

THE POWWOW IS IMPORTANT

In colonial days a well-known educator was raising funds for his school. When one wealthy businessman was solicited, he responded by asking, "Isn't that a lot of money to educate a boy?"

The schoolmaster replied, "Not if it is your boy!"

Some pastors and people may feel that the Royal Rangers program costs too much in time, energy, effort, and money. But the motto of Royal Rangers explains it best: "Reaching, teaching, and keeping boys for Christ." Every effort and part of the program is designed to fulfill that motto. The powwow is no exception.

The powwow is an annual out-of-doors event sponsored by the district to challenge men and boys. Usually held at some central location in the summer, it is a vital part of the total Royal Rangers program for the following reasons:

It is well planned.

Powwows, like so many other church activities, don't just happen. The executive committee meets soon after the last powwow to evaluate that event while each area is still fresh in each person's mind. The weaknesses and strengths are clearly defined. The general outline for the next powwow is discussed.

Early in the spring another meeting of the executive committee is held where final plans are crystallized. Assignments are made. Schedules, the number and kinds of activities are planned, speakers are chosen, and special events are arranged for. The district commander arranges for the printing and advertising. Local leaders are contacted by means of a monthly newsletter.

Before the powwow packets containing advertising, schedules, registration forms, and information concerning the training sessions and

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competition activities are mailed to all the churches. Thus a powwow is important because it is well planned—and is well planned because it is important.

It provides opportunity for competition.

Pastors and parents know that boys thrive on competition. Let more than one boy be present, and friendly competition begins. It may show itself in a little friendly shoving, pushing, tugging, holding, jumping, or some other way.

The powwow uses this natural competitiveness and channels it so boys learn new skills. Walking a monkey bridge, throwing a tomahawk, erecting a tent, running the obstacle course, or shooting a bow and arrow all appeal to the boy. Thus a powwow is important because it is a teaching/learning device.

It provides opportunity for fellowship.

Royal Rangers is a natural means for developing comradeship. Boys dressed in clean, pressed uniforms, or in fatigue-type T-shirts and jeans, soon lose any feeling of being different or underprivileged. But more than that, boys coming from the church have a great basis for fellowship. Whether or not they have met boys from other parts of their district, it is easy to get acquainted, for they know about Sunday school, Christ's Ambassadors, worship, songs, and choruses. These are all familiar so it is easy to make new friends. Thus a powwow is important for it provides fellowship.

It provides an opportunity for learning.

One of the best ways boys and commanders learn is by seeing what others do and how they do it. From the time a campsite is staked off until the tents are up and the flags are flying, men and boys learn by watching. If one picture is worth a thousand words, then how much more is watching an actual campsite come to life?

By JAMES E. GRIGGS

Also the training sessions are carefully arranged, and the instructors are purposefully chosen so the boys will get the most out of their time at the powwow. After being shown how to do it, a boy can return to his campsite and immediately put into practice what he has learned. Thus a powwow is important for it provides the basis for learning by seeing and doing.

It provides an opportunity for evangelism.

The excitement of a regular Royal Rangers meeting attracts new men and boys. But in the last few weeks before a powwow, the excitement really builds. Often this spills out beyond the borders of the regular outpost. New men and boys are reached.

At the night rally at the powwow, when the campfire blazes and the speaker shares, it is natural for a boy to step out and make a decision for Christ. He not only has found new friends, but he has found the best Friend of all—the Lord Jesus Christ.

On such an occasion when boys were kneeling in a large circle around the embers of a campfire, one leader turned to a man standing nearby and remarked, "This is what Royal Rangers is all about."

The man replied, with tears running down his face, "Yes, I know; that's my boy down there!"

Powwows are important because they provide an opportunity for evangelism.

So planning, competition, fellowship, and learning are all important. And "reaching, teaching, and keeping boys for Christ" is the heart of Royal Rangers and the powwow.

Remember, a man never stands quite so tall as when he stoops to take the hand of a boy—especially if in taking his hand he brings the boy to Christ. 