

Pre-Camp Training for Living History Staff Members

Chapter 6

“The Cutting Edge“- Our Quest for Excellence

If you have ever visited Disney Land or Disney World, either as a child or adult, you can't help but be impressed with the quality of everything you see. The grounds are perfectly manicured, the entrance to the “Magic Kingdom” is bright and cheery and most important the characters are just as you always dreamed they would be! Disney's corporate training stresses that “Everything at Disney Land is as it's supposed to be”. Quests come with extremely high expectations and they are never disappointed!

Philmont Scout Ranch serves over 23,000 youth and adults each year, there are always thousands on the reserve list, many of whom may never have the chance to attend. In fact, just a couple summers ago, Philmont reached its 1 Millionth participant! If you don't think Philmont is world famous, just try walking through any airport in America wearing a Philmont shirt and see if someone doesn't come up to you and say, “Hey, I was there!” That person is going to talk about their trek and share experiences he or she had and will no doubt mention the interpretive camps he visited.

The job you do this summer will influence lives far into the future! The greatest joy you can experience as Philmont Staff member is knowing that you have made a positive difference in someone's life. Giving you the tools to do this is the reason we have developed this on line training.

When you received chapter one, you got a short look at how Philmont teaches scouting's values by using living history venues. You visited the Rich family home and met new Americans who were willing to work hard to be a part of the changing frontier. It was in chapter one that you were given the six principles of good interpretation which are worth referring to repeatedly as you develop your dialogues with campers and plan activities at your camp site.

Next you received beginning direction on how you can actually portray a character out of the past. Hopefully you realized how much fun this will be, especially dressed for the part. Now some of you may still be a little intimidated

by this, but relax. As our friend and once a fellow staffer, Camp Director Donnie Lunsford once said. “It gets easier once you put on the interps.”

Speaking of interps, Philmont is constantly expanding and refining the wardrobe department. The goal is to provide each staff member with two or three sets of clothing along with some accessories. As we outlined in chapter three, you are encouraged to join in this effort by bringing some of your own, especially shoes, boots, long underwear, socks, stockings, watches and hats. Be sure they are correct to the time period, camp activities and characters. Consult David if in doubt. AND, if you haven’t sent your size survey in yet, please send it ASAP, please!

Remember, how you look in your costume and how you use props acknowledges your character. How you speak and act defines your person. Think of your interps as the Scout Uniform you wear for the role you play!

So you’re all dressed up and ready to “do program”! **Wrong!!** Maybe so if you work in a skills or service camp like Cimarroncito or Urraca, but for you, lucky you, you actually get to *live* the program. You and your fellow family members will cook your meals on a wood burning stove, care for animals, tend to the garden, sharpen and maintain tools, and any number of “chores” that must be done. Here is the fun part -- you are going to get your “visitors” to join in with you and make them love it! Kind of reminds me of the movie “City Slickers”.

The time line of Philmont’s interpretive camps spans over 100 years from the Rocky Mountain Fur Company Traders of 1831 at Clear Creak to Mr. Phillips’s family and guests at hunting Lodge in 1941. It’s like the Michener novel *Centennial*. During that century important world, national and local history was made and is now being revived by each of you.

Chapter five of this training was important as it points out that the folks who lived here and whose lives you recreate didn’t live in a vacuum. This chapter also included the web links to excellent examples of first person interpretation as we want to see it done. Let’s present a living video of the past as scouts travel the time warp of Philmont...from the days of the Anasazi, followed by those of the early fur trappers to the travelers on the Santa Fe Trail, civil war veterans, and its Hispanic and Anglo homesteaders.

So let's celebrate the life of the wonderfully generous man who not only gave us this land but left us a legacy.

"The only things one gets to keep permanently are those he gives away..." Waite Phillips

While you serve as a Philmont Living History staff member this summer we challenge you to give scouts and leaders lasting values and lifetime memories, and we promise you that you will get to keep it all!

Until then ... or hasta entonces, as the Abreus would say....

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