

# 3rd Time's a Charm

Or three strikes and you're out, but I prefer the title saying better. It is midway through the year of my third stint at being an AWANA leader. Some time ago, when I was still subbing, I was asked by family to break off a bit from the kids. After all, I was doing drama and serving in 4th and 5th grade on the weekends then working all week in K-8 classrooms. Not wanting to get rid of the weekend service, I dropped AWANA after the year was over.

This year things have been a little different but very much the same. Originally, 3rd-4th grade were known as Pals (boys) and Chums (girls) while 5th (normally 6th too, but at our church 6th grade is junior high and they don't do AWANA) were known as Pioneers (boys) and Guards (girls). I believe it was during time #2 that the switch was made to T in T: Truth in Training for all three grades, boys and girls. One year I worked with Sparks (K-2) but the rest of the time has been with 3rd-5th grade. Would you believe the kindergarten Sparkies from that year are in 8th grade now? Time does fly. Other differences this year include keeping points for my team- kind of a pain with over 15 boys, mostly 3rd and 4th grade though I do have one or two 5th-graders- and game time is no longer the normal circle games, though at the beginning of the year we did do them. Now we switch off between double-kickball (two balls, two kickers, one set of bases) and dodge-ball.

Last night was crazy hat night. Every week has some sort of theme with varying levels of participation- last week was ugly sweater night and few participated. Wristwatch night also seemed to be on the light side. Hat night must have been easier as there was much participation. Conservative, childless me didn't have a hat anywhere near crazy status and I didn't have time to think about it anyway since I arrived home from work after six and had to be at the church at 6:30.

There were of course Dr. Seuss hats among the fare, a mohawk hat, a creative lad wearing two Civil War hats representing both Union and Confederate sides, and another one wearing stacked baseball hats. I am slightly chuffed to say the winner came from my own team, though of course I had nothing to do with it myself. Cole wore the same hat he always wears to AWANA- he usually leaves it on all night except for prayer- but over that he had on a full Air Force pilot helmet, meaning not just the helmet but the breathing apparatus as well. Technically not a hat, but it did go on the head, so... He informed me one of his relatives was in the Air Force. If he went to this church on the weekend (he attends a different church- he came as another's friend one week and signed up after that) he would fit right in at camp this summer and the winter retreat the following January- next year will be the military theme once again.

Anyway, speaking of winter retreat, **\*this\*** year's retreat is tomorrow night and it is now after 11PM. Time to hit the sack so I will have at least some rest for it. And perhaps a blog post afterward. Please pray for us this weekend- 24 hours from Friday 7PM to Saturday 7PM.