

# PHILMONT AMBASSADOR UPDATE

PAGE 1

SERVING BOTH SIDES OF THE ROAD

July 2023

## Councils Benefit From Contingent Incentives

Philmont is offering incentives to re-invigorate Council high adventure programs for 2024. Councils which have not sent a contingent in 2022 or 2023 and which register for a 2024 contingent will get a 20% fee credit that they can use to offset their costs to bring a crew. If they bring two crews, the second gets a 25% fee credit, and a third crew gets a 30% credit. The credit is intended to help Councils with the added administrative burdens incurred with promoting and organizing Philmont contingents. In addition, each crew will receive one scholarship for a deserving youth.

Council contingents are vitally important in changing the lives of Scouts through a Philmont experience. Contingents bring together Scouts from smaller units which cannot meet the minimum crew size as well as provide sufficient adult leadership. However, the numbers of Council Contingents have dropped significantly in recent years.

The Contingent incentive was announced to all Council Executives at the BSA's National Annual Meeting in Atlanta in May. In a letter to them, Roger Hoyt, Philmont's General Manager, wrote, "As a past Scout Executive, I remember well how fired up my volunteers returned from attending a conference and the help they gave our council to succeed. I remember the faces of the Scouts returning from Treks and knew that our organization made it possible to change their life. Philmont is an integral part of the Scouting program, and [Scout Executives] are an important part of our team."

Helping more Scouts benefit from Philmont is the main goal of the incentives. "We think we can get back over to 100 Council contingents," says Hoyt. "What



*Council Contingents are important because they bring together Scouts from different units who might not otherwise have an opportunity to experience a life-changing Trek. (Philmont Photo)*

## Jim Ellis Steps Down as Ambassador Coordinator

Jim Ellis is stepping down after being the Philmont Ambassador Task Force Chair for the last 6 years in order to devote his energies to other retirement activities. An enthusiastic proponent of Philmont, he officially became Ambassador #25 on January 28, 2013, soon after the program began.

Ellis's love affair with Philmont goes back to his first trek, 8-19-D in 1965. "We traveled to Philmont from southwest Michigan in an old school bus driven by our two contingent leaders. It was three days out and two back, traveling straight through

the last night and arriving back home around 4:00 in the morning. I volunteered to make sure the driver stayed awake." He was back for PTC Conferences in 2003 and 2004, and alertly returned home this time "knowing that I had to tell my fellow Scouters how great it was to go to Philmont."

Like many Philmont attendees, Ellis consistently speaks to fellow Scouters about the importance of Philmont's high adventure programs and the virtues of Philmont Training Center conferences. "My

**Incentives** (Continued on page 10)

**Ellis** (Continued on page 9)



# Museum Opens New Scouting Heritage Gallery

The National Scouting Museum officially opened its newest exhibit on June 20, 2023, to great fanfare and celebration of Scouting's history. Russel Smart, chair of the museum committee and chief benefactor of the new Scouting Heritage Gallery explained to the attendees that although the museum has a lot of items "It's not about the Stuff. It's about the Story of Scouting."

The new exhibit incorporated the "Ingram Foundation Order of the Arrow" Gallery as its model for new displays. These include areas showcasing Scouting's Founders - Baden-Powell, Seton and Beard - and important figures such as James E. West and "Green Bar Bill" Hillcourt. Other exhibits show the extent of World Scouting, Scout camping through the years, the evolution of merit badges and Scout handbooks, and many more fascinating items.

Chastity McReynolds, Assistant Chief Scout Executive, was on hand and noted how much effort went into the gallery. "We celebrate collaboration from many people including seasonal staff who painted walls and volunteers who came in to align patches and pins and memorabilia in drawers and all those people who have come together to make this the world class exhibit that was dreamed of so many years ago."

McReynolds continued to explain how



The opening exhibit of the new Heritage Gallery has a video wall that showcases the many aspects of Scouting that contribute to its importance in shaping the lives of youth. (Tom Baltutis photo)

appropriate it was that that the National Scout Museum is at Philmont where "Thousands of Scouts who come off the hills can see their legacy - what they mean to Scouting – not only in carrying it forward from the past but into the future."

The Heritage Gallery is just the first phase of new and expanded exhibits in the

National Scouting Museum. There are plans for displays featuring New Mexican and Southwestern heritage, the Santa Fe Trail, Waite Phillips, and Ernest Thompson Seton. The museum will make Philmont an even more "must see" place for all Scouts.

P2



Museum Chair and benefactor Russell Smart explained how the new Heritage gallery is just the beginning of projects to make the museum a must-see destination. (Tom Baltutis photo)



Scouting's history is told through exhibits on its founders as well as memorabilia including uniforms, camping equipment, badges and handbooks. (Tom Baltutis photo)





## Training Center Nightly Stays Now Available

PTC is now offering stays for one or more nights to travelers in the Cimarron area. Guests can choose from a night under canvas, either in a Terrace Tent or Deluxe Family Tent complete with queen size bed, or they can have the comfort of a lodge room. This is the perfect opportunity for Scouters passing through the Philmont area to spend a day or more to check out the museums, make purchases at the Tooth of Time Traders, or take a stroll around Base Camp.

Accommodations can be booked at the Philmont web site [here](#). Meals and PTC-programmed activities are not included. There is an outside BBQ area available for cooking, or guests can take advantage of restaurants in Cimarron. Guests must also abide by BSA rules such as no alcoholic beverages, firearms, pets, etc. A full list is available [here](#). Watching a short youth protection video is also required for overnight stays.

**P2**

## Ambassadors Have To Be Visible, Trusted and Approachable

Promoting Philmont is a big job, especially if there is only one or two Ambassadors in your council. But even one person can be a powerful influence if they are visible, trusted and approachable according to Rev. Dave Weyrick who taught "Developing Scouting Relationships to Change Lives" at PTC this summer.

That means Ambassadors have to be present often at Scouting events, troop meeting and camporees so others in the council get to know them. As all Scouts, they are "Friendly, Courteous and Kind",



Small Fry youth perform a song they learned in the Kids and Kin program during the Friday evening Happy Trails activities at PTC. (Tom Baltutis photo)

## PTC Delivering As Scouting's Place To Learn, Play and Relax

Philmont Training Center is fulfilling its vision of being the premier environment for learning, playing, relaxing, and creating lifetime friendships and unforgettable memories. The 2023 summer is off to a great start with many informative conferences and enjoyable family adventures.

PTC's enthusiastic staff keep youth and spouses busy all day in the Kids and Kin program while Scouters are learning how to enhance their Scouting programs back home. Scouters can still sign up for conferences on the registration page [here](#).

Staff goes out of its way to provide that 'something extra' to make lasting memories. For example, during the Am-

bassador Seminars, PTC Director Danny Tucker made the Maxwell 1 classroom available for faculty spouses Lisa Weagraff, Jennie Baltutis, Monica Ellis and Janet Krehley to turn into their personal quilting and craft center, complete with daily refreshments.

Family Adventure Camp participants have enjoyed the all-to-rare opportunity to bond together during activities that involve everyone. Their days are filled with pursuits that let them play, relax and enjoy the beautiful Philmont surroundings.

Guests can sign up for hikes, shooting, climbing, archery, horse rides and more using the Sign Up Genius site accessed easily via a QR code on their weekly schedule. Family Adventure Camp guests have their choice of packages sampling all Philmont has to offer as well as programs designed for younger children, scout-aged adventurers, history buffs and experienced hikers.

During the evenings, staff host activities like the "Are You Tougher Than a Ranger" skills challenge, Western Night with BBQ bison, Cornhole Tournament during cobbler night, and Happy Trails Night with games and an ice cream social.

Accommodations range from traditional spacious wall tents, deluxe family tents and motel-like rooms in duplexes or lodges. There is still time this summer to get to PTC for a week or a half week of Family Adventure Camp.

**P2**



## 2023 Crews Trek Burn Areas As Programs Evolve

Philmont crews are starting to hike north-south through the 2018 burn areas to see both the extent of the damage and the natural recovery of the forest. In 2021, the first crews trekked through the area accompanied by a Philmont staff member and were in constant contact with logistics in case of hazards like a flash flood. This year, crews are hiking from Cimarroncita to Sawmill without the need for a staff person, and soon they may not even need to carry a tracking device for logistics to follow them.

Rayado and ROCS treks are now starting to camp in the burn area so that crews can participate in conservation projects to aid in restoration.

Other areas such as Zastro were affected by the 2022 Cook's Peak fire. The ATV program there has been discontinued since it did not fit with Philmont's wilderness programs. For similar reasons, mountain bike programs have been discontinued. It was felt that such activities are better handled at Council Camps so Philmont could concentrate on its living history programs and nature themes.

P2



One expanded activity this year is the 'Sporting Arrows' program at Cimarroncita. Scouts take aim and fire at foam disks tossed from a launcher in an ultimate test of skill. (Philmont photo)



A Ponsse Bear harvester works at thinning the forest. Philmont's goal is to reduce stand density by up to 50% to return to where historic levels would indicate. (Philmont photo.)

## Forest Thinning Projects Surge Forward with Mechanical Help

Beautiful as they are, Philmont has too many trees. As the result of years of fire suppression that allowed woodlands to become overgrown, there is now a concerted effort to restore a more natural balance to the forest.

After the Ute Park fire of 2018, a number of restoration and thinning projects were begun throughout Philmont. Some created defensible space around physical assets like cabins in the backcountry and the Philmont reservoir. Crews did contour felling of trees and built silt ponds to control runoff. Volunteers on PhilBreak, the OA, and PSA crews worked on a 1000 acre shaded fuel break on Beaubien road.

Over time, they created 6,000 gumdrop-shaped piles of dead wood, and 3,500 of those were burned during the winter months. "It made a noticeable difference," says Roger Hoyt, Philmont's General Manager. However, progress was slow and more was needed.

"We now have a restoration and thinning project going on in the backcountry with mechanized equipment. We'll get 700 acres done in three months. But whereas 1000 acres took us 5 years and \$200,000 annually, this 700 acres will cost us \$1.3 million. You can spend money really quick using mechanized timbering. All we need now is another \$200 million and we'll be able to get the other 62,000 acres treated," he adds only a little facetiously, "but you got to start somewhere and have goals. My next goal is to raise a couple more million dollars, do another 1000 acres, and just keep moving right on down the road.

"It's awe-inspiring to see what a healthy forest looks like in the south Ranch. It's hard to explain just what that feeling is. You really need to see what we need to do to protect Philmont in the future."

P2

**The August  
Ambassador 1  
Seminar has been  
cancelled.**

**The Ambassador  
Autumn Adventure  
is still a GO!**



# Ambassador Seminars Showcase Philmont's Backcountry



Tom Baltutis photo



Tom Baltutis photo



Steven Gold photo



Tom Baltutis photo

*Clockwise from top.* Ambassadors gathered beneath the Tooth of Time at Rocky Mountain Scout Camp for their graduation. Ed Svirvely, Tom Kube, Kellee Menard and Steve Gold get a panoramic view after scaling the Tooth of Time on their free day. A-1 class members hear the 'porch talk' from Ponil's Staff. Pumping the hand car at Metcalf Station's railroad gives A-2 attendees a real workout.



# Philmont Is Serious About Adult Physical Fitness

A Philmont trek is tough. Days can be hot and dry and nights cool and wet. There is 25% less oxygen at 8000 feet compared to sea level, and the dry mountain air will suck the water right out of you. The 50 pound pack that seemed easy to carry on that Saturday afternoon practice hike, if you bothered to do one at all, is a real burden when you have to heft it day after day.

There is absolutely no substitute for getting in shape for a Philmont trek, yet every day of every season, Scouts and Scouters show up who are not ready for what is ahead of them. “One of the things that Ambassadors can do is to help crews understand that they must be prepared. You can’t get off the couch, drive to Philmont, and do a trek,” remarked Steve Nelson, Camping Director.

Another misconception is that Philmont will allow those who do not meet physical requirements to go out on the trail once they are here. That is not true. Nelson’s message is strict: “Make sure you are

under the weight limit when you get out here. We’re 10 days into the summer, and we have turned away an adult advisor almost every single day. And it’s not that they are one pound over – they were at least 10 pounds over, as many as 60 pounds over.

It’s not only weight restrictions. “We’re generally looking at eight to ten high blood pressures every day. Generally, we can calm them down and get them good to go,” says Nelson thankfully.

“The physical preparedness to come to Philmont is what’s important, and it’s one of those things that Ambassadors can help with and tell people that we are serious about. Don’t come to Philmont and risk being turned away. People will come and say, ‘Well since I’m here, they will let me go on the trail’. We will not.

“We’ve had a few fatalities, and nobody wants to go through that experience. We’re really not as worried about that advisor so much as we’re worried about those kids who would see their advisor have a heart attack on the trail. Unfortunately that has happened.”

There is also a misconception that Philmont will provide a Ranger as a substitute for an Adult Advisor once a crew arrives. Again, clarifies Steve, “There is no ‘Rent-a-Ranger’ program. If sufficient Adult

Leaders can’t meet requirements to get on the trail, their crew will not leave Base Camp, and the responsibility for that is on the Adults, not Philmont. The Ranger’s job is to train the crew for the first four days, and there will be days where I am short Rangers this summer. We will not have enough to cover all the crews, but we will figure out how to do it.”

On the other hand, there are occasions when something unexpected happens once a crew is on the trail such as an injury or sickness. In that case, Philmont will replace an advisor with appropriate adult leadership, whether male or female, at no charge.

Another way of being ready is for crew leaders and adult advisors to read everything Philmont sends them and to watch the Preparedness Seminars available [here](#). Although there are plenty of websites purporting to give the lowdown on Philmont, there is no substitute for getting the information directly from Ranch staff on current practices and procedures. Some unofficial on-line advice can be outright wrong, sending Philmont Staff scrambling to correct it if they can.

“Be Prepared” applies in more ways than one at Philmont.

P2

Height (Inches)	Weight (pounds)
60	166
61	172
62	178
63	183
64	189
65	195
66	201
67	207
68	214
69	220
70	226
71	233
72	239
73	246
74	252
75	260
76	267
77	274
78	281
79+	295



At Carson Meadows, Crews get training from Staff in emergency medicine, but it is not something that Philmont wants Scouts to have to put into practice on their Trek. (Philmont Photo)





A scout gets acquainted with one of the pigs at the Rich Cabins. Learning the cooperation needed to maintain the farm is an important part of the program. (Philmont Photo)

## Focus on the Backcountry

# Scouts Learn Cooperation On The Farm at Rich Cabins

**Elevation: 7,729 feet**

**Water: Potable Spigots**

**Commissary**

In the wilderness areas of the Valle Vidal, places to spend the night can be sparse. Scouts will find one at Rich Cabins, but only in exchange for work on the farm. The pioneering Rich family, originally named Risch in their native Austria, appreciate all the help they can get in their daily chores of milking cows, caring for livestock, gardening, grinding corn, and making soap. Later in the evening, Scouts will be invited to join the family for an evening of song and stories on their cabin porch.

In the 1880's, The Rich family settled in the Valle Vidal area on what is now the Vermejo Ranch. [See November, 2021 Ambassador Newsletter.]

They were one of many immigrant families from European countries during the early 19th century through the early part of the 20th century. Some were fleeing crop failures, land and job shortages, rising taxes, or famine. Others were seeking personal freedom or escaping religious persecution.

After the Homestead Act was passed in 1862, railroads and land developers advertised the availability of land in the West to the crowded and politically troubled countries of Europe. The nature of the West had changed considerably from the days when the only Europeans here were single men, trappers, traders, and adventurers. Family homesteads like the Rich's created a stable, "civilizing" atmosphere and led to a more populated area, and generations of westerners with diverse national backgrounds followed. The family was a unit of work, defense, and independence on the frontier.

After staying at Rich Cabins, crews head to other locations in the Valle Vidal such as Iris Park or Greenwood Canyon or back into Philmont property itself.

**P2**



## Crews Get to Bushwhack in Valle Vidal

With over 100,000 acres of pristine scenery, the Valle Vidal (Valley of Life) Unit of the Carson National Forest offers breathtaking vistas of high peaks, forests, and alpine meadows. Although there are no designated trails, there are endless recreation opportunities in this area for hiking, camping, and fishing.

Another great feature of the Valle Vidal is the ability for a crew to "bushwhack" from location to location using only map and compass or GPS. Navigating through large ponderosa pine stands is a beautiful and rewarding challenge. There are also low impact camps located in the Valle Vidal where crews can experience a night under the stars by themselves.

Since 1988, Philmont has trekked through pieces of the Valle Vidal. Today, Philmont utilizes roughly 59,000 acres in the Colfax County portion of the property. The Valle Vidal borders Philmont near Dan Beard, Rich Cabins, and Philmont's North Ponil country. It is home to New Mexico's largest wild elk herd. As a part of Philmont's special use agreement with the Forest Service, crews do meaningful conservation services and practice Leave No Trace Camping in the area.

Philmont crews that trek into the Valle Vidal are shining examples of Scouting's commitment to being good stewards of the National Forests. Philmont has redesigned the Valle Vidal itineraries to offer even more exciting programs, including climbing at Little Costilla Peak and Ash Mountain South.

There are many water sources in Valle Vidal, from smaller ponds to creeks and rivers that are all fed by mountain snowmelt. Comanche Creek, Rio Costilla, Rio Pueblo, and the Shuree ponds offer excellent fishing opportunities.

With elevations of 7,700 to 12,584 feet, the plant life in Valle Vidal is abundant and varied. The best season to view the area's wildflowers is during July and

**Valle Vidal** (Continued on page 10)



**Who's Who at Philmont****Facilities Director - Kevin Stickelman****Duties at**

**Philmont:** As director of facilities, I am responsible for providing leadership to the maintenance team at the ranch which includes motor pool, utilities, Camping Headquarters, Philmont Training Center, backcountry, Chase Ranch, and cabin restoration. I also chair the Safety Committee, oversee capital projects, and serve as the staff advisor to the Facilities and Properties Task Force within the Philmont Ranch Committee. My team includes 22 year-round and 30 seasonal staff plus numerous volunteers.



**How did you come to work at Philmont:** I first came to Philmont on a trek in 1993 followed by additional treks in '95 and '97. In 2000 I returned as seasonal staff. Following those seasonal years, I spent my career in the ski and outdoor recreation industries while continuing to volunteer in scouting. In 2021 I had the opportunity to come back to Philmont full-time in my current role.

**Number of Years at Philmont:** Seven

**Prior positions at Philmont:** Logistics 2000, Camp Director (CD) Clark's Fork 2001, CD Miranda 2002, Backcountry Manager 2003, Autumn Adventure Staff 2001-2002.

**Prior Scouting positions outside Philmont:** I grew up in scouting and attained Eagle with Troop 176 in Leavenworth, KS. As an adult I have held positions as Order of the Arrow Advisor and Council Board Member in Crater Lake Council in Oregon, Board Member in Las Vegas Area Council in Nevada, and currently serve on the Troop 68 Committee in Cimarron, NM.

**Most memorable experience at Philmont:** While my list of memories at Philmont is long, I have to say that meeting my wife is

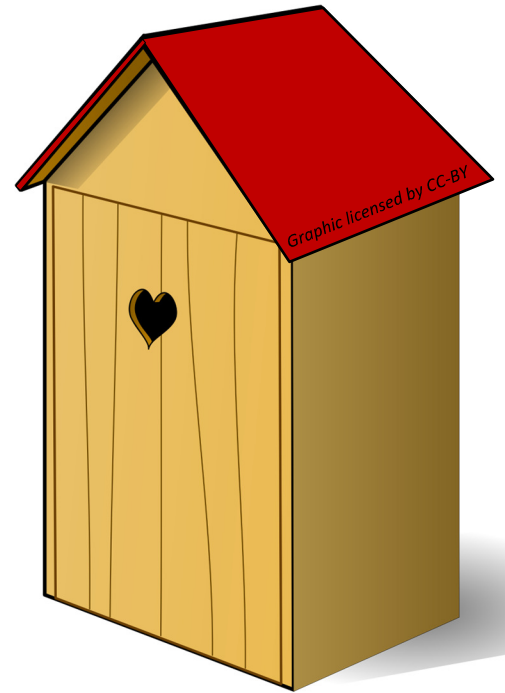
by far the most memorable. We met in 2001 during CD training while I was working as CD at Clark's Fork and she was working as CD at French Henry. That summer is certainly one of the main reasons why I am back here today.

**Most humorous experience at Philmont:** During Autumn Adventure in 2001 I was sleeping on the porch at Hunting Lodge when I was abruptly awakened by something dragging my sleeping bag with me in it off the porch. My first thought was that I was a midnight snack for a bear and started throwing anything I could reach at the creature. When the motion stopped and I finally got a look, the hungry bear turned out to be a curious horse.

**What do you like most about working at Philmont?** I love the people, I love the land, and I am still blown away by how many lives of those who visit here are changed. Each season at Philmont brings with it new challenges, and each day at the ranch presents new opportunities for those of us who work here to leave the place a little bit better than the day before. The energy and velocity of the spring and summer seasons are balanced by the quiet and solitude that falls over Philmont in the fall and winter.

**What's your favorite off-duty activity?** Spending time in the backcountry with my family is definitely my favorite. Whether hiking, fly fishing, or cutting firewood, time in these mountains never grows old. Outside of Philmont I spend time skiing at the neighboring resorts in the winter, supporting local school activities, and volunteering with the Philmont Fire Department. I'm also I am active with the local Scout units.

Lastly, living in New Mexico is not really living without enjoying Hatch Green Chile season. August and September bring about one of my favorite times of year where fresh chiles are roasting in front of nearly every produce store in the area.

**P2****Backcountry Sanitation Education**

Scouts at Philmont have been trained for years in proper trash handling in the backcountry. Indeed, many crews take up the challenge to see who could compact their food packaging waste into as small a space as possible. It's extremely rare to see even one piece of litter in the backcountry.

Human waste disposal is another important aspect of backcountry sanitation, and unfortunately, there have been some misconceptions. The practices of only using the 'Red Roofs' for solids and 'peeing on a rock' are incorrect. Moisture is needed from urine for wastes in out-houses to break down completely. Because of the recent pattern of dry summers, solids in the 'Red Roofs' have not been able to naturally decompose when scouts use rocks.

This misconception has also led to uncomfortable situations on the trail for the increasing number of female Scouts doing Treks. Philmont Rangers now inform crews that it is acceptable to use Red Roofs for all human waste disposal.

**P2**



# Jim Ellis Moves On From Ambassador Coordinator Role

**Ellis** (Continued from page 1)

Lodge Advisor once asked me if I ever had a conversation where I didn't end up talking about Philmont," Ellis recalled.

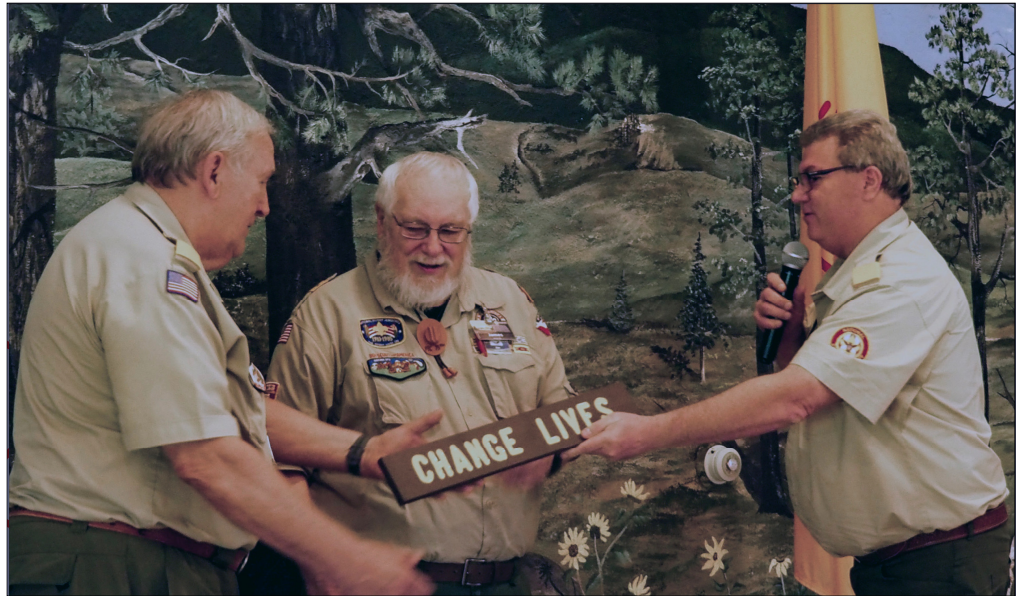
He got his chance to formalize his promotions about Philmont when the PTC Ambassador program started in 2013. Although the Trek program was flourishing, PTC attendance was lagging, and the initial plan was to seek out Scouters to promote "The Other Side Of The Road". Almost 300 Scouters were either appointed by their Council Executives or applied to be advocates for PTC in their home councils.

The first PTC Ambassador Seminar was held in 2014, and Ellis was sitting in the packed Miranda classroom with 40 other attendees. They were notified by PTC Director Andrea Watson that they were no longer "PTC Ambassadors" but instead were "Philmont Ambassadors" and were asked to promote both camping and training programs.

In 2017, Ellis was named as the National Coordinator of the Philmont Ambassadors when the program was again reorganized, adding that position and four regional coordinators. Ellis' appointment brought about one of his favorite Philmont memories. "I traveled to PTC by train in December of 2017 to participate in the first Ambassador webinar. The afternoon after the webinar PTC Director Matt Rendahl said, 'Let's take a ride', and we spent the next 4 hours in his Suburban driving through the buffalo pasture, the Baldy Town area and points beyond. I saw places on the Ranch I'd only heard about. It was a great afternoon!"

As National Coordinator, Jim served as conduit for the latest information on Philmont Conferences and Camping program, organized the annual Philmont Ambassador Seminars, and kept Ambassadors informed through periodic emails, webinars, and postings on the Ambassador Facebook page. He worked closely with the newsletter editor to get Ambassadors information through that channel.

While he is stepping aside from being Ambassador Coordinator, Ellis is definitely not stepping away from Scouting or promoting Philmont. He is on the LaSalle Council Advisory Committee covering eight counties in northern Indiana and southwest



Jim Ellis (center) receives a plaque with Philmont's "Change Lives" motto from PTC Conference Committee Chair Chuck Walneck and Director Danny Tucker. (Tom Baltutis photo)

Michigan. Ellis is an avid Scouting memorabilia collector and chairs his OA Sakima Lodge's annual Trade-O-Ree.

And he'll still be working Philmont into his conversations. Ellis observed, "It's all about talking with Scouters, especially the ones who have been to Philmont. There seems to be a common bond among those that have completed a trek. I typically have a large Philmont map in my exhibit display, and you can always tell who's been on a trek because they immediately start tracing their itinerary with their finger.

"It's also fun to talk with Scouters who have never been to Philmont, and you can

see the excitement start to build when you tell them about this place we call HOME. These on-on-one conversations seem to be the most effective, especially when I can hand them literature about the Ranch and PTC," advises Ellis.

"Get to know the leadership of your council and districts, especially the training and camping chairs so you know about upcoming activities and can get yourself invited to do a Philmont promotion. Also, do not be afraid to work Philmont into every conversation you have with another Scouter."

**P2**

## Trek Slots Still Available for 2024 Plus PTC Publishes Preliminary Conferences

Spread the word! Philmont still has openings for Crews in 2024. Seven-, nine-, and 12-day treks are available as well as Cavalcades. These will be filled on a first-come, first served basis by contacting the Philmont Camping office [here](#). Crews still have time to do all the necessary training hikes and equipment procurement for a 2024 Trek but signing up now is important.

And while on the subject of 2024, Philmont Training Center is planning a number of special events for its upcoming 75th year of operation. PTC has already started to publish its list of conferences for next summer. Along with traditional favorites like Commissioner's Week and the Philmont Leadership Challenge, there are new offerings like "Energize Your Pack Outdoor Program" and "Shooting Sports Fiesta." A preliminary list of courses is available [here](#), but keep checking for additions. The official launch of the full schedule will be in October.



# Trek and PTC Incentives Seek To Boost Philmont Numbers

## Incentives *(Continued from page 1)*

does that mean in real numbers? If we had 100 councils that bring an average crew size of ten, we're talking one thousand more experiences at Philmont - that's one thousand more lives changed and one thousand more memories that will last a lifetime.

"Back in 2017 there were 170 Councils that brought a contingent," noted Hoyt. "Although some councils were just reserving space to slot in a Troop or Crew, a majority were still finding those solo scouts or troops so small that they couldn't muster the numbers for a crew. They would collect those individuals and put them in a contingent, find the leadership and bring them here.

"We've gone from 170 Council contingents to 44 registered so far for 2024. Now we realize we've lost traction because of bankruptcy, fires, and Covid and with new

Scout Executives unfamiliar with Philmont. For them it's just another thing that they have to organize - but we still think it's important to focus on high adventure trips."

The significance of high adventure in Scouting was the subject of a study by the [RYTE Institute of Montclair University in 2020](#). It found that those Scouts who experienced high adventure activities demonstrated significantly higher averages across more than half of the areas of youth development. Specifically, these areas include communication, leadership, citizenship, sense of purpose, and goal setting.

In addition to the Contingent fee incentive, Council Executives were encouraged to send Philmont a list of their dedicated Scouters who will then get a personalized invitation to attend a PTC Conference.

Councils and Districts which send their Chairperson and Commissioner to their respective Key 3 Conference will receive a scholarship for their professionals to attend the same conference.

Many Councils still do not have a Philmont Ambassador, and Roger Hoyt encouraged Executives to identify a Scouter to fill that role, saying "Nothing beats boots on the ground."

Hoyt is enthusiastic about what will result. "Philmont is the energy that refills everyone's batteries. You take what happens here and go back to your home councils and convert that energy into the membership and resources that we need to continue to move this great program forward."

**P2**

## Philmont Ambassador Newsletter

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Visitors to the Valle Vidal can experience thrilling sights of the largest elk heard in New Mexico along with mountain views and wildflower-filled meadows. *(Forest Service photo)*

## Scouts Practice Conservation in 'Valley of Life'

### Valle Vidal *(Continued from page 7)*

August. There are wild irises and paintbrush species on grassy slopes and gentians and shooting stars in boggy areas.

Cutting across the basin and serving as distinct topographic features are a series of Oligocene igneous dikes that are 33 to 28 million years old. The most prominent one is the Rock Wall, or simply "The Wall," that separates the unit into the east and west

sides.

The remains of former mining and ranching communities can be found near the McCrystal Creek Low Impact Campground. A small amount of gold and silver lured miners here in the late 1800s, but their luck was short-lived and most mining camps and communities didn't stay more than 15 years. This area also supported many ranchers and homesteaders through the years.

**P2**