

Johnnie Barnes, founder of Royal Rangers, dies of heart attack



Photo by James P. Allen

Royal Rangers National Commander Johnnie Barnes was loved and respected worldwide for his efforts to win boys to Christ.

Johnnie Barnes, founder of the Assemblies of God Royal Rangers program and Royal

Rangers national commander, went to be with Christ June 15. He died at his home in Spring-

field, Mo., after suffering a heart attack. He was 61.

Barnes was ordained with the North Texas District in 1950. He married Juanita Shipley that same year. He served as an evangelist for 7 years and pastored at Electra, Tex., for 4 years. He also served as youth director of the North Texas District 1960-61.

Barnes founded Royal Rangers, the Assemblies of God ministry to boys, in 1962. According to Men's Ministries Department officials, there are 5,290 Royal Rangers groups currently in the U.S., with 128,298 members. An estimated 1 million boys have been involved in Royal Rangers since 1962. The program operates in 43 countries around the world.

In 1985 the National Royal Rangers Training Center, Barnes' longtime dream and vision, became a reality with the purchase of 1,533 acres near Eagle Rock, Mo.

As national Royal Rangers

commander, Barnes was senior editor of *High Adventure* and *High Adventure Leader*, quarterly magazines for boys. Circulation numbers around 87,000 for the magazines.

He was an accomplished songwriter, artist, and the author of 14 youth and outdoor related books. His travels took him throughout the U.S. and into 26 countries on behalf of Royal Rangers.

Barnes received the God and Service Award from the National Church Commission for Civic Youth Serving Agencies and has appeared in *Who's Who in America*.

"Brother Barnes was indeed a faithful soldier of the Cross," said Ken Riemenschneider, Men's Ministries Department secretary. "His tireless efforts to 'reach, teach, and keep' boys for Christ enabled him to minister Jesus' love to thousands of men and boys."

Barnes is survived by his wife Juanita, a son, and a daughter. ☐