

# Philmont Scout Ranch

## Troop 598's High Adventure Backpacking Trek 2022





## Background

As part of the Evendale BSA Troop 598's high adventure program, the Scouts from the Troop participated in a 12-day trek at Philmont Scout Ranch, located in Cimarron, New Mexico. The Troop applied for a trek in November 2020 and in December 2020 was awarded a spot. Their arrival date was set as June 16th, 2022, making the Troop's crew number 616-S. The 616 indicates the Troop's arrival date and the "S" suffix indicated that they were the 19th crew assigned to that arrival date. All units that come to Philmont are labeled as "crews".

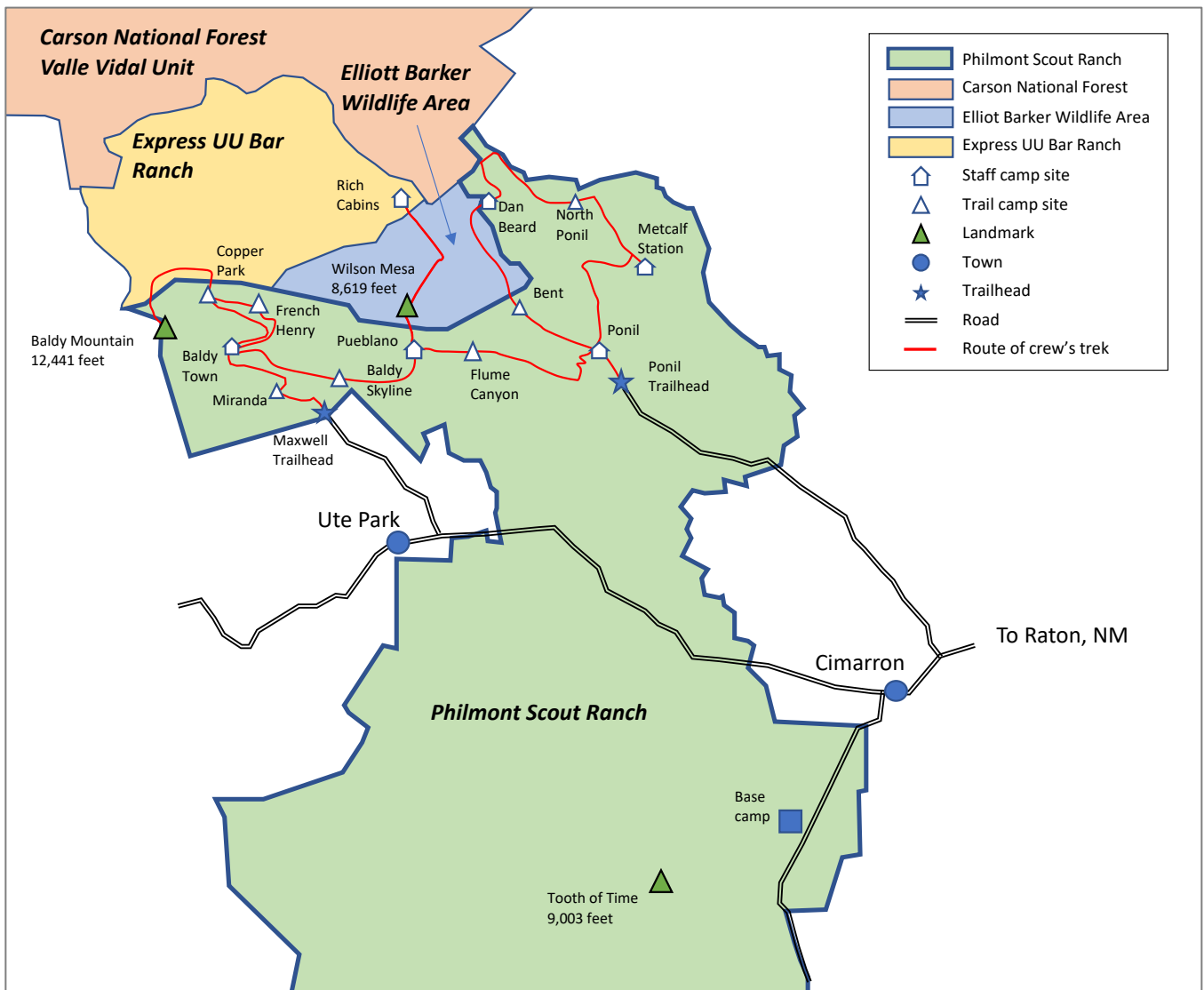
In February 2022, the boys selected their top 6 desired treks and submitted their choices. After only a brief wait the crew was informed that they had received their first choice of treks. The trek number selected was 12-21. The difficulty of the trek was listed as Rugged, out of the range of difficulty being Challenging, Rugged, Strenuous, and Super Strenuous. The key highlights of this trek were challenge course events, mountain biking, gold mining and panning, tomahawk throwing, blacksmithing, homesteading, and muzzle loading rifle shooting.

Throughout the spring months of 2022, the fire risk in New Mexico was extremely high. Around the May timeframe, Philmont notified the crew that their trek itinerary had to be modified. The original trek included several days in the Valle Vidal unit of the Carson National Forest. Due to the fire risk, the National Forest Service was closing all access to the forest. Philmont reconfigured the crew's trek, now notated as 12-21F. The "F" suffix was used to denote that the trek was modified due to forest fire risk.

The new trek covered 63.6 miles and 12,488 feet in elevation change, with overnight stays and programs as shown in the table below.

Day	Location	Program	Miles	Elevation Gain	Elevation Loss	Camp Elevation
1	Base camp	Orientation, gear pickup, opening campfire	---	---	---	6,700'
2	Bent	Trail camp	3.6	372'	85'	7,319'
3	Dan Beard	Challenge games	3.8	692'	118'	7,896'
4	North Ponil	Trail camp; mountain biking near Metcalf Station	8.3	698'	1,024'	7,570'
5	Ponil	Food pickup; branding, lassoing, chuck wagon	5.3	861	1,302'	7,150'
6	Flume Canyon	Trail camp	7.2	845'	339'	7,715'
7	Rich Cabins	Food pickup; homesteading	4.5	1,473'	755'	7,728'
8	Baldy Skyline	Trail camp	8.5	2,318'	986'	9,050'
9	Copper Park	Trail camp; food pickup at Baldy Town; gold panning, mine tour, blacksmithing at French Henry	7.1	2,169'	709'	10,530'
10	Copper Park	Trail camp; summit Baldy Mountain	8.7	2,622'	2,622'	10,530'
11	Miranda	Black powder, tomahawk throwing	4.7	397'	2,027'	8,898'
12	Base camp	Clean up; closing campfire	1.9	41'	924'	6,700'

The crew's route is shown on the map below. The trek started at the Ponil Trailhead and ended at the Maxwell Trailhead. Philmont bussed the Scouts to and from the trailheads.



Map of Philmont showing route of trek



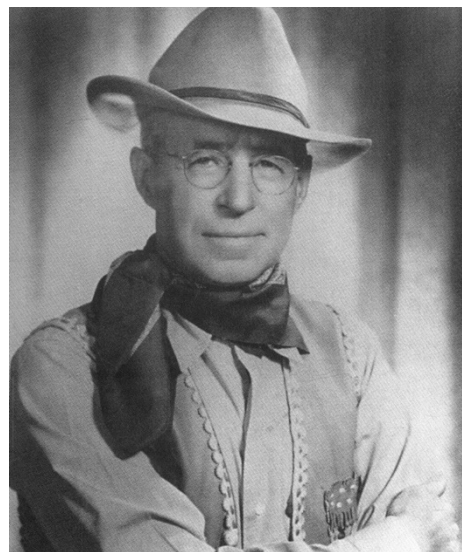
## History of Philmont

Philmont is a National High Adventure Base located in New Mexico and is operated by the Boy Scouts of America to allow crews of Scouts to partake in backpacking treks and other outdoor activities. The property covers 140,177 acres of wilderness in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of the Rocky Mountain chain.

Native Americans of the Jicarilla Apache and Ute tribes once inhabited the area of Philmont. In the mid-1800s European settlers started to move into the area, fueled in large part by the Santa Fe Trail that crossed the plains just southwest of Philmont. Philmont's most iconic landmark, the Tooth of Time, got its name from the trail. Travelers along the Santa Fe Trail knew that once they saw the landmark, which looks like a giant tooth, they only had a week or so to go before reaching Santa Fe, New Mexico.

In 1841 ranchers Carlos Beaubien and Guadalupe Miranda purchased a large land grant from the Mexican government, including the land Philmont occupies. Ownership passed onto Beaubien's son-in-law Lucien Maxwell, who played a major role in developing and settling the land.

Ownership of the land changed hands several times before Waite Phillips started purchasing blocks of land in 1922. Waite Phillips had acquired a vast fortune in the oil industry, having created the successful Waite Phillips Company. Phillips focused on vertical integration within his business, in which his company controlled the entire oil production process from drilling the oil, refining the oil into gas, shipping the oil and gas via its own rail cars, and then selling the gas in its own gas stations. He was able to sell the company to a Wall Street investment firm in 1925 for \$25 million. Over the course of multiple purchases, Phillips had acquired over 300,000 acres of land. He used the property as his summer home, called the Villa Philmonte, and for outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing for his family and friends. The prefix "Phil" comes from Phillip, and the suffix "monte" comes from the Spanish word for mountain.



Waite Phillips

In 1938 and again in 1941, Phillips made two donations of land to the Boy Scouts of America, for a total of 127,395 acres, to be used as a wilderness camping area. Scouts attended the first high adventure trek in 1939. The camp was originally called Philturn Rocky Mountain Scout Camp. The word Philturn is derived from Waite Phillip's name together with the "Good Turn" he did by donating the property to the scout program. In 1941, the name of the camp was changed to the Philmont Scout Ranch and Explorer Base.

In the early years of Philmont, the ranch was set up with a half dozen "base camps" at strategic locations throughout the property. A visiting group of Scouts would stay at one of these camps for a week and day-hike to surrounding locations of interest.

In 1963, Norton Clapp, who served as an officer of the National Council of the Boy Scouts of America, donated 10,098 acres of land to the Boy Scouts. This area included the Baldy Mountain mining area.

In 1989, Philmont entered into an agreement with the Carson National Forest to the north of Philmont's property, in which they received a series of five-year special use permits that allows crews to hike and camp within the Valle Vidal unit of the national forest. Around this time, Philmont also entered into agreements with private landowners surrounding Philmont to allow use of those properties as well.

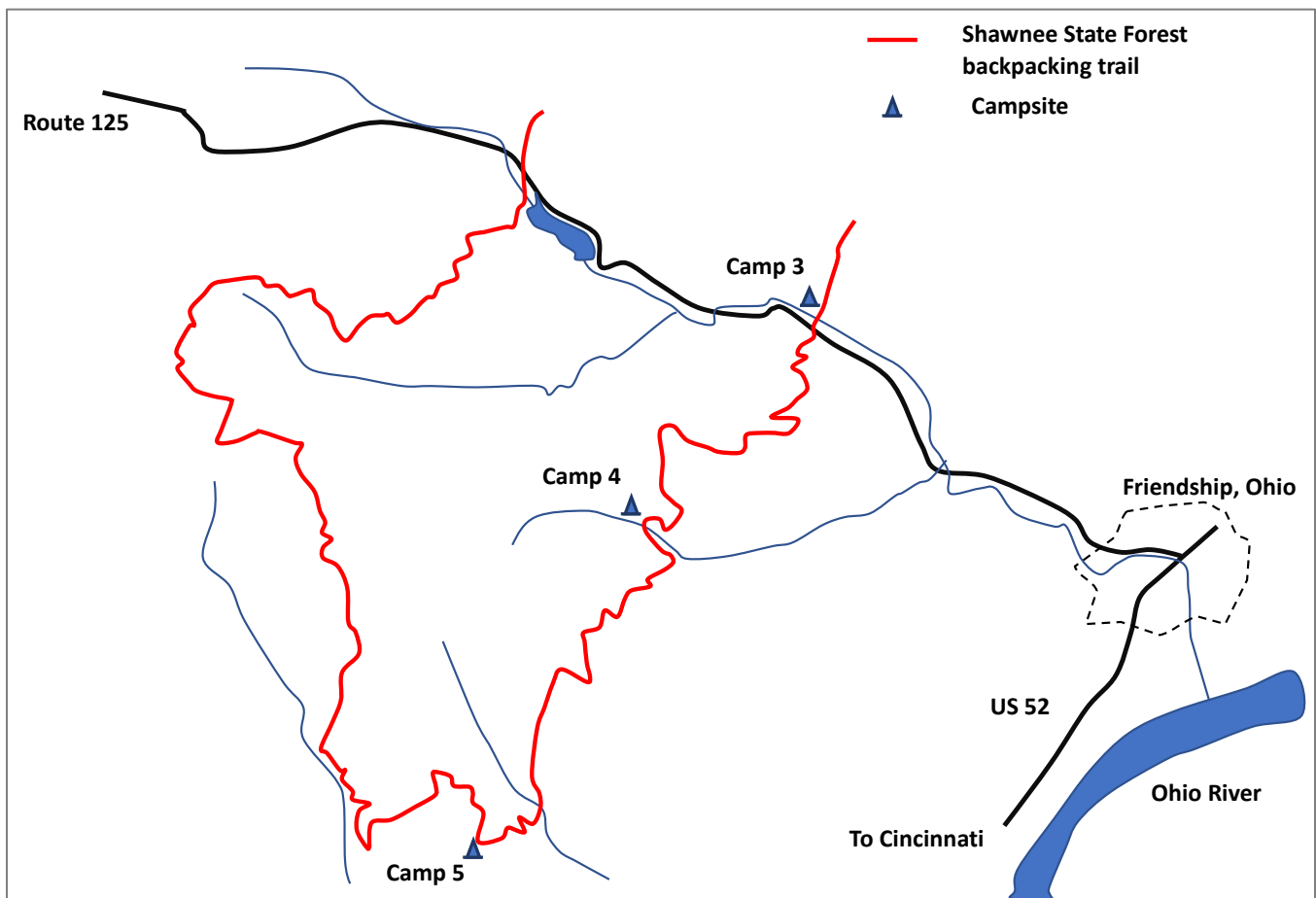
Philmont is the world's largest youth camp, in terms of total land area. During its main season from early June to late August, approximately 22,000 Scouts and adult leaders backpack through the camp's extensive backcountry. On any given day, approximately 350 Scouts and adults arrive, 350 leave, and 3500 are hiking in the backcountry.

One of the conditions under which Waite Phillips donated the property was that the land had to be maintained as a working ranch. To meet this requirement, Philmont has approximately 250 horses, 85 burros, 320 cattle, and 140 buffalo. The ranch produces 300 tons of hay a year to feed the animals.



## Physical Preparation

In order to help the Scouts prepare physically for the rigors of Philmont, the Troop set up several shakedown campouts. The first shakedown backpacking weekend was intended to be at Zaleski State Forest in March, 2022 with the intent of hiking around 18 miles. Unfortunately, a late winter snowstorm cancelled the event. In April and again in May, the Troop planned weekend backpacking trips to Shawnee State Forest, with the intent of hiking 20 miles on each of them. The plan was to camp at campsite 3 on Friday night, backpack to campsite 5 for Saturday evening, and return to the parking lot near campsite 3 on Sunday. On the shakedown in April, the Scouts were able to only complete 10 miles, turning around halfway between campsites 4 and 5, returning to spend the night at campsite 4 on Saturday. On the May shakedown, the Scouts completed the intended mileage by camping Saturday at campsite 5.



Shawnee State Forest Backpacking Trail map

In addition to the monthly shakedown campouts, the Troop also organized multiple Saturday hikes around Evendale as well as frequent trips to the Reading football stadium to walk steps.

**Crew T-shirt**

Isaac Lohmueller and Nate Booher worked together during a campout in the spring to generate the design for the crew t-shirt. The design incorporated a representation of Baldy Mountain along with symbols for some of the key activities the crew would be doing during the trek.



Front artwork



Back artwork



## Crew Participants

Eight scouts and four adults participated in the trek.



Ben Adkins



Wesley Anglin



Nate Booher



Declan McGrath



Sam Noble



Toby Rainey





Petey Wilkens



Nathan Young



Mr. Isaac Lohmueller



Mr. Steve Lohmueller



Mr. Tim McGrath



Mr. Brad Wilkens



## **Youth Leadership Roles**

Philmont requires each crew to select three of its youth members to serve the crew in youth leadership roles. These roles are Crew Leader, Chaplain's Aid, and Wilderness Guia.

### **Crew Leader:**

The Crew Leader is responsible for organizing the crew, assigning duties, making decisions, and recognizing the capabilities of each crew member. Petey Wilkens fulfilled this role.

### **Chaplain's Aide:**

The Chaplain's Aide helps the crew in following the 12<sup>th</sup> point of the Scout Law. The Chaplain's Aide helps the crew earn the Duty To God Award and leads daily devotionals. Welsey Anglin fulfilled this role.

### **Wilderness Guia:**

The Wilderness Guia helps the crew understand and follow the principles of the Philmont Wilderness Pledge and Leave No Trace. The guia also helps the crew earn the Wilderness Pledge Achievement Award with the help of the Ranger. Declan McGrath fulfilled this role.

**Wednesday**  
**June 15, 2022**

The crew met at the Bell Tower Arts Pavilion at 8:30. It was Declan McGrath's birthday, so Mrs. McGrath brought donuts for the crew. After stowing everyone's gear in the vehicles and getting a group photo, the crew started the drive to Galesburg, IL around 9:15. Mr. Lohmueller, Mr. McGrath, and Mr. Wilkens drove.



Mr. Lohmueller, Mr. Wilkens, Toby Rainey, Sam Noble, Ben Adkins, Wesley Anglin, Nathan Young, Declan McGrath, Mr. Isaac Lohmueller, Nate Booher, Petey Wilkens, Mr. McGrath

The crew had looked at both flying and taking the train as potential transportation options. When presented with the two options, the Scouts unanimously voted for the train. Fortunately, this option was also the cheaper of the two.

From the mid-1850's through around 1920, trains handled most of the intercity travel in the US. During this time, the railroads were private, for-profit businesses. Then, starting around 1920, ridership started to drop significantly due to the popularity of the automobile. In addition, intercity bus companies such as Greyhound became very popular. By 1940, railroads lost about 1/3 of their ridership.

World War II brought a resurgence in rail usage. Huge troop movements for the US Government and restrictions on automotive gas drove a sixfold increase in passenger traffic over the low point during the Great Depression. This success for the railroads, however, was short lived. After World War II passenger traffic plummeted, and by the late 1940's most passenger rail lines were not generating profits. The railroad industry at the time was highly regulated by the Federal government, and one aspect of this was that once a railroad started a passenger route, it was legally required to continue running that route, or it had to apply through a lengthy process to shut the route down. Many railroads went bankrupt due to the heavy losses of their passenger services.

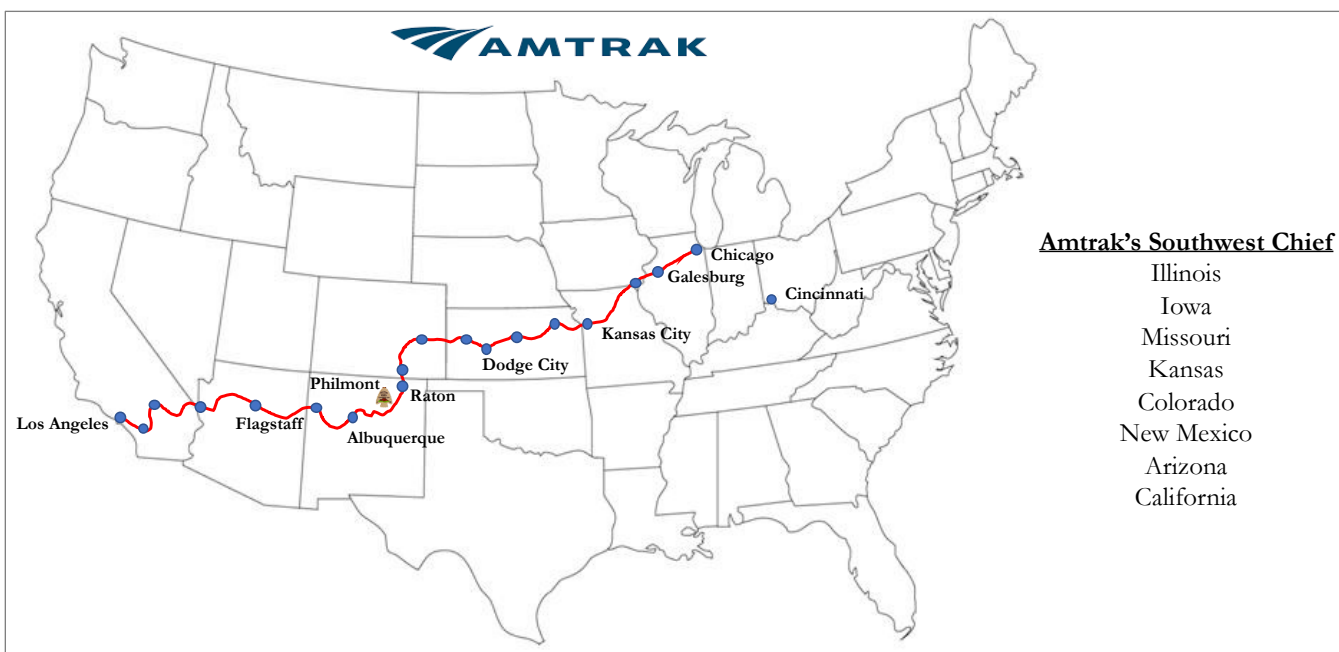
Fearing that passenger rail service would come to an end in the US, Congress started investigating a national intercity railroad solution. In 1970, Congress passed the Rail Passenger Service Act to create the National Railroad Passenger Corporation. This entity, which later became known as Amtrak, was chartered to provide intercity passenger rail service for the entire nation. It is a publicly funded railroad that is operated as a for-profit business. The intent behind the structure of Amtrak was for the new organization to take over all intercity passenger rail service in the US to provide a cohesive national rail network. Individual railroads could contract with Amtrak to provide passenger service, thereby eliminating their legal obligation to continue operating their passenger lines. The railroads provided rolling stock, equipment, and crews. In return, the railroads received approval to discontinue their passenger services. They also received their choice of tax breaks or common stock in Amtrak. Amtrak did not receive any rail tracks or right-of-way along those tracks. The individual railroads kept ownership of the tracks and were responsible for maintenance of the tracks. Railroads were expected to provide Amtrak access to their tracks, for a fee.

Railroads did not have to participate in the national network, but if they did not join, they would still be required to maintain their passenger service. Twenty of the 26 railroads operating passenger service at the time opted to join Amtrak and ceased their own passenger operations.

Amtrak service started on May 1, 1971, and currently serves more than 500 destinations in 46 states with over 300 routes. Nearly 31 million people ride on Amtrak each year.

The original name proposed was Railpax, but this was changed to Amtrak shortly before the railroad started operation. The name is a blend of American and track.

The route the crew took is called the Southwest Chief. The route starts in Chicago, Illinois, and runs to Los Angeles, California. The crew picked up the train in Galesburg, Illinois and rode it to Raton, New Mexico.



Map of Amtrak's Southwest Chief train



The drive to Galesburg to pick up the Amtrak train was uneventful. The caravan made one stop halfway to the destination to get some food for lunch and gas for the vehicles. The stop had both a McDonalds and a Wendy's. Several Scouts opted to go to Wendy's, only to learn that the restaurant was closed, so everyone ended up heading over to McDonalds.

The crew arrived in Galesburg around 3:00 pm. There is a train museum next to the Amtrak station that the Scouts were interested in exploring, but unfortunately it was closed on Wednesdays.



Galesburg train station



Galesburg train station



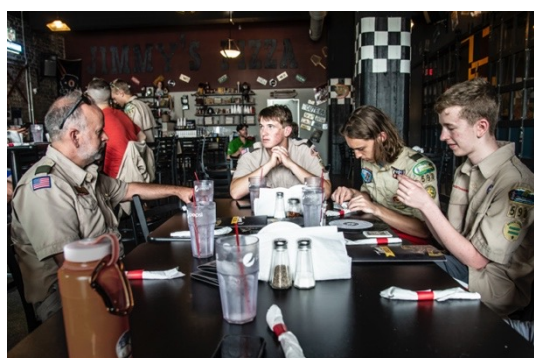
Galesburg Train Museum



Engine 3006 at the Galesburg Train Museum

The Scouts opted to explore the town a bit and while walking around they found an antique store that they wanted to check out. As they were getting ready to leave the owner approached the crew and gave each Scout a packet of baseball cards.

From the antique store the crew made its way over to Jimmy's Pizza to get some pizza for dinner.



Mr. McGrath, Sam Noble, Isaac Lohmueller, and Nate Booher at Jimmy's Pizza



Wesley Anglin, Declan McGrath, and Ben Adkins checking out the antiques



After dinner the crew went back to the train station to await the train. The train was running a few minutes behind schedule. There were several other Scout crews on the train heading to Philmont.



The Southwest Chief upon arrival



Boarding the train

Most of the scouts spent the bulk of the evening hanging out in the lounge car, playing Uno, Magic the Gathering, and other card games as the miles rolled by outside the windows.



The scouts traveled in coach

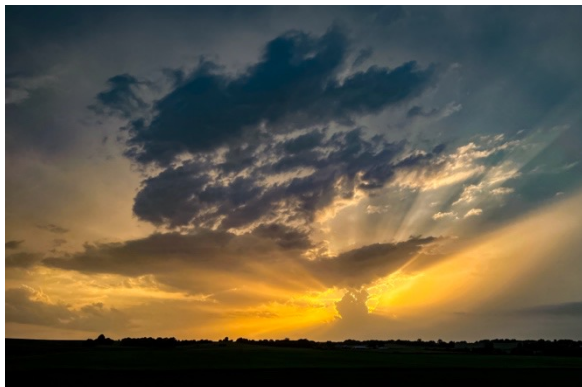


Declan McGrath, Ben Adkins

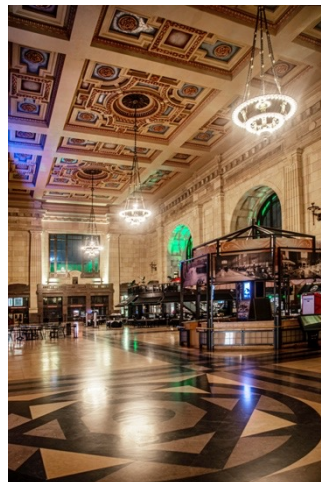


Petey Wilkens, Isaac Lohmueller, Nathan Young, Toby Rainey

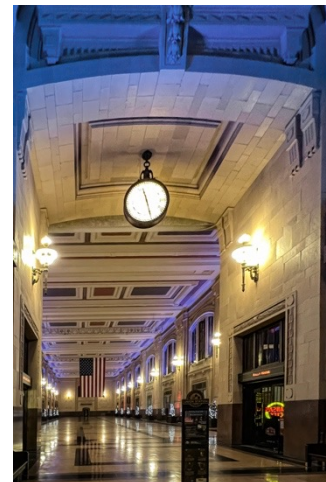
In Kansas City the train had about a 45-minute layover at The Union Station. Mr. Lohmueller took the Scouts into the building to explore the grandiose architecture for a bit, before getting back onto the train for the rest of the journey to New Mexico. Everyone called it a night at that point.



Sunset somewhere in Missouri



Union Station's Grand Hall



Union Station's concourse

Union Station's history began in 1903 when the Missouri River flooded Kansas City, destroying the train station, Union Depot, that served the area. Rail executives decided to build a new train station on higher ground and in a more central location. Planning for the Union Station began in 1906 as twelve railroad companies united to form the Kansas City Terminal Railroad Station that would serve all the contributing railroads. The architects designed the building in the beaux-arts architectural style that was very popular in the United States and France in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Construction on the building started in 1910 and lasted for four years. On October 30, 1914, the building finally opened to the public, with the first train arriving at the station the next day. Passenger traffic through the station peaked at almost 700,000 passengers in 1945 at the end of World War II due to the huge number of America's armed forces heading home after the war. After the war, passenger rail traffic plummeted as more people owned cars and air traffic became more popular, leading to the station closing in 1985. The building sat vacant for 11 years until the city of Kansas City began working on plans to restore and redevelop the building. In 1999 Union Station reopened to the public, restored to its former glory, and included shops, restaurants, a theater, exhibits, and an interactive science center. In 2002, Amtrak brought back train service to Union Station, with daily arrivals and departures of the train line Southwest Chief, which operates from Chicago to Los Angeles.



**Thursday**  
**June 16, 2022**  
**Trek day 1**

None of the crew slept very well overnight, but they all kept their spirits high. The adult leaders had received multiple compliments from the other passengers on how well behaved the Scouts were.



Wesley Anglin, Declan McGrath,  
 Isaac Lohmueller, Toby Rainey



Isaac Lohmueller



Ben Adkins, Nate Booher, Petey Wilkens,  
 Nathan Young



Wesley Anglin joined another Troop in their card game



Isaac Lohmueller, Toby Rainey, Petey Wilkens



Mile marker sign in La Junta, Colorado



Group shot in the lounge car before debarking



View looking up ahead of the train

The day's travels provided some beautiful scenery through Kansas, Colorado, and New Mexico. The train eventually arrived in Raton, NM around 1:00 pm. The crew had coordinated a shuttle bus pickup through Philmont to take them from Raton to Philmont. The bus driver made a stop at a location that had ready access to McDonald's and Arby's for everyone to get some lunch before the 1-hour ride to Philmont.





Arrival in Raton, New Mexico



Isaac Lohmueller



Getting the crew's gear from the luggage car



On the shuttle bus to Philmont from the train station



The open road



Roadside scene on the way to Philmont



The crew arrived – unloading gear from the shuttle bus



The Welcome Shelter at Base Camp

Once at base camp at Philmont, the crew met their Ranger, Reese. Reese would help guide the crew through the check-in process at base camp and then travel with them for the first two days of the trek. This would give him the time to make sure the Scouts knew the appropriate skills for backpacking within the Philmont wilderness.

The crew spent the rest of the day working the logistics in preparation for leaving for the backcountry the next day. This included registration, medical re-checks, and getting settled in at basecamp for the night.





Ranger Reese explaining how a Philmont trek works



The crew received additional training about Philmont's requirements



Dinner time in the dining hall



Tent City at base camp for incoming crews



After dinner, the crew attended chapel services. It started to rain a bit, which had everyone excited. It hadn't rained at Philmont since Easter, which was almost exactly two months earlier. The rain lasted only a few minutes, though. After the chapel services, the crew went to the opening campfire program. Since the entire state of New Mexico is under a fire ban due to the extreme risk of forest fires, the program did not actually have a campfire. The program was high energy and was written to give a brief history of Philmont.

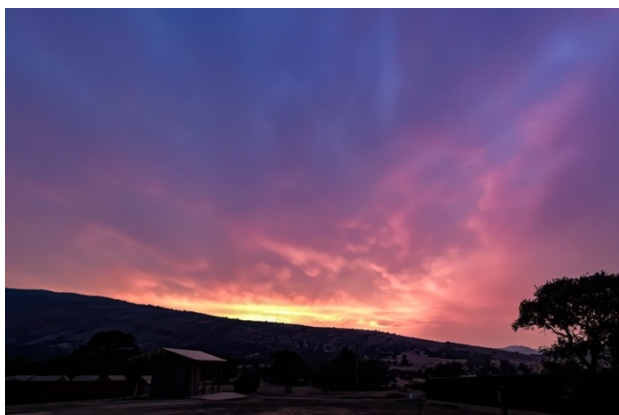
After the campfire program, the crew called it a night.



Sunset looking towards South Country



Chapel service



Sunset over the Tooth of Time Ridge before the opening campfire



Waiting for the opening campfire to start



Opening campfire program



Youth leaders taking pledge to serve their crew well



**Friday**  
**June 17, 2022**  
**Trek day 2**

It was an early morning, starting at 5:45, as there was a lot that had to happen today to be ready to be on the trail in the afternoon. After breakfast, the crew got the first batch of food for 9 meals and the crew gear. It was then time for the personal gear shakedown. Reese had the crew pull the cots out of the tents and each Scout had to empty their backpack onto the cot. One item at a time, Reese read off the Philmont packing gear list. Each Scout had to show Reese that they had the required item, and then put that item back into the tent. Once Reese had finished the packing list, he was able to see what extra gear everyone had brought. The whole intent of the process was to make sure that the crew had all the required gear with only a minimal number of extra items.



Picking up crew gear for the trek



Picking up the first batch of food



Ranger Reese giving some instructions



The crew doing a gear shakedown



Dividing up the crew gear and food



With everyone's gear properly checked, Reese took the crew to get the standard crew photo in front of the Tooth of Time.



The view from base camp looking southwest towards Urraca Mesa (far left) and the Tooth of Time (far right)



Crew photograph in front of the Tooth of Time

Mr. Steve Lohmueller, Toby Rainey, Sam Noble, Ben Adkins, Nate Booher, Petey Wilkens, Ranger Reese, Mr. Isaac Lohmueller, Declan McGrath, Mr. Brad Wilkens, Wesley Anglin, Mr. Tim McGrath, Nathan Young



Reese was able to give some trail talks related to skills that the crew would need while out on the trek. Specifically, he spent some time on orienteering skills, such as how to read a map and use a compass, how to orient the map, and how to do triangulation, which is a valuable skill to help locate oneself on a map.



Philmont was under an Extreme fire warning



Ranger Reese instructing the crew how to read a map



Pety Wilkens explaining the route to the crew

After lunch, the crew boarded a bus to head out into the backcountry. It was about a one-hour drive to the Ponil Trailhead.



Starting the trek at the Ponil Trailhead



View of the landscape at the Ponil Trailhead



Last minute instructions before starting the trek



Wesley Anglin



Nathan Young studying the map to lead the crew for the day



From the trailhead, the crew started hiking towards Ponil Camp, about a mile down the trail. The boys struggled a bit with navigation and got on the wrong trail several times. During this stretch of hiking, Reese's boss was tagging along to get a feel for how well Reese was performing as a Ranger. His boss had a ukulele with him, and was playing it as he hiked, allowing the soft sound of music to waft past the crew as they hiked down the trail.



Leaving the trailhead down the Middle Ponil Canyon



Crossing the South Ponil Creek

Ponil is a staff camp located at an altitude of 7,200'. The program focuses on western lore, which includes bull lassoing, branding, horse riding, and burro packing, as well as offering a cantina, chuckwagon dinners, and a campfire program. This campsite is one of the largest hubs for trails in Philmont, as the camp is located at the intersection of five canyons that extend further into North Country. The camp is also frequently used as the starting or ending camp for treks. From 1938 to 1941 the camp served as the base camp for all of what was known at the time as the Philturn Rocky Mountain Scout Camp.



Hiking down the road after getting briefly off the route



Crossing a bridge over the Middle Ponil Creek next to the staff cabin for Ponil



The name Ponil comes from the name of a tribe of Native Americans that occupied the area between 1100 and 1400 AD. The Ponil People made their living from farming as well as hunting. The origins for this group of people are unknown, as well as the reason for their disappearance.

After getting the porch talk the crew was able to do some lassoing of "bulls" who had escaped from their pens, as well as to get some items branded. Petey was the first Scout to successfully lasso the bull. With practice, several other scouts and adults were also successful.





Hanging out on the porch at Ponil Camp waiting for the porch talk



Staff worker in period dress



Scouts getting the porch talk to explain the camp



A successful bull lassoing



Isaac Lohmueller



Nathan Young



Petey Wilkens



Isaac Lohmueller lassoing while a group of scouts get items branded



Ben Adkins





Scouts trying their hands at lassoing



Petey Wilkens catches the first bull



Isaac Lohmueller



Nate Booher, Wesley Anglin



Isaac Lohmueller



Petey Wilkens trying for a second bull



Isaac Lohmueller



Mr. Lohmueller catches a bull



The crew working together to round up the bulls



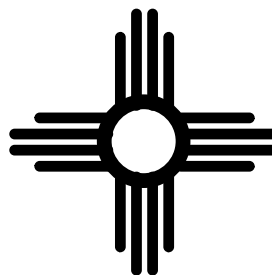
Several Scouts took the opportunity to brand some hats and water bottles. The staff offered several options for brands, namely the Philmont cattle and horse brands and the New Mexico sun brand.



Cattle brand



Horse brand.



New Mexico sun brand



Staff branding Declan's hat



Waiting to get something branded



Branding a hat

After a hard afternoon's work of rounding up the bulls and getting gear branded, the crew headed over to the cantina for a cold drink of root beer. The cantina serves two types of root beer: creamy and crunchy. When asked what the difference is, the staff would only say, "One is creamy, and the other is crunchy". Some might say that this is just backcountry staff humor, and that both taps serve the same root beer. Others say that they can taste the difference. In the end, it is all a mystery.



Crossing over Middle Ponil Creek to get from the lassoing and branding area over to the main staff cabin and cantina

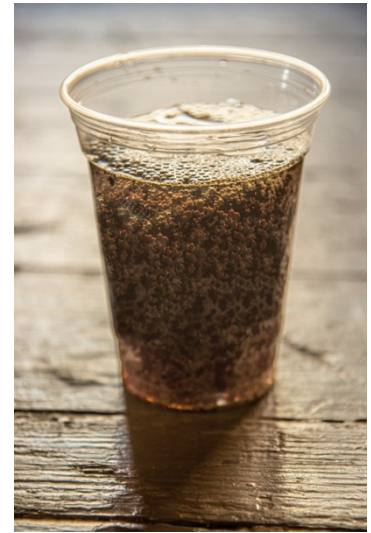




Buffalo head on the wall in the cantina



Inside the cantina



A cold glass of creamy root beer (or is it crunchy?)



View from the cantina looking up the canyon towards the staff cabin



Petey Wilkens, Nate Booher



View of the cantina

As the crew was getting ready to leave, Mr. McGrath mentioned that he was starting to get hit with altitude sickness, making him feel nauseous and weak.



Everyone retrieving their backpacks from the pack line



Stopping for a break along the trail to Bent Camp from Ponil



The hike from Ponil to Bent was short but somewhat slow, as Mr. McGrath's altitude sickness started to hit him hard. The Scouts were very supportive of him and offered to help him in a variety of ways. Once at Bent, the crew got his tent set up right away so that he could lie down and get some rest while the rest of the camp was set up.



On the trail to Bent Camp



Isaac Lohmueller



Break time



Break time



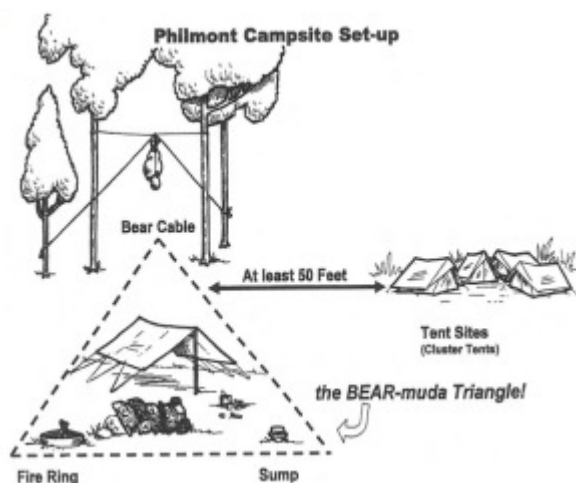
Toby Rainey

The Bent Camp is named after Charles Bent. He was born in Charleston, Virginia in 1799. He spent several years in the US Army, and then in 1928 he moved west and began working in the region around modern-day New Mexico as a fur trader. He later went on to serve as the first civilian governor of the New Mexico Territory, which the US acquired from Mexico in 1846. The Bent Camp is an unstaffed trail camp. The water source was the stream that flows through Middle Ponil Canyon next to the campsite. The elevation at Bent is 7,319 feet.

Each day one Scout was responsible for navigating along the trail for the day. On this day, Nathan was the navigator. Reese used the affectionate term "naviguessor" to indicate how Scouts often aren't sure of the route to take. Getting briefly lost and taking the wrong trail for a bit is par for the course for many crews at Philmont.

Once in camp, Reese taught the crew the Philmont method for setting up a campsite, hanging bear bags, cooking meals, and cleaning up afterwards. He cooked the crew's first dinner to demonstrate the process.

Philmont has an abundant variety of wildlife such as deer, elk, coyotes, buffalo, beavers, wild turkey, and bears. To help keep the wildlife wild and to ensure the safety of the scouts, Philmont has very specific procedures to be used around setting up camp and handling everything that has a scent that could attract animals. These procedures are summed up with the method called “the Bearmuda Triangle”. This method concentrates all activities that might have a smell within a triangle formed by the fire ring, food sump, and bear cable. All cooking, eating, and cleaning is done within this triangular area. The dining fly and backpacks are kept within the triangle, while tents are pitched outside of this area so that everyone is sleeping outside the area that contains any smells.



The Bearmuda Triangle Layout

The sump is a drain where liquid wastes can be safely disposed of after cleaning dishes.

The last component of the Bearmuda Triangle is the bear bag. To protect the animals, it is imperative that the animals do not get access to human food. Therefore, at night or anytime during the day when crews are not in the campsite, all smellables need to be hung in a bear bag. A smellable is anything that might have a smell that could attract animals. The list of smellable items includes food, soap, water bottles that have had flavored drinks, clothes that have food stains, plastic eating gear, sunscreen, etc. Each campsite is equipped with a bear cable, which is a steel cable strung between two trees and is at least 15-20 feet off the ground. When a crew arrives at a campsite, one of the first tasks of setting up camp is to hang the first set of bags with all the smellables that are not needed for the rest of the day. At the end of the day, the crew would then hang all the remaining smellables in a second set of bags. This second set of bags is referred to as the Oops bags, because inevitably there will be an evening or two when a scout will find a smellable amongst their gear after the bear bags have been hung.

The number of bags to be hung will vary based on what point in the trek the crew is, with more bags being required immediately after a commissary stop, where the crew stocks up on food for several days. On average, this crew used about 8-10 bear bags.





Reese demonstrating how to hang the bear rope



Petey Wilkens trying his hand in hanging the bear rope



Petey Wilkens and Reese



Declan McGrath and Sam Noble



Once the bear bags are hoisted up to the bear cable, the bear ropes are tied off to a nearby tree

After all the cleanup was done, Reese introduced the activity Roses, Thorns, Buds, and Gardeners. This is a group activity to help crew members process the day and open communications between members. Each Scout took a turn to give personal examples from that day of things symbolized by roses, thorns, buds, and gardeners. A Rose represents something beautiful or memorable about the day. A Thorn represents something that was difficult or irksome about the day. A Bud represents something that the Scout is looking forward to in the next day or so. Lastly, a Gardener represents someone who helped or inspired that Scout somehow that day.

It was almost 11:00 before the crew was able to call it a night. The sky was clear, and the stars were amazing.



**Saturday**  
**June 18, 2022**  
**Trek day 3**

In the morning, Declan was starting to heat water for oatmeal when Reese asked him what he was doing. Reese explained to Declan the Ranger way of eating oatmeal and that was to eat it dry. This saves the hassle of heating water and doing dishes. Declan was intrigued, and after sharing his new learnings with the crew, the decision was made to eat the oatmeal dry. Several scouts opted to at least add cold water to the oatmeal.



View of the campsite



Mr. Lohmueller helping Nathan Young fix his backpack



View from camp looking up Middle Ponil Canyon



View of the camp



Bear bags



Reese playing his harmonica



Reese working with Ben Adkins on reading maps



Shortly after leaving camp the crew entered the Elliot S. Barker Wildlife Management Area. This area on Philmont's northern boundary is controlled by the State of New Mexico and was purchased in 1966 to protect prime habitat for deer and elk in the area. The area is named after Elliot Barker, an author and ardent conservationist. As the state game warden, he lobbied successfully for the creation of numerous wildlife refuges throughout the State of New Mexico and the passage of numerous conservation laws. However, his biggest claim to fame came in 1950. There had been a large forest fire in the Lincoln National Forest in southern New Mexico, and firefighters had rescued a small cub from a tree in the middle of the fire. The cub was motherless and had burned feet, so Barker agreed to take charge of the orphan. Barker nursed the bear back to health but by that point in time the bear lost most of its natural instincts. Rather than releasing the helpless bear back into the wilds, Barker had the idea of turning the bear over to the US Forest Service and promoting it as a symbol of fire prevention. The cub soon made its way to the National Zoo in Washington, DC, becoming the living inspiration for US Forest Service's forest fire prevention ad campaign with Smokey Bear. Smokey Bear's famous slogan is "Only you can prevent forest fires!". In 1952, Steve Nelson and Jack Rollins wrote a popular song for the Forest Service about Smokey as a public service announcement. To maintain the rhythm of the song, they added "the" between "Smokey" and "Bear." Due to the song's popularity, Smokey Bear has often been called "Smokey the Bear" by many people, but, in actuality, his name never changed. He's still Smokey Bear. While at the zoo, Smokey received so much fan mail that the US Postal Service gave him his own zip code. Smokey remained at the National Zoo until his death in 1976, when he was returned to his home to be buried in Smokey Bear Historical Park in Capitan, New Mexico.



Entering the Elliot S. Barker Wildlife Management Area



Hiking up Middle Ponil Canyon



Hiking in the Elliot S. Barker Wildlife Management Area





Hiking down the trail



Remnant of an old windmill



The trail ahead in Bonita Canyon



Weathered wood



Break time

The trail to Dan Beard Camp passed through some pretty scenery, including some good views of the Little Costilla Peak located within the Carson National Forest just beyond Philmont's northern border. Little Costilla Peak has an elevation of 12,584 feet, making it the 19th highest peak in New Mexico.



Bonita Canyon



Bonita Canyon





Wildflower



Toby Rainey



Wildflower



Bonita Canyon enroute to Dan Beard Camp, with the mountain Little Costilla on the horizon



Breaktime

The crew was heading to Dan Beard Camp, where they were staying for the night. This staff camp named after one of the early founders of the Scouting program in the US, Daniel Carter Beard. The crew liked the name, as it is the same as the crew's home council name. Dan Beard was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. At the age of 11, he and his family moved across the Ohio River to Covington, Kentucky, where he lived until he went to college. He became an engineer, surveyor, artist, and author. In 1905 Beard founded the youth group for boys called Sons of Daniel Boone, focusing on the outdoors and the ways of the American frontiersman. He later merged this organization with the Boy Scouts of America in 1910 and served in the upper levels of leadership with the BSA for over 30 years.

Dan Beard Camp is located at an elevation of 7,900 feet within Bonita Canyon. The theme of the camp's program is Challenge Events, which are activities that help foster team development.



Daniel Carter Beard



Shortly after arriving at Dan Beard Camp, it started to rain. The crew hunkered down underneath a tarp while waiting out the rain. The camp director came out to talk to the crew for a bit, and at the end of her talk, she asked if anyone had any questions, comments, or interpretive dance to share with her. Without missing a beat, Toby did a little jig for her. The director got a big kick out of this, saying that no one had ever done a dance for her.



Arriving at Dan Beard Camp



Reese giving instruction while waiting for the rain to stop



Sam Noble



Petey Wilkens



View of the camp from under the rain fly while waiting for the rain to stop



After about an hour under the tarp, the rain finally stopped, so the crew went up to the campsite to set up tents. Everyone got out the food and other smellables, and the Scouts went to go hang the bear bags. After a long while, they came back with dejected looks on their faces, as it took many tries before they were able to get the bear ropes over the cable. In their defense it should be noted that the cable was very high off the ground.



Panoramic view of the campsite



Nathan Young, Wesley Anglin, and Petey Wilkens setting up the dining fly



View of Little Costilla Mountain in the distance

Afterwards the crew headed down to the staff cabin to do the camp's program. At Dan Beard, the program is COPE and challenge games. Since the rain had only just recently stopped, most of the games on the COPE course were closed. The program started out with a team-building game where the goal was to pass an invisible ball as quickly as possible to another member in the group using a specific combination of hand movements and sound effects. Anyone who did not use the correct combination was out for that round. The winner was the last person in the game.



Team building game



Team building game



The first challenge game was called the Helium Hula. Everyone stood in a circle around the hula hoop and supported the hoop with two fingers per person. The goal was to work as a team and lower the hula to the ground, with the requirement that everyone maintains contact between their two fingers and the hula hoop. This is way more challenging than it would seem. The hula tends to go up and down. The crew eventually did it. The challenge level was raised a notch as the crew had to repeat the exercise but this time without talking.



Helium Hula game



Helium Hula game

The next game was called the King's Finger. In this game there is a pole in the ground about 10 feet tall. Using nothing but two 2x6 boards about 4' long, the Scouts had to lift a tire up and onto the pole. They then had to lower the tire to the ground without the tire touching the pole.

At first, Ben said that it couldn't be done, but then quickly got involved in coming up with possible solutions. It took a bit of time and many tries, but they eventually got the job completed successfully. Before moving onto the next game, the Scouts volunteered to get the tire back off the pole in preparation for the next group. They quickly were able to get the tire off the pole.



The King's Finger Game – going up



... almost there.



Oh, so close





Small setback



Success



Debriefing after the game

The last game was a large seesaw that everyone had to get on and balance. This game wasn't too challenging.

Throughout the afternoon's games, another staff member and his crew were taunting the 616-S crew's staff member, Jay, claiming that they were the better crew. Towards the end the crew leader from the other crew called out the 616-S's crew leader, Petey, for a game of rock, paper, and scissors to settle it once and for all who was the better crew. Petey won the game, but one of the other crew members cried foul, saying that it wasn't a real crew leader to crew leader battle, as Petey's adversary wasn't that crew's leader today, as they are rotating the crew leader each day. Petey faced off against the other crew's current crew leader, but unfortunately lost this round.



Seesaw game



Taunting another crew





Petey Wilkens answering the challenge from another crew

After this last game, the crew went back to their campsite and cooked dinner. At 8:00 the crew went back to the staff cabin for the evening program. This involved more team-building games.

The first game was a race where the runners were blindfolded. There was a series of objects in the path that the runners had to avoid, and their teammates had to shout out instructions for where they had to go. The goal was to be the first team to get a ball at the end of the course and back to the starting line. If a runner touched one of the obstacles in the road, they had to go back to the beginning and start over.



Sam Noble vs. Petey Wilkens



Sam Noble vs. Petey Wilkens



Sam Noble vs. Petey Wilkens



Isaac Lohmueller



Nathan Young vs. Declan McGrath



The second game was called 'The Amoeba. In this game the Scouts wrapped a rope around themselves as a group. With everyone holding the rope and facing outwards they had to work as a team to move down the road. Several staff members were walking around on the road waving pool noodles. The amoeba had to navigate down the road while avoiding the pool noodles.

The last game was a big sword fight using pool noodles. A scout would not be able to use his arm or leg if it was hit with a sword. A scout would be eliminated after being hit in both arms and both legs. The goal was to be the last scout in the battle.



Pool noodle battles



Twilight view



Camp silhouettes

Back at camp, Reese broke out a pound cake, canned apples, and frosting as a farewell treat for the crew.

Mr. Lohmueller then gave a short scoutmaster minute about working together as a crew and putting the needs of the crew first. The talk then segued into a discussion to address some interpersonal behavioral issues that were starting to creep into the crew dynamics. The crew then ended the evening with a Roses, Thorns, Buds, and Gardeners discussion.

While hanging the bear bags for the night, Sam made a comment to the group that he needed someone to help him with a particular task and immediately Toby jumped up and offered to help, saying, "All I heard was that he needed someone."



After getting back to the camp after hanging the bear bags, Nathan realized that he had some snacks in his jacket pocket, so a few Scouts offered to head back to the bear bags to hang the snacks. As the Scouts were hanging the bags, Sam turned to Wesley and asked if Wesley knew how to tie the ropes off. Wesley didn't, so Sam proceeded to explain to Wesley what to do. Sam tied the knot to show Wesley and then added that he wasn't going to do the final tying. Sam untied the knot and then allowed Wesley to do the task. The EDGE method at work.



Sam Noble and Declan McGrath tying up the bear bags



Hanging the bear bags



Chaotic bear bag cable

Sunday  
June 19, 2022  
Trek day 4

Reese woke everyone up around 5:10 to catch a sunrise. Reese wanted to give his dramatic Ranger speech about preserving the beauty of Philmont's landscape and the role that everyone plays in helping to protect it with the sunrise as a backdrop. Not everyone got up, so Reese put off his speech until everyone was available.

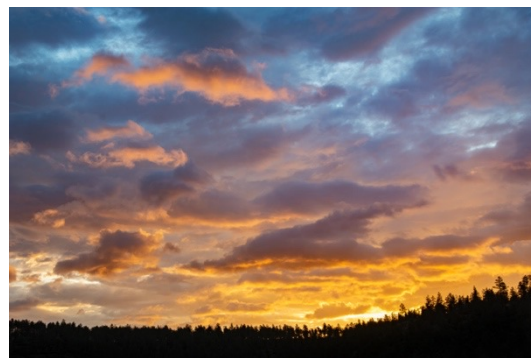
The sun rose behind the far wall of the canyon with intense colors and a dramatic cloudscape. About half the crew got to experience the colorful sunrise. Reese was eventually able to give his speech, and after that, he departed from the crew for a return to base camp.



Starting the day



Sunrise



Sunrise



Rainstorm in the distance



Dynamic cloud cover





Reese giving his Ranger speech



Mr. Lohmueller, Mr. McGrath, Isaac Lohmueller, Wesley Anglin, Toby Rainey, Sam Noble, Reese, Nathan Young, Ben Adkins, Declan McGrath, Nate Booher, Petey Wilkens, Mr. Wilkens



Ranger Reese



Looking north up Bonita Canyon, with Little Castillo Mountain in the distance

Breakfast was a cooked meal this day, and this slowed the crew down. During breakfast a “Happy Father’s Day” went out to the 3 dads in the crew. The crew didn’t get out of camp until around 9:45.



Nathan Young cleaning up from breakfast



Heading to the staff cabin in the morning before leaving camp



Recycling the meal bags



The first stretch of trail from Dan Beard Camp was brutal, as it was practically straight up the canyon wall. The local staff members call the stretch of trail The Thigh Master. The trail gained around 260 feet in elevation over the course of around 1/3 mile.



Isaac Lohmueller



Climbing "The Thighmaster" out of Bonita Canyon enroute to North Ponil Camp



Looking back towards Dan Beard Camp with Baldy Mountain on the horizon

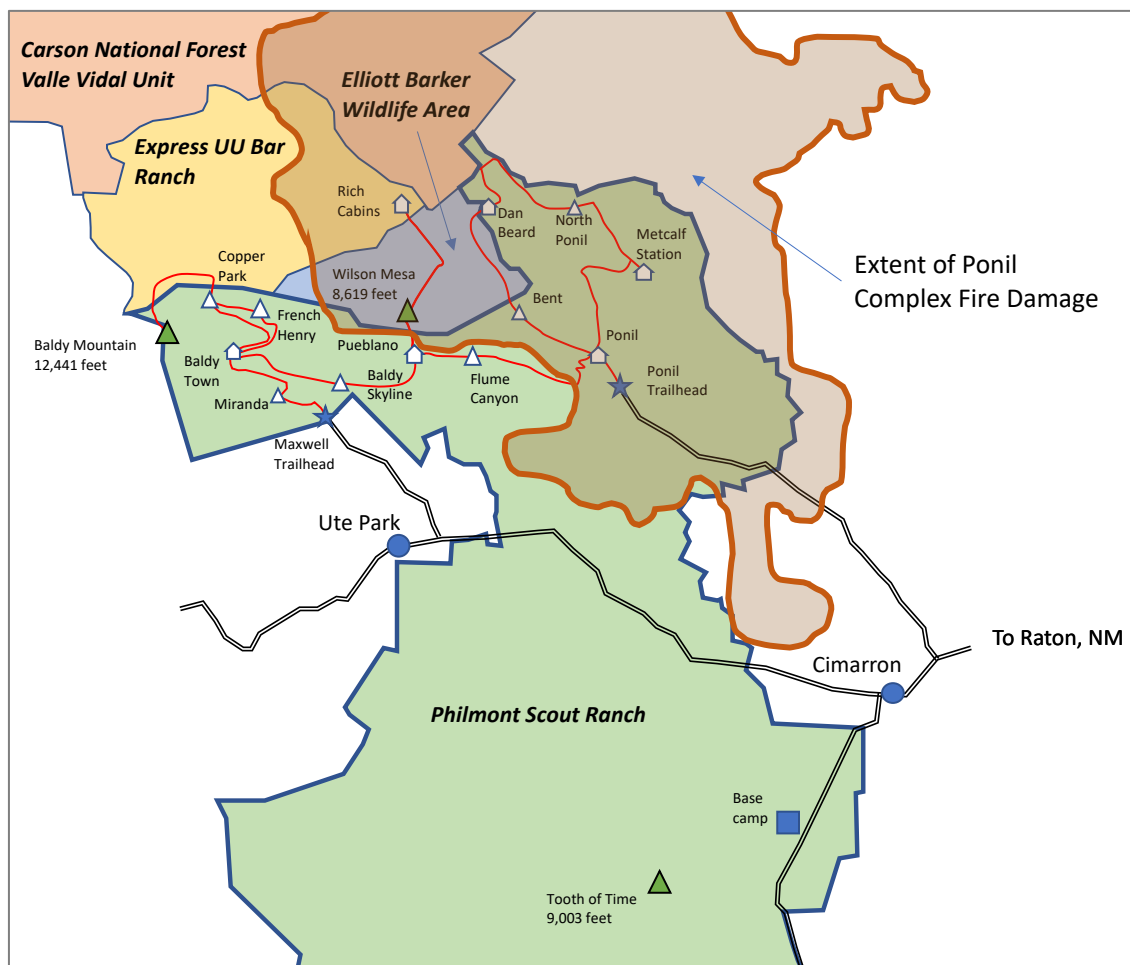


Isaac Lohmueller carrying some crackers

At the top of the canyon at the spot called Rabbit Ear, the crew had a decision to make regarding which path they wanted to take to get to the next campsite located at North Ponil Camp. The first option was to go directly to North Ponil, drop the backpacks, and then hike down to the entrance of Cook Canyon for the day's program, which was mountain biking. The second option was to go directly to the activity location through Cook Canyon to do mountain biking and then head to North Ponil Camp for the night. The scouts opted to go to North Ponil first and then head to mountain biking.

The trail from Rabbit Ear offered an expansive view of the Valle Vidal area of the Carson National Forest to the north of Philmont. Unfortunately, the area hasn't yet fully recovered from the 2002 Ponil Complex Fire and there are still signs everywhere from that fire. The Ponil Complex Fire was started by several lightning strikes during a period of severe drought conditions. The fire burned for over two weeks before being contained and burned over 92,000 acres, with approximately 30,000 of those acres on Philmont property.





Map showing the extent of the Ponil Complex Fire

A bit further down the trail, the crew once again had a decision to make. They could head directly to North Ponil or take a loop side trail that Reese said had some spectacular views of the Valle Vidal. A staff member at Dan Beard, however, said that it wasn't worth it. The scouts opted to go straight to North Ponil to get to the mountain biking sooner.



View looking north into the Valle Vidal region of the Carson National Forest



En route to North Ponil Camp





Looking north towards the Valle Vidal



Enroute to North Ponil Camp



Prickly pear cactus



Break time



Mr. Lohmueller



Petey Wilkens



Isaac Lohmueller, Sam Noble



On the trail





Enroute to North Ponil Camp



Mr. McGrath



Thistle wildflower



Break time

Once at North Ponil the crew set up camp and took a break for lunch before heading down North Ponil Canyon to the entrance of Cook Canyon to do the mountain bike program. The trail down into North Ponil Canyon from North Ponil Camp was very steep and rocky. Shortly after getting down into the valley, Petey realized that he left the crew paperwork back at the camp. The crew would need the paperwork to check in for the mountain biking, so Petey and Declan ran back to the camp to get it. While waiting for the boys to return, Mr. McGrath found an old skull, weathered and white, lying on the ground next to the road. At the time the crew was not able to identify what type of animal the skull was from, but later it was identified as elk.



Declan McGrath getting ready to hang the bear bags



Sam Noble and Petey Wilkens watching, as Declan McGrath prepares the rope to be tossed over the bear cable to hang the bear bags





Petey Wilkens and Declan McGrath running back to camp



Elk skull



Looking up North Ponil Canyon



Ben Adkins, Sam Noble, and Nathan Young finding shapes in the clouds



Looking down North Ponil Canyon

Once Petey and Declan returned the crew continued the rest of the way to the entrance of Cook Canyon, which is where the mountain biking program was being held. The program normally resides at Whiteman Vega Camp in the Valle Vidal area of the Carson National Forest. Due to the extreme fire risk that New Mexico is currently under, the US Forest Service closed access to the Carson National Forest. As a result, Philmont moved the mountain biking to Cook Canyon.

Once at the mountain biking area a staff member informed the crew that the program is currently on hold. One of the scouts on the previous crew, which happened to be the crew's sister crew, had an accident while riding, and the rest of the staff were occupied with evacuating the scout from the trail. The staff member told the crew to hang out in the area in case the staff was able to offer trail rides in a little while. After waiting for about half an hour, the staff member came back to the crew to let them know the mountain biking was going to have to close for the rest of the day. This was a very disappointing turn of events for the scouts, as mountain biking was their top choice of activities they wanted to do when they were selecting treks. After discussing the options, the crew opted to walk ½ mile further down North Ponil Canyon to Metcalf Station to explore what the camp had to offer and to see if they could do any of the program there.





Ben Adkins and Nathan Young filling up their water bottles from a water buffalo at the mountain biking area



Ben Adkins and Nathan Young talking to one of the adult leaders from the crew's sister crew

Metcalf Station focuses on the history of the railroad and logging industries in the area. The camp has a train station, post office, a small building, and a barn, along with a stretch of rail. One part of the program at Metcalf Station involves having Scouts rebuild a stretch of rail through the canyon.

Throughout the mid 1800's in the United States, there was a huge migration of people westward, driven by gold rushes, free land, and the portrayal of the West as a land of opportunity. During this time, railroads played a significant role in moving people and goods westward. The railroads allowed people and goods to move into a community and resources to be shipped out of an area to be used elsewhere. The opportunity to make money in this setting attracted many entrepreneurs and businessmen.

One of these businessmen was Thomas Schomburg. In 1907 Schomburg moved into the area. With the railroad and mining industries booming, and many people moving into the area, lumber was in high demand, driven by the need for the large quantity of railroad ties, support beams for mines, and housing. In response to this boom, Schomburg started the Continental Tie and Lumber Company, which operated out of Cimarron, New Mexico. The company took advantage of the large stands of Ponderosa Pine and Douglas Fir trees in the area. To move the timber from the forests where the trees were harvested to the lumber mills, and then ultimately to market, Schomburg also started a railroad called the Cimarron and Northwestern Railway, whose main line ran up North Ponil Canyon, with spurs running up the adjacent canyons. The railroad operated around 22 miles of track in the area. All the ties and lumber needed for the Cimarron and Northwestern Railway came from the Continental Tie and Lumber Company. Timber camps were established all along the railway routes and adjacent canyons to harvest the trees. Due to the abundance of trees in the area, the first 5 years of operation were very profitable, but by 1916, the timber in the area was exhausted and the various railroad branches were slowly abandoned. By 1930, the Cimarron and Northwestern Railroad had abandoned all its lines and ceased to operate. The Continental Tie and Lumber Company operated until 1937 when it shut down its operations for good.

Metcalf Station's program represents the summer of 1907, shortly after the Cimarron and Northwestern Railroad started operations. The camp is located along the old right-of-way for the main line of the railroad. Opened in 2014, the camp is Philmont's newest staff camp. The camp is named for William Metcalf, who served as the Colfax County Deputy Sheriff. Metcalf was ambushed and killed during the Settlers War in 1875. This war centered around land ownership and was between settlers who had been living on the land for many years and those who owned the deeds to the land.



When the crew arrived at Metcalf Station, there weren't any available time slots for program. After the crew explained the situation that they were in with the mountain biking being cancelled, a staff member encouraged the crew to hang out in the area in case another crew didn't show up for their time slot. A little bit later, the camp director offered to allow the crew to do a self-guided tour of their museums, as long they promised not to touch anything. The first area the crew explored was in the train station, which included two small rooms with artifacts from the railroad history in the area. Across the rail line in one of the buildings, another display showed the tools used on the railroad.



Hiking down North Ponil Canyon to Metcalf Station



Metcalf Station



Train depot at Metcalf Station



Checking out the railroad museum



Some of the tools used on the railroad



Collection of historic lanterns



View down the rail line being built at Metcalf Station





Isaac Lohmueller



A view of the rail line through the canyon at Metcalf Station



Staff worker Paul



Historic lanterns

After visiting the two displays, the crew hung out for a while. After a bit, one of the staff members started talking with the crew, and after hearing about their situation asked if the crew would be interested in riding the pump car. The scouts enthusiastically jumped at the opportunity.

The pump car allows for 4 people to operate the lever mechanism which drives the car. Four scouts quickly volunteered to ride the car first. Each group of 4 people would drive the car about 150 yards down the line and then bring the car back. As the first group was about to start one of the riders shouted out for someone to record the time it took to do a roundtrip. This was turning into a race between the three groups.

The first two groups included all the scouts. The last group to ride was the four adults. The adults won the race with about a minute lead.

The rally cry for the staff at Metcalf Station is "Pride and glory!". During the first group of scouts to run the pump car, someone had the idea to shout the rally cry as they were pumping. The front pair of riders would shout "Pride!" while pumping down and then the back pair would shout "Glory!" while pumping down.





Paul demonstrating how to operate a pump car



Ben Adkins, Nate Booher, Declan McGrath, and Wesley Anglin are the first to operate the pump car



“Pride!” yelled Wesley Anglin and Declan McGrath



Toby Rainey, Nathan Young, Sam Noble, Petey Wilkens, and Paul



Mr. Wilkens, Paul, Isaac Lohmueller, Tim McGrath (hidden), and Mr. Lohmueller



Wesley Anglin, Toby Rainey, and Nathan Young



Isaac Lohmueller (hidden), Mr. Lohmueller, Mr. Wilkens (hidden), Mr. McGrath, and Paul



Paul



After leaving Metcalf Station the crew headed back to the mountain biking tent to fill up on water. As the crew approached the biking area, the infirmiry vehicle was slowly driving down the road in the other direction, presumably evacuating the injured Scout, Nick. The crew later learned that the Scout was going to be taken to Raton for medical attention. The boy's crew was huddled together, offering a quick prayer for the Scout's recovery. Wesley had the idea of offering to lead a prayer with the two crews together and approached the other crew. After a brief shared praye, the crews headed back to camp at North Ponil.

Around dinner it started to lightly rain for a short period. The rain had stopped and around sunset a beautiful rainbow stretched across the sky, forming a full arch. Mr. Wilkens started to take some pictures of the Scouts interacting with the rainbow, with much laughter ensuing.



Preparing for the impending rainstorm



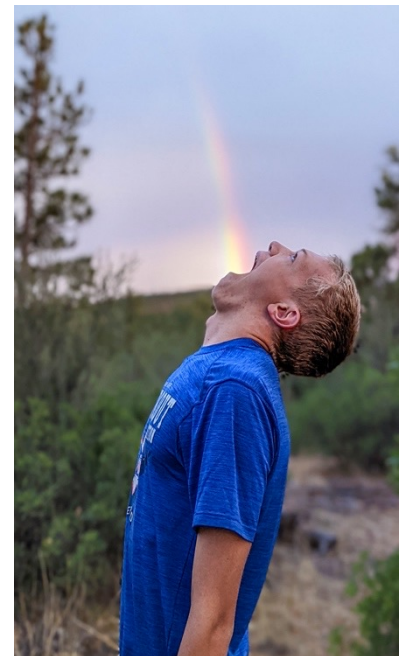
Sam Noble and Toby Rainey making dinner



Toby Rainey



Ben Adkins



Nathan Young





Sam Noble



Wesley Anglin



Petey Wilkens



Petey Wilkens



Isaac Lohmueller



Declan McGrath



Nate Booher



Rainbow arching across the sky



Throughout the trek one scout would go up to another scout, and in a deep, raspy voice, would say “You got grit, son!”. Sam came up with this idea. This evening, Nate came up with an idea to make a joke with Toby, and Isaac joined in on the endeavor. Isaac found a box of Ritz crackers, and walking up to Toby, Isaac quickly handed the box of crackers to Toby. He then said in a grizzly voice, “You got Ritz, son!”. It took Toby a second or two to react then he bust out in a deep belly laugh.



“You got Ritz, son!”

Nathan Young was also able to have his Scoutmaster Conference for Eagle at this campsite.

After cleaning up dinner and getting the bear bags hung, the crew did a Roses, Thorns, Buds, and Gardeners discussion before calling it a night.



Nathan Young having his Eagle rank  
Scoutmaster conference with Mr. Lohmueller



Monday  
June 20, 2022  
Trek day 5

The crew woke up at 6:45 to a beautiful day with the sun shining. This morning, even though it was a no-cook breakfast, it took the crew about 2 ½ hours to get out of camp..



Campsite



Mr. Wilkens journaling



Campsite



Eating area in camp around the dining fly



Mr. Wilkens



View of the campsite from the bear bags



Troop's bear bags





Golden barrel cactus



Ponderosa pine tree



Checking the day's route on the map



Shadow hiker



Hiking down the North Ponil Canyon



Hiking down the North Ponil Canyon



Filling up water bottles at the mountain biking station

Just past the mountain biking area, the crew had two options for paths to take to get to the next campsite. The first option was to take a trail to get to the top of the ridge. This option was longer than the other option, but since it had switch backs to gain elevation, it was not as steep. The second option was a road that went almost straight up the ridge line to crest the ridge. To save time, the scouts opted to do the shorter route even though it was steeper. It turned out to be very strenuous and completely in the sun.





Isaac Lohmueller



Nathan Young



Petey Wilkens



Isaac Lohmueller



Isaac Lohmueller and Toby Rainey



Mr. Lohmueller giving Declan McGrath a lesson on using a compass



Declan McGrath and Mr. McGrath talking through the route for the day





Break time



Mr. Lohmueller and Sam Noble doing trailside maintenance on Sam's pack



Ben Adkins



Isaac Lohmueller, Toby Rainey, and Sam Noble



Leaving the canyon floor and starting up the road to the top of the canyon wall



Taking the road up the side of the canyon





View looking back towards Metcalf Station



Sam Noble



Panoramic view of the surrounding wilderness



View of the surrounding wilderness



View of the surrounding wilderness

The crew took a much-needed rest break in the shade of some trees at the top of the hill. Declan walked a bit off the trail to use the restroom, and when he came back, asked what a rattlesnake sounded like. He'd heard something about ten feet from him. He mimicked the sound, and the general consensus was that he had, indeed, heard a rattlesnake.

While taking a break several scouts found some pinecones lying on the ground. Declan McGrath brought out his baseball pitching skills and started pitching the pinecones while several other scouts used their trekking poles as baseball bats.





Ben Adkins and Declan McGrath



Declan McGrath



Declan McGrath and Ben Adkins

After the break at the top of the ridge the crew started heading towards Horse Canyon. At this point, the crew got a great view of Baldy Mountain off in the distance.



Mr. Wilkens



Hiking down the road with Baldy on the horizon



Baldy Mountain



Declan McGrath checking the map



Hiking down Horse Canyon





Hiking down through Horse Canyon



Hiking down through Horse Canyon

The crew had lunch trail side near the bottom of Horse Canyon. Nathan Young and Sam Noble had been accumulating drink packets, and decided to consume about 6 of them in a row, straight out of the packets



Lunch break



Red tongues from too much drink mix



Rock formation in Horse Canyon



Hiking down through Horse Canyon

Each day a new scout had the responsibility of navigating the crew to its daily destination. Using Reese’s term, each scout started the day out as a navigessor. Today it was Declan’s turn in that role. He was reluctant at first, admitting that map reading was not a strong skill for him. Mr. Lohmueller worked with him throughout the day’s hike, teaching him the skills needed to navigate with confidence, and enabling him to put those skills into practice. Towards the end of the day, Mr. Lohmueller asked Declan if he knew exactly where the crew was on the trail. Declan studied the map for a moment, and confidently stated where the crew was located. This earned him the title of “navigator”, having graduated from the navigessor status. This process was repeated throughout the trek for each scout in the crew, and by the end, every Scout achieved the navigator title of honor.





Rocky alcove



Hiking down Horse Canyon



Hiking down Horse Canyon

After checking in at Ponil, the crew went to the commissary and picked up the next food drop, which consisted of 5 meals. Ponil also has a large swap box, and the crew took advantage of the opportunity. Toby was able to score several containers of gouda cheese.



Hanging out on the staff cabin porch



Nathan Young



Declan McGrath, Nate Booher, and Wesley Anglin checking out the swap box



Swap box



Hummingbird at the staff cabin





Toby Rainey



Ben Adkins checking the camp map



Nate Booher

Back at the campsite, the crew set up tents and the dining fly, and hung the bear bags before heading to the chuckwagon dinner. The chuckwagon dinner is part of Ponil's program, where the staff, along with several scout helpers per crew, prepares dinner for all the crews. This year, dinner consisted of chili and crackers, with a muffin for dessert.



Petey Wilkens crossing Middle Ponil Creek



Ben Adkins crossing Middle Ponil Creek



Toby Rainey crossing the Middle Ponil Creek to get to the campsite



Cloudscape over Ponil



Toby Rainey checking the campsite map





Waiting for the chuck wagon dinner to be served



The sheriff of Ponil



Toby Rainey serving the dinner



The crew enjoying their dinner



Toby Rainey serving the chili



Toby Rainey



Staff servers for the chuck wagon



Shelter where the chuck wagon was held



Waiting in line to wash dishes





Getting the campsite set up



View of the crew's campsite



View of the crew's campsite



View of the crew's campsite



Isaac Lohmueller



Pinecone



Declan McGrath journaling



After dinner, the staff hosted a cantina show. The crew arrived a bit before the show and was able to enjoy a round of root beer, compliments of Mr. Lohmueller.

The cantina show was quite enjoyable. The show started out with an argument between two staff members as to the relative merits of creamy vs. crunchy root beer. The show continued with the sheriff and the mayor joining in, warning everyone present about an outlaw by the name of Leroy that had come to town to steal everyone's cows. There was a lot of songs being sung and hilarity ensued.

The crew called it a night after the cantina show. This was the only campsite that the crew would visit with showers. The boys considered trying to squeeze showers into their schedule, but ultimately opted against it, deciding that extra sleep would be preferable.



Crew enjoying a round of root beer



Cantina show



Cantina show



Cantina show



Sunset over the Ponil staff cabin



Tuesday  
June 21, 2022  
Trek day 6

Overnight the temperature got down to 44F under partly cloudy skies.



Breakfast



View from camp across the canyon floor



Packing up in the morning after breakfast



Campsite's Red Roof Inn



Beetle



Toby Rainey, Isaac Lohmueller



Bindweed wildflower









Petey Wilkens, Toby Rainey, Ben Adkins



Hiking through South Ponil Canyon on the way to Flume Canyon Camp



View of the surrounding wilderness



On the trail to Flume Canyon Camp



Mr. Lohmueller



Mr. Wilkens



Toby was the navigator for the day and did a great job of knowing where the crew was based on the number of side canyons that the trail crossed. Close to getting to camp, Mr. Lohmueller presented Toby with his navigator test, asking Toby if he could point out on the map where the crew currently was located. Toby felt that the crew was in one of two possible locations, and with his compass and map he used the triangulation skills Reese taught the crew back at base camp. With that he was able to home into the correct location, earning him the navigator title for the day.

The hike from Ponil to Flume Canyon was a short 4 miles so the crew arrived at the campsite by 11:30. There was only one open spot available, but it seemed to lack space for tents. There was another crew in an adjacent campsite that had a lot of open space for tents, so Petey asked if his crew could share part of the open field with them and the other crew agreed. This was the last day for the other crew and they were planning on waking up around 2:00 am to be able to catch their return bus at 8:30 several miles away.



Toby Rainey checking the location of the crew

After setting up the camp, the crew ate lunch. Afterwards, it was a fairly laid-back afternoon. Toby Rainey, Isaac Lohmueller, Wesley Anglin, and Ben Adkins started playing in the dirt. They created a role-playing game where they were aspiring soil tycoons looking to sell as much dirt as possible.

A Ranger passing through the campsite encouraged the crew to head over to Pueblano to see if the staff could work the crew into some afternoon program. Pueblano is about a 35-minute walk down South Ponil Canyon from the campsite.



Nathan Young



Sam Noble



Wesley Anglin, Toby Rainey, and Isaac Lohmueller – soil tycoons



Wesley Anglin, Toby Rainey, Isaac Lohmueller, and Ben Adkins





Hanging the bear bags



Mr. Lohmueller reading the map



Nathan Young setting up the bear bag ropes



Burro at the Pueblano Camp



Staff cabin at Pueblano Camp



On the porch at the staff cabin



Squirrel at the staff cabin



Hummingbird at the staff cabin



Pueblano Camp's program focuses on the history of logging in the area. The setting for the program is 1918 and recreates the historic Continental Tie and Lumber Company. The camp offers spar pole climbing, crosscut sawing, and tie making. All the ties that the scouts make at Pueblano are taken to the nearby Metcalf Station, where staff and scouts are constructing a replica of the historic Cimarron and Northwestern Railway that operated on Philmont property in the early 1900s.

Once at Pueblano, the crew learned that all the spots for spar pole climbing were already filled, but the staff did offer for the crew to learn about making railroad ties. The staff member showed the crew how railroad ties were made by hand in the 1800s. A regular axe was used first to create score marks along the side of the log, then a broad axe was used almost sideways to the log to remove all the chips created by the score marks. Chip by chip, the process would turn a round log into a square railroad tie, making it a very slow and laborious process. After a staff member demonstrated the technique, each member of the crew got the chance to try it for themselves. Afterwards, the crew headed back to the campsite. It had started to lightly rain during the hike back.



Staff member explaining how railroad ties were made by hand



Staff member demonstrating how to use an axe



Staff member demonstrating how to use a broad axe



Petey Wilkens



Petey Wilkens





Declan McGrath



Declan McGrath



Wesley Anglin



Wesley Anglin



Ben Adkins



Ben Adkins



Sam Noble



Sam Noble





Toby Rainey



Toby Rainey



Nathan Young



Nathan Young



Isaac Lohmueller



Isaac Lohmueller



Mr. McGrath



Mr. McGrath





Mr. Wilkens



Mr. Wilkens



Mr. Lohmueller



Ponderosa pine needle and bark



Grass stems on the side of the trail



Hiking back to Flume Canyon Camp from Pueblano

Back in camp the crew hung several clothes lines, and Ben and Toby volunteered to wash any dirty clothes people had, using the stream that passed through the campsite. Declan and Wesley were the runners, bringing the clean clothes back from the creek and hanging them to dry. Meanwhile, Petey, Nathan, and Sam started working on dinner, which consisted of “Mountain House” beef stroganoff packets. Instead of making the meal in the separate pouches, the crew opted to make all the individual meals in one large pot.

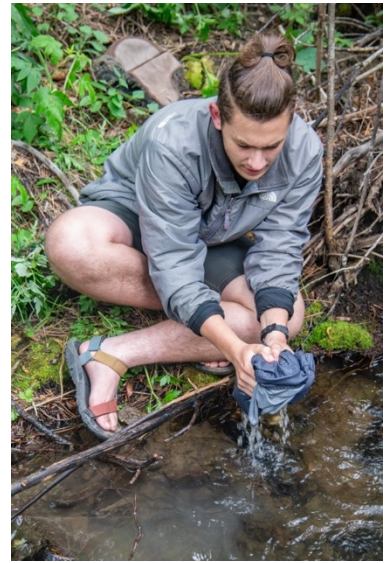




Ben Adkins



Toby Rainey



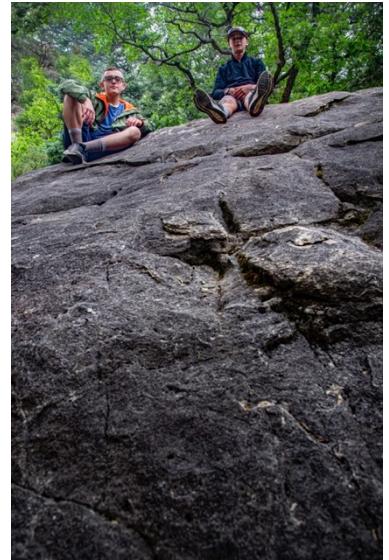
Toby Rainey



Interesting boulder



Wesley Anglin, Declan McGrath



Wesley Anglin, Declan McGrath



Declan McGrath and Wesley Anglin



The crew's campsite





Petey Wilkens



Sam Noble



Cooking dinner



Dinner



Enjoying dinner



Sam Noble

Declan was the human sump for dinner, and specifically asked to have his picture taken as proof of his accomplishment in the trip book. Each day the scouts took turns with the role. The human sump was responsible for cleaning the main cooking pot after a meal. The Scout would eat any food that was left over, rinse out the remaining food scraps in the pot, and then drink the water. The goal was to get the pot as clean as possible to get rid of all the food scraps before actually washing it. This was another strategy Philmont uses to prevent animals from getting human food.



Declan McGrath



After dinner, Ben had his Scoutmaster conference for his Star Rank.

That evening Sam commented that he hadn't yet changed his crew T-shirt yet from the first day of traveling to Philmont and was trying to convince the other scouts to wear their crew T-shirts all 12 days on the trek. Mr. McGrath mentioned that he hadn't changed his shirt yet either. Mr. McGrath offered the challenge that he wouldn't change his shirt if Sam didn't change his shirt either. Thus, a competition was born to see who would wear their initial shirt the longest. Wesley and Declan had also not yet changed, but they weren't yet ready to commit to going the entire 12 days in their original shirts.

To reduce the risk of littering, Philmont teaches scouts to make one-piece trash when opening packages of food. The Philmont ethos requires scouts to yell "I believe in forest fairies!" to their crew members if they make two-piece trash, at which point the rest of the crew yells back "And they believe in you!"

Overall, the spirits of the crew were running high. There are a lot of different personalities in the group, but they all seem to genuinely get along and have fun together. Who hangs out with who really ebbs and flows, so the group dynamics are strong. There are lots of games and joking around, as well as lots of singing on the trail.

Another Scout group was in close proximity in the next campsite over and they had to get up super early to make it to their conservation site and then catch their bus back to base camp. They called it a night around 8:00 pm and to be respectful, the crew started quiet time then. The boys were playing a pantomime game to amuse themselves until they too called it a night. The high temperature for the day was 69F.



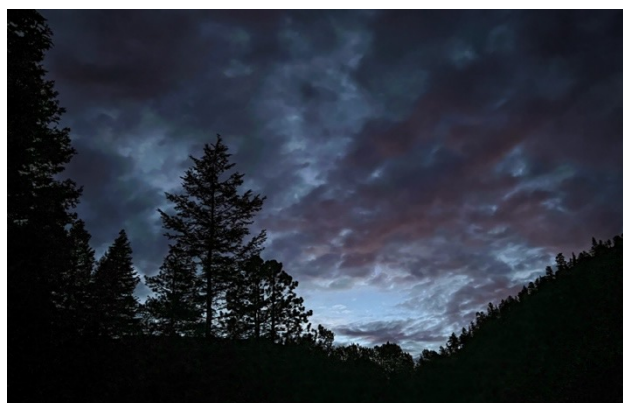
Mr. McGrath



"Oh no! Two-piece trash"



Setting up the dining fly



The last hints of color in the dusk sky



**Wednesday**  
**June 22, 2022**  
**Trek day 7**

The temperature overnight got down to 56F. In the morning, there was a colorful sunrise awaiting the scouts.



The view of the campsite at sunrise



The view of the campsite at sunrise

There was a Scoutmaster Challenge this morning, with the goal of getting out of camp within 55 minutes after the end of the Morning Show, with the expectation that the crew would have a trailside breakfast. The crew made it out of camp with about a minute to spare. The crew hiked a few minutes down the trail before stopping for breakfast.

During breakfast, the crew discussed how they wanted to get to Rich Cabins. They had 3 options. They ended up choosing to go up Flume Canyon to Pueblano and then up and over Wilson Mesa. The main draw of this option was that there is a lake on top of Wilson Mesa, and there was the hope that the crew might spy some animals coming to the lake for water. It was an intermittent lake, meaning that during dry periods, the lake would dry up, so there wasn't any guarantee that the lake would have any water.



Breakfast trailside

During the hike to Pueblano the crew was singing a lot of snippets of different songs. The common thread behind every song was that the words "blue bead" were inserted somewhere into the lyrics, in an effort to get Mr. Lohmueller to award blue beads for nights of camping at Philmont for times when it had rained, as part of the crew's participation recognition program. Mr. Lohmueller had reminded the crew that the Patrol Leaders Council had decided several years prior that beads for nights of camping would not be awarded for long term camping trips such as high adventure treks or summer camps since participants would already be receiving special beads for those trips. This did nothing to dissuade the scouts from continuing the subliminal messages hidden within the lyrics. The singing went on for about half an hour until the crew reached Pueblano.





Mr. Wilkens



Sam Noble



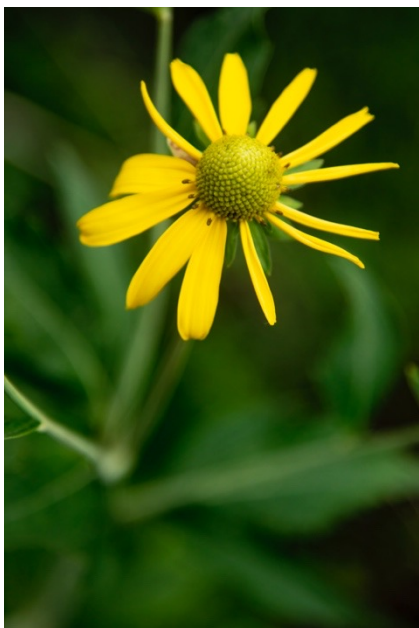
Thistle wildflower



Western blue jay feather



Wild rose flower



Coneflower wildflower



Western salsify wildflower



Bindweed wildflower





Hiking back to Pueblano



View along South Ponil Canyon on the way to Pueblano Camp



Declan McGrath

The crew stopped at Pueblano to fill up on water and drop off trash. While there, they saw Paul, the staff member from Metcalf Station that allowed the crew to drive the pump cars on the railroad, and they spent some time chatting with him. During this time, it started to lightly rain



Evening primrose wildflower



Wild blue flax wildflower



Nathan Young



Pueblano Camp's Red Roof Inn



Hanging out at Pueblano Camp for a break



The hike from Pueblano up to the top of Wilson Mesa was very steep and very rocky. The top of the mesa is a flat grassland. Once on top, the crew walked in silence in the hopes of seeing some animals, especially around the lake on the mesa. The lake had a small amount of water in it, but there weren't any animals to be seen in the area.



Hiking across Wilson Mesa, with Baldy Mountain shrouded in clouds in the background



View across the top of Wilson Mesa



Sam Noble opening the gate in the fence



Baldy Mountain shrouded in clouds



Hiking across Wilson Mesa



Hiking across Wilson Mesa in the rain



Break in the storm



View across Wilson Mesa



After leaving the top of the mesa the trail dropped in elevation down into Middle Ponil Canyon, which is where Rich Cabins was located. It was a fairly uneventful hike to Rich Cabins, although the entire hike from Pueblano to Rich Cabins was in the rain. The morale amongst the crew was pretty low. Nate was the navigator for the day, and he did an outstanding job of keeping track of landmarks along the route. He was able to consistently keep track of how far along the trail the crew was.

About halfway down the length of Middle Ponil Canyon to Rich Cabins, the road was blocked with a locked gate and “No Trespassing” signs. The signage was marked with the UU Bar Express ranch name. This is the ranching company that purchased the original UU Bar ranch property from Waite Phillips, although the land the crew was entering was not part of the original ranch. UU Bar Express allows Scouts to use this property as part of their treks.



Hiking down from Wilson Mesa



Hiking down from Wilson Mesa



Hiking down from Wilson Mesa



Hiking up Middle Ponil Canyon to Rich Cabins Camp



Hiking up Middle Ponil Canyon to Rich Cabins Camp



Hiking up Middle Ponil Canyon to Rich Cabins Camp



Once at Rich Cabins, the crew checked in with the staff and then hung out on the porch for a while, hoping that the rain would soon stop. As is common for most staff camps, crews are not allowed to eat on the staff cabin porches, so the crew hunkered down under a pine tree to eat lunch. By this point in time, everyone in the crew was wet and cold. After lunch, the crew hung out on the porch for a bit until the staff gave the crew a tour of the cabins. Mr. McGrath encouraged the scouts to ask lots of questions so that they could stay inside the cabin longer. Nathan rose to the challenge.



Rich Cabins Camp



Bedroom in Rich Cabins



Dining room in Rich Cabins



Kitchen in Rich Cabins



Foyer in Rich Cabins



Fireplace in the cabin's bedroom



The crew got a tour of the historic cabins



Rich Cabins Camp is a bit unique in that the camp is managed by Philmont but is actually located on private property. The program at this camp is homesteading and includes such activities as the historic cabin tours, gardening, milking cows, tending to the animals, candle making, and an evening porch program. The camp also contains a commissary for food pickup.

The camp is named after the Rich family, who lived on the property and ran a ranching operation from 1880 to the mid-1910s. The Rich family immigrated to New Mexico from Austria. The first member of the family to immigrate to the United States was Frieda and her husband, Joseph Wertz. They settled in the town of Catskill, located north of the present-day Rich Cabins site. Joe Rich was the next family member to immigrate, and he was the one who established the Rich Ranch and built the cabin at the present-day camp site. A few years later Joe's brothers, John and Louis, came and became partners in the ranching operation. David was the last brother to arrive in the area.

As additional family members arrived, the original cabin was enlarged several times, and was considered a very nice home in its day.

In 1916, the Rich brothers sold the property to Stanley M. Chase of the neighboring Chase Ranch. In 1918, Joe had relocated to Wyoming with his two brothers, John and David, where they established the Rich Brothers Ranch. Frieda and her husband moved to Trinidad. Only Louis stayed in New Mexico, with his descendants still living in the area.

The setting for Rich Cabins is the summer of 1900 and the programming focuses on homesteading. Due to the rain, all the programming associated with taking care of the animals was cancelled, but the crew was able to do the cabin tour and learn about candle making. Each scout got the opportunity to make their own candles.



Declan McGrath, Petey Wilkens, Ben Adkins, Wesley Anglin, and Mr. McGrath making homemade candles



Once the candle is made the starter weight is cut off from the candle



Dipping a string in hot wax to make homemade candles





Mr. McGrath and Isaac Lohmueller with their candles



A finished candle

After completing the candle making, the crew noticed that the rain had stopped, so they ventured out to the campsite to set up the tents and dining fly. A nearby tree was commandeered as an impromptu clothesline to help dry out everyone's wet gear. Rich Cabins is a low impact camp, so there aren't established campsites. Crews camp anywhere in the grassy field that covers the floor of the canyon, about half a mile from the cabin. Rich Cabins has a commissary, so the crew picked up their next batch of food, which consisted of 7 meals.



View looking up Middle Ponil Canyon



View of Rich Cabins Camp



View of Rich Cabins Camp



Crew's campsite





A lone tree next to the crew's tent site became a clothesline



Toby Rainey sumping the day's dinner



After a long day of rain a rainbow came out



Isaac Lohmueller was tossing Combo's snacks, which Sam Noble was trying to catch with his mouth



Sam Noble's successful catch

At 7:00 pm that evening, the camp's program focused on farm chores. Originally, only Sam wanted to go to the program, but in the end, almost all of the boys went, leaving Nate, Wesley, and Toby to finish cleaning and hanging the bear bags. They were a bit annoyed and exhausted, teaching a valuable lesson for the crew. Moving forward, chores would be wrapped up before a group left for program.

At the evening program, the scouts fed the chickens and then corralled them into their hen house for the evening. They fed the burro and the goats, then spent the rest of the time scooping up the animal poo.





Declan McGrath and Sam Noble



Burro



Goat



Ben Adkins and Sam Noble corralling the chickens into their hen house



Ben Adkins and Sam Noble corralling the chickens into their hen house



Isaac Lohmueller and Sam Noble filling the feeding trough



Nathan Young mucking the animal pen



Isaac Lohmueller mucking the barn





Nathan Young mucking the animal pen



Sam Noble, Declan McGrath, Petey Wilkens, Ben Adkins and a goat



Petey Wilkens mucking the animal pen



Nathan Young and the piglets



Mr. Lohmueller and the piglets



Isaac Lohmueller



Isaac Lohmueller and the piglets



Animal yard



Petey Wilkens with the piglets



After the farm chores, the staff put on a porch performance. The four staff members played a variety of musical instruments and sang many songs. The scouts were energized and highly engaged in the show. For one of the songs the staff passed out a variety of “musical instruments”, such as metal spoons, rusty hinges, a broom, washboard, etc., and they had the scouts play along to their song. Toby had received the broom. In the middle of the song, the staff stopped singing and one shouted out, “Broom solo!” and Toby did an outstanding improv on the broom, swishing the bristles across the floor to make sound. For another song the homesteader’s wife, Frankie, sang solo. She had an amazing singing voice.

At the end of the program, they ended it with the traditional Philmont Hymn. All current and past staff were invited to come up and join in the Rich Cabins staff in singing the song. Mr. Lohmueller got up and joined the staff, since he worked on staff one year while he was in college. After the song, the staff then announced that the porch program was officially over, but that the scouts could stay longer for an after show for more songs if they wanted. The scouts all energetically yelled, ”Yes!”.

After the show the scouts went back to camp. It was still wet and cold but not raining. The high temperature for the day was 64 F.



Staff hosting the porch show



Staff hosting the porch show



Mr. Lohmueller joined the staff for the singing of the Philmont Hymn



**Thursday**  
**June 23, 2022**  
**Trek day 8**

Overnight the temperature got to a low of 51 degrees. In the morning, the sky was mostly sunny when the crew got up at 6:00, giving a welcome relief from the rain of the day before. The crew took down the camp and headed up to the cabin area for breakfast. The crew was able to leave Rich Cabins for Baldy Skyline around 8:30.



Sunrise. A welcome sight after the previous day of rain



View of the canyon from the campsite



Declan McGrath with his repaired rain pants



Wesley Anglin, Toby Rainey, and Petey Wilkens crossing a small stream



Petey Wilkens crossing a stream



Heading up to the staff cabin for breakfast



View looking down the Middle Ponil Canyon





View looking back towards Rich Cabins



View looking up Middle Ponil Canyon



Ben Adkins locking the gate behind the crew



View looking down Middle Ponil Canyon



Mr. McGrath and Sam Noble checking the map



Hiking out of Rich Cabins



Wildflower



Shadow hiker



Nate Booher





Starting the climb out of Middle Ponil Canyon up to Wilson Mesa



Horned lizard



Sam Noble



Petey Wilkens



Mr. Lohmueller

The crew maintained a quick and steady pace up the trail to the top of Wilson Mesa. Like yesterday, the mesa was devoid of any animals, but the mesa did yield a great view of Baldy Mountain.



View across the top of Wilson Mesa



View across Wilson Mesa with Baldy Mountain





Hiking across Wilson Mesa



Baldy Mountain



Nathan Young closing the gate in the fence line



Starting the hike down off Wilson Mesa



Hiking down from Wilson Mesa towards Pueblano



Break time



Ben Adkins



Sam Noble



Declan McGrath





Wesley Anglin



Nathan Young



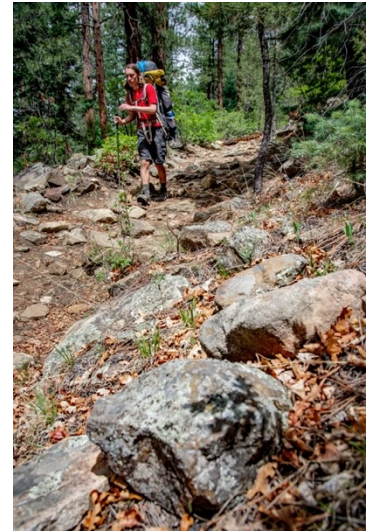
Petey Wilkens



Nate Booher



Toby Rainey



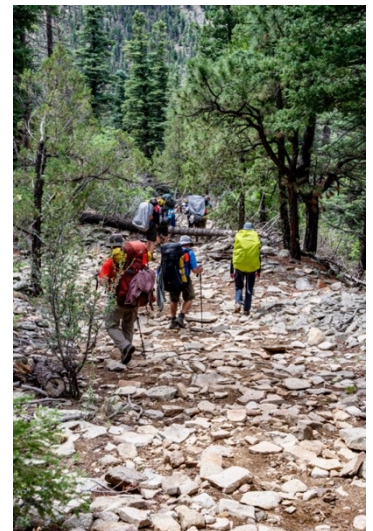
Isaac Lohmueller



Mr. Wilkens



Mr. McGrath



On the trail from Wilson Mesa



The crew made it down to Pueblano for lunch. Part of lunch included “Chicken in a Biscuit” crackers. Several people in the crew had heard of them before, but most hadn’t. The consensus was that the crackers were pretty tasty. Toby was the guest announcer for the Morning Show during lunch. The crew was supposed to have program at Pueblano this day, but since they were able to squeeze in the tie making two days prior, the crew skipped it this day.



Crossing South Ponil Creek next to Pueblano Camp



Crossing South Ponil Creek next to Pueblano Camp



Taking a break at Pueblano Camp



Mr. Lohmueller working with Sam Noble on reading the map



Toby Rainey had the chance to be the guest host for the Morning Show

After lunch, the crew headed up a side canyon enroute to Baldy Skyline. The hike was uneventful. When the crew arrived at the campsite, they found a daring mini bear in the area looking for some food. The crew set up tents and then hung up the bear bags to protect the crew’s food from the mini bear. In the process of hanging the rope over the bear cable, one of the scouts got the bear rope tangled with some rope that was already knotted onto the bear cable. The crew tried to get the bear rope free but did not have any success. Several scouts ran down to the conservation site that was near the campsite to ask if the staff had any long-handled tools that they could use to cut the bear cable as high as possible to maximize



the amount of recovered rope. Brendon, a member of the conservation crew staff, came back with the scouts with a pair of loppers. To salvage as much rope as possible, the scouts lashed hiking poles onto the handles of the loppers. The lashings weren't strong enough and so the loppers weren't able to cut the rope. Brendon ended up cutting the rope as high as he could reach using the loppers without any extensions, leaving the rest of the rope hanging. Fortunately, he had a spare bear bag rope at the conservation site and ended up swapping ropes with the crew.



Elaborate switch back on the trail up to Baldy Skyline



Break time



Passing through a small meadow on the way up to the Baldy Skyline



Sam Noble conferring with Mr. McGrath on the crew's location



On the trail



On the trail

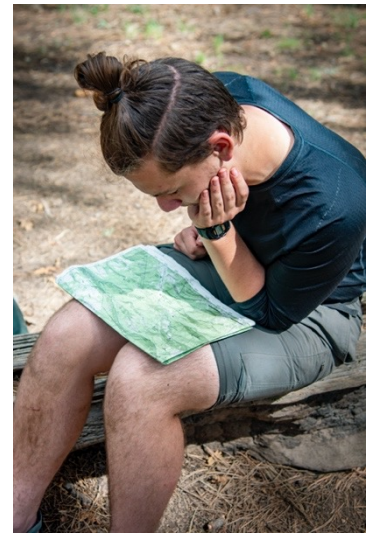




View from the back of the line



A deer skull was hanging on a tree



Toby Rainey studying the map



Raising the bear bags



Tying the bear bags off to the trees



Lashing loppers to hiking poles



Attempting to rescue the knotted bear bag rope



Cutting the stuck bear bag rope to salvage as much line as possible



Cutting the stuck bear bag rope to salvage as much line as possible



With Baldy Skyline being a trail camp there wasn't any evening program. The crew used this as a down-day to relax and recoup. Today's route was the first of the three hardest days on the trek, with more mileage and elevation gain than they have done so far.



Mr. Wilkens drying out his tent



Nate Booher



Declan McGrath setting up his tent



Petey Wilkens, Sam Noble



Isaac Lohmueller, Petey Wilkens, and Nathan Young purifying water



Declan McGrath and Ben Adkins cooking dinner



Mr. McGrath journaling



Mr. Wilkens journaling





Relaxing after the day's hike



The crew set up a clothesline to dry clothes from the previous day's hike in the rain



Petey Wilkens filling water bottles

The scouts had started to develop some interesting eating habits. Hot chocolate packets are often included with breakfast. Nobody wants to clean in the morning, so the boys eat the powder straight out of the packet. They seem to enjoy it! They also do the same with oatmeal packets – just eat it dry right out of the pack. Triscuits are a big hit. Meat sticks are also hot commodities. The crew occasionally gets little containers of peanut butter that the boys will dip the meat sticks into. It gets creative out here! Aside from that, meals often contain granola packs, animal crackers, cheese dips, ritz and saltine crackers, stroopwaffels and lots of “Cliff” type bars – usually at breakfast and dinner. At the staff camps, they have “swap boxes” where you can trade for other foods. Not surprisingly, it is normally filled with whatever nobody wants, but occasionally the boys find a treasure in there.

Every camp, regardless of whether it is a trail or staff camp, has a “Red Roof”. This is Philmont’s term for a two-seater outhouse. Each seat is separately enclosed and are arranged to be back-to-back. Each toilet is surrounded by walls for privacy, but there are open spaces at the bottom and top to allow airflow. A pit underneath the seat holds all the waste. “I am going to the Red Roof” was the euphemism someone said if they needed to use the restroom. About halfway through the trip, Toby modified it to add some character by saying that he was going to visit New Zealand. One idiosyncrasy about the Red Roofs, however, is that pee is not allowed to go into the pits, as it leads to it stinking. You have to go pee outside before using the Red Roof to go poo.



Small pasture next to the crew's campsite



Ponderosa pinecone



As a way of monitoring the overall health of the hikers, Philmont uses a bit of potty humor. After any time you use the Red Roof, you must give it a rating that you share with the crew. If you had to pee, you had to say how clear it was. If you had to poo, you had to give it a number. A “1” is so runny, you could pass it through a screen and the screen would come out clean. A “10” is basically so hard that it hurts and so solid that you don’t even need to wipe. A “mythical 11” is when you are so convinced that it will be a 10 that you don’t even bring toilet paper with you. It is called mythical because it rarely works out for the camper who tries, and who then must call for someone to bring the TP.



Petey Wilkens, Sam Noble, Nathan Young cleaning dishes



Doing the sump dance



The crew spent the evening relaxing around camp



The campsite was within a stand of ponderosa pines

After dinner, Sam, Toby, and Mr. Lohmueller went to a meadow near the camp to take some pictures. The sun was setting and there was a brilliant display of color in the sky.



Sam Noble, Toby Rainey



Mr. Lohmueller photographing Evening primrose wildflowers



Mr. Lohmueller's wildflower shot





Dramatic sunset



Dramatic sunset



**Friday**  
**June 24, 2022**  
**Trek day 9**

The morning started with a colorful sunrise. The Scouts had a Scoutmaster Challenge to get out of camp within 50 minutes after the end of the Morning Show. The timer on Mr. Lohmueller's phone went off just as the last of the crew stepped onto the trail heading out of the campsite. The crew hiked a few minutes and stopped to eat breakfast in a small meadow. While eating, two mini-bears (Philmont's semi-affectionate nickname for any number of small, furred animals, mainly squirrels and chipmunks) showed up, scampering around the crew, looking for food. After breakfast, the crew started the day's hike but had a bit of difficulty finding the correct trail out of the Baldy Skyline, but after only a handful of minutes found the correct path.



Sunrise



Sunrise



Evening primrose wildflowers at sunrise



Sunrise in the camp before the crew woke up



Mini-bear (aka., squirrel)



Breakfast time



Mini-bear (aka., squirrel)





Petey Wilkens getting his bearings before starting the day's hiking



Hiking down the road with a view of Baldy. The crew had started down this road and within a few minutes realized they were on the wrong trail

From Baldy Skyline the crew worked their way to Ewell Park and then over to Baldy Town. During this stretch of trail, the crew passed through a portion of the forest where the conservation crew had created a large number of wood piles to be burned during the winter season as a way of getting rid of all the dead wood on the forest floor. On the final descent into Baldy Town, the crew got a magnificent view of Baldy Mountain.



View of some of the burn piles to be used to clear out the dead wood on the ground. The piles will be burned during the winter



Panoramic view showing the progress of the conservation department in clearing out the dead wood on the forest floor





Baldy Mountain



Crossing a small area of loose rock, called a scree field



Hiking down the trail



Hiking over a boardwalk in a muddy area



Mr. McGrath



Nathan Young



Mr. Wilkens





Panoramic view of Ute Creek Canyon, which extends from Baldy Mountain on the right to the open plains off in the distance on the left. The road leads into Baldy Town.



Hiking down the road towards Baldy Town



Petey Wilkens



Ben Adkins



Mr. Lohmueller



Approaching Baldy Town

Once in Baldy Town, the crew ate lunch and then headed to the commissary to pick up the next food drop, which consisted of 9 meals. It had started to lightly rain around the time the crew was leaving Baldy Town. From Baldy Town the crew headed over to French Henry. It had stopped raining about the time the crew reached French Henry.





Mr. McGrath, Mr. Lohmueller, and Mr. Wilkens enjoying the couch on the cabin porch



Taking a break on the staff cabin porch



Staff worker dressed in period clothing



Declan McGrath in the camp store



An old car permanently parked next to the staff cabin



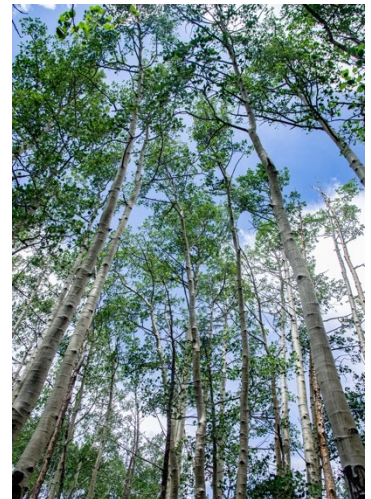
View looking down Ute Creek Canyon



Lunch time at Baldy Town



Declan McGrath, Ben Adkins



Grove of quaking aspen trees





The recycled meal bag “snake”



Isaac Lohmueller heading up to the staff cabin



Dividing up the meals after a resupply



One person's amount of food to carry



Sam Noble



Hiking out of Baldy Town on the way to Copper Park Camp



Hiking out of Baldy Town on the way to Copper Park Camp



Break time



On the way to Copper Park, the crew passed through French Henry Camp, where they were scheduled for program activities. The program at French Henry focuses on the rich mining history in the area, which started around the 1860s. The camp is named after the large French Henry Mine near the camp, which was started by a Frenchman by the name of Henry Burell in 1869. The mine was looking for gold within Baldy Mountain.

After getting their porch talk the crew headed down to the stream to try panning for gold. Unfortunately, no one found any gold.



Crossing South Ponil Creek to enter French Henry Camp



Crew getting the porch talk about French Henry Camp



Hanging out on the porch at French Henry Camp



Staff member explaining how to pan for gold



The crew had the chance to pan for gold





Ben Adkins



Petey Wilkens



Nate Booher



Petey Wilkens



Nate Booher



Ben Adkins



Wesley Anglin



Toby Rainey





Nathan Young



Mr. Lohmueller



Isaac Lohmueller

After panning for gold, the crew went to the blacksmithing shop to learn about blacksmithing and to work on a project as a crew. The scouts were given several options as to what type of implement they wanted to make, and they opted for a butter knife. The crew started with a square bar of iron. Each scout got the opportunity to complete one step in the blacksmithing process, whether it was pounding, bending, or twisting the metal, until the knife was completed.



Listening to instructions at the blacksmith forge



Sam Noble



Wesley Anglin



Sam Noble



Declan McGrath





Nate Booher



Toby Rainey



Ben Adkins



Petey Wilkens



Nathan Young



Isaac Lohmueller



The butter knife that the Scouts made



Nate Booher, Nathan Young, Sam Noble, Ben Adkins, Toby Rainey, staff member, Declan McGrath, Wesley Anglin, Petey Wilkens, Isaac Lohmueller



The next activity was the mine tour, which was located about 15 minutes up the trail from the main cabin. The mine on the tour is not the namesake French Henry Mine, but another mine near the camp called Aztec Ponil 1. This mine was also a gold mine. Two prospectors, Mathew Lynch and Tim Foley, found gold flakes in Ute Creek near the base of Mount Baldy in 1867. Tracing the gold to its source, the two prospectors discovered a rich vein of gold further up the mountain and established the Aztec Ponil mine in 1868. Over the next several years, the mine yielded a tremendous amount of gold. However, after about 4 years in operation, gold production from the mine plummeted and the property was eventually sold several times. Sporadic attempts to revive gold production in the mine were made but were never very successful. The mine finally closed down in 1940. The economic success of this particular mine, however, spurred significant prospecting throughout the region as late as 1930, including the namesake French Henry Mine.

The tour took the crew about 150 yards into the old mine. Inside, the staff guide talked about how the mine was dug and a bit of the history of the mine.



Mine entrance



Board to show who is in the mine



Mr. McGrath walking through the mine



View inside the mine



Staff member explaining how mines were dug



View looking towards entrance of the mine



Outside the mine entrance, the view looking down South Ponil Canyon was impressive. At one point in time the crew saw a rainbow far off in the distance.



Historical tram ore car outside the mine entrance



View looking down South Ponil Canyon



Petey Wilkens



Rainbow in the distance

After the tour, the crew talked to several other groups that were coming down from Copper Park, the crew's destination for the evening. The other scouts mentioned that the well at Copper Park wasn't working so the camp was dry. There was a water source at the mine, so the crew got the approval of the staff worker to have dinner there. The plan was to fill up after dinner with as much water as the crew could carry before heading up to Copper Park. The crew then took an inventory of the number of MicroPur water treatment tablets available only to learn that they only had enough to treat about 20 liters of water. This would have been enough water at most for the rest of this day. The crew would be without access to clean water for the summit attempt the following day through to late in the morning the day after that. Several of the adults at that point headed back to the staff cabin at French Henry and were able to get several sleeves of tablets, enough to get the crew over to Baldy Town where they could get some more tablets and clean water.

While all that was going on, several scouts started working on dinner. The crew had chicken broth packets, plus chicken and packets of cheesy mashed potatoes. The boys opted to mix it all together into a chicken/cheesy mashed potato soup. It sounded odd, but the boys agreed it tasted pretty good.

While dinner was being prepared, several other scouts purified as much water as they could and filled everyone's water bottles and bladders, including two 5-liter and one 3-liter bag. During the hike up to Copper Park, Nathan carried the 3-liter bag, which he named Simba, all the way, while the rest of the scouts took turns carrying the 5-liter bags. The scouts agreed that it was easier for one scout to carry both 5-liter bags simultaneously rather than having two scouts carry each bag separately.





Hanging out while waiting for dinner to cook



Wesley Anglin and Ben Adkins doing dinner dishes



Mr. Lohmueller



Nathan Young, Toby Rainey, and Nate Booher

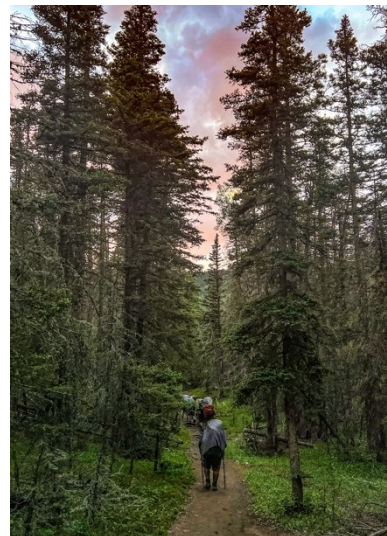
The hike from French Henry to Copper Park is very strenuous. The staff at French Henry call this stretch of trail “The Wall”, and the trail is aptly named as the trail is very steep and rugged. The trail rises over 800 feet in elevation within about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile, yielding a 22% grade. Combine that with the fact that the crew just received another food supply and that everyone was carrying more water than normal, making the packs the heaviest they have been all throughout the trek, the hike to Copper Park was brutal. Despite the strenuous hike, spirits were very high amongst the crew.

It was getting dark by the time the crew made it to Copper Park, and the afterglow of the sunset was very colorful.





Climbing “The Wall” to Copper Park Camp



Colorful skies as the crew approached Copper Park Camp



Taking a break after finishing “The Wall”



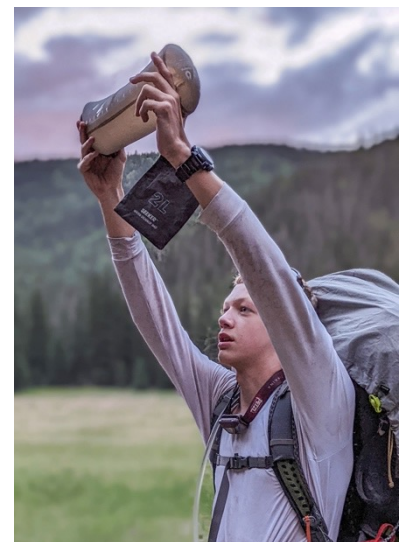
The crew highlighting the extra water they carried up “The Wall” to Copper Park



The crew enjoying the sunset



Toby Rainey



Nathan Young

The campsites at Copper Park are not clearly delineated from each other and the camp was pretty full with other crews, so it was challenging to find a spot to camp in the dark. The crew had to walk amongst the other crews before finding an open area. The scouts set up tents, hung the bear bags, and called it a night.



**Saturday**  
**June 25, 2022**  
**Trek day 10**

The main objective for the day was to summit Baldy Mountain. Philmont has four main rules for summiting:

- 1) If the crew can't see the summit because of clouds or fog, the crew can't summit
- 2) If it is raining hard or thundering, the crew can't summit
- 3) If one person needs to turn around, the whole crew turns around
- 4) The crew must start back down from the summit by noon

The scouts wanted to get up early so that they could summit by noon and get back down before any afternoon rain showers. As such, the scouts got up at 5:30. It was partly cloudy in the morning and the summit was visible from Copper Park. The conditions were right to allow the scouts to summit.



Crew's campsite at Copper Park Camp



Early morning view of Baldy Mountain



After a quick breakfast, the bear bags were hung, and the crew started the ascent up the mountain. Shortly after starting the hike, it started to rain lightly. Brief periods of low cloud cover blocked the view of the summit, but the crew continued in the hopes that the weather would clear.



Hanging the bear bags before leaving camp



Hanging the bear bags before leaving camp



The way to Baldy



The trail to the top of Baldy had a lot of switchbacks

About half-way up, the crew entered a small clearing and took a break. After about a 20-minute break, the crew started hiking again, but the trail started heading downhill. After about 10 minutes, the crew stopped for a map check and realized that they were heading down the wrong trail. Backtracking, they returned to the clearing and found the correct trail to take up to the summit.



Hiking up the trail to Baldy Mountain



Ben Adkins and Declan McGrath checking the crew's location



Mr. Lohmueller checking the map





Taking a break in a small clearing along the trail



Isaac Lohmueller, Toby Rainey



Ben Adkins



Sam Noble, Nathan Young



Wesley Anglin



Mr. Lohmueller, Isaac Lohmueller



Isaac Lohmueller, Toby Rainey, Petey Wilkens, Nathan Young



Mr. Wilkens, Petey Wilkens





Petey Wilkens



View of Baldy as the crew took a break



Wildflowers in front of an old tree



View of Baldy



View of Baldy



New life replacing the old



Wildflowers and dead wood

Once the crew crossed over the tree line at an elevation of around 11,800 feet, the weather conditions turned very windy and cold. A lot of clouds started to roll in. Visibility of the top was on and off as clouds rolled by.





Panoramic view of the surrounding wilderness to the north of Baldy Mountain



Mr. McGrath, Declan McGrath



Toby Rainey



Declan McGrath



A flat stretch of trail



A steep stretch of trail





View of the surrounding wilderness



Another steep section of trail



View of Baldy Mountain



A rock cairn marked the trail to the summit



Ben Adkins



Mr. Lohmueller



Wesley Anglin



Taking a break

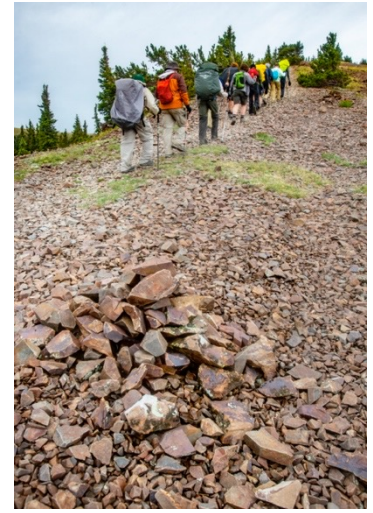




Wind battered tree trunk



A rock cairn marks the trail



View of the trail



Panoramic view of Baldy and the surrounding wilderness. The green meadow at the base of Baldy is Copper Park



Baldy



Break time



The trail crosses a saddle region before the final ascent



Ragwort wildflowers





Hiking past a rock cairn



A flat section of trail before the final ascent



The crew was hiking above some clouds



A cloud blew across the trail ahead

As the crew got closer to the summit, they came across an old shed next to an abandoned mineshaft. At the time the summit was enshrouded in clouds, so the crew decided to stop for lunch at the shed and to wait out the cloud cover, hoping that the clouds would clear so that they could summit.



Approaching an old mining shed



The crew took a break waiting for the clouds to clear



The crew ate lunch next to the abandoned building



An old abandoned mine

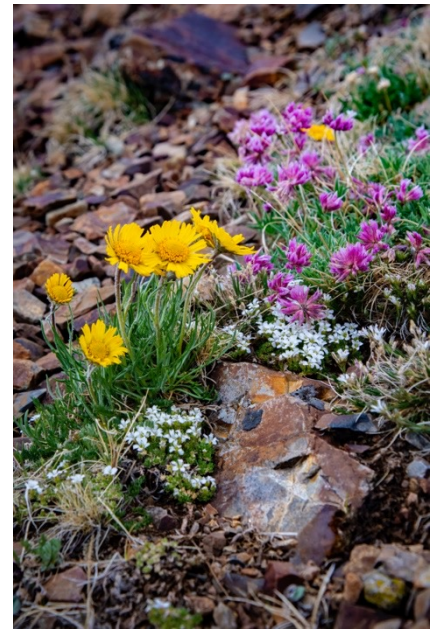




Entrance to an old mine near the summit of Baldy



Wildflowers



Wildflowers

After about half an hour, the crew was discussing whether to push on to the summit or to return down the mountain. The crew was only about 300 feet in elevation below the summit, and only about 10 minutes of hiking away, but the weather was not improving. It was still windy and cold, with clouds still covering the summit. Several scouts mentioned that they were starting to get cold and another expressed concern for the crew's safety, so the decision was made to turn back at that time.

The walk back across the ridge was rough. The weather was cold, super windy, rainy, and foggy. The crew made it through that and back to the wooded slope, which made hiking easier. About half-way down the mountain the clouds began to break, and the sun came out for a while, so spirits picked up a bit. The sunny skies lasted for about an hour before the skies clouded over again. The crew got back to camp about 2 pm. Having the same camp two nights in a row is nice! The boys relaxed for a few hours. Once again, the sun came out. Late in the afternoon, however, the rain started again and lasted the rest of the day, while temperatures hovered in the low 50s. Morale was significantly dampened, and the crew called it a night early.



View of the summit of Baldy





Hanging out at the campsite



Toby Rainey, Petey Wilkens, Isaac Lohmueller

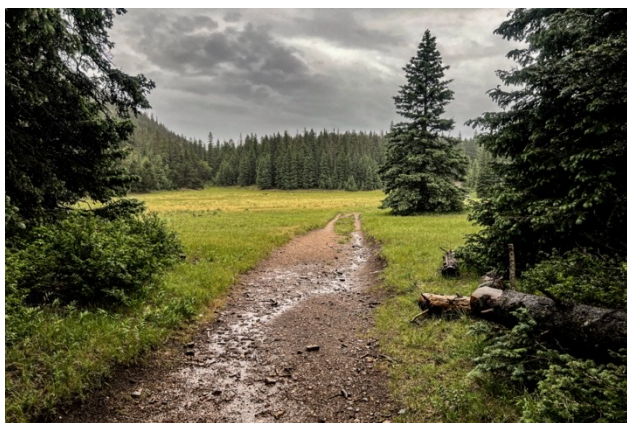


Nathan Young and Isaac Lohmueller setting up the dining fly



**Sunday**  
**June 26, 2022**  
**Trek day 11**

The crew was originally planning on getting up at 6:00 am, but it was still raining at that time. The decision was made to sleep in for another hour to give the rain a chance to let up, but it didn't stop. The crew got up at 7:00. The morale was low as the crew ate breakfast and cleaned up camp. Declan had the great idea of working together as a crew to get the tents taken down. He suggested that the crew could take the fly off one tent and then have 4 scouts hold the fly over the tent body so 2 other scouts could pack the tent body away without getting the inside soaked by the rain.



Copper Park's meadow



Rainy morning



Baldy Mountain is hidden by clouds



Tearing down camp – using the tent fly to keep the tent body dry



The crew made their way to Baldy Town, where they were able to pick up some water treatment packets. From there the crew took the trail down to Ute Meadows campsite and then to Miranda, the final destination for the day.



Declan McGrath, Pety Wilkens



Ben Adkins, Wesley Anglin



Nate Booher



Hiking in the rain



Ben Adkins



Nathan Young

The camp is named after Guadalupe Miranda. Miranda, and fellow rancher Carlos Beaubien, were awarded a 1,700,000-acre land grant in 1841 that included much of the land that would become Philmont. This was one of the largest contiguous private landholdings in the history of the United States.

The program at Miranda Camp focuses on the fur trade and the mountain man rendezvous and is set in 1838. A rendezvous was a trading fair that was held on a regular basis, that allowed traders to bring goods like rifles, gun powder, cloth, tools, and beads from the East to be exchanged for animal furs. In the 1830s, the fur trade was the largest industry in the United States and the rendezvous was a defining feature of that industry. Trade rendezvous were held regularly from 1825 to 1840.



The crew's program at Miranda was supposed to be black powder shooting, tomahawk throwing, rendezvous site visit, a game called Mountain Ball, and an evening porch program, but because of the rain these events were cancelled. The staff did put on a program related to trading in the 1800s.



On the road back to Baldy Town Camp



Hiking in the fog and rain



Low cloud cover



Hiking in the fog and rain



Lunch break on the trail



Inside the trader's tent demonstration



The crew set up tents using the dining fly as a cover to help keep the tent bodies as dry as possible. The crew worked together to hold the fly while 2 scouts set up their tent, repeating this for all tents. Afterwards, the crew set up the dining fly, tying it to the trees so that everyone would be able to stand underneath it.



Working as a team to set up everyone's tents



Hanging out under the dining fly



Nathan Young

It was about this time that Nate told the crew advisors that he was getting very cold. Nate was wet and the air temperature was hovering around 50 F. After seeing that Nate was suffering from hypothermia, Mr. Wilkens got out an emergency blanket and Mr. Lohmueller started boiling water. Sam and Petey ran up to the staff cabin to ask for some hot water as well. They came back with a staff member, who after seeing Nate, said that he wanted Nate to go up to the staff cabin. The cabin is heated, and Nate could be treated for hypothermia up there. Nate was very weak and could barely walk, so Sam and Petey put Nate's arms over their shoulders and helped support him as they walked to the cabin. Nathan and Mr. Lohmueller walked ahead of them to clear any obstacles from the trail so that Nate wouldn't trip. At the cabin, Mr. Lohmueller stayed inside with Nate while the scouts were asked to stay out on the porch. There were about a dozen people in the cabin who were recovering from hypothermia. The staff had the oven turned on with the oven door propped open and people with the worst cases of hypothermia, including Nate, sitting next to the stove. After a while a message came over the radio from base camp, telling all staff camps that if they had a wood burning stove in their cabin, then they had an emergency use exemption on the fire ban, allowing them to build a wood fire. A big cheer went through the cabin, with the staff quickly working to get a wood fire going.



Once a good fire was going in the wood burning stove, the staff moved all the scouts over to the wood burning stove. After about 2.5 hours in the cabin, the staff member felt that Nate had recovered and could return to his camp once he felt ready to go. Mr. Lohmueller asked Mr. Wilkens to get a hot meal ready and added that he would bring Nate back to camp in about half an hour.

Once Nate was back in camp, several scouts jumped in and offered him some of their warm, and dry, clothing to help him stay warm.

While eating the mac and cheese dinner, Nate started laughing at some joke, a positive sign that he was feeling better. After dinner, the crew washed the dishes and hung up the bear bags. A lot of the mac-n-cheese had burnt on the bottom of the pot, so the scouts did the best they could. They decided that they could do a better job once back at basecamp the next day when everything wasn't cold and wet. This was the last meal that the scouts would be using the pot, so it was deemed an acceptable approach. The adults heated up water to add to water bottles for people to use to help warm up their sleeping bags, and everyone called it a night.

The rain never let up at any point in the day. The temperature stayed around 50F all day long as well.



**Monday**  
**June 27, 2022**  
**Trek day 12**

The rain hadn't stopped at all during the night.

The crew was scheduled to be at the conservation site for their work project by 7:10, so they got up around 5:45 to give them enough time to eat breakfast, tear down the camp, and get to the staff cabin.



Camp was located in a grove of pine trees



Camp was located in a grove of pine trees



Foggy morning



Packing up the campsite



Campsite



Wesley Anglin, Declan McGrath



Hiking up to the staff cabin



Hiking up to the staff cabin





Heading up to the staff cabin for the conservation service project



Toby Rainey and the pack line

Once at the staff cabin the conservation staff told the crew that they wouldn't be working on their project that day since it was still raining. The staff did want to still meet with the crew to give the crew a conservation talk to fulfill the conservation requirement for the participant patch.

The staff took the crew down to the conservation work site, which was located about half-way down the meadow in the camp. Had the weather been dry, the crew would have been clearing the dead wood lying on the forest floor and piling the wood into burn piles. The piles would then be burned during the winter months when the risk of forest fires is low.

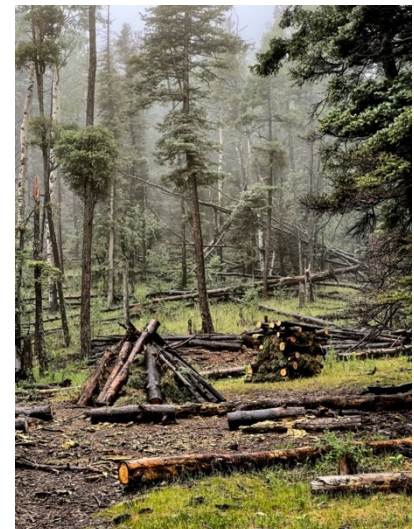
The staff talked about what conservation is and why it is important, the role of forest fires in forest management, Philmont's philosophy on forest fires, and what Philmont is doing to address the risk of forest fires in the future. They also talked about opportunities for scouts to come back to Philmont within the conservation department. They concluded the talk with one of the staff speaking about his college research project related to the environmental impact of cowbirds. Cowbirds are classified as brood parasites since they lay their eggs in the nests of other birds, forcing the host birds to raise the cowbird young in addition to their own. This pushes the burden of raising the young from the cowbirds to the host birds, putting the health of the host bird population at risk. In areas where the cowbird population is high, other bird species tend to decline in number.



Wildflowers in the camp meadow



Conservation staff waiting to start their conservation talk in lieu of service time



Conservation project site



The crew was supposed to be at the conservation project for 3 hours, but the conservation talk only took about 1 hour, leaving 2 free hours to spend. The crew opted to hang out at the staff cabin as it was still lightly raining.



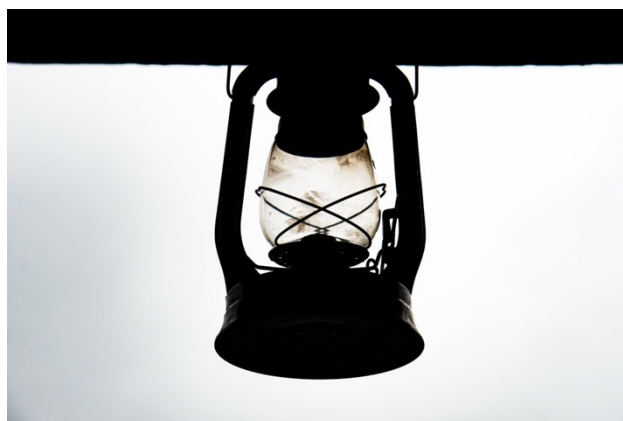
Mr. Wilkens



View of the Miranda Camp meadow from the staff cabin



Black eyed susan wildflower



Lantern hanging in the staff cabin

While hanging out on the cabin porch, a staff member dropped some leftover food into the swap box, including a full-size summer sausage. Several scouts were quick on the draw to grab the coveted prize, but Ben came out the winner, scooping up the sausage. Sam quickly started to negotiate with Ben to split the sausage with him. Sam's best offer came to a snack and a drink of Ben's choice once back at basecamp, three crisp high-fives, and a firm handshake. Sam was getting pretty close to closing the deal with Ben when all of a sudden, a different staff member heard about the negotiations and offered a counteroffer of his own. During the trading demonstration the day before a different staff member was explaining how beaver traps work and explained how the trap isn't designed to break the beaver's bones but rather to simply entrap the beaver. As a result, the trap doesn't close with a lot of force, such that a person can set off the trap with his hands and not get hurt. The presenter had then demonstrated this by punching the release mechanism on the set trap, causing the trap to snap shut on his wrist without causing any harm. Today, the staff member offered up that he would allow Ben to punch a beaver trap. Ben accepted the counteroffer. What the staff member failed to mention was that he wasn't going to actually set the trap. He simply held up the unset trap by its chain and allowed Ben to punch the side of the trap.





Staff worker in period clothing



Ben Adkins, Declan McGrath, Sam Noble



Negotiations between Ben Adkins, Sam Noble, and a staff member

A little bit later the crew went down to hang out inside the camp's teepee tent, which was big enough for the entire crew to fit in. While hanging out in the tent, the staff member came back and said that since Ben was such a good sport, he gave the sausage back to Ben. Ben then went to Sam and accepted his offer.



Getting out of the rain into the teepee



The beef stick negotiations continue



Toby Rainey



Ben Adkins, Nathan Young, Wesley Anglin, Petey Wilkens, Mr. Wilkens



Isaac Lohmueller, Declan McGrath



Around 11:00 am, the crew started down the trail to the Maxwell Trailhead to be picked up by the bus. It was still lightly raining and only stopped once they got near the trailhead. After 46 straight hours of rain, the sun finally came out.



Wesley Anglin



Nate Booher



Mr. Lohmueller



Nate Booher



Declan McGrath



Wesley Anglin



Isaac Lohmueller





Ben Adkins



Sam Noble



Nathan Young



Petey Wilkens



Toby Rainey



Mr. Wilkens



Mr. McGrath



On the trail to Miranda Trailhead





Break time



Hiking on the trail to Miranda Trailhead



Crossing a stream



Hiking the trail towards Miranda Trailhead



Hiking the trail towards Miranda Trailhead

Once the crew reached the Miranda Trail Head, they crew had about an hour before the bus was scheduled to arrive. They broke out a frisbee and started to play with it. The sister crew was also there and several of their scouts joined in with 598. The bus eventually arrived, and the crews loaded up. On the way back the scouts spotted a herd of elk in the meadow next to the road.



Mr. Lohmueller, Declan McGrath, Mr. Wilkens, Toby Rainey, Wesley Anglin, Petey Wilkens, Nathan Young, Ben Adkins, Sam Noble, Mr. McGrath, Nate Booher, Isaac Lohmueller



The Same Shirt For All The Trek club: Wesley Anglin, Declan McGrath, Sam Noble, Mr. McGrath





Waiting for the bus to come



Waiting for the bus to come



Playing frisbee



Petey Wilkens



Sam Noble



Sam Noble, Ben Adkins, Isaac Lohmueller



Ben Adkins



Nathan Young, Wesley Anglin, Isaac Lohmueller,  
Toby Rainey, and Petey Wilkens





Loading up the bus



Declan McGrath, Ben Adkins



On the bus

Back at base camp the sun was shining in a bright, blue sky, and the temperature was warm, all very welcomed by the crew. The crew began the busy process of checking back in and getting crew gear returned to Philmont. Ben and Sam tackled the mac-and-cheese pot from the night before. It was pretty bad to start with and the two scouts weren't able to get it perfect, but at least good enough. The Philmont staff working gear check-in simply said, "Yeah, that's a lot better." He shrugged his shoulders and said, "I'd eat out of that", and accepted the pot. Meanwhile a separate group of scouts washed the tents and dining fly, hanging them up to dry. The scouts then had the opportunity to get showers, the first since before leaving to go into the backcountry.



Unloading the bus back at base camp



It is tradition to toss your boots onto the Philmont sign after your trek. Philmont occasionally removes and donates the boots





Toby Rainey and Declan McGrath washing the tents



Nathan Young hanging the tents to dry



Toby Rainey and Declan McGrath washing the tents



Washed tents hanging to dry



Home bound area of base camp



Dining hall

After dinner, the crew attended the closing campfire program. There were 4 staff members telling stories and singing songs. The program was a high-energy show, and the scouts were really engaged. The show ended the same way all campfire programs end at Philmont, with the campfire leader inviting all former and current staff members to come up front and join in the singing of the Philmont hymn. Mr. Lohmueller, who served on staff in 1993, joined in with the rest of the staff. During the song, the boys all had their arms around each other's shoulders, swaying back and forth, singing along. Although the campfire program was officially over, the 4 staff members offered an after-show, with more songs.





Staff hosting the closing campfire program



Closing campfire program



Closing campfire program



Closing campfire program



Petey Wilkens being recognized for serving as crew leader



Mr. Lohmueller joined the staff to sing the Philmont Hymn at the end of the campfire program



Crew singing the Philmont Hymn at the end of the campfire program



It was a gorgeous, clear night with a huge number of stars in the sky. The crew had a short ceremony under the New Mexico sky to hand out the Arrowhead patches, celebrating the successful end of the trek.

Afterwards, the scouts headed back to the tents and called it a night.



Milky Way over the open prairie



Milky Way over several basecamp tents



**Tuesday**  
**June 28, 2022**

The crew got up and packed all their gear before heading to breakfast. Afterwards they had some time to kill, so they went over to the Tooth of Time to purchase some souvenirs. A lot of the scouts bought belts, belt buckles, patches, stickers, shirts, water bottles, hats, etc. Several scouts were able to take their souvenirs and get them branded.



The crew's tent city tents



Cleaning out tents and packing gear to head home



Isaac Lohmueller finishing sweeping out his tent



Petey Wilkens displaying his new Philmont belt with Declan McGrath and Ben Adkins



Hanging out at the Trading Post



Philmont brand on Mr. Wilkens' boot



Nathan Young checking the fit of his new Philmont belt





Philmont sign at the entrance to basecamp



It is tradition that scouts toss their boots onto the Philmont sign at the end of their trek

Around 10:30 the crew got on a shuttle bus to take them about 5 miles down the road into Cimmaron for lunch. There were several choices, and the crew selected the Kit Carson Restaurant, since there was both Mexican and traditional American food on the menu. After lunch, the crew walked to the Cree-Mee for ice cream. Most of the crew ordered the namesake dessert Cree-Mee, which is their version of an ice cream Blizzard. The scouts then caught the shuttle back to base camp.

It was during the morning that the crew first learned about an Amtrak train accident. The day before, an east-bound Southwest Chief train collided with a dump truck east of Kansas City, Missouri, causing a derailment. Throughout the morning, there was some ambiguity as to how the crew was going to be getting home, as the route was not passable. One of the other scout crews that was also traveling east on the Southwest Chief had heard that Amtrak wasn't running the route at all, and so that crew started looking into chartering a bus back to Galesburg. Mr. McGrath mentioned that he was interested in possibly having his crew join in on the charter bus. Shortly after that, however, the crew learned that Amtrak was still running the Southwest Chief all the way to Kansas City, Missouri, and would be bussing passengers to the final destinations from there.



Dust devil in the base camp parking lot



Nathan Young, Petey Wilkens, Wesley Anglin, and Sam Noble waiting for the bus into town



Toby Rainey, Isaac Lohmueller





View of downtown Cimarron, NM



View of downtown Cimarron, NM



View of downtown Cimarron, NM



View of downtown Cimarron, NM



Lunch in town



The crew went to the Cree-Mee Drive In for dessert



Chocolate chip Cree-Mee



During the first part of the crew's trek, Ranger Reese had instructed the crew that whenever they entered a staff camp, they should put all the crew's backpacks together in row, called a pack line. This helps keep all the crew's gear together and organized, especially important if there were multiple crews in camp at the time. Reese also taught the crew about Ranger magic that allows a pack line to suddenly disappear. When the crew was ready to leave, they would line up on both sides of the pack line and grab their backpack straps. On the count of three, everyone would simultaneously pull their pack out of the line, thus causing the line to disappear. This was a quick and efficient way for everyone to grab their pack.



Pack line of all the crew's backpacks



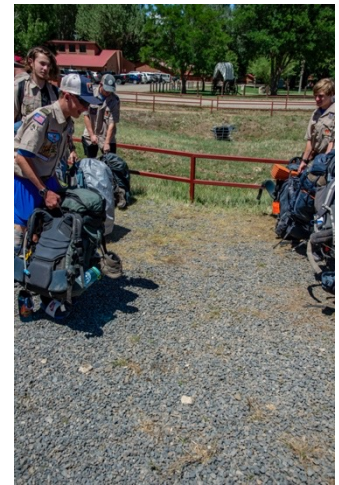
"One, two, three."



Going ....



going ....



gone. In an instant the pack line is gone.



View of Philmont's wilderness from base camp. Uracca Mesa is on the left, and the Tooth of Time on the right.



Around 2:30 the Philmont shuttle bus picked up the two crews that needed to catch the Amtrak train and drove them to Raton. The bus stopped at a local grocery store before reaching the train station to allow people to purchase some snacks for the trip home.

Once at the train station in Raton, the crew had about 2 hours to spend before the train was slated to arrive. The bus driver recommended that the crew check out the Pack Rat Gift Shop across the street. Most of the crew headed over to the store and several people purchased some gifts.

A local catering vendor offers pre-ordered New York strip steak dinners to be available to scouts boarding the train. Mr. Wilkens was able to buy just a steak and had it cut into 12 pieces, offering the pieces to the crew. Everyone agreed it was delicious.



View of Philmont's North Country from the bus ride back to Raton, NM



Amtrak's train depot in Raton, NM



Crew's gear while they were waiting for the train to arrive

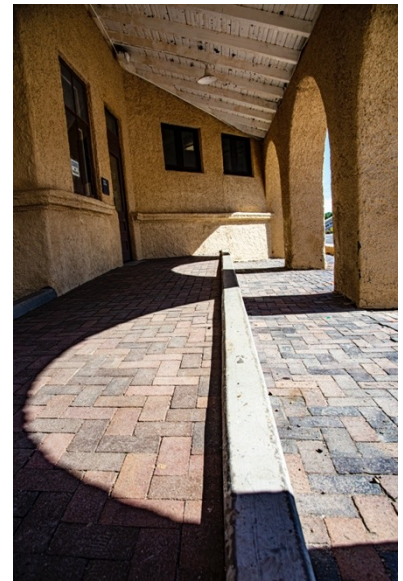




Raton, NM Amtrak station



Raton, NM Amtrak station



Shadows



At the Amtrak station in Raton, NM:  
Mr. Lohmueller, Mr. Wilkens, Declan McGrath, Wesley Anglin, Nate Booher, Toby Rainey, Isaac Lohmueller, Sam Noble, Ben Adkins, Nathan Young, Petey Wilkens, Mr. McGrath

The train finally arrived about an hour late. The scouts had been assigned to one of the cars that didn't have working air conditioning. To make up for this the staff had cleared out the lounge car and had it reserved just for the scouts.

Most of the scouts hung out in the lounge car, playing a variety of games. Mr. Lohmueller and Mr. McGrath caught up on their journals and read some books.

By the time everyone called it a night, the car with the crew's seats had cooled down a bit, making it more bearable.





The arrival of the Southwest Chief



Mr. Lohmueller



Toby Rainey, Petey Wilkens, Isaac Lohmueller, Wesley Anglin



Declan McGrath, Ben Adkins



Mr. Lohmueller, Mr. McGrath



Scouts hanging out in the lounge car



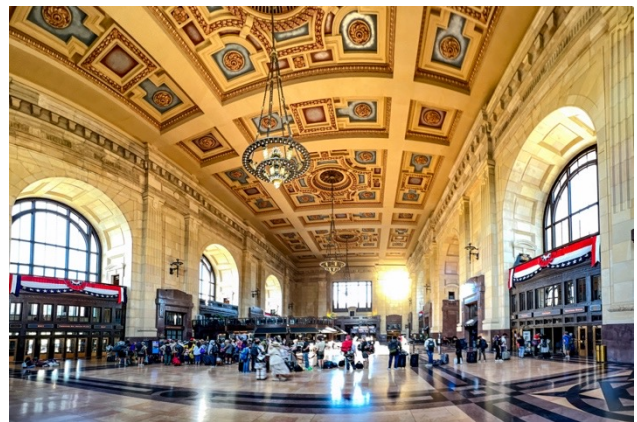
**Wednesday**  
**June 29, 2022**

The train was near Lawrence, Kansas when day broke. The train arrived in Kansas City, Missouri around 8:15 am. The crew would be disembarking from the train at this point and be picking up a bus for the rest of the journey back to Galesburg.

Out on the platform, several of the crew's adult leaders hopped into the baggage car and started a pack brigade to unload all the scouts' gear. Once everyone had their gear, they headed into the main station to await further instructions on how to get on the right bus. While waiting, a local TV news reporter approached the crew and started asking them about Philmont and their experiences there and on the train ride home. After a few minutes, the reporter asked if he could interview a scout on camera. Petey volunteered to do the interview and handled himself quite well.



On the platform heading to grab the crew's gear



Inside the train terminal



Inside the train terminal waiting further instructions



A tribute erected in the train terminal honoring all those impacted by the train accident two days prior





Petey Wilkens getting a microphone put on him by the reporter



Petey Wilkens being interviewed



Petey Wilkens being interviewed



Petey Wilkens being interviewed



The reporter spent some time talking with the crew

The bus finally arrived, and the crew got on board. Amtrak provided all the passengers with egg sandwiches from Panera Bread before the buses pulled out around 9:30 am.



Nathan Young and Petey Wilkens



Getting on the bus for the ride to Galesburg, IL



Around 12:15 the buses arrived at La Plata, Missouri to drop off some passengers and then around 2:30 pm, the buses arrived at Fort Madison, Iowa. Amtrak had Subway box lunches available for lunch. The buses stayed there only long enough to allow everyone to use the restroom and grab the food. It was then back on the bus to head further down the road.



Mr. Wilkens and Wesley Anglin on the bus



Train station in Fort Madison, Iowa



Picking up lunch in Fort Madison, Iowa



The stop at Fort Madison train station was brief. Some people were able to start eating their lunch

The rest of the bus trip was uneventful, finally arriving in Galesburg around 5:30. The crew quickly transferred their gear from the bus to the vehicles and began the trip home. The crew stopped at McDonalds for dinner. The scouts were hoping for a Wendy's, as they wanted to try a 50-piece box of chicken nuggets, but the crew couldn't find one. After filling up the vehicles with gas, the crew continued the rest of the way home. Tired but excited, the crew pulled into the BTAP around midnight.



Mr. Lohmueller and Sam Noble packing gear into the van



One last shot before starting the drive home – Petey Wilkens, Isaac Lohmueller, Toby Rainey, Sam Noble, Mr. Wilkens



## Patches Earned

The Scouts had the opportunity to earn the following patches while at Philmont.

### Participation award

This patch is awarded to any participant who completes a trek at Philmont.

The entire crew earned this patch.



### 50 Miler Award

This award is designed to stimulate interest in outdoor adventure and to promote activities that improve personal fitness, self-reliance, knowledge of the outdoors, and a connection to conservation.

To earn the patch participants have to complete a minimum 50-mile, 5-day trek by an unmotorized means, such as biking, boating, hiking, or canoeing. Each participant also needs to complete 10 hours of conservation.

The entire crew earned this patch.



### Wilderness Pledge Achievement Award

This award is designed to teach Scouts the concepts of Leave No Trace and to instill in them the Wilderness Pledge, which focuses on respecting wildlife, conserving water and protecting sources of water, respecting trails, and maintaining litter free trails, campsites, and facilities.

To earn the patch, Scouts need to demonstrate that they are following all the camping practices taught by the Ranger, take part in seven trail discussions that focus on each of the seven principals of Leave No Trace, and complete 3 hours of conservation work.

The entire crew earned this award.



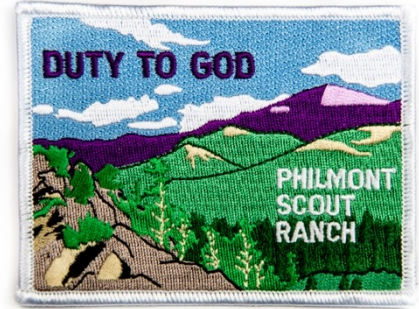


### Duty to God

The “Duty to God” program is designed to expand participants’ awareness of the bountiful creation around them, to emphasize their responsibility to the land, air, and sea, and to encourage them to examine their relationship to God.

To earn the patch participants must attend a religious service while at Philmont, participate in at least three daily devotionals with their crew, and lead Grace before a meal.

The patch was earned by Petey Wilkens, Declan McGrath, Ben Adkins, Nate Booher, Sam Noble, Nathan Young, Wesley Anglin, Toby Rainey, Mr. Lohmueller, Mr. Wilkens, and Mr. McGrath.



### Survey Participation

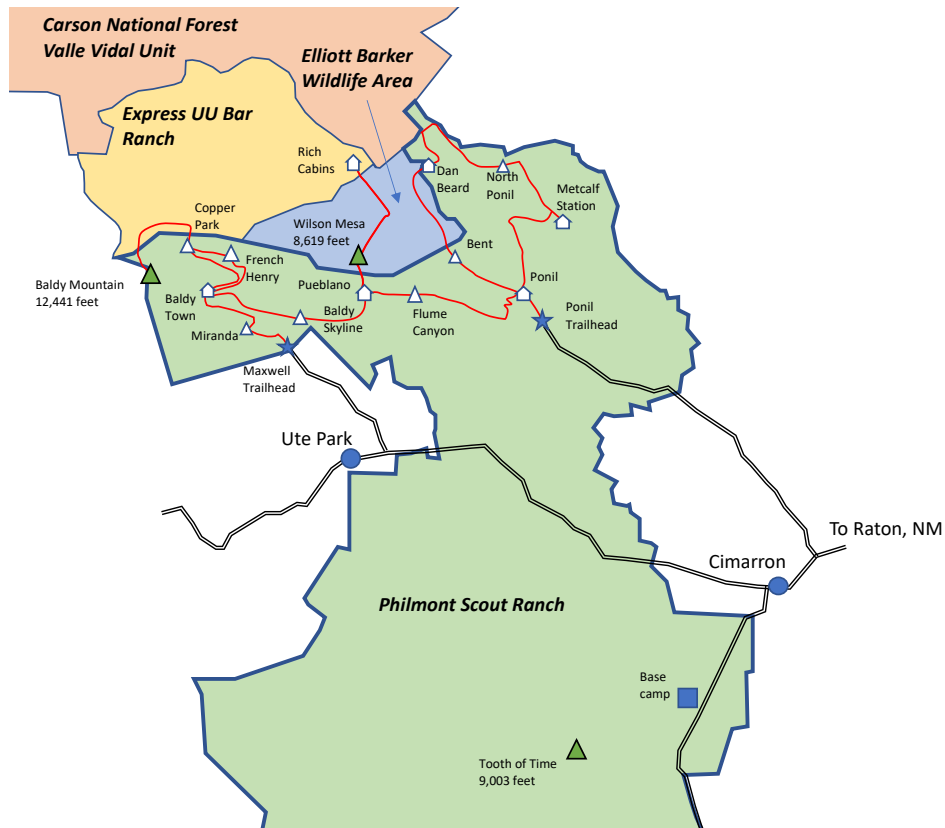
The medical school from the University of Kansas had partnered with Philmont to conduct a research project on the effect of COVID on a person’s ability to perform strenuous activities. The voluntary project involved Philmont participants taking a short survey before and after their trek. Participants who completed both surveys received a patch.

The entire crew earned this patch.

The mascot of the University of Kansas is the Jayhawk. The mascot of the medical school at the University of Kansas is a Jayhawk wearing a doctor’s lab coat. The mascot name is the Jaydoc.







## Philmont Hymn

Silver on the sage,  
Starlit skies above,  
Aspen covered hills,  
Country that I love.  
Philmont, here's to thee,  
Scouting Paradise,  
Out in God's country, tonight.

Wind in whispering pines,  
Eagles soaring high,  
Purple mountains rise,  
Against an azure sky.  
Philmont, here's to thee,  
Scouting Paradise,  
Out in God's country Tonight.