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TOP STORY

Camporee looking for community service projects

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Pathfinders will be working with Gillette artists to create murals in the community when the International Pathfinder Camporee comes to Gillette in 2024. (photo courtesy of the International Pathfinder Camporee)

"Mgcini Mkwanzani"

International Pathfinders Camporee is coming to Gillette in August 2024, and it's looking for community service projects for the kids to do while they're here.

Cindi Young, community service projects coordinator for the Camporee, met with local nonprofit organizations last week at Cam-plex to hear about potential projects.

There will be seven sessions of volunteers during Camporee. Each session will have about a thousand kids, and they'll go around the community working on these projects.

With Gillette being a new location for Camporee, Young said she didn't know how many community service projects will be done, but she estimated between 20 and 30.

"It can be a very small project, or something that uses hundreds," she said. "We want to accommodate anything that will help the Gillette community."

Young said there are several projects where the details are still being worked out, such as beautification or building projects, but there is one already on the schedule.

Darin Edmonds, superintendent for the Campbell County Cemetery District, has asked for help from Camporee to clean all of the monuments and veterans' crosses in Mount Pisgah Cemetery. There are about 6,500 monuments, which includes headstones, footstones and other burial markers, and 1,100 veterans' crosses.

The district cleans the monuments by request, and it also tries to do as many as possible in the summers, but with all of the other responsibilities, many monuments end up not getting cleaned.

Edmonds said he never has more than 15 people working on it at one time.

"We can't do the entire cemetery in the summer with the staff I have," he said.

It takes about 5 to 10 minutes to clean one monument. Edmonds projected that all 7,600 monuments and crosses could be cleaned with three shifts with a hundred kids each.

“We’ve been planning it out for the last year, what it would look like,” Edmonds said.

There’s no project too big or too small, Young said.

For example, at the last Camporee, a group of Pathfinders helped a thrift store put together donated puzzles to make sure they had all of the pieces before putting them on the shelf, Young said.

It was a very time-consuming project and didn’t take a large number of volunteers, but it was much-needed, Young said.

She said Campbell County is unique when it comes to volunteering.

“People come out and participate and help,” Young said. “That’s not the way most communities are.”

Anyone who has a project idea can email Young at communityservice@camporee.org. It doesn’t matter if they’re a nonprofit or a business, as long as the project will benefit the community.

“The way your community works together, there can even be much broader projects,” she said. “We can do bigger and better things here.”

Jonathan Gallardo