

bless boys—even if they cannot devote full-time service.

If you were to talk to him, he would tell you about Royal Rangers and its advantages. His teenage son Dan participates in its programs, and his wife and daughters have been involved in Missionettes, the Assemblies of God program for girls. Joyce, his wife of 34 years, travels with him at times and speaks to women, encouraging them to support their men or work in the girls' program.

Most of the funds that come to the Deavers are supplied by Fred's sideline to his ministry—his paintings and bronzes. Royal Rangers leaders and others purchase these to further his work.

"The greatest award I receive is when a hard-working man enjoys and identifies with my art enough to justify spending his hard-earned money to own it," Fred said.

He does not have time to promote his works in art shows or displays. Why not?

"What I'm doing is for time and eternity," he explained, "and I can't lose any time."

As I sat in his gallery, a simple log cabin near Riverton, Kansas, located just a few feet from the home he and his wife built, I was overwhelmed at the art and craftsmanship I saw all around me.

Basically self-taught, Fred has learned to capture the loveliness of nature and the interest of history accurately. Brilliant colors and tasteful objects and figures almost seem to leap off the canvas.

His youthfulness appeals to the boys, even though he is a grand-

father. He stresses the necessity for consistent daily devotions, Bible reading, and memorization.

The Deavers are no strangers to sorrows and tests. Shortly after they decided on full-time service for the Lord, both were tested. Fred's health broke. Over the years Joyce has suffered sickness and a near-fatal car accident.

Fred talks not of his works, but of anointed services. The glory for these always goes to the Lord. He enthusiastically shares information about Royal Rangers, the people involved, and the wonderful boys. Time and time again he applauds the parents who faithfully send their boys and support the program.

As I visited with him, I could hardly believe that the young boy who had once attended my church and rode bicycles with me during our youth in Joplin, Missouri, had become so creative and devoted to God. Unpretentiously he recounted how God had grasped his heart and caused him to accept Him as Savior and Lord.

The stories he shared reflect excitement—flying, parachuting, motorcycling, hunting, rodeo riding. But he is most thrilled with what he is doing now, working for God.

His face glowed as he recalled the first boy he saw come to the Lord through a Royal Rangers altar call. Spiritual fishing has taken up most of his time since.

How does this humble man create such masterful works of art? "I pray over each blank canvas," he stated. "When I reach a block, when I do not have the natural knowledge

or ability, God opens my eyes and shows me how to continue.

"Other artists ask me how I knew to do a certain thing at a certain place which was artistically correct, and I tell them God puts it in my mind. He is my Teacher and my Agent. I still have to work at it, but He intervenes and guides me every time I call on Him."

Why do the people and animals in his paintings and sculptures look so realistic? He studies details. If the subject is an Indian, he will research the weapons, costumes, customs, and habitats of the tribe.

So authentic and professional are his works that one university granted him an honorary doctorate in humanities of arts. His paintings have appeared on the covers of national publications.

When I asked him if some of his works were publicly displayed, he gently remarked he had been giving some to hospitals and other institutions from time to time.

The Boy Scouts of America commissioned him to do a portrait of John Wayne, which was presented at a banquet in 1978 in Los Angeles in Wayne's honor.

For many years Fred has been the national president of the Frontiersmen Camping Fraternity, an elite group of men and boys who have excelled in Royal Rangers and in Christianity.

The rich background Fred received from his parents and others provides the values and spiritual insights he passes on to the boys. He tells them: "I regret that I didn't decide to fully commit my life to the Lord much earlier." That is why he is so burdened for the Royal Rangers. He wants to persuade these boys to turn to God before the evil days come upon them.

This man has learned to trust God's Word and love and obey his Lord. He honors that beautiful name by sharing it everywhere he goes, and God honors him by proving there is a Jehovah-jireh who can supply His children's needs when they will obey and trust Him. ▣

*Boys respond to an altar call given by Fred Deaver at the Royal Rangers Camporama.*



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