Camp Builders wives sewing for God’s kingdom

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Sounds of roaring electric saws and clanging hammers reverberate outdoors across Christian campgrounds courtesy of hardworking Texans on Mission Camp Builders volunteers.

Indoors, different sounds are heard. They are the whirs of sewing machines, snips of scissors and laughter from a group of friends serving God in a remarkable way.

Volunteers (left to right) Joan Tucker and Beverly Quinn display some of the items created by the wives of Texans on Mission Camp Builders. (Photo / Leah Reynolds / Texans on Mission)

The “ladies of Camp Builders” are wives who accompany their husbands on monthly Camp Builders projects. While their spouses unload construction tools from the Texans on Mission trailer, the women unload sewing equipment and bins upon bins of donated fabric and supplies.

When the sun rises each morning—after a hearty breakfast and devotional time together— volunteers head to their projects, eager to use their time and talents to make an eternal impact for God's kingdom.

A sewing room is set up in an available space—often in a cabin's common space or an old storage room. In the sewing room, the ladies tackle as many projects as possible. The priority lies in what the camp needs, which can include curtains for cabins, seat cushions, food covers and even bean bags for cornhole games.

The women make skirts and shorts for various ministries; quilts and baby hats for pregnancy centers; and fidget quilts for children with special needs and nursing home residents, among many other projects.

Veteran sewer 88-year-old Joan Tucker finds great joy in embroidering special designs for her quilts, bringing a personal touch to each pattern. She and her husband Earl have volunteered for 20 years.

"When we started, we were one of the youngest couples. Now, we're one of the oldest," Tucker said with a chuckle.

When it comes to retirement, Tucker said, "You have to stay busy, or else you'll just sit in a rocking chair until you fade away."

When volunteer Nancy Morgan retired from 42 years of nursing in 2017, she yearned to serve others behind the scenes.

Volunteer Candy Nance serves with the wives of Texans on Mission Camp Builders. (Photo / Leah Reynolds / Texans on Mission)

“It’s fun to sew together with a group of women and have fellowship together, but the end goal is to further the kingdom of God,” Morgan said, noting that the ladies pray over every completed item before it’s sent to its final destination.

While some volunteers join the crew with a prior knowledge of sewing and needlework, many have little to no experience, yet all find a task to do.

“We have plenty of places for people to work,” said Beverly Quinn, coordinator for the ladies of Camp Builders. “There are always things to cut out. There’s always something to do for the people who don’t sew.”

In 2023 and 2024, Texans on Mission Camp Builders had more camps requesting help than they had seen for many years. Quinn said the work can be busy, but it’s time well-spent with good friends and for a great cause.

“This gives the ladies a purpose,” Quinn said. “We not only have fun together, but we pray together. I enjoy not only knowing we’re making a difference in lives here and abroad, but that we all become family.”