



## The Great BBQ

By Deborah Wassenberg

*This was a special event, advertised weeks before, asking children and volunteers to come dressed in their country and western gear. Children were encouraged to invite a friend. We decorated the room with bales of hay, cleared a big space for line dancing and used a length of red gingham as a tablecloth. (The smell of the hay was powerful, so be aware of children with asthma or allergies. You need a big space or plenty of ventilation.) I chose not to include a Memory Verse this week as the program was jam packed and I like to use a morning like this to change the usual routine.*

Songs: Line dancing and foot stomping

Jesus Hokey Pokey

Peace Like a River

Just Give Me Jesus ('Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus)

Story: The Great Feast (A Play)

Bible Reference: Luke Chapter 14:15-24

*The Narrator was one of the volunteers, while I played the Sheriff, so I could direct the the action and reign in behaviour! Lots of adlibbing. The Deputies were two children I chose on the morning (older children I knew would enjoy committing to the roles). Also, use volunteers to play the Rich and Important Guests who double up as the Poor, Lame and Blind, as they will know what to say.*

**Cast:** Narrator, Sheriff, 2 Deputies, 3 Rich and Important Guests who double as the Poor, Lame and Blind.

**Props:** 2 Hobby Horses (for the Deputies)  
2 Deputy Badges  
3 Invitations  
Frisly apron and duster  
Bandages, walking stick, dark glasses

**Scene:** Seat the children in the middle of the dancing space so they can turn around and follow the action. Place the Rich and Important Guests in three separate places

around the outside of the dancing space. There should be plenty of room for the Deputies to ride around, too.

**Narrator:** In the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 14, there's a story Jesus told. It's called, 'The Great Feast.'  
It went something like this...One day a man decided to have a big party.

**Sheriff:** Howdy, I'm the Sheriff and I'm going to throw me a big Hoe Down! I'm going to invite the Rich and Important people of the district. I'll send out a Save the Date first, so they'll know when my party is going to be on. I sure don't want anyone to miss out. I need me some Deputies. *(Choose two children.)* Raise your right hand and say after me...I promise to carry out my Deputy duties faithfully. Okay, now you're deputised *(pin on Deputy Badges)*. It's time to saddle up! Take these invitations with you.

**Narrator:** So the Sheriff gave his Deputies the Save the Date invitations, so the Rich and Important guests would know when the big party was to be. The Deputies rode to the first Rich and Important Guest and handed him the invitation. *(Volunteer smiles and nods.)* They rode on to the second. *(Volunteer smiles and nods.)* Finally, they rode to the third Rich and Important person, who also said would be there. *(Volunteer smiles and nods.)*  
The Deputies rode back and told the Sheriff the good news. All the Rich and Important Guests were coming! The Sheriff was delighted and got busy preparing the big party.

**Sheriff:** **To the children:** Now, y'all, I need some help with a list of things I'll need for my party. What do y'all suggest? *(Take ideas from the children.)*  
Thank you. That's mighty helpful. I think I'll add extra steaks to BBQ. We'll have some fried chicken, pecan pie and iced tea.

**Narrator:** Next, the Sheriff decided to clean and tidy his house.

**Sheriff:** *(Puts on apron and gets duster and cleans, children too, and sings.)*  
This is the way we clean the house, clean the house, clean the house. This is the way we clean the house early in the mornin'.

**Narrator:** Then it was time to set the table and add some decorations.

**Sheriff:** *(Gets 3 children to compete: who can blow up a balloon the fastest)*  
Yeeha! I do believe I've got everything ready!  
Okay Deputies! Saddle up! It's time to go out and tell those Rich and Important Guests to come, because the Hoe Down is a-ready!

**Narrator:** So the Deputies rode off to gather the Rich and Important Guests.

*(Deputies approach the first guest.)*

**Narrator:** But the first Rich and Important Guest shook his head.  
He wasn't coming to the party after all.  
It seems he had just bought a new ranch and he wanted to go and look at it.  
Well, that was his excuse.  
The Deputies were sad.

But they rode off to bring the second Rich and Important Guest.  
But he shook his head. He wouldn't come to the Hoe Down either.  
He'd been to the stock sales and bought some new oxen and wanted to try them out.  
Well, that was his excuse.  
The Deputies were really sad.

They moved on to the third Rich and Important Guest and he said he couldn't come because he'd just got married.  
Well, that was his excuse.  
The Deputies were really, really sad.

They rode back to the Sheriff and told him the bad news. The Rich and Important Guests had all made excuses. They had rejected the Sheriff's hospitality.

**Sheriff:** What? That first Rich and Important Guest I invited had to look at his new ranch instead of coming to my Hoe Down?  
Who buys a ranch without looking at it first?

And that second Rich and Important guest I invited had to go out and test drive some animals instead of coming to my Hoe Down?

And that third Rich and Important Guest I invited, couldn't come to my Hoe Down because he got married? He could have brought his wife along to the party. The little woman would've loved it.

Well, now I'm madder than a cut rattle snake! You know what?  
They can all miss out then!  
Deputies! Saddle up!  
I want you to go out into the town. I want you to find every poor person, every person who can't walk, talk or see. I want you to bring them to my Hoe Down. They don't have to be rich and important and they don't have to be good.  
Go get 'em.

Narrator: *(The Volunteers who played the Rich and Important Guests quickly become the Poor, Blind and Lame by adding bandages, walking stick and dark glasses.)*  
So the Deputies set off for the town and collected all the poor and the disabled and brought them back to the Sheriff's Hoe Down.  
*(Deputies gather up the Volunteers and bring them to the Sheriff.)*

Sheriff: Well, that's a bit better. But I reckon there's room for plenty more at my Hoe Down. Deputies! Saddle up!

I want you to go out into the county, the desert and the valleys. I want you to find the people who live out there and I want you to bring 'em all to my Hoe Down. There's plenty of room and plenty to eat.

Narrator: *(Now the Deputies gather all the children.)*  
So the Deputies set off for the desert and the valleys and collected even more people to come to the Hoe Down.

Narrator: The Sheriff's barn was full of happy guests having a great time. They never dreamed they could ever be invited to such a wonderful party!  
*(Throw confetti. You're going to have to vacuum up hay anyhow!)*

Sheriff: Ye ha! Let's dance everybody!  
*(All join in a song and dance. If you have a volunteer who can sing and play guitar, this is the time for them to lead a song.)*

Narrator: *(Settle everyone down)*  
Jesus told this story to explain that God wants everyone to join Him in heaven.

God is like the Sheriff. *(Sheriff takes a bow.)*  
He's planning a wonderful party in Heaven. He invited his own people (the Jews) to come in, but they rejected Him and made excuses. So God decided to open Heaven to everyone else.

We are like the Deputies. *(Deputies take a bow.)*  
We have to saddle up and go out and tell everyone that God wants to invite them into Heaven to a party with Him.  
God is not satisfied until Heaven is full of people!

Altar Call. Are you going to God's party?

## Games:

*You'll find all kinds of games on the internet. Here are three we played.*

Throw the snakes in the boots: throw rubber snakes into cowboy boots.

Lasso a horse: rope a carpenter's saw horse (made to look like a horse).

Conk a Cow: we were loaned some blow up purple plastic cows, so we stacked them, for the kids to knock down with a plastic ball.

## Photo Booth:

*I changed the 'hole in the board' game into a 'Wanted' poster and asked a Volunteer to photograph the children, then gave the photographs as gifts to families the next week. Mums and Dad's loved them!*



## Morning Tea: Chuck Wagon

*You could organise a Sausage Sizzle for the entire Church.*

Wagon Wheel biscuits

Fruit

Water

## Craft: Clothes Peg Leg Horses

*You'll find this craft on the internet. Basically, a cardboard horse to decorate, with clothes peg legs. I was amazed at how the older primary girls loved this craft and spent so much time on it. They named their horses when finished.*