

through service and projects. It is administered by the Sprout Fund, a nonprofit organization that supports grass-roots projects in the region.

After the grant was received, it was up to the college to put together the Venture Crew, Ms. Lawry said.

The eight members of Venture Crew No. 50 have been working on the wagon on weekends this month.

The youths spent the first two days just cleaning it and removing the woodwork and iron parts that needed to be replaced, said Isaac McKeever, associate adviser for the crew.

The work also involves sanding the wagon and applying oil so that the cracked wood can reseal itself.

"They're doing a great job. They're great kids," Mr. Mc-Keever said.

Crew member Ben Lesniak, a freshman at Knoch High School, said his family does some restoration work, but nothing like this project.

"I thought it would be cool to help restore it," he said. "I really wanted to try this for the experience of it."

He said he was amazed at the good condition of the wagon, which has helped somewhat with the restoration process.

"But it's still tough to do the work," he added.

Hannah Zibert, a junior at Knoch, said one of the other crew members encouraged her to join. Since she hadn't worked on this type of project before, she said, she thought she'd give it a try.

"It's amazing how much grime can get on a 100-year-old wagon," she said, laughing.

The wagon is expected to be in service at the conservancy by April, Ms. Lawry said.

Shari L. Berg is a freelance writer.

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Plenty of elbow grease and a lot of mineral oil going into wagon restoration

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By Shari L. Berg

'It was just sitting there, neglected. We felt it was something that needed to be put back to life and to use.'

It didn't look bad for its age, estimated at 160 years old. But the hay wagon -- left to sit unprotected in a drafty barn for many years -- needed some tender loving care to get it back to its original condition.

And that's what Venture Crew No. 50, a co-ed youth development program of the Boy Scouts of America, is doing.

The old hay wagon was discovered on the grounds of Succop Conservancy, which is owned and operated by Butler County Community College.

"It was just sitting there, neglected," said conservancy director Nancy Lawry. "We felt it was something that needed to be put back to life and to use."

Once restored, the wagon will be kept at the conservancy in Penn and be available for rides, classes and celebrations, such as weddings.

"For an old wagon, it's actually in really good condition," said Bob Shaner, project manager. "We think we can save more than 80 percent of the original wagon, which is good for a restoration. Usually you can only save about 20 percent of the original parts."

Succop Conservancy is home to the college's new Heritage School, which offers classes for adults in folk arts, crafts and heritage trades, and the conservancy will play a part in the wagon's rejuvenation.

The iron parts from the wagon that can't be salvaged will be remade at the conservancy's own blacksmith shop. And the paint will be made on site to keep it "history appropriate" Mr. Shaner said.

"We don't want to make a replica," he said. "We want to preserve as much of the original as we can," he said.

To help restore the wagon, the college received \$5,000 from Pittsburgh 250 Community Connections, a program that encourages civic involvement in the city's 250th anniversary