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Authority figures, youths share outdoor adventures

By Kathryn Dailey
Loveland Reporter-Herald

When campers leave the Laramie River Valley Rendezvous, they do it with more confidence in themselves, organizers say.

Laramie River Valley Rendezvous is a nonprofit outdoor adventure camp that pairs at-risk youths from Larimer County with law enforcement officers, firefighters and National Guard members.

“Everything you do and everything that makes up you is unique, and that’s what makes you special to everyone else around you,” said Bob Younger, an officer with Fort Collins Police Services who runs the camp and is looking for applicants.

Applicants must be age 13 to 16 and can be referred by schools, school resource officers or officers in the community. Youths also can apply online.

Younger can take as many as 40 youths, who attend the camp for free.

The camp runs July 6-11, and Younger would like to have applications turned in by the first week of June, he said.

After a 50-mile bus ride up the Poudre Canyon, campers get to let loose with some camping on the Laramie River, hiking, biking, horseback riding and whitewater rafting.

They also learn responsibility through helping set up the camp and helping in the kitchen, and they develop relationships with law enforcement individuals, who may otherwise be seen as authoritarian figures, Younger said.

“They come off the mountain and can’t believe what they accomplished,” he said.

The nonprofit camp operates on donations and fundraising. On average it costs \$475 to send a youth to the camp.

On June 7, in Fort Collins’ Old Town Square, organizers will host the second annual Bar Olympics. Local bars can participate in several games, such as tug of war and karaoke, and are able to bribe the judges for extra points, said organizer Sharis Honeycutt.

Last year there were eight teams, and the organization raised about \$4,000. This year there will be at least 12 to 15 teams, she said.

The winning bar is named best bar in town and gets to host the opening ceremonies the following year.

The event is a dry event, with no alcohol, and will have a bounce house and face-painting for children, Honeycutt said.

“We keep it really-age appropriate,” she said.

If You Go

What: The second annual Bar Olympics.

When: Noon to 7:30 p.m. June 7.

Where: Old Town Square in Fort Collins.

Purpose: All proceeds go to benefit the Laramie River Valley Rendezvous.

ON THE NET: For more information, go to www.lrvr.org.

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