

PHILMONT AMBASSADOR UPDATE

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SERVING BOTH SIDES OF THE ROAD

November 2021

Summer Attendance Soared with Adventure

By Steve Nelson, Camping Director



We all had waited anxiously for the beginning of the summer of 2021. After Covid cancelled summer of 2020 and after the Ute Part Fire cancelled 2018, we were anticipating a very busy year. But the big

question remained: Would we open? Gratefully, the State of New Mexico accepted our Mitigation Plan, and we were able to welcome a record number of participants for the 2021 summer. As we look back now, it was a great year that had numerous challenges to overcome.

First, we had an amazing staff that gave everything to provide a quality experience for our participants. Many were on staff for the first time during our largest summer ever at Philmont. Much of their training had to be done virtually, and staff went to their assigned locations promptly upon arrival. Although this worked well,

the staff missed opportunities where they could socialize and brainstorm with their colleagues. We will probably keep some of the online training but will be bringing back some of the group-wide training in future years.

Many departments conducted Zoom meetings which were good to start the planning process before they arrived. Management very much appreciates the

great leadership and consistent superb customer service staff gave our participants.

Some of our adaptations for the Covid summer worked very well. We worked diligently on social distancing from the moment crews arrived at the Welcome Center until they gathered at the Closing

Adventure (Continued on Page 4)

PTC To Expand Marketing, Improve Reservation System

By Danny Tucker, PTC Director

As I sit with my ankle propped up following surgery and looking forward to the long recovery, I have time to reflect on some lessons learned from my new role as Director, Philmont Training Center (PTC).



I like the following definition of "lessons learned" and how it applies to what changes PTC is experiencing in our launch of a "New Beginning."

Lessons learned are the documented information that reflects both the positive and negative experiences of a project. They represent the organization's commitment to project management excellence and the project manager's opportunity to learn from the actual experiences of others. These lessons come from working with or solving real-world problems.

Here are some helpful examples of what we have experienced to date and how we are applying these "lessons learned" going forward.

Marketing: I am tired of hearing "It always amazes me that Scouters know about Philmont Scout Ranch but haven't got a clue about what is being offered on the other side of the road." But do they know that the training center has been strengthening Scouting since 1950 with valuable leader training in a world class facility?

Lesson Learned – We need comprehensive marketing! Recently, I had the chance to craft a new marketing plan that includes social media, flyers, banners, print, and email communication that will equip our Ambassadors with the information they need to promote all of Philmont – both our classic backpacking programs and PTC programs.

Family Programs: It was painfully obvious that combining both Conference Family and the Family Adventure Camp into one program did not work out well. I

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News Notes

Philmont Lottery Is Open. The lottery for individual unit treks for 2023 remains open until December 1. Remind Units that now is the time to put in a bid for a spot.

Ambassador Webinar November 3. Hear the latest news directly from Philmont's leadership team on Wednesday, November 3 at 8 PM EST. Ambassadors should check their email for information on listening into the Webinar.

QR Codes Can Replace Brochures and Save Trees

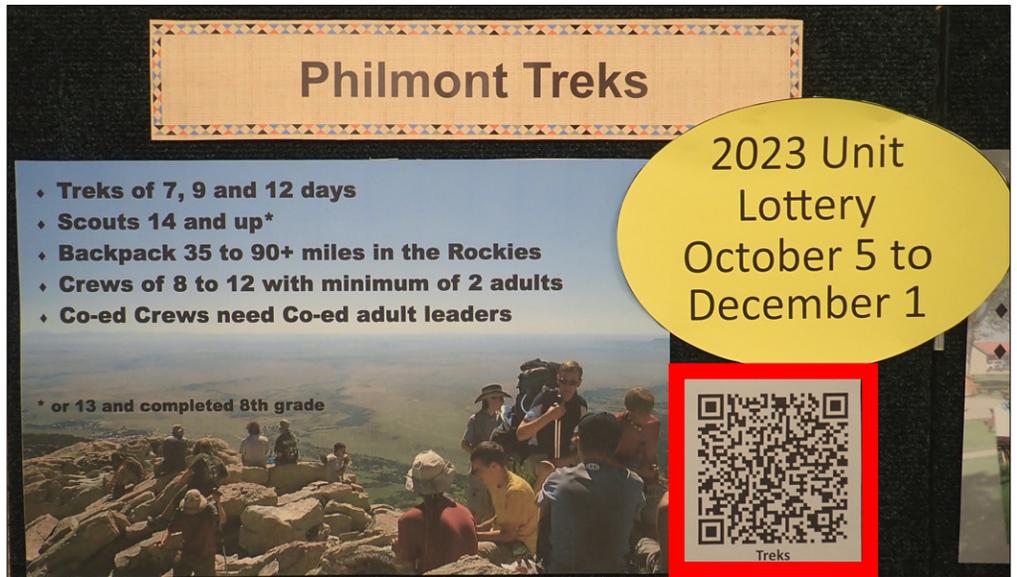
Save a tree. Think green. Reduce waste. Travel light. Conserve resources. Leave No Trace. A Scout is Thrifty.

These slogans remind us to conserve paper and reduce waste. Sometimes, though, conservation can be thrust upon us when a resource is no longer available such as is the case with Philmont brochures. These were colorful additions to our displays and were nice to hand out to visitors. Realistically though, many wound up in the recycling bin (hopefully) once they got home.

Fortunately, there is an easy fix that puts the solution literally in the palm of your hand - QR codes. QR (for Quick Response) codes are the checkerboard symbols that are popping up everywhere in store displays, restaurant menus, magazines and newspapers. Although they are somewhat like the more familiar bar codes, QR codes are more useful because they contain a lot more information. Scanning a QR code with your cell phone* brings you an internet link instantaneously. So instead of handing out Philmont brochures, visitors can scan a QR code at your display. They can load up on information without loading up their arms with paper.

Making the link instantaneously does require a phone or internet connection that may not be available such as at camp. However, many QR reader apps let you store the link for later use when you get home.

There are several ways you can obtain QR codes for Philmont material. One is to print off posters from the Promote



Incorporating a QR code into your display lets people link directly to information on the Philmont web site.

Philmont web page <https://www.philmontscout ranch.org/resources/promotephilmont/> and add them to your display. You could also print the posters, cut out the QR codes, and paste them onto your display.

Another method is to download a QR code generator program onto your computer. You then copy the Philmont page web address and paste it into the QR code generator. The program will create an image that you can save and print out. You can incorporate the code into a graphic or sign that you put on your display.

QR codes for many Philmont programs are now posted on the Ambassador Face-

book page. You can also request them from Newsletter editor Tom Baltutis - tfbaltutis@gmail.com.

A great use of QR codes is to use them for links to Philmont promotional videos available on YouTube. Just as you can copy a Philmont web site address for Treks or Family Adventure Camp, you can copy the video's YouTube URL, paste it into a QR generator, and print out the code for your display. Visitors to your display can scan the code and watch the video right there or when they are home. They can also share it with other Scouts and Scouters afterwards. What a great way to extend your outreach efforts!

**Note: You have to download an app that reads the QR code with your phone. There are many available, some which contain ads and some without. Your phone also may have one already pre-loaded.*

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**Save the Date:
Ambassador
Seminars
June 19 to 25,
2022**

NATIONAL SCOUTING MUSEUM GIFT SHOP

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 An advertisement for the National Scouting Museum Gift Shop. It features a collection of items including a large American flag, a baseball cap, a book titled "PHILMONT", a book titled "Beyond the Hills", and various pieces of jewelry. The text lists "Jewelry", "Artwork", "Collectables", and "Books" as available items. It also includes the phone number 575-376-1136 and a note that the shop has something for everyone, including for birthdays, anniversaries, and weddings.



Ambassador Profile

Barry Bray Encourages Scouts to Experience Life-Changing Treks

"I've been going to the Philmont since 1972, so I know the power of the Ranch to change people's lives and to show them that they are far more capable of doing things that they never thought they could do," explains Barry Bray when asked why he loves being a Philmont Ambassador.

But it was Barry's recent Cavalcade that really stands out in his mind. For a couple of treks in the past, Barry was at Philmont on Father's Day, and he always thought how nice it would be to have his son along for a Trek. His wish actually came true on a Cavalcade with not only his son, but also his daughter-in-law and his spouse along for the ride.

"Another neat thing about that Cavalcade is that we took the place of a cancelled crew. We had been trying for years to do this but were unsuccessful. When Mrs. (Betty) Pacheco called me and asked if we would be interested, it took me about five seconds to respond in the affirmative!"

He recalls, "It was the last Cavalcade of the season, and school would be starting for most, so we only had five Scouts able to attend which made it a very close knit Crew. We got to see what 'gather' is all about, and we got to help Mr. Ben load up the burros at Ponil to take them South.

"The atmosphere for 'gather' was very

special with everyone saying goodbye for the season. At Head of Dean, which normally has 50-100 participants, we were the only crew there, and we got to enjoy the fellowship of the staff for their last night of the season. We even had newly made friends from Pueblano hike over to have supper with us that night. It was truly a special night with special people.

"It's things like this that make me want to share our HOmE with everyone so that they may have these same experiences as well!"

Barry's been an Ambassador since 2017 when he stepped up to become active promoting Philmont in the Quapaw Area Council which serves 5,000 youth and adults. "Our Council represents 39 out of 75 Counties in Arkansas covering some 200 miles North to South and some 150 miles East to West divided into 6 Districts. Prior to Covid, I would visit a different district each month. With Covid and with districts not meeting now, I've used Council events to reach everyone like I did at our OA Pilgrimage last weekend."

Being the only Ambassador in his council, prior to Covid he did 8 to twelve promotions per year. This year he has done 6. His

Barry Bray (Continued on page 6)

PTC (Continued from page 1)

am happy to announce that we have restructured our staff for 2022. Our conference family program will be back in full force along with an upgraded spouse program.

Lesson Learned – We listened! Family programs are back! There should be no reason to leave your family at home when we have the very best outdoor experience sitting right here at Philmont.

Reservation System: Out with old and in with the new. This Fall we will launch a brand-new reservation system for the training center. We worked with the National office to craft a process that will meet the needs of our guests and simplify the reservation experience. All PTC participants will make their reservations through the Philmont website. They will first register for their conference, training program, etc., and then they will be directed to a second system to reserve their housing. This system will bring PTC in line with industry standards.

Lesson Learned – If it's broke, fix it! We did!

Who is the PTC?: It's no wonder to me that people know Philmont, but lack an understanding of who the Philmont Training Center is. For years we have been called the "National" Training Center. Too many adults have felt that word *National* reflected the National Council and not a place for local Scouters to attend. Our Philmont Training Center Task Force has begun building new framework that includes a mission, vision, and direction for the future of the PTC. Does that mean name change? Only time will tell. Our goal is to launch this new strategic plan in the Spring of 2022. Watch for our "New Beginning."

Lesson Learned – "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet."

I am so thrilled to see the work that our Ambassadors are doing to expand the reach of Philmont. There are many exciting things coming down the road. Thank you for being our partners and for your efforts.

"If there's one a thing I've learned in my life, it's to not be afraid of the responsibility that comes with caring for other people." - Danny **P2**

Philmont Staff Succeeded in Providing Summer of Adventure

Summer Adventures (Continued from page 1)

Campfire. Out along the trail, crews were still able to experience a great mountain-top experience. The biggest challenge was in having to limit the size of some traditional programs in camps like the Cyphers Stomp. And yet the overall evaluations were solid, and we appreciated recommendations for ways to do better next time.

Our Food Service Departments did a great job of meeting the dietary needs. In basecamp we had "To Go" meals for all the

crews that they could eat at the new sheltered tables in tent city. This allowed us to keep everyone separated outdoors which I am sure helped in keeping everyone safer.

We had our share of challenges due to logistics. We're continuing to work on ways to provide everyone with the healthy food they need considering personal dietary restrictions. A big thanks goes to our Food Service staff who really came through when it mattered.

We implemented some North to South itineraries through the burn scar for the

first time since 2017. All these crews were accompanied by a guide who was carrying a radio and a GPS tracker for safety. We did have to cancel the burn scar hike twice because of stormy conditions. We will continue along this same plan in 2022 with perhaps expanded itineraries.

We believe that Covid affected the preparation of many crews. Several were unable to complete all the physical preparedness they needed which caused some to struggle on the trail. Other crews struggled with the teamwork needed for successful participation. The ability for a crew to come together as much as possible prior to experiencing the stresses caused by a rigorous mountain trek is so important. We will be focusing on this aspect of crew preparation as we begin our Philmont Preparedness Seminars in October.

We are now heavy into the planning for our 2022 season. Our Itinerary Planning Committee is working diligently to make changes that we saw were needed from the 2021 season. We are also busy in hiring our 2022 staff. We can always use additional applications, so please encourage any interested folks to apply. We are already anticipating 19,500 participants for the 2022 season.

I have not mentioned yet the number of participants for our 2021 season, and I have wanted to wait until the end of the article to talk about this number. Our final count was 25,001. That count is 972 above the prior record year. That is a phenomenal number of participants that stressed many aspects of the operation. Again, because of an outstanding staff and amazing resilience of crew participants, we had a great year.

I have been asked about the number "1" of the 25,001. It is interesting that we have that number 1. It reminds all of us to be concerned about that 1. In Scouting, we need to reach out to the 1 and engage them in a vibrant Scouting program. That 1 Scout may be the one that saves a life, is president of a major company, becomes a university professor or more. Let's make sure that we reach out to the 1 and provide them with a life-changing Philmont and Scouting experience.

Thank you Ambassadors for what you do help Philmont deliver those great mountain-top experiences! - Steve

P2

Who's Who at Philmont

Austin St. George Leads Rangers and Winter Adventure Programs



Duties at Philmont: I give leadership to the Ranger Department and the Autumn and Winter Adventure programs.

How did you come to work at Philmont: I

came to Philmont on a trek when I was 14 years old, we stayed at Pueblano and I remember having the greatest day climbing the spar poles, playing loggerball, then watching the campfire. At the end of the day my crew had a Roses, Thorns, and Buds session, and my bud was to one day come back to work at Philmont.

Number of years at Philmont: 7

Prior Positions at Philmont: Assistant Camp Director - Beaubien (2012) Camp Director - Hunting Lodge (2013), Cypher's Mine (2014), Miranda (2015) Autumn Adventure Guide (2014 & 2015) Winter Adventure Guide (2015)

Scouting position prior to working at Philmont: I worked as the Camping Executive for the W. D. Boyce Council in Peoria, IL for 5 years.

Most memorable Scouting experience: When I first left working at Philmont sea-

sonally to work for the W. D. Boyce Council, I went to a committee meeting for planning a council contingent to the National Jamboree. As I met with the committee, one of the members kept saying that I looked familiar to him. After the meeting it clicked for him, and he showed me a photo on his phone of him and me at Miranda from the summer before that he took while on trek. That moment really made me realize the impact that Philmont has on people from all over the country.

Most humorous experience at Philmont: I remember trying to start a fire at Mt. Phillips camp on a very cold Autumn night. A couple members of the crew were at the Mount Everest Base Camp the week before coming to Philmont, and the only kindling we had to start the fire was some Nepalese Rupees left in their packs. It was so cold the crew burned the money to get some warmth!

What do you like most about working at Philmont? It is awesome to think that at Philmont there is always someone having the most important day of their lives. Maybe it is discovering a new lifelong hobby or a career interest. Being at Philmont changes lives, and it is amazing that I get to see those moments for participants and the staff everyday working here.

What's your favorite off-duty activity at Philmont? I generally like any activity outdoors but my favorite things to do is trail running, skiing, and climbing. P2

Focus on the Backcountry

Challenges at Head of Dean Require Teamwork

Elevation: 8840 feet**Water: Spigot**

Reprinted from an article in the July 18, 2008 issue of PhilNews. Some things at Philmont remain timeless.

by **Daniel Flatt**, PhilNews writer

Life is full of obstacles: earning an Eagle badge, graduating high school and sometimes getting you and your fellow Scouts over a 12-foot wall of two-by-fours.

As a Challenge Camp, Head of Dean (HOD) provides crews a chance to not only overcome its team-building course, but also a chance to kick back, enjoy the view and even play an occasional game of ultimate Frisbee.

"For me, my favorite [challenge] was pushing all of us over the wall," said Scout Kyle Saltsman of crew 703-M2 from Baltimore, Md. "That was just because you know you don't get over it unless you rely on your crew members. It takes half of you and three-quarters of your team."

In the wall challenge, a crew must get its entire group over a 12-foot wooden wall. Only two may stay at the top to help the others up, and as each gets to the top, a person is rotated out of participation, making strategy and planning key to success.

HOD Program Counselor Anthony Akins echoed Saltsman's opinion by placing the source of the wall's popularity on its visual intimidation. "I guess you just come up to it and ask, 'How are we going to do this?' And then everybody always does. I've never seen a crew not get over the wall," Akins said. "I think it's just kind of intimidating, and then you actually do it. It's like, 'Wow, I did that!'"

Located at the head of Dean Canyon – midway between Baldy Skyline camp and Upper Dean Cow camp – at 8,840 feet above sea level - HOD camp also gives remarkable visuals of the more natural kind.

Framed by age-old pines and looking north from the front porch of the cabin is a clearing that gives a view of the southern Rocky Mountains, adding a picture-perfect touch to advisers' coffee. Camp Director Rachael Marks said, "We pretty much have the most amazing view of the southern Rockies. It's stellar."

The 12 available campsites are tucked away along the side of a green meadow. In the early evening, the meadow is home to games of ultimate Frisbee led by HOD Program Counselor Rex Bair and his coworkers. Crew members and staff launch Frisbees into endzones marked by pines and a firewood log.

Along with the wall, the challenge course has five stations in use, including an initial team-building station, King's Finger, the Spider Web and Nitro Rope. The course

also has a tire traverse, where crews try to cross a 30-foot section using five hanging tires. The staff said the traverse challenge that is the "other Scout favorite" is broken and they are awaiting the material to repair it.

Aside from the broken traverse, the seven HOD staff who call themselves the "HOD pod" remain optimistic as they look out over Philmont's Dean Canyon and challenge crews to succeed.

P2

Navigating obstacles is one of the challenge activities at Head of Dean that builds the teamwork and confidence essential to completing a Trek.

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Bison graze peacefully within sight of the Sangre de Cristo mountains in New Mexico.

Neighboring Vermejo Park Ranch Provides Haven for Bison Herds

Vermejo Park Ranch, located to the north and east of Philmont, is home to one of the most important bison herds in North America. Like Philmont, the area was also originally part of the Maxwell Land Grant and passed through several owners before a large parcel of 205,000 acres was bought by William J. Bartlett of Chicago in the late 1800's. Bartlett used the land as a ranch as well as a private hunting and fishing reserve.

Bartlett expanded his initial holding to 300,000 acres. He died in 1928, followed shortly thereafter by his two sons. Over time, the land was purchased by several syndicates and individual owners. The ranch was sometimes used by private hunting and fishing clubs whose members included Will Rogers, Cecil B. DeMille, Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, Herbert Hoover and Harvey Firestone. Some of these personalities visited Villa Philmonte while they were in the area.

Vermejo Park is not only abundant in wildlife resources, but also in coal and gas reserves. However, fossil fuels have costs both in environmental and human toll. Pollution from coal mines on the property still are undergoing remediation efforts, and in nearby Dawson, NM, the second worst mining disaster in U.S. History occurred when 263 miners were killed in 1913.

Pennzoil eventually purchased the property in 1973 and expanded it to 588,000 acres. However, high production costs of coal and protective environmental regulations restricted its development.

In 1996, Ted Turner purchased the

property. It is now a hunting, fishing, and eco-tourism reserve abundant in elk, deer, pronghorn, and bison. Mountain lions and bighorn sheep roam the higher elevations which reach into the same Sangre de Cristo mountains as Philmont.

Over 8,000 acres of the land is inhabited by prairie dog colonies which sparked interest in using the area for restoration of endangered black-footed ferrets. The ferrets are obligate predators of prairie dogs, meaning that they rely solely on them for food and reuse their dens for shelter.

A significant effort of the ranch is the Turner Bison Program. Over 1,200 bison are managed on the land as part of Turner's 50,000 bison nationwide. Originally, a small group of bison known as the Castle Rock herd lived on the ranch. The herd was significant in that genetic testing proved that it did not have any cattle mitochondrial DNA, showing that it was not tainted by cross breeding efforts.

The Castle Rock herd is also free of brucellosis, a disease that was introduced into bison herds by cross breeding them with cattle. *Brucellosis* is a nonnative, bacterial disease that induces abortions in pregnant cattle, elk, and bison. It is the primary reason that cattle ranchers oppose free ranging bison in the U.S.

In 2009, the ranch partnered with the state of Montana and now holds a quarantined herd of bison from Yellowstone. It is now one of the only privately-held herds of Yellowstone bison that helps maintain a genetically pure breed.

P2

Philmont Bison Jerky Now In Trail Food, At ToTT

For nearly 100 years the same bison herd that Waite Phillips brought in from Oklahoma and parts of Wyoming has been roaming the pasture just northeast of Tooth Ridge. For the first time in 2021, 100% pure bred bison from this herd was available as snack sticks in Philmont trail meals and are for sale at the Tooth of Time Traders. They'll make a great stocking-stuffer for Scouts in your family!



Barry Bray (Continued from page 3)

favorite event is the leader's appreciation lunch at summer camp. "You get so many people with various levels of experience all wanting to share their Philmont stories with you. Then you have those with no experience wanting to know everything," explains Barry.

He finds that the most productive encounters are those on the unit level. This is especially true for those units who either have a slot already and have never been to the Ranch.

"Speaking one-on-one after the presentation, explaining the benefits of PTC with respect to their personal situation, and answering their overall questions has been the most successful approach in my experience. It's a great way to express your own love for HOmE and to share with someone who has your undivided attention."

Next to his Cavalcade, another memorable experience at Philmont for Barry has been during the Ambassador Seminars.

"My favorite activity has been riding in the Suburbans into backcountry with fellow Ambassadors and seeing the activity behind the scenes of different departments that make the Ranch run," recalls Barry. "I've been to two Seminars, and the best part is meeting other Ambassadors who share the same love for the Ranch and want to share it with others." **P2**