

Girl Scouts create bottle-top beauty

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In an array of color, meticulously placed bottle caps creating a sunset ocean scene fill a portion of the wall surrounding the Wastewater Treatment Plant next to Beachfront Park.

Crescent City's Girl Scout Troop 90648 revealed their bottle-top mural Oct. 11 as one way to beautify their surroundings.

"We're just pretty proud of it, and we think we did a great job," said 11-year-old Hollyn Wakefield, who's been a Girl Scout for six years.

With mini-glasses of Martinelli's sparkling cider, the seven scouts, their two leaders, parents, grandparents and passersby toasted the completed project.

One of the Girl Scouts organization's sayings is "make the world a better place," and this troop holds to that motto. With one project and a little teamwork, the troop, led by Star Blackburn and Katie Wakefield, believe they've made Crescent City a better place by transforming trash and litter into a site residents and tourists can enjoy.

"This is good for everyone, you know, it makes our community look better," Blackburn said. "I feel really proud of them, and I can't wait to see what they're going to do in the future."

The mural is the final project of the troop's study on the "Wonders of Water," in which the girls learned about water shortage, water pollution, and related issues. They also toured the Water Treatment Plant and participated in a beach clean-up to understand the amount of waste near the water.

“It just shows that we’re really lucky, like, we’re lucky to have this beautiful ocean,” said Gianna Antonetti, a 10-year-old Scout.

At the end of their water module - what is called their “journey” - they needed to come up with a culminating project. With a little bit of brainstorming and creativity, they thought up the idea of a bottle-top mural ... a two-fold project that both cleans up litter and creates art.

“It wasn’t just things we bought. It was things that we had found that had been hurting our environment,” Antonetti said.

Yet they couldn't put a mural just anywhere. They had to get permission first. So, the group of 11- and 10-year-olds faced first the Crescent City Planning Commission and then the City Council, both of which gave them an adamant go-ahead for the project.

“(Getting permission) was such a great learning thing for them, to realize that there are channels that you go through to properly do something,” Blackburn said.

After they had the city’s approval, they went to work on the creation. The first part of that process, and possibly the longest, they said, was collecting all of the bottle tops in a range of colors. Once they had enough, they spent several hours sorting them into color sections.

With help from local businesses, they got extra supplies, such as a couple of two-by-four boards, paint and trim. Then, during Thanksgiving break last year, they went to work, first drilling holes in all of the bottle tops, then screwing them into the boards.

Now, after a year’s work, it has become part of the wall.

Through this “journey,” the troop says they have learned to be thankful for the water around them and to take care of the environment. And now that their project is done, they are gearing up for future ways to make the world a better place.

“We’re ready for more opportunities to help the environment and do good things,” said Bliss Blackburn, an 11-year-old trooper.