



# Cadeting Today

A newsletter for friends and supporters of the Calvinist Cadet Corps



Top: Cadet clubs in Iowa join for an evening of racing fun.

Bottom: A cadet in Grand Rapids, Michigan receives a trophy.



## Racing Ahead

Year after year, in Cadet clubs across North America, boys, and their fathers, are busy making small cars out of a block of wood and a few additional pieces. Seven inches (18 cm) long, two inches (5 cm) wide, and weighing no more than five ounces (142 g), it is incredible how different each boy's final creation can be.

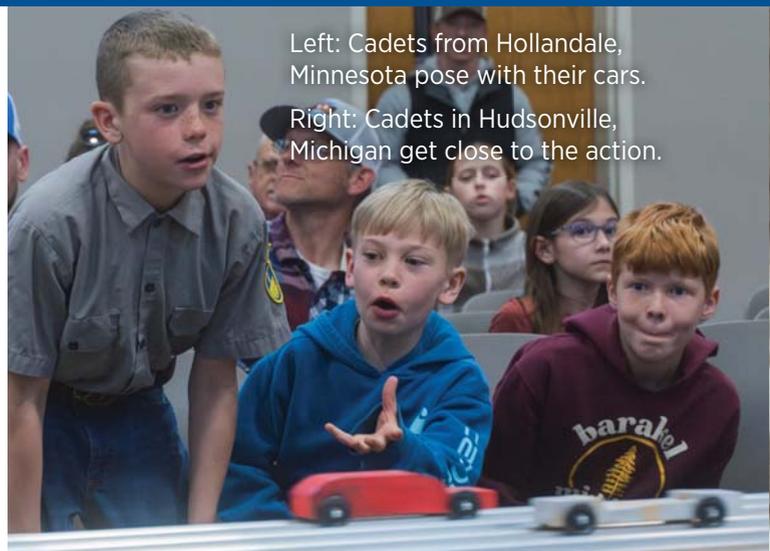
Yes, it is always exciting for a boy to see his car come down the track. Disappointment can be soon behind for those cars made with stiff wheels, or having problems rolling in a straight line, that may not even make

it to the finish line without an extra push. The smile on a boy's face can hardly be contained when he is given a trophy for the fastest car, or for the best-looking car. Even the winner of the turtle race, the slowest car to actually finish the race on its own, may be spotted beaming with pride, holding a trophy.

But the goal of these races isn't to teach a boy how to build a derby car. Unless they eventually have a son of their own who needs to make a car when they join Cadets, this is not a skill that transfers easily to later in

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If you love me, you will keep my commandments.



Left: Cadets from Hollandale, Minnesota pose with their cars.

Right: Cadets in Hudsonville, Michigan get close to the action.

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life. And the primary goal isn't to learn how to win, or lose, graciously.

These races allow a boy to experience the joy of seeing something he conceptualized, planned and put into reality, roll down the track. They allow the boy to develop an awareness of the skills God has given him. These races allow a boy to learn how to adapt when things don't go right with the scroll saw, to react in a Christlike manner when something breaks or when someone else is able to do

something better than them. These races allow a church community to gather together, and jointly cheer on all of the boys and their cars, recognizing the specialness of each competitor.

We can't show photos of each and every racing event held during this Cadet season, but the included photos give a small glimpse into these Cadet car races.

## Leading the Way

Every year the Cadet organization holds its Congress, the name given to our annual meetings. Congressmen (representatives from each council - the regional groups of Cadet clubs) along with a number of council presidents, gather over several days to conduct business matters.

Much more than administrative details are considered over these days. Men from coast to coast, across Canada and the US, gather as longtime friends, even if it is their first time attending. Times of devotion and singing, discussing and eating, sharing and listening, cause the time to pass by faster than many like.

This year's meetings did not have any major proposals for consideration, but the time was filled reviewing all aspects of the Cadet ministry. Time was spent discussing how we can better communicate within our ministry and about our ministry. The men also looked at what it takes for the Cadet ministry to remain financially viable, using the monetary gifts we are given in the best way to further God's kingdom work.



Sam Bysma, a congressman from Ironwood, council speaks with other congressmen.



## Winter Is For Snow

Growing up in Israel, Jesus may have periodically seen some snow. It would not have been a regular thing, and He and His friends wouldn't have had the winter wear and sleds that boys have today. But cadets, in many clubs, live in regions where winter, with its cold temperatures and snow, is a part of life.

Many Cadet Councils (regional groups of clubs) hold an annual event called a snow derby. It is a day of competition, a display of skills, and lots of fun. Regular events include erecting a shelter, building a fire, performing first aid, and finding their way around the course using a compass. Some years, weather dependent, the event becomes more of a mud derby than a snow derby, but fun is had nonetheless.

A big thank you goes to all of the men who plan, organize and run these events to give the Cadets opportunity to challenge themselves, and spend a day in the great outdoors, no matter how cold it may be.



Pictured left: Cadets from the Wood-N-Stream council in Michigan come together for some challenging fun in the snow.

## Cadets: Exploring Where They Live

The badges the cadets work on are divided into categories, one of which is "Exploring: Where You Live." A popular badge in this category is "Fire Safety."

The cadre of 4th-grade cadets at the Orange City Cadet Club in Orange City, Iowa recently worked on this badge together as a group. One of their activities was to tour the local Alton Volunteer Fire Department.

Besides being educational, the firemen also made their visit fun. The boys were able to try on the protective gear to gain a better appreciation of what the men and women who serve as fire fighters go through to protect us.



A cadet club in Orange City, Iowa experiences what it means to be a fire fighter.

## From the Director's Desk: Setting An Example

*Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. - 1 Timothy 4:12*

In my role as Executive Director, I get to attend a number of Cadet events each year. Training conferences, derby car races, campouts, dinners, Cadet Sunday services, and more, all give me opportunity to interact with the men and boys.

When I interact with the cadets my standard question is, "what is your favorite part of Cadets?" I never know what the answer will be, and I've been surprised a number of times. There's the frequent "working in the shop" and "derby cars", as well as "game time" and "campouts". Now and then I hear something generic like "everything" or "making stuff." But once in a while a boy responds with "being able to talk with my counselor about life" or "Bible lessons" or "the demonstrations my counselor does before the lesson."

When I interact with a junior counselor, my standard question is, "why are you a junior counselor?" I often expect to hear that they are there because their parents make them, but that has yet to be the answer. "I need the volunteer hours for school" is often said sheepishly, but further discussion shows they still enjoy the role and are growing through it. Other boys have commented how they enjoyed being a cadet, and now want to be able to pass their experiences on to younger boys, or how they feel they have the talents God can use in the role. One boy recently told me, "Some boys love basketball or football and spend a lot of time on that, Cadets is my sport."

Each of these answers shows how the Cadet ministry can reach every boy in his personal situation. Little by little, when a relationship between the counselor and boy grows, the cadet is regularly shown how to be more Christlike in all areas of life. Bit by bit, the cadet is being shown an example of how to be a leader while living for Jesus.

Each of these boys, in each of their situations, is the reason we continue in the Cadet ministry. For each of them, we all need to continue setting an example for the believers.



Steve Bootsma  
Executive Director



A counselor leans in to speak to a group of boys at a snow derby in Michigan.



Published by:

Calvinist Cadet Corps  
4695 44th St SE, Suite B-130  
Kentwood, MI 49512

Canada: 261 Woodall Way,  
Woodstock, ON N4T 0K9

Phone: (616) 241-5616 ext. 1

Email: [info@calvinistcadets.org](mailto:info@calvinistcadets.org)

[www.CalvinistCadets.org](http://www.CalvinistCadets.org)

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