

Monday, September 21, 1991

Scouts tackle beautification jobs at historical museum site

By Lorraine McClish
staff writer

Six Life-ranked Boy Scouts, all working their way up to the coveted rank of Eagle, wind up their summer of service to Farmington's new Historical Museum.

The spruced-up building and grounds, once the mansion of Governor Fred Warner, are in large measure due to the volunteer work given by Jeff Green, Bryce Mutz, Charles Hovanessian, Keith Weyher, Tom Smith and Dan Singer.

The scouts have worked with Kay Blakeney and Margaret Walker in planning and carrying out various major tasks in the old mansion that is now undergoing adaptation as a historical museum.

Mrs. Blakeney is the site's Garden Guild chairwoman, which is made up of members of all area garden clubs; Botsford, Farmington, Hill and Dale and North Farmington clubs.

Mrs. Walker is chairwoman of Farmington Historical Commission whose foremost project is the restoration and preservation of the premises.

WHILE THE number of hours required for individual Eagle award projects is not stipulated, those projects must be of sufficient magnitude to meet the requirement of the Eagle rank.

The work done must also provide a significant benefit to the group or agency for which the service is performed.

The basic requirement, as spelled out by Green, is "to plan, develop and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to either a religious in-

stitution, school or community."

All of the scouts fulfilled the leadership requirement by recruiting other members of their troop to help where additional help was needed and overseeing the work done.

Green completed an extensive groundskeeping job involving weeding, edging, transplanting, pruning and mulching in what now is known as the Warner Memorial Gardens, and along the entire west boundary line of the premises on Grand River, between Farmington and Gill roads.

He is a resident of Farmington Hills and a member of Troop 389 which is sponsored by Nardin Park United Methodist Church.

Bryce Mutz recruited about 20 scouts on their way to Eagle rank at Church of Christ, to prepare the area that is now known as the Victorian Rose Garden, for planting.

Mutz also assisted with laying new specially-designed brick walkways through the grounds, planting rosebushes and some of the plants that were put in the border gardens.

CHARLES Hovanessian is a fellow scout with Mutz in Troop 179 who removed an old concrete terrace and replaced it with a new sandstone and flagstone patio that was designed to be planted with creeping thyme.

He also led the crew of workers that tore down some unwanted fencing from around the perennial flower beds.

Maintenance jobs were under the supervision of Keith Weyher, a member of Troop 253 who meet in Prince of Peace Lutheran Church.

His crew did all of the weeding, edging and pruning in all of the border gardens and all the peony beds.

Restoration of the exterior of a two-story frame carriage house on the grounds was the job of Dan Singer.

The scout from Troop 110 sponsored by Our Lady of Sorrows Church scraped old paint, applied the prime and finish coats; then followed original trim details to complete the restoration of the aged building.

"WE ARE ALL impressed with the dedication and achievement of each of these young men," Mrs. Walker said, speaking for the many area residents who are giving their time and talents to make the museum a reality.

Their work has been outstanding. We are most appreciative of their contributions toward the preservation and improvement of the premises that will house so much of our history."

The two-story Civil War era home in the center of Farmington's historic district was accepted as a gift to the City of Farmington from descendants of the former Michigan governor last December.

Calls of help for the mansion's restoration sent out by members of the local historical commission were answered with gifts of money, materials, supplies and manpower from the residents.

Plans call for the museum to serve as an official site for city receptions and museum functions. It is expected to be open to the public at least several days a week and offer a variety of on-going programs.



Dan Singer spent a good deal of his summer on a step ladder to complete the restoration of a Civil War era carriage house on the museum grounds.

Tom Smith, another member of Troop 253, adopted the task of cleaning, sanding, repairing and refinishing 79 hand-me-down metal folding chairs that will be used for a variety of function to take place in the new museum.

Smith is the youngest of the six scouts on their way to Eagle rank at age 12 who thinks he will reach his goal by the time he's 13.

He is also the youngest boy in a family of 13 children who follows in the footsteps of eight older brothers who are Eagle Scouts.

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Chairs that will be used in the new museum are hand-me-downs from the board of education. Tom Smith spent one full day just getting the bubble gum off the furniture before the refinishing job started.

Green, Keith Weyher, Tom Smith and Dan Singer.

Break time is taken in one of the back garden courts by the scouts after a job well done. From left, Bryce Mutz, Charles Hovanessian, Jeff

Welding shovel and wheel barrel, a summer-long job, are Keith Weyher (at left) and Jeff Green. The rose garden was designed by Ted Beausoleil.

The beauty of the border gardens surrounding the old mansion is due in large part to the labors of Bryce Mutz (in front) and Charles Hovanessian.

Staff photos by R. S. Wilson

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