Youths put faith to work at camp

BINGHAMTON — Youth-group members from Elmira's East Side Catholic Parishes joined more than 400 people of many denominations from all over the United States in a week-long work-camp mission in Binghamton July 8-14.

Sponsored by Group Publishing, Inc., and coordinated by the Broome County Council of Churches' office of CREW (Community Repairs by Energetic Workers), the Forest Hills Work Camp involved 67 projects, according to Joyce Kirby, administrative assistant for the Broome County Council of Churches.

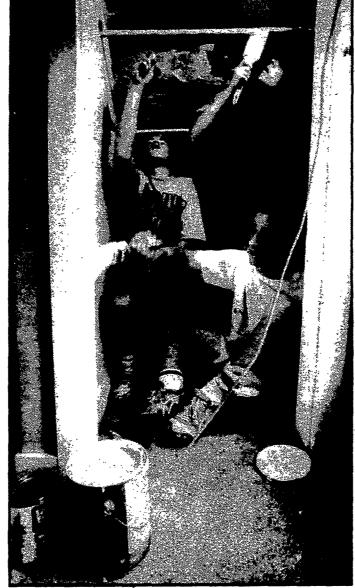
Work-camp participants helped construct, repair and weatherize homes for low-income residents. According to Ann Karski, youth minister for Elmira's St. Cecilia, St. John the Baptist and Ss. Peter and Paul churches, community workers described the area "as having significant needs."

This year marked the second time the cluster parish sent members of its youth group to a work camp. The teens and their adult leaders traveled to Wheelersburg, Ohio, for a similar project in 1988.

Since 1977, more than 20,000 young people and adults have put faith into action at work camps sponsored by Group, according to Kirby, who noted that each project is thoroughly screened.

Elmira teens who made the trip last week were: Joe Agan, Andrea Cerio, Dan Delany, Melissa Donovan, Tracey Hamilton, Kristi Huffman, Mary Karski, Matt Karski, Theresa Karski and Mark Murray. Adult leaders Phil Murray and Tom Webb accompanied the youth group.

Youth ministers interested in finding out more about work camps may call 303/669-3836.



Mark Murray, foreground, helps paint a closet with workmates M. Marlowe Moore of North Carolina, right, and Todd Smith of Virginia.



Melissa Donovan, right, places a star on the hand of homeowner Margaret Bess as part of daily devotions, which emphasized prayer and friendship.



An exhausted Tracey Hamilton takes time for a nap amid a sea of sleeping bags in a classroom-turned-dormitory.



Tracey Hamilton checks the makeshift mail board on the front windows of Binghamton's Seton High School, which housed 400 Forest Hills Work Camp teens from all over the United States.

Courier photos by Babette G. Augustin

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