

## A New Fathers Experience

When my soon to be wife got the information on the YMCA Princess's program, I thought, "I do not need or want to be part of it, I have too much going in my life". I just graduated with a bachelor's degree, planning a wedding, the upcoming holiday season, and the new family. She did not have to convince me when she reminded me that my soon to be stepdaughter needs to learn who I am, as well, I who she is. She went to the registration night and signed us up, then came home and told me, I was in charge of the first meeting, and I really got scared, not knowing what to expect or what to do.

The very first meeting of the Yavapai tribe when very well, we got together all of the things that were necessary to get started. When it was over I was overwhelmed by the commitment needed and wanted. I was very interested because I saw how the little princess was so excited to have new friends. It was not until the first camp out that I fully understood what being a father is all about.

We almost did not make the first camp out, We were married on September 28, all of the adjustments, the honeymoon, there was so much to do. I also work on Saturday's. I was convinced to go because it was the "Induction Ceremony". We had received camping gear for our wedding and what better way to break in the new gear, than camping with my new princess? We carpoled with another father and daughter, it gave me time to see and give the two little princesses time to get to know each other. I never realized the experience that was about to happen. I enjoyed getting to know another father, see how he handles situations with his daughter, his outlook on parenting.

The Fox tribe put on the best camping weekend I have ever been on. Looking back it seemed that the camp out went on forever, there was so much to do, see, and learn. The tribes did an outstanding job carving pumpkins. On Saturday night at the Induction Ceremony changed the way I look at children forever. The Induction walk, the pumpkins full of life, the ceremony was simply outstanding. I can remember everything like it was yesterday. The princess's faces, they looked excited, amazed, I cannot find the other words to describe what I saw on their faces. It was a truly special feeling. I cast away my impatience on Sunday morning and have yet to get impatient with my little princess since. I learned so much, as to what it takes to be a father and a friend to my new daughter. Since the magical weekend, when she spends time with her paternal father I find myself getting almost jealous that she will not be around.

The YMCA princess program is only as good as the commitment the fathers have. The Yavapai tribe has shown and proven its commitment to the future. We are committed to being the best new tribe the YMCA has ever seen.

Big and Little Coyote  
The Mighty Yavapai Tribe