nobody knows the exact age of an ancient and mysterious Native American mound located at the summit of a wooded ridgeline in central Ohio. Most experts believe it was constructed about the time of the birth of Jesus. The X-shaped mound, whose circumference approximates the size of a Little League infield, is the attraction at Cross Mound Park on the outskirts of the village of Tarlton (about 300 people), which is a 35-minute drive south of Columbus.

Chuck Miller selected Cross Mound Park as his company’s PLANET Day of Service project. His company, EsQape-proof your weed control.

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Mirrorscapes LLC, proves you don’t have to be a big landscape company or one that’s been around a long time to do something nice for your region. Miller, 52, founded Mirrorscapes in nearby Lancaster, OH, three years ago as he was winding down a 30-year-career as a high school educator — much of it spent teaching agriculture.

His company has four trucks and employs “seven or eight” employees, adding part-time help as needed for bigger projects. Miller’s top challenge this spring has been reining in his firm’s rapid growth, thanks to its “follow-up and customer service” and, more recently, to winning a prestigious award for its display landscape at the Tri-County Home Builders Home and Garden Show in March.

“We’ve been going like crazy. The phone’s been ringing off the hook,” says Miller, obviously pleased as he and his six-man crew load two work trucks for the morning’s work at the park. “We needed a break. The guys needed something different to do. They’ve been putting in a lot of hours.”

His young crew (including “plant man” Lennie Conrad, a retired high school guidance counselor/coach and several years Miller’s senior) approaches the Earth Day project with unfeigned enthusiasm, fueled probably as much by the prospect of a working picnic in the park — as evidenced by the boxes of goodies being loaded into the trucks — as by the cloudless, bracing April morning.

Driving three trucks to Cross Mound Park, and after digging into pastries and...
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*Based on a comparison of the Automotive News classification of full-size commercial vans.