my eyes and fall asleep. This time, however, there is no nightmare; in fact, there would be no nightmares ever again. I awake just before noon on Friday almost one week to the minute of when my ordeal had begun. The nurses let me look at my medical chart. As I read Thursday night’s entries, there is not an entry for my vitals signs or morphine use. It simply reads, “The patient was asleep, I chose not to wake him.”

After two weeks in the hospital, a nurse comes in, and I ask her when the stitches will be removed from my head. She looks at me curiously and asks, “What stitches?” I gently lift my head and point to where the little stubbles are beginning to grow. I say, “I didn’t come in here with

these; the first doctor in the emergency room sewed me up.” She picks up my chart and looks through it with a funny expression. After reading all the pages, she leaves the room and returns with my primary doctor. He asks me how I received the stitches, and I repeat the story. He asks me to describe the doctor. They whisper to each other, and the doctor leaves. The nurses tells me that there is no record of the stitches anywhere on my chart and that there is no tall, thin, elderly, white male doctor working at the hospital. I think to myself, “This just gets more and more bizarre every day.”

My orthopedic surgeon says that due to the extent of the injuries to my hip I will need hip replacement surgery in less than 10 years. The cardiologist and internal medicine surgeons also warn me of potential problems and likely surgeries in the future. As they are speaking, I think to myself, “These future operations can’t be any worse than being dragged down a street underneath a truck.”

I am finally released from the hospital. Lisa helps me get dressed as I sit on the bed. I can’t walk, but I slowly stand up so she can help me put on my shirt. As I gently stand there on my good leg, my pants fall right off! I went in weighing 207 lbs. and am leaving weighing 144 lbs. I have gone from a muscular young man to a very thin 6’0” beanpole!

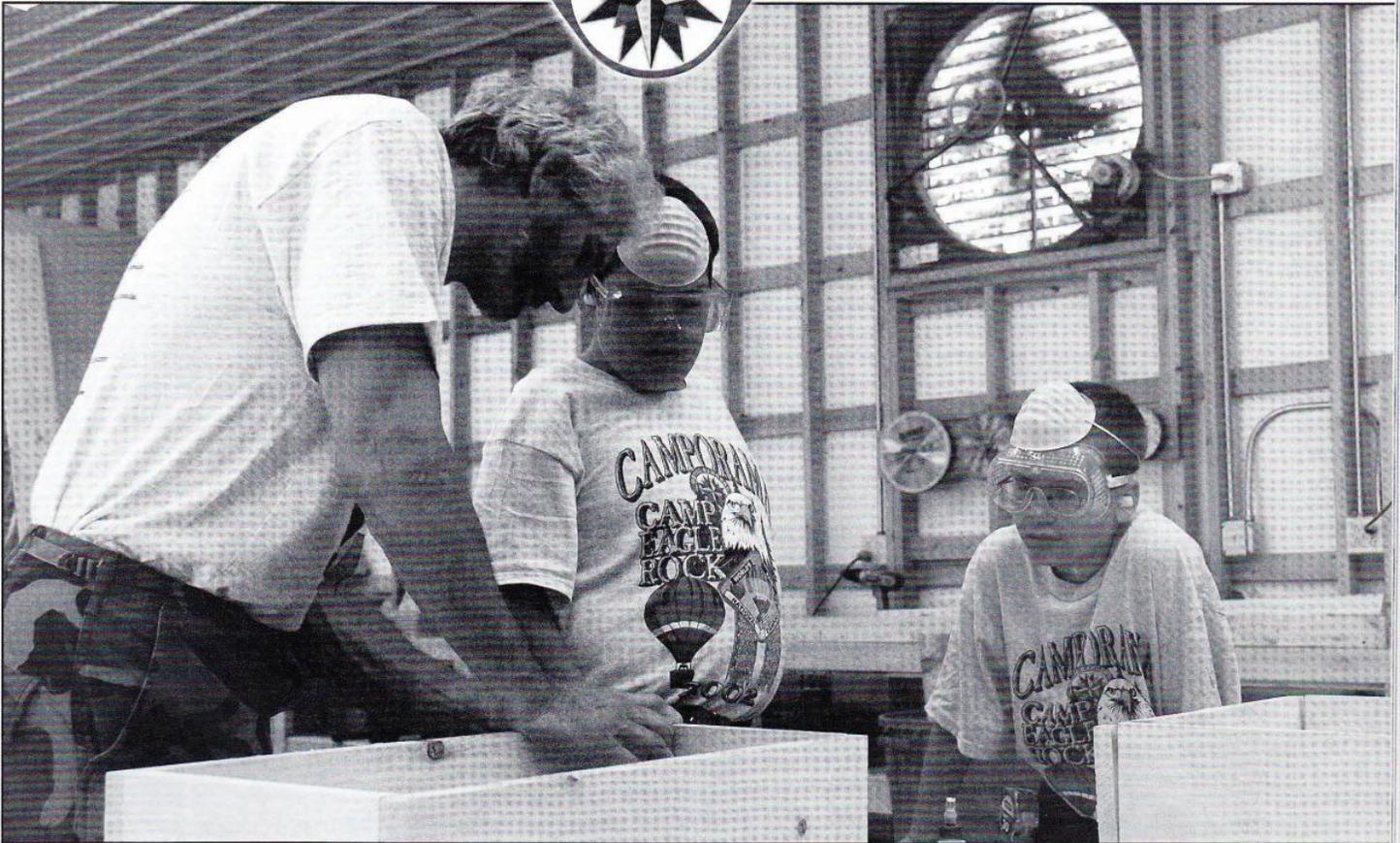
I never see David again. He left the company shortly after the accident. I don’t know if the reason was of fear of my dad or encouragement from the owner. I received a card from him around Thanksgiving, approximately three weeks after the accident. He said he was sorry and didn’t mean to run me over. I hold no grudge against him; although, I wish I could tell him personally. It was six long months of recovery and rehabilitation before I returned to work.

October 30, 2007, I celebrated the 25th anniversary of the accident. God has blessed my gorgeous bride of 25 years and me with three beautiful girls. I have never told many people of the accident; I’ve never spoke publicly about how God chose to give me a new lease on life that fateful day. This is not because I’m not thankful or feel that God let me go through something I am not sure I deserved, but it is mostly because I’m a private person and I have never allowed the accident to be a crutch or excuse. I’ve tried to move on with my life. I’ve gone through more operations than I care to remember; but I’ve not had to have my hip replaced, praise God! Pretty much every day

I experience pain, and when I do, I try to smile and tell myself the pain means I’m alive to experience another blessed day. ☘



Perry Siddle is National Training Coordinator for Royal Rangers.



Good Isn't Enough When Better Is Possible

by Perry SIDDLE, National Training Coordinator

A number of years ago I attended a national training event. At that event patrols were constantly being asked to perform and complete tasks. As my patrol came close to finishing a project, a member of our team would say, "It's good enough." Now, I knew the project was not good enough. Even though I had never worked on some of the projects before, I knew that our efforts weren't up to par with what I've experienced at other Royal Rangers training. So I would continue working to complete the job so our team would rise and shine above the average team. Near the end of the week, as the stress of the work load increased, I have to admit I grew tired of hearing, "It's good enough." So I finally blurted out, "It's not good enough! We have to do our best."

How many times have you been asked to complete some task for your spouse or Royal Rangers? You tell yourself that you need to work hard to complete it because you want to do your best. But, as you get close to finishing the task, you grow weary or some other task becomes a higher priority. You look at your work and say, "It's good enough," even though in your heart you know you can do better. Sadly, too many leaders take this approach when it comes to the Royal Rangers ministry. Whether it is preparing for the weekly meeting or planning to attend the district powwow, it seems the "good enough" attitude too easily slips in.

I believe that a "good enough" mentality equals second best. And I never cared to strive to be second best. My approach has been, "Good isn't enough when better is possible." During and after high school I worked in the construction field with my father. He would tell me that it takes less time to do a job right than it does to do a job over. This is good advice, because doing a job right requires you to do it better than average.

So how do you keep out of the "good enough" rut? Try using the CARE approach!

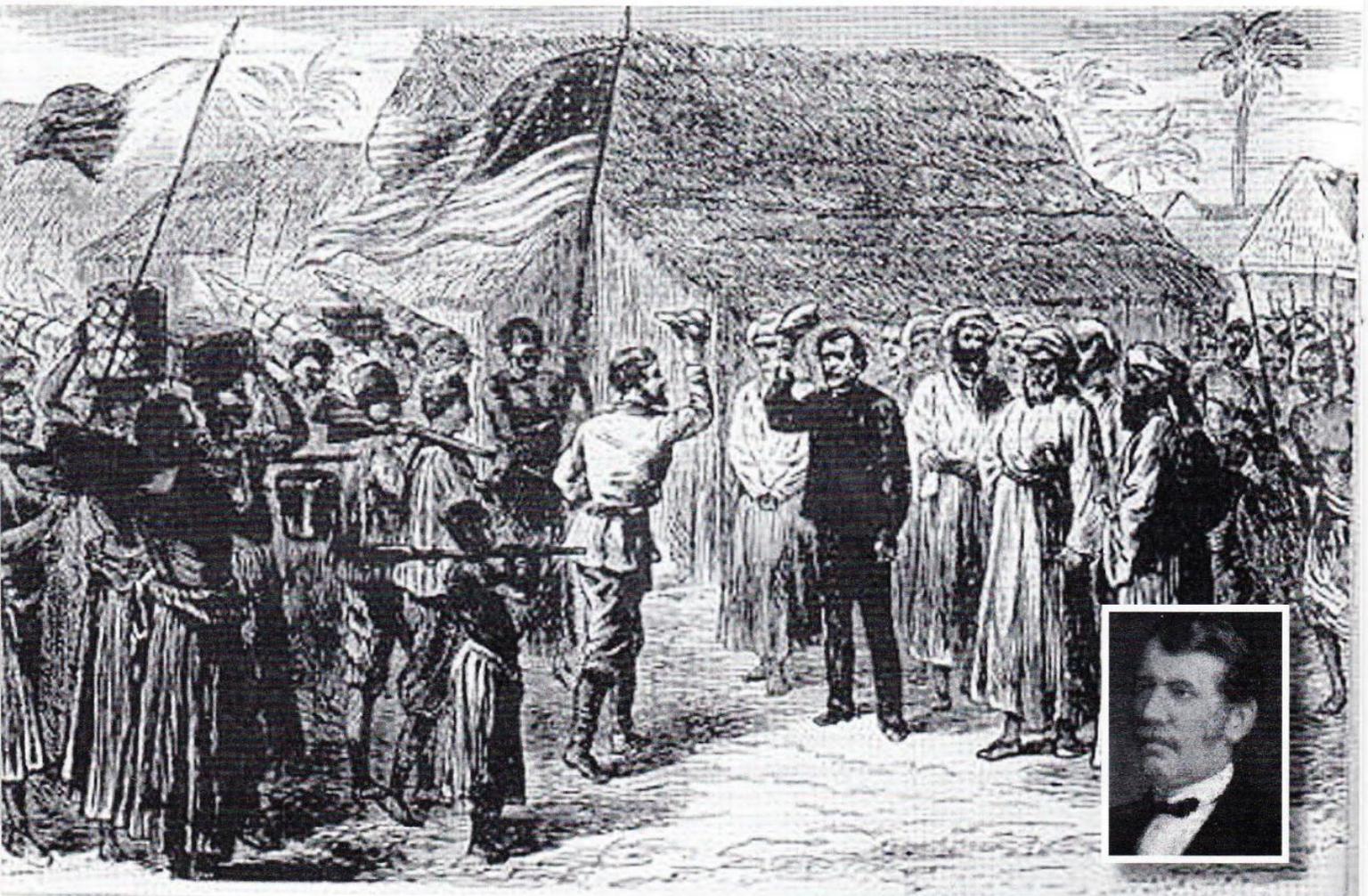
C— COMMITMENT. Being committed means giving and doing your best every time! You may never know when a job you do has an eternal impact on a Ranger in your outpost. This also means not to commit to doing more than you can finish. Pushing yourself is good; failing because you've said yes too often is bad!

A— ATTITUDE. With a positive attitude, I can accomplish "all things through Christ who strengthens me."

R— REMEMBER THE REASON. Whether you are working on an item off your "honey-do" list or your weekly meeting for Royal Rangers, there is a reason why your best matters.

E— EXCELLENCE. It really is habit forming. People remember those who go above and beyond when completing tasks. They expect your best at everything you do.

When you CARE to do your very best, then better is possible!



A Life For Freedom

by Louise DUNCAN

In the early 1800s in a little village in Scotland, a little boy studied well into the night. His home, which he shared with his parents and siblings, was one room in a tenement building. His ambition was to be a medical missionary. His name was David Livingstone.

When he finished his studies and became a missionary, he sailed for Africa. His horror when he encountered the atrocities of the slave trade made him determined to put a stop to it.

Dr David Livingstone was born in the little town of Blantyre, Scotland, on March 19, 1813. His parents were poor, but they valued learning and were devout Christians. His father, a shopkeeper, was an earnest member of a missionary society.

Becoming a missionary was not easy for David. At 10 years old he started work in the local cotton mill. His job began at 6 a.m. and finished around 8 p.m., then afterward he had to attend night school. Most of the other children could do little except sleep, but David studied far into the night. He studied Latin from a textbook he had bought with his first week's wages.

He had a self-reliant nature. One evening he calmly spent the night on the doorstep since his father always locked the door at dusk.

David studied medicine at Anderston in Glasgow and in 1838 was accepted by the London Missionary Society. While there he met Robert Moffat who was a missionary in Africa. Robert later became David's father-in-law. David



was so moved by Robert's experiences in Africa that he decided to go there instead of to China, which was his first choice. David was ordained as a missionary in London on November 17, 1840.

He was deeply devoted to helping others. He wrote: "It is my desire to show my attachment to the cause of Him who died for me by devoting my life to His service."

On December 8, 1840, David sailed for Africa on H.M.S. George and arrived in Kuruman via Cape Town on July 31, 1841. He learned the native language quickly and soon began preaching. He was impatient to be off to untouched regions.

His first journeys were to find healthier sites for mission stations. The terrible disease called malaria made large areas of Africa impassable for Europeans. But he was not worried about malaria. During his trips, David encountered a group of slave traders driving their captive Africans, like cattle, to the slave markets on the coast. It was a constant nightmare for David. Families were broken up. Bodies lay by the wayside where they perished from the brutalities. David committed to fighting the slave trade somehow.

He realized that the development of plantations in Zanzibar, surrounding islands, and Mauritius, along with increased demand for slaves from sugar plantations in Brazil, led to a phenomenal growth in the East African slave trade. More than 70,000 slaves were exported annually.

David decided to expose the slave trade and its causes. His disclosures led to the creation of a Parliamentary Select Committee. The result was a treaty negotiated with the Sultan of Zanzibar, stopping the transportation of slaves along a 1,000 mile coastline. Sea routes were replaced with overland routes. But the slaves were then subjected to greater horrors. Slavery was not officially abolished until many years later.

David could see that there was no future for Christian missions until slavery was abolished. He wrote in his letters and journals about the importance of developing commerce between the Africans and Europeans. Development of Africa's fertile soil would help Christianity to spread and so lead to civilization.

He contributed religious and scientific articles to periodicals in Britain. He also sent geology and flora samples together with maps of his travels. David's

explorations added one million square miles to the known portion of the world. He discovered many lakes and rivers.

After discovering the Zambezi River and tracing it to the East Coast and the Indian Ocean he tried to trace the source of the Nile River. He wanted to discover a passage from coast to coast. In this way he was sure the slave trade would die out.

He endured many hardships; malaria and other serious health problems dogged him for most of his life. His food and medicines were stolen on occasions, and during the heavy rains he was continuously wet.

David's missionary purpose to preach to, heal, and help the African people was the impelling motive which carried him on, even during his last four years when he was very ill and short of supplies. He was often discouraged and he thought he had been forgotten. The missions staffed by African evangelists, which he had dreamed of having, were long in coming. His assurances of the prospects of commerce and Christianity were met with little response.

But his efforts were not in vain. Within several years of his death, his name had inspired others in the new age of missions. He was the pioneer for Central African Christianity and also a pioneer of modern independent Africa.

He always believed that others would carry on with the work he had started. His last day of travel was April 29, 1873. He had reached the village of Chitambo in Ilala. His faithful servants Susi and Chumah found him kneeling by his bed, head in hands. He had died in the act of prayer.

David's servants packed his papers and instruments to arrive safely in England. They buried his heart under a tree. They embalmed his body and carried it for five months to Unyanyembe. They believed that their master would want to be buried in England.

David was buried with honors at Westminster Abbey in London, on April 18, 1874. He is remembered for his missionary work, extensive explorations, and his contributions to geographic and scientific knowledge. He was an individualist who let no one stand in the way of his goals. He is distinguished for his humanitarian efforts to alert the world to the slave trade and his work toward the ultimate eradication of slavery. ♣

On December 8, 1840, David sailed for Africa on H.M.S. George and arrived in Kuruman via Cape Town on July 31, 1841. He learned the native language quickly and soon began preaching. He was impatient to be off to untouched regions.

New National Programs Coordinator Appointed



Ryan Beaty was recently appointed to serve as the new national programs coordinator. His responsibilities will include overseeing the development of new curriculum items, revising existing items, and coordinating teamwork with other ministries.

Ryan has been a Royal Ranger since he was five years old, earning every advancement level including the Gold Medal of Achievement. He has served in various leadership capacities, including national FCF scout, lieutenant commander, group commander, sr. commander, and South Texas missions coordinator. He has completed his LMA, is a certified instructor, and has attended NTC, ANTC, RKTC, WCO, National Academy, and Advanced National Academy. He has also served on a number of national and junior camps in the U.S. and most recently at NTC and ANTC in Kenya, Africa.

As a licensed minister with the South Texas district, Ryan has served as a children's pastor, youth pastor, junior and senior high school Bible teacher, and a member of the faculty for Berean School of the Bible at Global University. He graduated from Southwestern Assemblies of God University with a degree in Christian Education and in May 2008 will graduate from the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity. Ryan grew up in Brenham, TX where his family remains active in ministry at Cornerstone Christian Center of the Assemblies of God. His father and mother are members of the pastoral staff at and his sister and brother-in-law are church leaders. ✎

Developing a Heart for
Servant
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Conditional Success

Read 2 Chronicles 26:1 through 28:27

The father, son, and grandson recorded in these chapters are a microcosm of the history of the rulers of Israel and Judah. The first two, Uzziah and Jotham, delighted in the Lord and followed His Law. Though Uzziah committed a sin of pride at the end of his life, he was a good leader and the kingdom prospered during his time. Nothing bad is recorded about Jotham and he grew powerful because he walked steadfastly before the Lord his God. Ahaz, the final ruler of the trio, rejected the Lord and spent his life in defeat, shame, and ruin.

The pattern is clear to see: a time of righteous prosperity followed by a sinful downfall. Is there any way to break that oft-repeated cycle?

As long as he sought the LORD, God gave him success (2 Chronicles 26:5).

We are not doomed to failure. We are offered success. The condition is that we seek the Lord, live according to His Word and follow Him all the days of our lives. As the Lord wanted all three of these kings to succeed, He wants us to succeed as we seek first His kingdom and righteousness (see Matthew 6:33).

PRAYER SUGGESTION: *Thank the Lord for a path to success!*

QUICKLOOK: *Chronicles 26:1–10*



Guardian Leadership

Read Acts 20:25–38

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood (Acts 20:28).

Paul's audience was the leaders of the church at Ephesus. He entrusted these elders with "the whole will of God" (verse 27), a treasure that must not be lost to false teaching.

Leaders must also protect and strengthen their people. Using shepherd imagery, Paul warned them not to lose any of the flock to the wolves of twisted belief.

Paul defined qualities of effective leadership. In contrast, ungodly leaders cause others to stray by diminishing the truth of Scripture, calling the Bible a philosophical or even historical document but denying its everlasting power and authority to change lives today. Godly leaders will not fall into this trap, but will continue to share "the whole will of God" with their flock.

PRAYER SUGGESTION: *Lord, help me to be a leader whose every action and word strengthens the faith of those around me.*

QUICKLOOK: *Acts 20:25–31*



DO I LOOK
LIKE THE
GARBAGE MAN?

**Are You a
“Tongue-Fu”
Champion?**



by Teresa CLEARY

Here's the situation: You've had a day so bad it should go down in history. It was a rough day at school. (How is it teachers always know when you don't do your homework?) You had a lousy bus ride home. (Who knew that window you opened was hooked up to an emergency buzzer that could split eardrums?) And when you walked in the door, your little sister (who was home with the flu) threw up on your shoes.

After cleaning yourself up, you sink into your favorite chair in the family room. Ah, that's better! A little TV, maybe a snack, and soon life will be good again. But just as you settle in, your mom asks you to take out the garbage—now.

Do you:

- a) Complain that you always get stuck taking out the garbage?
- b) Say “*&\$@#!” under your breath five times fast and hope she doesn't hear?
- c) Lie and say you'll do it later because you're really busy right now?
- d) Say sarcastically, “Do I look like the garbage man? Get someone else to do it”?
- e) Sigh, get up, and take out the garbage? (Maybe the dog will keep your spot warm until you come back.)

How about this? You're hanging out at the corner with your friends when you spot a girl from school who is overweight.

Do you:

- a) Point her out with a wisecrack about her weight as she walks by, something like, “Can you believe she actually finds clothes to fit?”
- b) Tell your friends that you have to wonder if maybe she weighs so much because she's p-r-e-g-n-a-n-t?
- c.) Say, “Hey, Lardo,” as she passes?
- d.) Comment that you can't understand why some people can't control themselves when it comes to food?
- e.) Say “hi” as she goes by? (It just might shock your friends!)

If your answer to either of these questions was anything other than “e,” you're well on your way to becoming a tongue-fu champion.

You know what that is, don't you? It's someone who uses put-downs, sarcasm, foul language, gossip, lying, complaining, or back talk to make a point. Maybe you only do it once in awhile. Or maybe that's your preferred method of communication. Either way, it's wrong.

Why?

► **It's disrespectful.** Not only are you being rude to someone else, you're also showing a lack of respect for yourself. You're telling the world that you need to try to make yourself look good by making someone else look bad.

► **It's damaging.** We're all sensitive to what other people think of us. Saying something mean about others is a sure way to hurt their feelings and bruise their self-esteem.

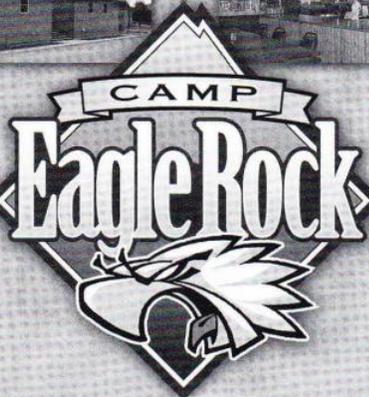
► **It's displeasing to God.** God's command is for us to “love one another” (John 13:34). Slamming others with your words isn't about love at all. In fact, it's just the opposite. Want some advice from God's Word? “He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity” (Proverbs 21:23).

So what do you do if you have a problem with mouth management? Try this two-fold approach. Pray before you speak. Before that insult or rude comment slips out, ask God to help you hold your tongue. Ask Him to silence the negative words that want to come out. Then, pray after you speak. If you slip up (Nobody's perfect, so it's likely to happen.), ask the Lord to forgive you and to continue to work on this area of your life. The choice is yours. Are you going to continue to be a “tongue-fu” champion or do you realize it's time to make a change? It will take some hard work, but why not become a “black-belt expert” in a more positive area of your Christian life? Those around you will thank you for it! ✨

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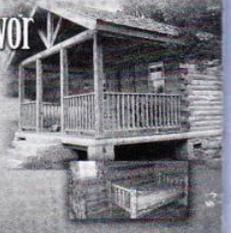
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Camels in the Bible

? ? ? QUIZ ? ? ?

by Betty Z. WALKER

1. Name three animals that Abraham had. (Genesis 12:16)
2. When Abraham's servant met Rebekah, what did she offer to do? (Genesis 24:19)
3. What did Rebekah ride when she went to meet Isaac? (Genesis 24:64)
4. What animals did God tell His people not to eat? (Deuteronomy 14:7)
5. How many camels did the Midianites have? (Judges 6:5)
6. What did Gideon take away from his enemies? (Judges 8:21)
7. What did men who escaped from David ride? (1 Samuel 30:17)
8. How many camels did Job have? (Job 1:3)
9. What did Jesus speak of a camel going through in Matthew 19:24?
10. What did Jesus say that blind guides swallow? (Matthew 23:24)

— Answers to Quiz on page 15



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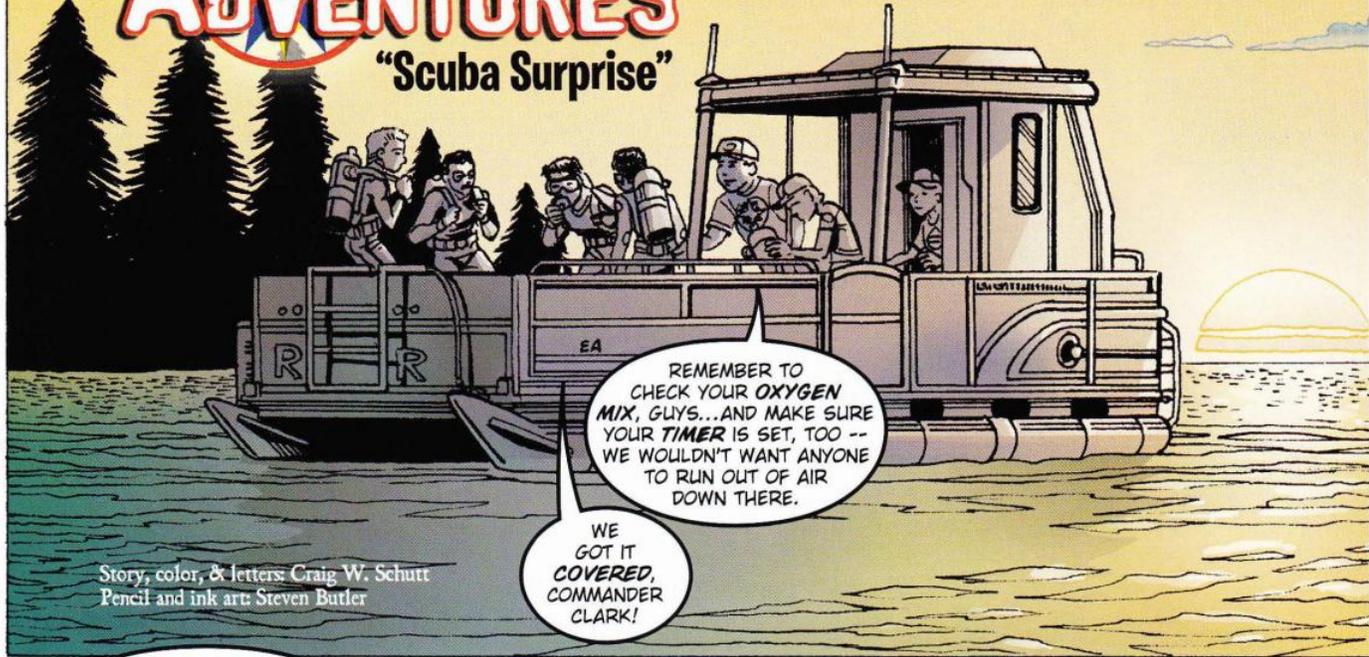
- A. ADMIT YOU HAVE SINNED.** *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23).
- B. BELIEVE IN JESUS.** *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16).
- C. CONFESS AND LEAVE YOUR SIN.** *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9).

If you would like someone to pray with you about your decision to know Jesus as your personal Savior, talk with your Royal Ranger commander, your pastor, or call the National Prayer Center at 1-800-4PRAYER.

ROYAL RANGERS ADVENTURES

"Scuba Surprise"

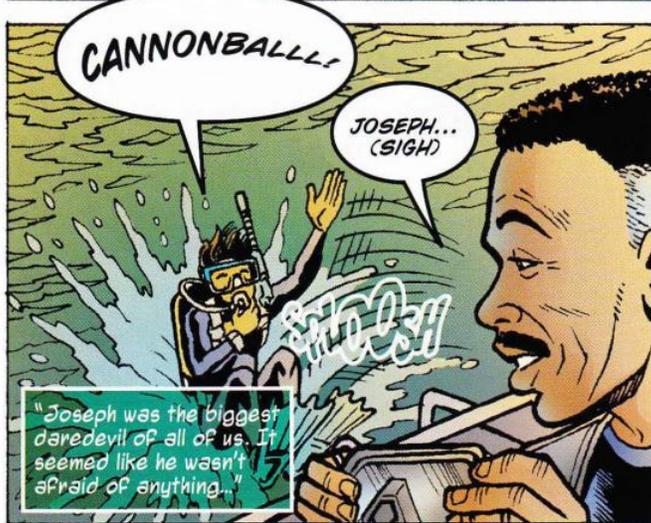
"The whole mystery began on a perfect early autumn morning. A few of us were training for our Silver Merit badges in scuba diving. Commander Clark had found an incredibly clear lake for us to dive in..."



REMEMBER TO CHECK YOUR OXYGEN MIX, GUYS...AND MAKE SURE YOUR TIMER IS SET, TOO -- WE WOULDN'T WANT ANYONE TO RUN OUT OF AIR DOWN THERE.

WE GOT IT COVERED, COMMANDER CLARK!

Story, color, & letters: Craig W. Schutt
Pencil and ink art: Steven Butler



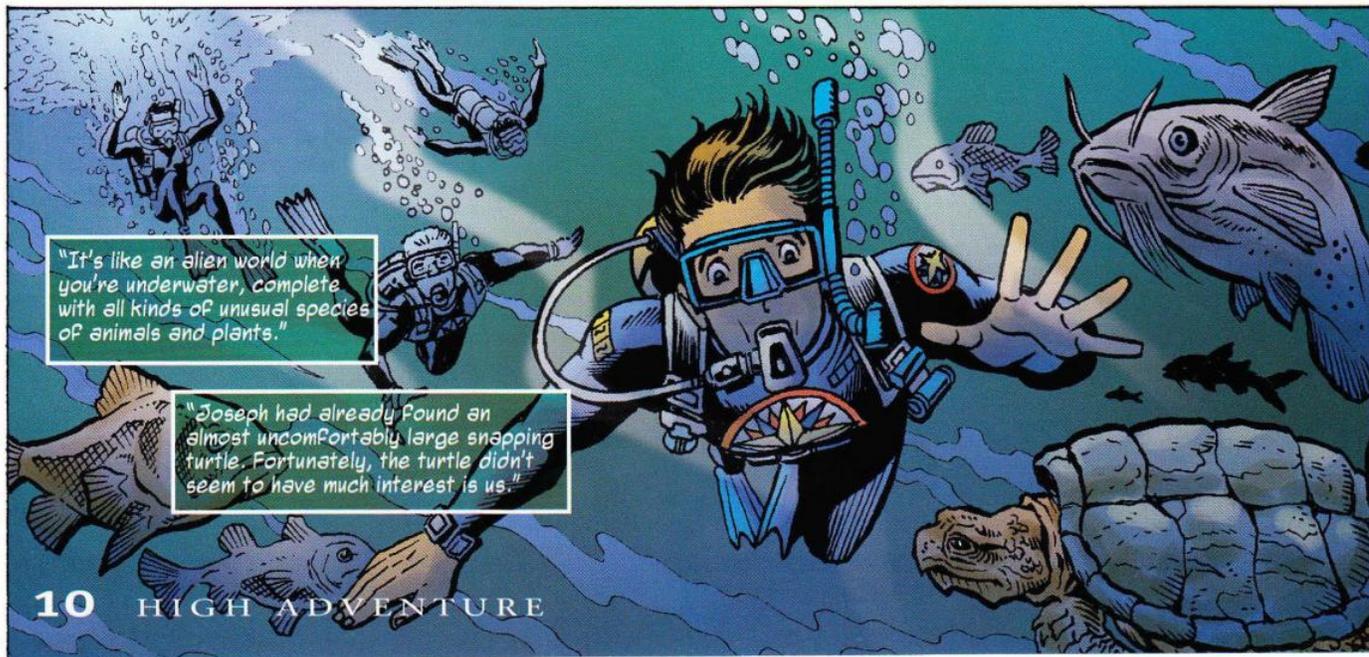
CANNONBALL!

JOSEPH... (SIGH)

"Joseph was the biggest daredevil of all of us. It seemed like he wasn't afraid of anything..."



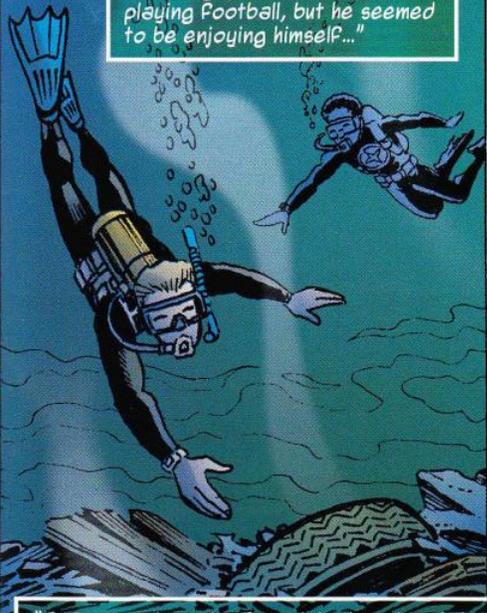
I GUESS WE'LL HAVE TO REMIND JOSEPH ABOUT THE 'BUDDY SYSTEM'...AGAIN. LET'S GO, GUYS.



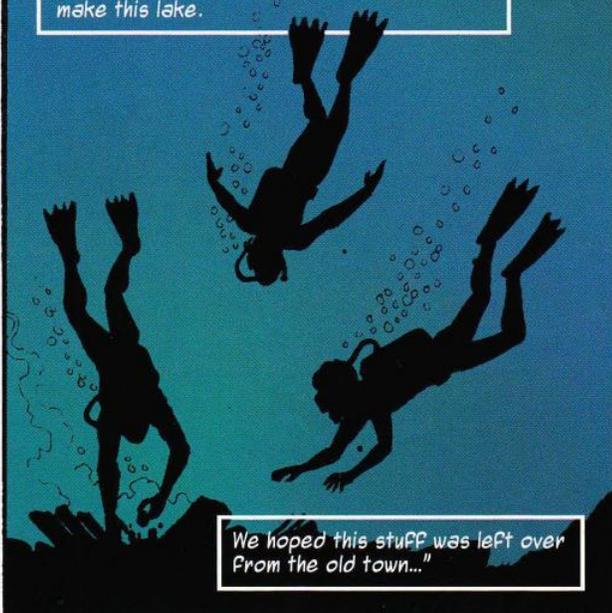
"It's like an alien world when you're underwater, complete with all kinds of unusual species of animals and plants."

"Joseph had already found an almost uncomfortably large snapping turtle. Fortunately, the turtle didn't seem to have much interest in us."

"Tank was the first one to make it to the lake bottom. He's the kind of guy who would rather be playing Football, but he seemed to be enjoying himself..."



"It's hard to believe that some people throw their junk into beautiful lakes like this. But Commander Clark said there used to be a town here before they filled the valley to make this lake.



"We hoped this stuff was left over from the old town..."

"Tank stumbled across some old medallion and Joseph went bonkers when he saw it..."



"Before we knew it, Joseph had grabbed the medallion and raced to the surface. We followed as quick as we could..."



WHAT'S THE DEAL, JOSEPH?

YOU-YOU DON'T RECOGNIZE THE DESIGN ON THAT MEDALLION, NATE?

I GUESS NOT...

WELL, YOU SHOULD. IT LOOKS JUST LIKE THE DESIGN ON MY BELT BUCKLE. DO YOU KNOW WHERE I GOT THIS BELT BUCKLE FROM?



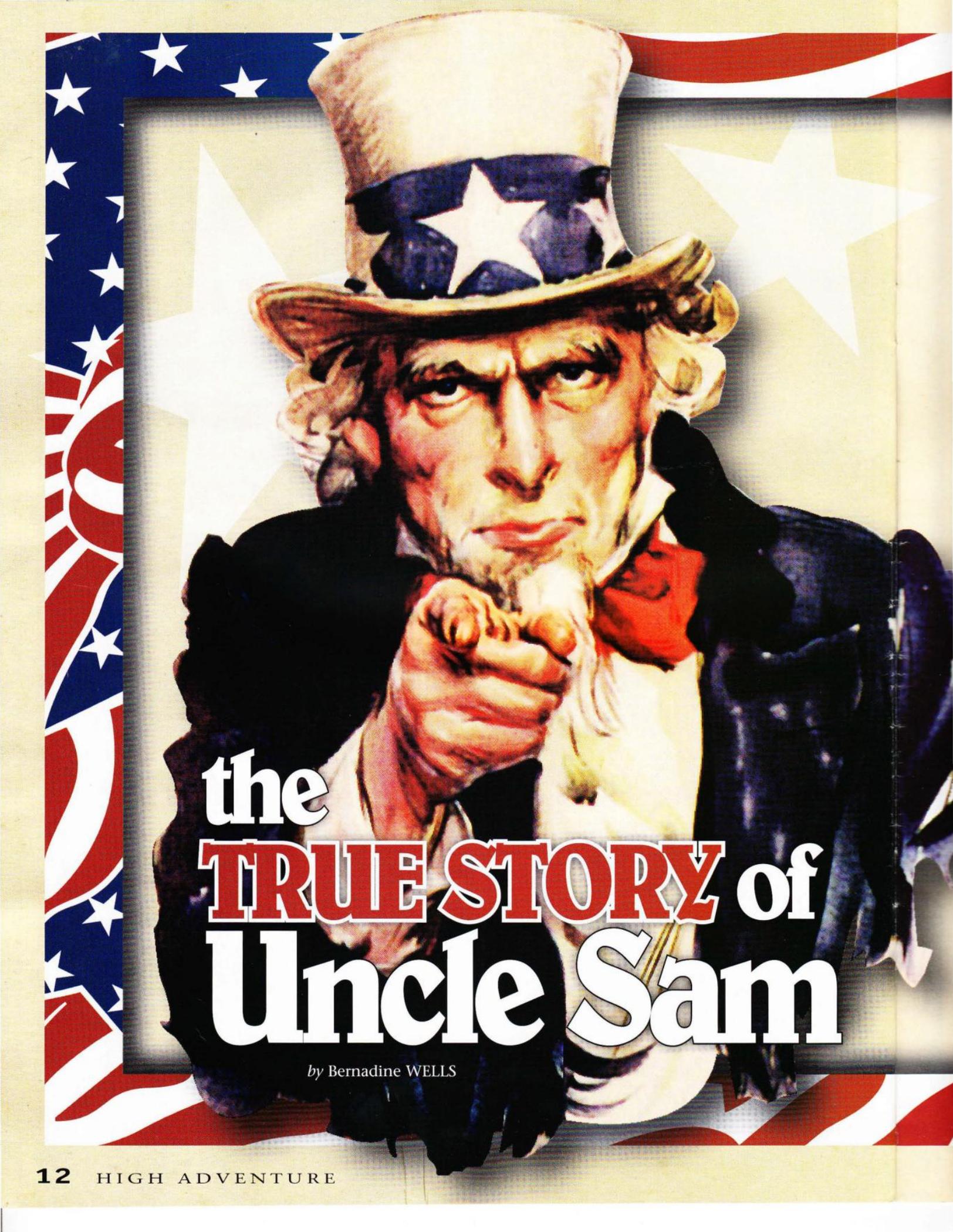
OH, YEAH --YOU SAID YOUR GREAT GRANDPA MADE IT DURING THE CIVIL WAR AND THAT IT WAS ONE-OF-A-KIND...

SO WHAT IS AN EXACT DUPLICATE DOING AT THE BOTTOM OF THIS LAKE?

"And suddenly we had ourselves a genuine mystery!"



CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE IN: "DUCK AND COVER!"



the
TRUE STORY of
Uncle Sam

by Bernadine WELLS

Our American Heritage

Have you heard of Uncle Sam? If so, you know he represents the United States of America and is pictured as a tall, slender man with white chin whiskers; a tall hat; blue coat; and red, white, and blue trousers.

On the Fourth of July, we celebrate Uncle Sam's birthday, but did you know Uncle Sam's birthday is actually September 13? His real name is Samuel Wilson, and he lived in Troy, New York.

Samuel was born in 1766 in Massachusetts. His parents were Edward and Lucy Wilson, and he had 12 brothers and sisters. Young Sam was adventurous and ran away from home when he was only 14 years old to join the Army. He served until the end of the war as a service boy for the soldiers.

After he returned home, he was unable to find a job in his hometown. So at the age of 23, almost penniless, he and his brother, Ebenezer, set out on foot to Troy, N.Y., to look for work. Sam had very little work experience, but was a hard worker. Before long, he had many different jobs. He made bricks; built houses; and ran a farm, an orchard, and a general store.

Sam fell in love with a beautiful girl, Betsey. She was the daughter of Captain Benjamin Mann. They were married in 1797.

Sam was honest, friendly, and a good neighbor. Everyone in Troy knew him, and the young and old began to refer to him as "Uncle Sam."

Sam and Ebenezer decided to start a meat packing business. They were good businessmen and became very prosperous.

When the War of 1812 began, the city of Troy became an important center for gathering

supplies and food for the Army. Because Sam was very patriotic, he wanted to do all he could for the soldiers. He contacted Elbert Anderson, a neighbor, who was in charge of getting supplies to the battlefield. Sam told him he could supply as much meat as needed.

Mr. Anderson required that the Army's purchases be shipped in large oak barrels with the letters "E.A.U.S." on their sides. These letters stood for Elbert Anderson, United States. When asked what these initials stood for, Mr. Anderson laughed and said, "Why for Elbert Anderson and Uncle Sam, of course."

Since many soldiers camped near Troy, they became acquainted with Sam Wilson and called the meat "Uncle Sam's."

During both World War I and World War II, the drawing of Uncle Sam was displayed everywhere. With his finger pointed at us, he states, "I Want You," to serve our country—not only during war, but at all times.

Even though the symbol of Uncle Sam is known throughout the world, the city of Troy was the home of the real Uncle Sam. Troy is proud of "Uncle Sam" Wilson, and they've

named streets, buildings, and parks after him. Even garbage trucks display his name.

Every year on his birthday, the citizens of Troy celebrate with parades, a big barbecue, and concerts. More than 20,000 annually attend Sam's birthday.

It wasn't until 1961, however, that Congress passed a bill recognizing Samuel Wilson as the namesake of our national symbol. Although his birthday is not July 4, Sam would be pleased and happy the nation chose this special day to celebrate the birthday of the country he loved.

His final resting place is on a beautiful, quiet hill overlooking Troy, N.Y., the city he chose to call home. *

During both World War I and World War II, the drawing of Uncle Sam was displayed everywhere.

With his finger pointed at us, he states, "I Want You," to serve our country—not only during war, but at all times.

Finding Joy

Read Numbers 11:1–3

For almost thirty years an American couple planned and worked to become missionaries. When they finally arrived on foreign soil and were able to use their skills to minister to the people, they were overjoyed. However, it wasn't long until religious riots exploded in the town. Markets were closed and tension reigned. Despite the trials, this couple continued to find joy in God's ability to protect and provide for them as they stood on His promises.

The Israelites were also in the midst of claiming a long-awaited promise from God. The land He had promised Abraham centuries earlier was within their reach. Yet to many among them this situation didn't seem so great. Despite God's provision they focused on their immediate surroundings rather than the promise ahead.

The people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the Lord, and when he heard them his anger was aroused (Numbers 11:1).

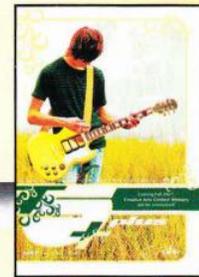
The Bible is full of God's promises of protection for His people. However, it is not full of promises of an easy life. On the contrary, we are assured of problems (John 16:33). But the problems make us less dependent on ourselves and more dependent on God. Trials teach us to concentrate on serving Him, not in meeting our own comforts. What difficult situations have you faced while claiming God's promises in your life?

What do you do to maintain a positive attitude while facing difficult circumstances?

Read Numbers 11:1 to 13:33; Mark 1:21–45

Prayer Emphasis:

Give thanks to God for His provision and ask Him to help you see through your difficulties to His blessings.



What's Inside?

Matthew 23:23–39

The Law had been set up as a guide to help God's people live a righteous life. However, the Pharisees had made it into something else. Not recognizing the purpose of the Law, they had turned it into a legalized game of gotcha!

You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean (Matthew 23:27).

That seems harsh, but the Pharisees needed to hear it. Although they followed the Law, they missed the point of the Law.

God's rules are intended to make our lives easier—not more difficult. God wants us as Christians to live as free people, not under a law that makes us feel oppressed and defeated. So often we get our eyes on the "rules" of Christianity and forget the meaning of God's words.

God wants us to love Him and others. If we look at the Bible as a whole, God's words are clear. If we love Him and seek Him, our lives will make sense. If we love one another, we won't be looking out just for ourselves.

God's rules aren't difficult; we just make them hard when we lose sight of His grace and unending love—for us and those around us. How well does your inside match your outside?

How can the two brought into alignment?

Leviticus 6:8 through 8:36; Matthew 23:23–39

Prayer Emphasis:

Ask God to guide your words and actions so you can be an extension of Him.

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Why do golfers wear two pairs of pants?
Just in case they get a "hole in one."

What has eyes but no nose, a tongue but no teeth and is a foot long?
A boot.

Why did the dog sit in the shade?
It did not want to be a hot dog!

How do you make an egg laugh?
Tell it a yolk!

If two's company, and three's a crowd, then what's four and five?
Nine.



"Since I just got baptized, can I skip tonight's bath?"

COMEDY CORNER

What did one eye say to the other eye?
There's something between you and me that really smells!

If a rooster lays an egg on top of a pointed roof, which side does it roll down on?
Roosters don't lay eggs!

Where's the best place to see a man eating fish?
A seafood restaurant!

What did the polite mouse say?
"Cheese" and "thank you."



"That's a strike? You mean two more strikes and I'm out?"

Camels in the Bible

??? QUIZ ???

— Answers to QUIZ from page 9 —

1. Sheep, oxen, and camels
2. To draw water for his camels also
3. The camel
4. The camel, the hare, and the coney
5. "The camels were without number."
6. The ornaments that were on their camel's necks
7. Camels
8. 3,000
9. The eye of a needle
10. A camel

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