A Warrior's Return

AIM To better understand an Indian idea of manhood.

AN INDIVIDUAL IS SUCCESSFUL IN LIFE ONLY IF HE ACQUIRES THE RESPECT AND ESTEEM OF HIS PEOPLE.

Indian people have always believed there is great honor in proving yourself in battle. Nearly 25,000 Indians served in World War II. On the battlefield the Indian stayed cool in combat and many won awards for bravery. In the barracks, however, he was often made fun of and teased.

- Have one member of your Four Winds Family group pretend to be a radio or TV talk show interviewer.
- Have someone else be the Indian service man and read the words spoken by this Navajo Indian after World War II.
- Have the interviewer continue to ask questions about what life in the military might have been like and have the Indian make up his answers.

"When I went into the service I was told: 'Remember, you represent us, you represent the Navajo, you represent the Indian. Not the rest of the country. Not the white man.' I remembered that. When I went overseas to Asia, some of the fellows would be rough with people. And they would hit an old man with their rifle butts. But I would never do that.

"If a boy fell off a bike, I would pick him up. If an old man was hit with a rifle butt, I would pick him up. And people would say, 'He is different from the others. He has a brown skin.'

"And I would say, 'That's not why.' And people would say, 'Why are you different then?' And I would say, 'Because I am Indian.' I lived by that. I believed in that. The Indian, you see, looked at being in the services a little differently."
Read the following description and write a story as if it were your first hunting trip.

**TRAINING OF A KLAMATH HUNTER**

Hunting and fishing mean many things to many people. Most sportsmen look on them as recreational activities. Many attempt to save money on their food bills with game. Still others like the businessman reaps great profit supplying equipment, gas, lodging and other necessities. Hunting and fishing means something entirely different to a Klamath Indian.

Klamath boys begin to hunt with their fathers at an early age, spending a long, exacting apprenticeship. They learn how, where, and when to hunt, the deer's habits and how to care for the carcass. Boys also learn moral lessons. It is believed that the Gagonas, (little people who live in the Klamath country) observe hunters wherever they are. If they should abuse or waste game or fail to track a crippled deer down, the Gagonas will go ahead of them in the future and scare the game away.

Boys usually receive their own use of a .22 at eight or nine years old. It isn't long before they hunt without supervision. They learn not to shoot animals that they do not intend to eat or give to someone else. At first only small varmint type hunting is done. At about age 12-14, a boy becomes more skillful at shooting, he is given a large caliber rifle. He finally gets to hunt deer.

Klamaths place high status on hunting ability and marksmanship so there is a lot of pressure on the young boy. Chances are that he will miss several deer before he hits one. The father will explain what the boy did wrong when he misses. When a Klamath boy finally makes his first kill it is one of the greatest moments he will ever experience and will repeat this experience many times to other adults.

He must distribute his first kill to other people - usually elders, widows or favorite relatives. He will receive a great deal of praise from each. They refer to him as a hunter, but he still has a long time to go as an apprentice.

A gift, a knife or some bullets, is given in return for the meat. At first it is difficult for the boy to face giving away his first kill, as he is so proud of it. The purpose of giving away the meat is so that he will learn to share his good fortune with those that are less fortunate. The good feeling that he gets from being able to help someone becomes a part of his personality.

The boy is allowed to eat the liver. Through this act he will gain the powers of speed, stamina or alertness directly from the deer.