

FEATURED

# More than 8,000 tickets sold for Camporee

By JONATHAN GALLARDO News Record Writer [jgallardo@gillettenewsrecord.net](mailto:jgallardo@gillettenewsrecord.net)  
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Cindi Young with the International Pathfinder Camporee talks Tuesday to a crowd gathered during a Gillette Chamber of Commerce luncheon at Energy Hall in Gillette.

Ed Glazar

More than 8,000 people already have bought tickets for the International Pathfinder Camporee, which is coming to Gillette in August 2024.

Pastor Ron Whitehead, director of the Camporee, spoke at the Campbell County Chamber of Commerce's monthly luncheon Tuesday to give an update on the event, which is expected to bring more than 55,000 people to Campbell County.

Typically, 15 or 16 months out from the Camporee, 3,000 to 4,000 people will have bought tickets for the event. Whitehead said that 7,746 Pathfinders have purchased tickets for the 2024 Camporee.

And these numbers don't include the numbers from the past seven days, when a thousand tickets were sold, Whitehead said.

"We've never had that, unless we're right at the end," he said.

Visitors are coming from all over the world, including more than 200 from east and central Africa, 32 from Puerto Rico, 16 from South America and 40 from Australia and New Zealand.

Whitehead said he's working with United Airlines to see about whether "we can size up the planes that are dropping in here." Some Pathfinder clubs are wanting to charter planes in and were wondering about the airport.

For many of these people, this will be their first time traveling out of the country, so he asked Gillette to be patient.

"Every large event has rumors, and we have our share, and we're going to have more," he said.

There will be a downtown parade on Gillette Avenue on Aug. 10, 2024. There've been rumors going around that the whole Camporee will be in the parade.

"That's not true, that would be a nightmare," he said. "That would be leadership malpractice at every level."

Kids will have to audition to get into the parade, and so only a select number of Pathfinders will be in the parade.

While the public won't be able to watch the Camporee's main stage programs in person, they will be able to stream them online or watch on cable, Whitehead said.

Local businesses also will get the chance to benefit from the preparation that Camporee is doing, he added.

"Our preference is to put money in the community," Whitehead said, adding that the organization will be open with the local companies.

"We'll show you the bids we're getting," he said. "If you can match it, we're happy to put dollars here."

Cindi Young, community service projects coordinator for Camporee, said the goal is for the Pathfinders to log 20,000 volunteer hours while they're here.

"We're looking at all ideas," she said.

Trash pickup and weeding of the parks are on the table, Young said. They can wash cars, collect food donations, prepare or serve food at the Soup Kitchen, do flag retirement ceremonies, sort through donated clothes at Seconds on the Avenue and spend time with senior citizens at Primrose, Legacy Living and Rehabilitation Center or the Senior Center.

"We want to do what you as a community want," she said.

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Jonathan Gallardo