

Chapter 13: AWANA

Chris and Bobby were at Davey's at 6:15pm sharp ready to go.

"Just waiting for Junior," Davey said, "then we'll go."

Chris noticed Davey's uniform, "will I get a uniform like yours?" Chris asked.

"Yep," and Bobby and Junior will get one like Billy's.

"Cool," Chris said admiring all Davey's awards displayed on his uniform.

"You gotta pass your entrance book before you can get your uniform," Davey's dad explained.

"It's easy," Davey said.

Just as their dad was pulling out of the driveway, Junior came running out of the house to get into the car with his mom waving from the front door, "have fun!" she yelled out as they all drove off.

“So, tonight is registration night,” Davey’s dad explained, “so, it won’t be the usual club night format, but they will have the AWANA games after registration is over.”

“What’s the AWANA games?” Bobby asked.

“It’s special games they play around this circle inside a big square,” Billy answered, “you and Junior will be in my class, called Sparks.”

“Sparks?” Bobby asked a little confused, “what is that?”

“That’s just the name of our club for kid’s our age,” Billy explained.

“Yeah,” Davey jumped in, “Chris, you’ll be in my club called Pioneers.”

“Strange names,” Chris said.

“They mean something,” Davey explained, “but you’ll learn all that. Just hang out with me and Bubba and we’ll show you the ropes.”

“Bubba’s going too?” Chris asked.

“Yeah,” Davey said, “Bubba’s one of our fastest runners, but he hasn’t seen how fast you can run.”

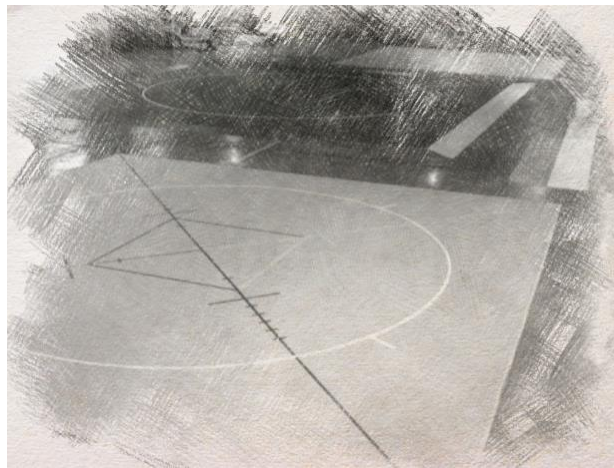
Chris smiled thinking about that.

The kids were lined up at the registration table, so they all got in line. The registration required them to fill out a form with all their information and take it home to their parents to be signed and brought back next week with money for the uniform and their book.

“Well, hey there!” Mr. Gene said to Chris and Bobby when he saw them, “and hey to you too Junior,” he said patting him on the head, “so glad you could all make it.”

“Yes!” Ms. Nancy said looking at Bobby’s registration form at his age and grade, “we’ll be playing games over at the square in a little bit,” she explained. “Bobby and Junior, you’ll be over at Game Square 2 with the Sparks club. I’ll take you over there after you get signed in and introduce you to your leader and the clubbers”.

After registration, Chris and Davey went to a large building that looked like a gym with two game squares. Game Square 1 for the third through sixth graders and Game Square 2 for the Sparks. They were a circle inside split into four sections for the red team, green team, blue team, and yellow team.



Davey and Chris were on the yellow team. Bubba showed up late and ended up on the red team.

“Hey Chris!” Bubba yelled out and waved as he ran by them to get on his red team line.

Chris looked at the red team and saw Debbie there waving at him. He remembered her from the pool and waved back.

Mr. Gene stood in the middle of the game square and blew his whistle *really* loud and told everyone to get behind their team lines.

Chris looked across the parking lot at the other game square where Bobby was, and it looked like there were even more kids on that game square. He could see Bobby and Junior playing a game where they hold on to each other's waste and run around the game square.



Mr. Gene explained the rules for this game, which is called Bean Bag Grab, then gave everyone on the team a number, one through fifteen, Chris was number two and Davey was number ten.

Davey explained to Chris, “you gotta grab as many bean bags as you can, even if you have to grab it outta someone’s hand.”

“Ok, everyone ready?” he yelled out, “everyone yelled back ‘yeah!’ “Get ready, get set, number....five!” and all kids with that number ran into the middle to grab as many bean bags as they could and ran back to their team line.

“Yes!” Davey yelled, “we got the most!”

Mr. Gene yelled out again, “Ready, get set, number...two!”

Chris ran out a grabbed his team’s bean bag first because it was closest, but then he looked around and all the other bean bags were picked up. As Chris stood there for a second looking around for another bean bag, someone came up and snatched his bean bag out of his hand.



“What?” Chris said with a confused look, and marched back to his team line with everyone laughing.

“You gotta pay attention,” Davey said, “this game is brutal.”

Chris had to sit down at his team line so the Game Leader knew he had already played, they continued the game until only two kids were left.

“Ok,” Mr. Gene said, “who’s left? Number one and number?”

“Ten!” everyone yelled back.

“That’s right,” he said and yelled out again, “Ready, get set, number...one!”

This was the last set of this game, Davey was ready, Chris watched paying close attention to the strategy of the game.

“Get ready, get set, number...ten!” Mr. Gene yelled out.

Davey went in for the center bag first, then picked up his team’s bag, then reached over to snatch Bubba’s bag from him, but Bubba wasn’t letting go. Bubba was bigger than Davey, so when Bubba started dragging Davey over towards his team’s line, Davey let go and ran back over to his team. Davey had two bags and so did Bubba, so it was a tie.

“You’re right!” Chris said to Davey when he came over and sat down next to him, “this game *is* brutal.”

“Yep,” Davey said, “but fun.” Davey looked over at Bubba and gave him a thumbs up.

“Ok next game!” Mr. Gene yelled out.

Chris looked over at the other game square and saw Bobby and the other kids running around the circle all linked together

holding on to each other's wastes, then Mr. Gene explained the rules for the next game.

Mr. Gene held up what he called a baton and announced that this next game is called the Baton Relay. He explained the rules about passing the baton to their teammate, then going around the circle, then into the center to pick up the pin for first place and the bean bag for second place.

Chris thought it was kind of weird to have a bowling pin sitting on top of a bean bag.

"You stand here," Davey explained, "and grab the baton when she comes around, then run around and hand it off to me." Davey said, "I'm last and will run in for the pin."

Chris grabbed the baton and ran around circle, then handed it off to Davey, who sped around and went in for the pin and grabbed it!



“I like this game,” Chris said.

“Yeah,” Davey said, “you’re a pretty fast runner.”

They played the baton relay game again and this time Davey told Chris to be the last runner.

Chris ran in for the pin the same time as Bubba and Chris grabbed it a split second before him and won!

“Yeah!” Davey and the team yelled for Chris, “Way to go!”

Chris felt good about winning for the team. He came back to his team line and they high-fived him and he felt great!

Games were over and Davey saw his dad waiting in the car. “Need a ride home Bubba?” Davey asked.

“Sure!” Bubba said and hopped in the car with everyone.
“You’re a pretty faster runner Chris,” Bubba said.

“Yeah!” Davey said, “glad he was on my team.”

“Bye Chris!” Debbie yelled out as they ran towards the car.

“You know Debbie?” Bubba asked.

“Met her at the pool,” Chris said.

“I think she likes you,” Davey said.

Chris said nothing and waved good-bye to Debbie as they drove off.

“Gonna go next week Chris?” Bubba asked as he was dropped off at his house.

“Sure,” Chris said.

“Me too!” Bobby jumped in, “that was fun!”

When Chris and Bobby arrived home, mom was in the kitchen and dad was in the garage making noise with his skill saw.

“Here’s the form mom, said and handed it to her, “you need to sign so I can take it back next week with the money for my uniform and book.”

“Here’s mine too,” Bobby said.

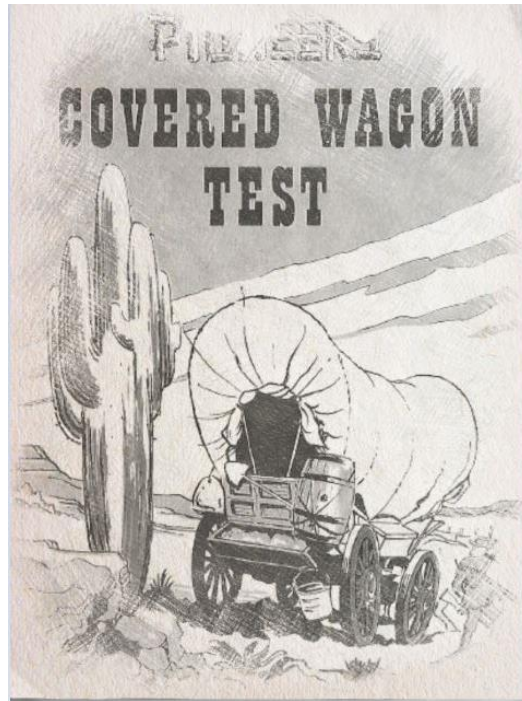
“Oh,” dad said, “this costs money?”

“It’s not that much,” mom said, “sounds like they had a good time,” then dad went back out to the garage.

Chris went to his room, laid on his bed, and opened his Pioneer entrance book and began to read it to prepare for next week.

“What’s that you’re reading?” Bobby asked when he came in.

“It’s my Pioneer entrance book,” Chris explained. “I have to complete it before I can get my uniform,” and showed it to him.



“Yeah,” Bobby said, “I got one too.”

“Let me see it,” Chris said, and Bobby ran to his room and get it out of his bag, then he came back and gave it to Chris.

[add pic of Sparky entrance book]

“This is so easy! I could finish this in one day!” Chris laughed and handed it back to Bobby.

“Yeah,” Bobby said, “I’ll finish it.”

“So, what’s a Sparky?” Chris asked.

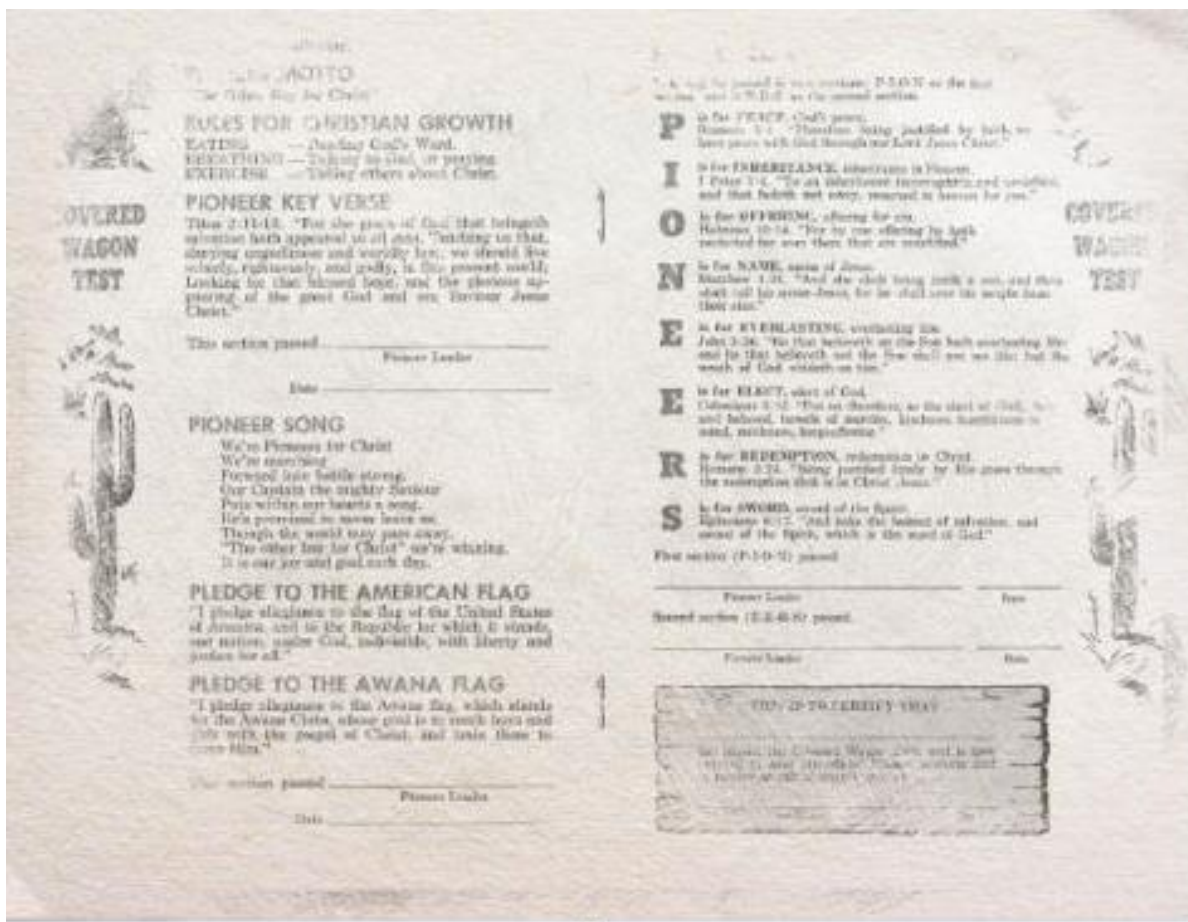
“Sparky is a firefly!” Bobby answered and walked out of the room looking at his book.

“What ya got there?” mom asked when she came into Chris’ room to say good night.

“My Pioneer entrance book,” Chris explained.

“I have to finish this before I can get my uniform,” he said and handed it to her.

Mom opened and read some of it.



She handed it back, “looks pretty easy,” she said. “Want me to help you with it?”

“That’s ok,” Chris said, “I think I can do this by myself,” he said, and look at it again. Mom said good night and softly closed his door.

“Oh,” mom said before she closed his door, “we’re goin’ school clothes shopping in the morning, so don’t make any plans,” she said, “school starts Monday,” she reminded him.

School, oh yeah Chris thought, he was looking forward that.

Bobby went out to the garage when he heard his dad sawing something, “what are you making dad?” Bobby asked as dad was cutting a piece of two by four with his skill saw, and the piece fell to the floor.

He stopped and looked up, “gonna get started on the porch this weekend,” he said, “so I’m cutting the wood for it now to get a head start,” dad said and handed Bobby a piece of wood, “hold it right here for me,” then dad cut another piece

and Bobby held it before it fell. Dad cut a few more pieces, then turned off the saw. “It’s getting a little late to be sawing wood,” he said as he piled up the pieces he had cut into a big pile and Bobby helped him.

“How did you like Awana?” dad asked while Bobby helped him pile up the wood pieces.

“Fun,” Bobby said, “next week we’re gonna have the whole program,” he explained, “tonight we just had games.”

“Glad you like it,” dad said, and Bobby went back into the house. He put the Sparky book on his bed and put on his pajamas, then climbed into bed and started looking at it.

“Don’t forget to brush your teeth,” mom said as she peaked into Bobby’s room and made sure he heard her.

Bobby finished brushing his teeth and got back into bed and started reviewing the first section of his book that he was supposed to have memorized for next week.

S is for Savior, P is for Power, A is for According to the Scriptures, R is for Raised, K is for Keep, and S is for Saved.

Bobby put the book down and laid his head on his pillow not sure he understood any of that. It wasn't long before he fell asleep.