

Our boys program almost died  
until we discovered the secret.

## MEN'S MINISTRIES MAKES ROYAL RANGERS GO

Last year 145 boys were saved and 22 were filled with the Spirit as a result of our Royal Rangers program at First Assembly in New Orleans.

On top of that, we are helping boys learn how to be self-reliant men who willingly serve God and their fellow-man.

And there is the spiritual development of the men who serve as commanders! Their involvement in Royal Rangers has helped them grow by leaps and bounds.

Clearly the Royal Rangers program in our church is a success. But it hasn't always been that way. I firmly believe the key to the program's current success is the recent identification it has made with the local Men's Ministries department.

In my 17 years as pastor of First Assembly, I have seen the Royal Rangers program rise and fall. There have been times when it met the needs of boys; other times when it became a drain on the workers without showing results; and even times when the program died completely.

I had to learn not to try to resurrect a dead program. At first I wanted to have Royal Rangers because everyone else did. How could I go to district council and admit we didn't have a program for our boys? But for 2 years we had no Royal Rangers program at all.

Then God sent a man, the most unlikely candidate you could imagine, to get our Royal Rangers program started. That's the first necessary ingredient—a man called and sent by God.

Leyland Giardina came to New Orleans from Tennessee to visit relatives. While he was in the city, he attended First Assembly. The next day he went back to Tennessee, resigned from a tremendous job, sold his house, and moved to New Orleans to hear me preach. And he wasn't even saved!

He and his family fought some real battles about this move. But he finally found a job, was saved, and filled with the Spirit.

Many times Leyland would hear me say something he didn't under-

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stand or agree with in my sermon. He would get mad, get in his car, drive home, but turn around and come back by the time I made the altar call. He would be the first to come to the altar.

Finally he got his feet on the ground, and one day he walked into my office and asked, "Pastor, do we have any material anywhere that tells us how to get the boys program going?" So I told him to write to the national Royal Rangers office for the information he needed.

Here was Mr. Nervous himself volunteering to begin a Royal Rangers program. He couldn't even sit still for 10 minutes, much less work with a bunch of boys. But he started the program because he said, "God put it in my heart."

And God sent other men to work with Leyland:

There was Dr. James Dunn, an outstanding medical doctor, researcher, and educator. God spoke to him to work with Buckaroos, and he ministered to those boys beautifully. And Larry Weixel gave a decade of unselfish work to provide a ministry to hundreds of boys.

For a number of years we had men who worked at keeping the Royal Rangers program going. But later it became more and more of a struggle. It seemed impossible to keep enough commanders.

Then Ronnie Clasen and Jerry Kuchler, two commanders who had recently resigned, came to me with their burden for Royal Rangers. They saw that the program had all but died. They felt bad because they wanted to see it change, but they didn't know what to do.

They pointed out that the boys needed more commanders, more

support, more of everything. The program lacked direction. Worst of all, the boys weren't being ministered to adequately.

I listened as these men shared their feelings of frustration and helplessness. Then I told them that most of the problems in the Royal Rangers would be over when our Men's Ministries developed and grew strong.

My simple statement made a profound impact on Jerry, who soon became our senior commander. He said later:

"Chills went up and down my spine when Pastor Gorman made that statement. At that time the Lord allowed me to catch part of the vision of Johnnie Barnes (the national Royal Rangers Commander) and my pastor.

"I remember how excited I was when I left the pastor's office. Now I knew why Royal Rangers was in the shape it was in—because we didn't have a Men's Ministries."

At that time I had been praying for God to raise up a man to get under the burden for the men in our church. Wayne Finley was that man.

Our Men's Ministries began to grow, and our Royal Rangers program began to grow with it. An active outpost council was formed as a part of the Men's Ministries, and the boys' program began to be presented to the men regularly.

Both the Men's Ministries and the Royal Rangers commanders see Men's Ministries as a necessary component to a successful Royal Rangers program. Not only do the men provide the boys' program with financial and spiritual support, but the needed commanders have come from Men's Ministries.

Our Royal Rangers program has found its proper place in relation to Men's Ministries and the church body. Now the program has a new sense of direction and purpose; boys are being ministered to effectively; and the commanders have experienced great spiritual growth.

Men's Ministries makes Royal Rangers go. 