

Having been involved in this program for five years, first with my daughter, Amanda, and now also my son, Jonathan, and also serving as an Assistant Tribe Chief, Tribe Chief, War Chief for various events, Assistant Federation Chief, and now Federation Chief, I have had to contemplate the benefits that can be obtained from the program and the costs of the program. The various chiefs have had to grapple with the pricing of activities and events, and respond too many of our members who have had questions and concerns in that area. Two very recent events have driven home the fact that the rewards that are often realized from involvement in this program easily outweigh the time and financial costs, and are, simply stated, priceless.

The first event occurred within the last month. Amanda and I are now in the Trails program, and she has “grown up” to the age of 10 and is now in 5th grade. Nonetheless, she told me still wants to attend the Princess Daddy Daughter Date because of the evenings we have shared on our dates in the past. Those evenings have been our time to get dressed up, I get her a corsage, we dance like only dads and daughters can dance, and on that night she is the only and most special girl in my world. Last year, I even took her shopping for her dress alone; something I have never done before. It is my opportunity to show her how I think a man should treat his date, especially one as important as my daughter. Seeing her smile when she talks about those nights, and knowing the impact those evenings have had on our relationship and how she views herself are all of the reward I need.

The second event happened Christmas morning. After our family opened our presents, Jonathan presented me with one last package. I opened it to find a picture he had colored of two wolves in a snowy mountain woods. He then told me he had made it to thank me for “doing Indian Guides with him.” I later learned from my wife that they were at Hobby Lobby, that he saw the picture in the color by number section, that he said it made him think of the things we do together in the program, and that he was adamant that he wanted to get it and color it for me as a gift. It is now framed and hangs next to my desk at home. The feeling I had when Jonathan gave me that present is unforgettable.

Those two recent events, and there have been others along the way, have driven it home to me again that the time it takes and the money we spend to participate in this program pale in comparison to the impact we can have on our kids’ lives, and simply do not measure up to the rewards we get from being involved with our children.

Amanda, Jonathan and I look forward to serving as your Federation Chief for this next year, and wish you all a happy and safe 2007.

Setting Sun

Rising Sun

Bold Shark