

# SPRING

## March to Awana In March

Schedule this theme for the first club night in March. When clubbers arrive, play lively march music on a piano or tape recorder until the flag ceremony begins. For Game Time, have clubbers march around the circle instead of running. Tell the story of the children of Israel marching around Jericho, found in Joshua 6.

## March Winds

Advertise with the following headlines:

*March winds blow hard*

*Who is the "windiest Awana clubber?"*

*Come to T&T next Thursday to find out!*

Run games that involve blowing ping pong balls or other objects. See *The Best Awana Games Ever!* book for ideas. Tell the Bible story of the tempestuous winds and Christ calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-39; Luke 8:22-24).

## Go Fly a Kite

Plan this outing for a Saturday in March. Have clubbers bring their own kites or purchase a supply of inexpensive ones to hand out. Run the following contests:

- Altitude – Clubber who lays out most string wins.
- Marathon – Winner is clubber with kite staying aloft longest.
- Artistic – Winner is clubber with most colorful, best-designed, etc., kite. Only those who make their own kites are eligible to compete.
- Strength – Which kite is the strongest puller? Measure drag with spring scale.
- Quarter-mile dash – Winner is first clubber to play out and reel in quarter mile of cord. (That's 1,320 feet.)
- Reeling-in – All kites must have same amount of cord out. First clubber to reel in kite wins prize.

## April Mania

Spring officially begins in March and can bring a definite drop in Awana club attendance. If clubbers are enjoying club less and less, they suddenly drop out as the days get warmer. If your club begins to lose its appeal, you need to shake things up. This spring, plan competitively for clubbers' time.

Advertise with posters announcing “to miss April Mania would be foolish.” In keeping with the “foolish” theme, hang publicity posters upside down or sideways. Crazy letters and wild colors will help get the message across.

Use crazy games. At your leaders’ meeting, brainstorm for games which will work in your club. For example: a three-, four- or five-legged race, a shaving cream pie-throwing contest, a raw egg or water-balloon toss.

Hold a “Create-a-Clown” contest. Furnish each team with greasepaint, a wig, old clothes and other odd items. Allow 10 minutes for each team to dress up one team member (or leader) as a clown. Be sure to have a camera ready to record the results.

In Council Time, expand on the verse, *The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God (Psalm 14sLa)*. Check your concordance for other appropriate verses about the fool. Also use the message suggested for April Fools’ Day.

## **April Fools’ Day**

Plan this theme for the club night closest to April Fools’ Day.

There are many explanations for the origin of April Fools’ Day, none of which has been proven true. In France, the custom of April fooling developed after the implementation of the Gregorian calendar by Charles IX in 1564. With this calendar, the beginning of the new year was moved to January 1. Prior to the change, it had been customary to exchange New Year’s gifts on April 1. When the date was changed, people sent mock gifts on the first of April. April Fools’ Day is celebrated in several countries. In Scotland, April 1 is “Cuckoo Day.” A favorite prank is to send somebody off to hunt a gowk (cuckoo). The word “gowk” is derived from “geek,” which means “someone who is easily imposed upon.”

Decorate the clubroom with “wanted” placards with pictures of clubbers “wanted” by the FBI. Hang pictures and posters upside down on walls and bulletin boards. Hang “Wet Paint” signs everywhere so leaders and clubbers are afraid to touch anything.

An April Fools’ club meeting does not imply an evening devoted only to practical jokes. And remember that fun at the expense of others is never appropriate. Plan this meeting as a time when everyone laughs together –not at the expense of any one individual.

If you feel it will be appropriate and fun in your club, you may want to play some practical jokes. Consider the variety of aids available at a hobby or trick shop. Be sure to use discretion when planning any of the following:

- Use trick pencils which bend when used.

- Wear a thread on your lapel. A helpful leader will start to remove it, only to find it's attached to a spool of thread in your shirt pocket.
- Offer treats from a trick candy jar –from which a snake or frog jumps out.

At the conclusion of the evening, declare the team with the least points the winner. Then proceed to give a prize to all clubbers. (Make this a surprise for leaders as well as clubbers.)

- Fools' exchange — Each clubber brings a white elephant gift (something in good condition which clubber doesn't want). The gift must be wrapped to disguise its contents. The clubbers sit in a circle, and the packages are passed from one to another. Any time a clubber is handed a gift he or she chooses to keep, the clubber should leave the circle and unwrap the gift. Because some clubbers have a difficult time making a choice, the game director ends the game after a reasonable amount of time. Each clubber still in the circle keeps the package he or she is holding.
- Dunce cap relay — Run a relay with four or more players from each team. When the whistle blows, the first player on each team races into the center, puts on a dunce cap and sits on a chair with feet together, hands folded and a foolish blank look on his or her face. The first player then takes off the cap, replaces it on the seat of the chair and runs back to tag the second player, who repeats the action. When the last player has completed the action, he or she grabs the center pin or beanbag.
- Blindfolded obstacle race –Set up an obstacle course around the circle with beanbags, pins, buckets, etc. Choose one player from each team; instruct players to walk their courses blindfolded without touching the items. Before the race begins, players should be permitted to practice without blindfolds. Then blindfold the players and quietly remove the obstacles before starting the race.

In Council Time, speak on the several fools referred to in the Bible:

- The person who says there is no God (Psalm 14:1 and 53:1).
- The one who despises his father's instruction and disobeys his parents (Proverbs 15:5).
- The "blabbermouth" with a sharp tongue. He angrily uttereth *all his mind* without thinking (Proverbs 29:11). Instead of waiting until his anger cools, he gossips, says bad words and hurts others by the things he says.
- The one who thinks it's funny to play mean tricks on others (Proverbs 10:23). He purposely destroys the property of others.
- The one who plans his life without consulting God or thinking of eternal matters (Luke 12:20).

All these fools *shall be* servant to the wise (*Proverbs 11:29*). God calls us to be *wise as serpents* . . . *harmless as doves* (*Matthew 10:16*). Don't fool yourselves by acting as fools.

## Spring Has Sprung

When the end of the club year is in sight, leaders must work extra hard to maintain clubber interest. Ideas listed below may be adapted for use in your club. Plan them in conjunction with

regular club meetings which include Handbook and Council Time, or plan them as special weekend events.

If club has met indoors all year, move the Game Square outside to the parking lot, onto a local baseball diamond or to a nearby park. Enlarge the circle to fit the available space.

Organize an Awana tournament. Competition may be either between teams in your club or with another local Awana club.

Plan a Bicycle Rodeo.

Begin club an hour earlier than usual with a picnic on the church grounds followed by a regular club meeting.

Plan a parents' special for mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, mothers and sons, fathers and daughters, or a family spaghetti supper.

Promote both your church camp and Awana Scholarship Camp. Have applications and brochures available.

Invite another Awana club to visit for a club meeting. Announce the evening as Double Night, Company's Comin' or AwanaGames Challenge (compete in AwanaGames events with the other club).

Meet early for a hike to another location for Handbook and Council Time. Schedule a scavenger hunt, penny hike, bigger-and-better hunt or treasure hunt.

Plan a picture-taking night. To preserve memories of this club year, clubbers and leaders bring cameras and take pictures of club activities. Play favorite games, sing favorite songs and choruses, etc. Hand out awards so clubbers can take pictures of one another receiving public recognition.

Prepare a float in a local parade (Memorial Day, Independence Day, community celebration parade)

Schedule an Awana Grand Prix where clubbers build and race small model cars (see *Awana Supply Catalog*).

### **Girls' Spring Fashion Show**

Schedule a mock fashion show, either for a T&T girl clubbers meeting or a mother daughter special. Use imagination and adapt the following script for your show.

14-carat jewelry – a ring with 14 carrots hanging from it. “A well-dressed young lady adds flair to her wardrobe with fashionable jewelry. This 14-carrot ring radiates good taste and elegance. Not only is it exquisitely styled, but it will also make rabbits love you!”

Buttons and bows – a dress generously adorned with many buttons and bows. “Boys like their girlfriends to be very feminine, and what could be more feminine than buttons and bows? Use trimmings like these to decorate your ensemble the more the better.”

Sack dress – gunnysack with holes cut in it for arms and head. “For more informal occasions, a sack dress is very appropriate. You won’t feel overdressed in this gunnysack, and you’ll know you’re in style as you show off the sleek lines of simple elegance.”

Gym shoes – shoes with Jim written all over them. “Here are shoes which provide comfort and support – and at the same time do anything and go anywhere. Prop them on the arm of the couch when you’re watching TV. Pound them into the running track at school. They’re made for it. They’re ‘Jim’ shoes!”

Knee socks – socks taped to knees. “Knee socks are great for any time of the year. They come in all colors and all sizes, so they can be mixed or matched with any outfit. Knee socks can be worn behind, below or above the knee. Or as our model demonstrates – all over the knee,”

T-shirt — golf tees fastened to a T-shirt. “Here’s a perfect shirt to wear with your knee socks and Jim shoes. Our beautiful T-shirt is right for you whether you play golf or just want to add style to those leisurely summer afternoons.”

Turtleneck sweater – toy turtles or pictures of turtles fastened to sweater. “Turtleneck sweaters keep your neck warm during chilly days. When you realize the fashion statement they make, you know they’re worth the price, even though the cost of turtles is rising. And soon you’ll hardly notice the swishy tails on your neck

Baggy slacks – paper bags taped all over pants. “Baggy slacks, the latest rage from Paris, are for you if your figure is a little less than perfect. Wear these, and you’ll know you’re wearing an original.”

Bloomers – bright and colorful flowers attached to slacks. “In your mother’s day, ‘bloomers’ were undergarments. No longer. We’ve kept the name, but changed the design. Wear these bloomers anyplace you want to make a special fashion statement.”

## **Promotion Party**

Plan this theme for a night near the end of the club year. This is a special night when clubbers who will be participating in an older club in the fall are invited to meet with that club. For example, second-grade Sparks attend Truth & Training, and sixth- graders attend Jr. Varsity. Eighth-grade JVers attend Varsity. Clubbers meet their new leaders, are welcomed into the new club and become excited about attending that club in the fall.

Keep the usual routine in each club, but play games that are not too complicated. At the conclusion of the evening, present certificates to welcome incoming clubbers.

### **Best Wishes to the Graduate**

Honor graduating T&T clubbers, Jr. Varsity guys and girls, and Varsity young people with a dress-up occasion. Either ask Awana moms or church members to cook the meal or reserve a banquet room in a local restaurant. An adult Sunday school class may be willing to subsidize the cost of the dinner to keep the ticket price within reason.

Center your theme around the idea of “Best Wishes to the Graduate.” Cut owl-shaped invitations out of construction paper. Invitations read:

*Best Wishes to the Graduate!*  
*Please join us for the Graduation Banquet, Friday, May 21.*  
*Dress in your Sunday best and meet at the church at 6 pin.*  
*We will go as a group to the Candlelight Inn.*  
*Cost per clubber: \$6. RSVP to Connie Jones no later than May 10.*  
*First Baptist Church Awana clubs*

Make centerpieces with dolls (Barbie and ken size) dressed in black caps and gowns. Girl has gown with white collar. Boy has V-necked gown with white shirt and colored tie. On each plate, have a white napkin rolled and tied with ribbon to look like a diploma. Make nut cups to resemble mortarboards (graduation caps). Paste a black band of construction paper around the cup. Top it with a square of black paper and a tassel.

Include fun (skits and stunts), singing and a challenge to Christian living by a speaker to whom young people will easily relate.

### **Awards Night**

Spring is the time to plan your awards night. If you want to have a meaningful evening for clubbers and parents, you must prepare early.

Whatever you have in mind, consider the basic elements of any awards program: the theme, awards, a message and a meal and/or refreshments.

Select a theme or motif around which your special activity is planned. The theme will help you work out the details. For example, if you use the theme “Count Your Blessings,” many hymns and songs can be found to reflect that theme. You could easily develop a special musical feature. Or feature a media presentation. This could be in the form of slides or a video. Include testimonial comments from clubbers, leaders and parents. Finally, conclude the program with a time of sharing by those whose lives were changed as a result of the Awana program during the year.

Your publicity for Awards Night should also use the theme or motif in its graphics and text. The feature should include everyone involved in club, even if some are not receiving awards.

It’s important to recognize each person receiving an award, but it is also important to keep the audience interested at the same time. Here’s a plan that works:

After an introductory statement, the commander or pastor reads the names of the first-book award winners starting with the youngest club. Clubbers come to the front of the church as their names are called. The director immediately awards ribbons to clubbers and lines them up for a group picture. A photographer takes their picture. Instruct the audience to hold its applause until after the picture is taken. Clubbers can then return quickly to their seats. Continue with the second-book awards. Before moving to the next club, use the same format to honor leaders. Include picture taking.

This system has several advantages:

All hear their names individually announced and are personally given their awards.

All are applauded equally, with minimum time consumed.

All are photographed in a special group picture.

The awards program moves quickly, even in large churches.

The awards presentation naturally ends with Meritorious and Citation Awards, leaving till last the awards that demand the most effort.

Awards Night represents a unique opportunity to communicate the gospel to clubbers’ unsaved parents. It’s important to select the right speaker. Your pastor or youth pastor, a gospel illusionist or a puppet act can provide a fresh, but meaningful, message. Limit the presentation to about 15 minutes.

You might want to have a potluck dinner before the awards presentation. Potluck allows you to assign dishes for everyone who attends and provides an enjoyable variety of food with minimum

effort. Or provide a simple meal such as hot dogs, sloppy joes or spaghetti. If refreshments follow the presentation, you only need dessert, coffee, tea and punch.

The refreshment time provides an atmosphere of fellowship and friendliness where leaders and parents become better acquainted. Every effort should be made by leaders to especially greet and become acquainted with people who seem apprehensive or shy. The parents are guests. Take the initiative to show the spirit of hospitality of your church.