

attained the highest award the program offers: the Gold Medal of Achievement. In 1991, 234 boys received this recognition.

To a great degree the success of the ministry has been because of its comprehensive training program. In 1991, 8,383 individuals enrolled in the leadership training course.

Is there still a need?

Some may ask, with the urbanization of America, is there still a need for Royal Rangers in the closing years of the 20th century? Surprisingly the ministry is growing rapidly in urban areas. It's here that outdoor adventure has great appeal.

Who would ever have thought children in America would take guns and knives to school?

Every day:

*Guns take the lives of 10 American schoolchildren.

*More than 7,000 teens will have their first sexual experience—hundreds contracting venereal diseases.

*The shameful result of poverty will claim 27 children's lives.

*Our generation's plague of drug abuse will cause the arrest of 211 children under age 12.

*The ugly scar of child abuse will be inflicted on 1,849 children.

*Children, who mature too fast in our nation's unregenerate, media-crazed culture, will commit crimes resulting in 1,629 being incarcerated in adult jails.

*More than 3,000 children feeling lonely, unloved, and unwanted will run away from home.

*Many of these will become victims of the number-two killer of adolescents: suicide.

*Thousands will turn to drugs, prostitution, crime, and violence.

Does America still need a ministry like Royal Rangers? Oh that every Assemblies of God church in America would see the need to invest in this ministry to boys that pays eternal dividends.

James Dobson, president of Focus on the Family, declared the public is undergoing a "family agenda of the left." The job done by parents and church is under attack by those who feel child development should be left to professionals, commissioned by the government. According to Dr. Dobson, this distorted agenda "continually emphasizes an exhaustive list

of children's rights, providing wedges to separate kids from their parents."

It is disturbing to read of a child granted a divorce from his parents; of a professing homosexual boy and his family suing a well-known boys organization for admission; of a sixth grade boy who pulled a gun in the classroom and shot two fellow classmates before committing suicide in view of the class; of two second grade boys facing criminal charges of rape. The ravages of broken homes have taken a toll on millions. The absent-



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father syndrome has emaciated the male model in our society.

Is there still a need for Royal Rangers? I can shout a resounding yes! This sin-sick world needs Jesus more than ever. With a growing population and sin abounding, the need to reach boys is a greater reality today than when this ministry was birthed.

An eternal difference

Anniversaries are a time for celebration. We are grateful for 30 years of God's blessing upon Royal Rangers and thankful for thousands of faithful leaders since 1962. It's thrilling to see this ministry reaching into 50 countries around the world.

Thank God for hundreds of Royal Rangers alumni serving on home and foreign mission fields, in government, in churches, and living for God in their communities.

More than 132,000 boys in nearly 6,000 U.S. Assemblies of God churches will be involved in Royal Rangers this week. The number of Royal Rangers around the world is much larger.

Anniversaries are more than a time of celebration. They are also a time of commitment. The job is not complete. Millions of boys remain untouched by Jesus' love and forgiveness. They are failing to cope in a complex world with adult-sized problems. Hardened by life, they too often become closed and calloused, lonely, and fearful.

Royal Rangers made an eternal difference for Clayton Stovall. In January 1991, 17-year-old Clayton visited Royal Rangers at Northwest Assembly in Mount Prospect, Illinois. His language was coarse, he smelled of cigarettes, he bragged about all the boys he had beaten up, and he carried a knife and said he knew how to use it. Godly boys and commanders showed Clayton Christ's love.

He continued attending Royal Rangers and began shedding his rough exterior. He looked handsome in his Royal Rangers uniform. On Wednesday, April 17, 1991, Clayton surrendered his life to Jesus. His life was changed. He was happy, always smiling and cheerful. This once-hardened boy was now tenderhearted and willing to help in any way he could.

Commander Joe Landers last saw Clayton on June 19 when he drove him home after Rangers. Clayton was to leave the next day to spend the summer in Michigan. On June 27, 1991, Clayton died a short time after being hit by a car.

Clayton's family asked if he could be buried in the Royal Rangers uniform. The pallbearers for his funeral were Rangers. Royal Rangers made an eternal difference in the life of Clayton Stovall.

Around the world Royal Rangers, through faithful leaders, continues to touch thousands of boys just like Clayton Stovall and Luis Santaella. Jesus is the message; Royal Rangers is the vehicle. ☞



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