

Gillette News Record

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WALK OF FAME

Westwood High School Class of 2021 celebrates graduation, **A10**

THEY'VE BEEN SCHOOLED

Area high schools boast 13 valedictorians, **B1**



ONE FINAL MATCH

All-star high school soccer games return for first time in 25 years, **C1**

City to lease land to CCSD as site for new Aquatic Center

By GREGORY HASMAN
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The Energy Capital Sports Complex will soon be adding a new sports venue in the not-too-distant future.

The new Campbell County School District's Aquatic Center is going to be built inside the "Field of Dreams."

The news comes after the Gillette City Council entered into a lease agreement with the district to build the 46,600-square-foot structure.

The sports complex is the perfect place for the aquatic center, and it will make that park even better, Mayor Louise Carter-King said Wednesday.

Under the agreement, the school district will be responsible for all phases of the aquatic center's construction and operation.

"We might share some parking with them, which is also a savings for both entities. But other than that the aquatic center is theirs to build," she said.

Interior details

Families will have more space to watch their loved ones perform at a swim meet as the capacity will increase from about 600 people, in the current building at 80 E. Warlow Drive, to 982 people at the new aquatic center.

It will definitely be more spectator-friendly and swimmer-friendly, said Dennis Holmes, district associate superintendent for instructional support.

The new aquatic center will have a 50-meter pool made out of concrete instead of the stainless steel one in the current facility that was built in 1983.

The pool is showing its age, said Sean Mathes, the project manager. See **AQUATIC CENTER**, Page A9



News Record Photo/Mike Moore

Cam-plex Executive Director Jeff Esposito stands in an open field that will be leveled in time for use by some of the estimated 55,000 campers who will be in Gillette in summer 2024 for the International Pathfinders Camporee. Although a few years out, Cam-plex is already hard at work on infrastructure to handle the largest single event Gillette has ever hosted.

It's in-tents

Preparation key for Cam-plex and International Pathfinders Camporee

By JONATHAN GALLARDO * NEWS RECORD WRITER
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Of all the multi-million dollar facilities at Cam-plex, ones costing about \$600 have generated the most interest recently.

Cam-plex officials have started the mammoth task of making 55,000 people from 100 countries feel at home for two weeks in 2024 when Gillette hosts the International Pathfinders Camporee. Cam-plex's ability to attract the huge event can be attributed in no small part to the immense facilities

that past community leaders have seen fit to build.

But if those before them have moved forward under the idea that "if you build it, they will come," those now in charge have realized that if they come, they will have to have a place to go.

Hence the fact that among the headaches officials were trying to resolve this week was one that costs about \$350,000.

For 600 port-a-potties.

Building a city at Cam-plex

There are many details that have yet to be nailed down for the Camporee, which won't take place until Aug. 5-11, 2024, but the planning process is well underway.

When it arrives, it will be the largest event Gillette has hosted. Camporee will essentially build a city at Cam-plex, with its own newspaper, radio station, food vendors and shops.

Other amenities that those who live in a city take for granted — like trash removal, transportation, water and waste disposal — still need to be figured out.

The lowly port-a-potty was one of those.

Cam-plex had budgeted \$350,000 for RV park improvements for the event because so many of those attending will be camping on Cam-plex grounds. But after talking with Camporee representatives, "There's a sense of urgency that we begin to sort out this detail, because without them this event simply can't happen," said Jeff Esposito, Cam-plex



Courtesy Photo/International Pathfinders

The International Pathfinders Camporee hosted 105 countries in 2019, with peak attendance hitting 62,000.

general manager.

At a county directors meeting this week, Esposito asked Campbell County commissioners if he could use \$350,000, which had already been budgeted, to buy por-

table restrooms to rent out to the Camporee.

He hopes the \$350,000 will pay for 600 port-a-potties, but he won't know until the bids come in.

They're meant to supplement,

not replace, the local inventory of portable restrooms, Esposito said, and all of the sanitation and waste disposal companies in town will be needed.

It is one example of the immense amount of planning that will be required over the next three years before the Camporee arrives.

"Everything from constructing an amphitheater to counting up the right number of tables and chairs," said Ron Whitehead, director of the Camporee.

The International Pathfinder Camporee is a youth outreach event put on by Seventh-day Adventist churches every five years. Participants earn merit badges, learn outdoor skills, go camping, learn Bible knowledge and are involved in community service projects.

In January, it was announced that the event would be held in Gillette. It had been in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, since 1999.

During the event, there will be See **IT'S IN-TENTS**, Page A9

Campbell County Graduation



- Class photos
- Ceremony information
- Commencement tips

Featuring graduates from:
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Gillette Home Schoolers Page D7
Gillette Heritage Christian Page D7
Thurston Senior High School Page D10-D12
Westwood High School Page D13-D15
Wright Junior-Senior High School Page D15

CLASS OF 2021

Sunday is a big day for local high school seniors and their families. Find schedules and photos of all of this year's graduates, **Inside**



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LOW 49

NEW BUILDING, SAME CARE: Kid Clinic
has a new home, will hold grand opening, **A7**

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