

PHILMONT AMBASSADOR UPDATE

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SERVING BOTH SIDES OF THE ROAD

March 2024

Full PTC Schedule Excites Scout Leaders

Philmont Training Center has a full schedule of exciting and informative conferences that will educate and inspire Scouts and Leaders this summer.

Starting things off early, just as the fish are starting to bite after a long winter, is the Certified Angling Instructor Course from May 1 to 8. Attendees will have three days of classroom study and two days in the backcountry fly-fishing. They'll learn to teach scouts at every level for recruiting, retention, and advancement.

Kicking off the summer season at PTC is the annual Commissioner Week from June 9 to 15. Filled with offerings for those Scouters who form the backbone of the BSA, attendees will gain the knowledge and tools needed to expand and enhance Scouting in their home councils.

In the "Increase Your Impact" session, Commissioners will learn from subject matter experts and people who have developed new strategies and expanded on the tried and true. They will explore how commissioners both grow and support great Scouting and discuss ideas about how com-



Families attending PTC enjoy an evening of music, skits and fun at the Stockade with enthusiastic Staff. (Philmont Photo)

missioners can do things differently to increase their impact. Participants will understand how to be more effective in growing present and future generations of youth and adults.

Interact With Experts at Scouting U

Scouting U is the division at the national office that is responsible for youth, volunteer, and professional training. Their team of staff and volunteers craft curriculum for the many training courses held throughout the country.



At PTC, Scouting U Week runs from July 21 to 27. It brings together classes designed specifically for volunteers, combined classes for both volunteers and local council staff, and two conferences designed for just pro-

fessionals as part of their career leaning tracks.

"We are excited to be able to give Scouters the chance to network with subject matter experts, people who write the curriculum for training courses, and other Scouters from across the country dedicated to equipping members with the tools and resources to deliver a quality Scouting program," said Danny Tucker, PTC Director.

This year's Scouting U week at PTC has a variety of half week options to give guests the chance to experience a multitude of

Membership growth is the focus of the week from June 16 to 22. In the "Moving the Membership Needle" conference, faculty who are on the National Membership Committee along with selected special guests will conduct a series of workshops. These are designed to create an understanding of the membership organization structure, successful methods and recruitment cycles with the intention of creating fully trained volunteer teams that understand how to collaborate effectively with the professional staff to significantly grow scouting in councils.

This week also features the International Adventures in Scouting conference that will help guide Leaders on participating in overseas events like Jamborees, Moots, and Camps.

Philmont Ambassadors won't be the only ones at PTC during the week of June

Scouting U (Continued on page 7)

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From the PTC Director

Philmont Ambassadors Strengthen Scouting Talent

By Danny Tucker, PTC Director

We all know that every youth, adult Scouter, and professional that attends Philmont is rapidly changed. Whether it is via the high-adventure side where partici-



pants embark on life-changing treks exploring rugged trails and numerous camps, or the training side known as the Philmont Training Center (PTC) where Scouters attend conferences to enhance their leadership skills; Philmont changes lives!

Ambassadors play a crucial role in empowering others to be advocates for Scouting by promoting Philmont opportunities to local units, districts, and council volunteers, families, and staff. Your efforts to equip and engage the Scouting community to attend Philmont each year are vital to the future success of the Scouting movement. Yep, it's a burden to bear, but true!

This summer, PTC is offering its most robust and Scout-specific conferences in many years. There are weeks dedicated to commissioner service, membership growth, religious relationships, and Scouting U-training. These, in addition to all the other fun and exciting conferences, are designed to strengthen Scouting and improve program delivery. Every Scouter across the country can find a course to attend, and Ambassadors can help by showing them where to look. Check out the conference schedule here

www.philmontscout ranch.org/ptc/.

No matter what side of the road, we need more Scouters this summer to attend Philmont and return home to their local councils where they will most assuredly, make a positive impact on the Scouting world.

Thank you, Ambassadors for what you are doing to make Philmont possible for everyone in your council to attend. Your efforts are helping to strengthen Scouting talent for many years to come.

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Sign Up Now For Ambassador Seminars

If you feel that your promotions have gone flat and you need to add some pizzazz to excite people to attend Philmont, then it's time to get to an Ambassador Seminar on June 23-29. You'll get plenty of insight on the programs offered as well as how to build attractive displays and give presentations that inspire attendance at Scouting Paradise. There's nothing like meeting other Ambassadors to share ideas that will excite you about Philmont. [Enroll here!](#)



NEW ARRIVALS



Get Outside To Promote Outdoor Adventures

When you think of Scouting, you think “Outdoors”. When you think Philmont, you think “The Great Outdoors”. When you think of promoting Philmont, you should also think “Get Outdoors”. Youth join Scouting to be outdoors, and being outdoors is the best place to get them interested in the programs offered at Philmont.

Scouting is full of outdoor events: District Camporees, Council Camporees, Klondike derbies, fishing derbies, group service projects and the like. While not all may be suitable for having an information booth, many have “Midway” areas or common spaces where Scouts and Scouters gather for part of the event. This is a great place to set up a Philmont display.

Coordinate with event organizers beforehand to arrange for the optimal location. You also may be able to make your display a required part of the program like at backpacking-themed camporee.

An outdoor event makes it natural to set up a two-person tent as part of a Philmont display. If you have a backpack, you may want to equip it with the essential gear to let Scouts get an idea of what they’ll be carrying. Setting up a one-pot dinner demonstration or showing how to purify water in the backcountry are other Philmont-related activities.



Be prepared for wind and weather when setting up an outdoor display. A canopy and table are useful to have for such occasions. (Tom Baltutis photo.)

It’s good to have some kind of attention-grabber at your display to draw interest from passers-by. Demonstrating how to throw a bear bag rope over a suitable tree limb is a very visible hands-on activity. A fly-fishing demo can generate interest in catching trout at Fish Camp.

Roping dummies are commonly found at the Western-themed camps at Philmont, and having a roping dummy at your display is a unique way to draw attention to it. There are a lot of “how-to” videos on YouTube for you to learn from so you can show Scouts that you are a real cowhand, or you can just let them try on their own to catch a wayward ‘doggie’.

Being outside poses a number of challenges. The event may not have a table for you to use, or the weather may be rainy, sunny or someplace in-between such that a protective shelter is needed. Many Ambassadors have found it handy to get themselves a pop-up canopy and a portable table for such occasions. If you are still associated with a Scout unit, it may be able to lend these to you.

Having paper brochures and the like may not fit very well at an outdoor display. The wind will have a way of moving them around, and not many people want to carry extra paper all day. Displaying the QR code for Philmont may be all you need for them to find more information when they get back to “civilization.”

Large Philmont maps and banners are

weatherproof, and they help draw interest. You can hang them from your canopy, but give them some room to sway in the wind. Be sure to stake down the canopy well.

While setting up an outdoor Philmont display poses some challenges, they are certainly worth the effort to get Scouts and Scouters excited about making a Trek in the backcountry as part of their Scouting adventure.

P2

Remind Scouts To Apply for Treks

It takes time for new procedures to sink in. Many units may still think that they have to apply for a Philmont Trek years before they can go or wait until the Fall Lottery. That’s changed! Remind units that they can apply for a Trek at any time for this coming year and the next.

If a Scout’s unit isn’t going on a Trek, they can use the Trek [Match System](#), or they can apply to go on an [Individual Trek](#).

Despite the shorter lead time, Scouts and Leaders still need to physically get ready for the rigors of a mountain experience. Some things never change!

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Scouts naturally take to hand-on activities promoting Philmont, like this popular calf roping set-up. Just Google “roping dummy” for info on buying parts and building one. (Tom Baltutis photo.)



Instead of joining the rest of his family on a European tour in the summer of 1926, teenaged Chope chose to be a young cowhand at the ranch. Chope (back to the camera) helps with branding at the La Grulia camp. (Photo from the Philmont museum archives.)

Philmont History Notes

Chope Phillips Loved Ranch Life

Perhaps without Waite Phillips's only son, there might not have been Philmont Scout Ranch. During a horseback ride to the Rayado Lodge at Fish Camp with an early Philmont general manager, Waite Phillips said, "You may wonder why I've disposed of the Philmont Ranch by giving it to the Boy Scouts. Our son, Elliot, and his cousins have enjoyed the ranch, and I want many other boys to have the same experience."

Even as a skinny youngster, Elliot Phillips took to the outdoors and didn't really care for the city life or material things. After his father acquired his northern New Mexico acreage, his only son took to the cowboy life quickly, becoming a real ranch hand, even if a diminutive one. Older cousins doing summer work started calling Elliot "Shorty," then a longtime Philmont cowhand named Malaquias Expinoza branded him with the nickname that would stay with him for the rest of his life. "Chopo" is Spanish slang for "shorty."

Waite Phillips had designs that Chope would follow in his footsteps as an oilman and businessman. Chope gave it a shot, working for a couple of years in the Kansas oilfields. But Chope's heart was on the New Mexican ranch lands, and his place was in the saddle.

In his early twenties, he watched with disappointment as his father gave away the

ranch he had grown up on and loved, and then sold off the last southern portion. Years later, Waite would buy Chope and his wife Virginia an 18,000-acre

ranch at Watrous, New Mexico, some sixty miles south of Philmont, which Chope said, "was all that I ever wanted." Unlike his father, Chope was no gentleman rancher. He worked his ranch, hard.

Though Chope was no longer a Philmont cowhand, he remained a frequent visitor, member of the Philmont Ranch Committee, and active supporter of the Boy Scout program. Chope and Virginia created a foundation with the substantial inheritance left to them by Genevieve Phillips. Philmont has been a beneficiary of sometimes large grants from that fund. In 1998, Chope Phillips was awarded Scouting's highest adult leadership honor, the Silver Buffalo.

Adapted from "A Million Miracles: 75 Years at Philmont Scout Ranch" by David Mullings.

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Chope and Virginia

Chuckwagons, Cattle Drives, and Cimarron Share History

Mention "chuckwagon dinner" and you conjure up visions of eating beans, bacon and biscuits from the back of a horse-drawn wagon along a remote dusty cattle drive. Or you might envision a chili dinner with peach cobbler at a Philmont camp. What you may not realize is how closely these two scenes are related in history—literally.

During the late 1800's, cattle raised on the plains of central Texas were driven to rail centers for shipment to meat packing houses in Chicago and Omaha. Famous trails that headed due north from Texas included the Chisholm Trail to Ellsworth or Abilene, Kansas; the Great Western Trail to Dodge City, Kansas or Ogallala, Nebraska; and the Shawnee Trail to Sedalia, Missouri.

The Goodnight-Loving Trail took a different route and passed very near

Chuckwagon (Continued on page 8)



The Goodnight-Loving Trail passed just east of Cimarron and the Philmont area on its way to railheads in Colorado and Wyoming.

Ambassador Adventure Sets Sights on Baldy

Time machines do exist in a way. While there is no magic box for you to step into and return to the past, you can go back to a simpler and quieter time by stepping onto Philmont's trails during an Autumn Adventure.

During the summer, the Ranch is busy with 300 scouts arriving each day, 300 more departing and 3,000 on the trail. There can be a long wait to get an ice cream cone at the commissary, let alone to buy souvenirs at the Tooth of Time Traders. However, in the fall, there are only a few souls around Base Camp and even fewer enjoying the quiet beauty of the backcountry on their own special Trek.

The Ambassador Autumn Adventure will be stepping out on the trail from September 15 to 22, 2024. You'll be able to picture what it was like for Waite Phillips to be out alone in the backcountry once only traversed by natives, explorers, trappers and traders.

Just like any other Trek, being on a crew requires commitment to preparing for the adventure of a lifetime. By signing up now, Ambassadors will have the motivation to get in shape through the coming spring and summer by doing practice hikes on their own. This is especially important for the 2024 Trek which hopes to reach the top of Philmont by climbing Mount Baldy's 12,411 foot summit. You don't have to live near mountains to prepare for Philmont—you just have to get out and put on the miles, and the sooner you commit, the better shape you'll be in.

You might be able to team up with a local crew preparing for their Trek this summer and go on hikes together. Testing your equipment for comfort, fit and utility on local trails is essential. Maybe it's time to get that ultralightweight pack you've been promising yourself as a birthday present.

For those who may not have been on a Trek with a Scout crew, this Trek has added benefits. "It gives Ambassadors a 'real look' at the Philmont backcountry and how treks work," William Sloan said after his 2023 experience. "It is also a great time to unwind and get to know other Ambassadors from around the country. There was great fellowship and relaxation in God's country with a great group of ambassadors."



The Ambassador Crew Ranger Avery Stupka, Steven Gold, William Sloan and Bob Weagraff pause to take in the scenery at Cathedral Rock. (Daniel Yee photo.)

One of the best features of the crew will be the camaraderie and shared love of Philmont gained from previous Treks or Training Center experience along with a desire to experience more during this special time.

Tom Kube, a participant on the 2022 Trek has these words of advice for those on the fence about committing: "What are you

waiting for? You cannot see the backcountry the same way once you have taken the Autumn Adventure Trek."

Don't put it off. Now's the time to sign up by clicking [here](#). The cost is only \$700 for the entire time at Philmont.

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Preparedness Seminars Available on YouTube

By March, Crews should be well into their preparations for the summer 2024 Treks. Every year, Philmont updates its preparedness seminars to inform scouts and leaders of how to best to get ready for their adventure ahead. The monthly videos are on posted the following topics:

- October 19: Season overview and introduction to Preparedness
- November 16: Gear—What you need for a trek at Philmont
- December 7: Cavalcade
- December 14: Itineraries & Crew Leadership
- January 18: Health and Safety
- February 15: Food and Cooking

Coming videos are:

- March 2: Individual Treks
- March 14: Base Camp Procedures
- April 18: Review and Final Updates

Advisors are given access to the live seminars through email links, but anyone can view the recorded session on line [here](#). Even if crews had gone to Philmont in the past, the information is updated annually to reflect changes in trails and policies.

Preparation for Treks takes several months, but units that already have strong backpacking experience are encouraged to sign up for a 2024 Trek.

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Earn the Triple Crown and Grand Slam Awards

Attending one of the BSA's national high-adventure bases — Northern Tier, Philmont, Sea Base or the Summit Bechtel Reserve — will change your life. Attending three or four? An accomplishment like that deserves an award. Scouts, Venturers and adult leaders who participate in a qualifying high-adventure program at three of the BSA's national high-adventure bases may receive the **Triple Crown** of National High Adventure award.

Those who participate in a qualifying high-adventure program at all four may receive the **Grand Slam** of National High Adventure award.

The awards are administered by the Charles L. Sommers Alumni Association, and applications are accepted online at the association's website. Here's everything you should know about these awards:

Triple Crown of National High Adventure award

Created in 1996, the Triple Crown of National High Adventure award recognizes those who have participated in at least one qualifying high-adventure program at any three of the BSA's four national high-adventure Bases. That's Northern Tier High Adventure Bases, Philmont Scout Ranch, Florida National High Adventure Sea Base, and Paul R. Christen National High Adventure Base at The Summit.

To put it broadly, you can count the programs for which these high-adventure bases are known. That means Philmont Treks, weeks at the Paul R. Christen base, Sea Base adventures and Northern Tier voyages. Activities that don't count include training conferences, the national jamboree and family programs. The complete list of qualifying programs at each base is available on the official application website.

Recipients of the award receive a 3-inch Triple Crown award patch reflecting the three national bases where they participated in a high-adventure program. There is no limit on the variations and quantities that may be ordered of the patch.

The patch will show a combination of animals that represents the three bases attended: a loon for Northern Tier, a bull for Philmont, a dolphin for Florida Sea Base and a black bear for Paul R. Christen.



The Grand Slam patch (center) features all four high adventure bases, while triple crown awards feature three of four bases each.

Grand Slam of National High Adventure award

The Grand Slam of National High Adventure award recognizes those who have participated in at least one high-adventure program at all four of the BSA's national high-adventure bases.

Recipients of the award receive one 3-inch Grand Slam patch. An optional large (6-inch) version is available for purchase.

Applying for the Awards

To receive the award, you must first complete the adventures at the camps and then submit an application to the Summers Alumni Association. Applying costs \$10, which covers the cost of the appropriate patch. The application for each award is on this [website](#). You will need information about your adventures such as your arrival dates, crew/program numbers, staff member's name (optional), or other identifying information.

Once you achieve the award, you will receive instruction on how to print out a certificate of accomplishment on the site. An optional 6 inch diameter version of the patch is available for purchase at the website.

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Philmont Ambassador Newsletter

Editor:

Tom Baltutis
tfbaltutis@gmail.com

Deputy National Coordinators:

Pat Wrath (NST 1, 2, 3, 4)
patwrath@hawaii.rr.com

Rob Welander (NST 5, 6, 9, 14)
hoacphilmontambassador@gmail.com

GW Bell (NST 7, 8, 15, 16)
mobeans@me.com

Dave Lyons (NST 10, 11, 12, 13)
Davethecommish@gmail.com

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Zia Experience Adapts to Scouts' Needs

By Sach Matthews, *Philmont Staff*

Last year (2023) marked the third year of the Zia Experience, an adaptive Philmont adventure for Scouts with disabilities, presented in conjunction with the Adaptive Special Needs conference at the Philmont Training Center. These two groups work together to help Scouts experience the great programs at Philmont and bring relevant information back to their home councils.

At the start of the week, participants enjoyed taking day trips to the T-Rex Trail and Lover's Leap. For Jason Wenner, an Eagle Scout who uses a wheelchair due to his cerebral palsy, these were some of the first opportunities to use "The Beast," an outdoor all-terrain motorized wheelchair, purchased for Philmont by the National Special Needs and Disabilities Committee.

"I can't even put him back in the car," said Jason's father Warren. "He used to love the bumps of the car. But the bumps on this thing are very cool for him."

For Jason's family, the most significant moment of the week was at the climbing wall. With the help of Chris Werhane, an adaptive sports lead for Adaptive Adventures, and COPE Director Brian Seibert, they created a rig to help Jason climb the wall. When Jason reached the top, he gave a thumbs up in celebration of the accomplishment.

To Jason's mom, Linda, this feat was joyfully overwhelming. "With the help of everybody, he got to go up almost to the top of the climbing wall. That was the biggest thing that I think we have ever done. It was very exciting."

Mike Runholt, a conference participant with cerebral palsy, was also given the opportunity to try the climbing wall. His friend Ozzy, who had climbed the wall at the same time, celebrated their success, exclaiming "We made it!". Ozzy said that the climbing wall was his favorite activity.

"Because Ozzy hadn't been able to attend a traditional summer camp, we thought this might be his chance to have an alternative to summer camp," explains Diane Caballero, Ozzy's mother. "He really enjoyed the shooting [sports], which I'd never even thought he would be able to do or would want to do. But he absolutely loved it."



A Zia participant climbs the rock wall at the COPE course. [\(Photo by Caroline Falin\)](#)

The Adaptive Special Needs Conference members got to participate in classes and interact with Zia participants throughout the week, giving them the chance to put their new knowledge into practice. Course content is revised each year to stay up-to-date with current research and topics of interest in the special-needs community. This creates an exciting and valuable experience for all attendees, regardless of whether they are a newcomer or returning member. Conference participant Sue Jacintho, for example, has attended all three years and is thinking about showing up again for the fourth.

"The first time I came here, I was looking at setting up a Disabilities Committee within my council down in Southern New Mexico. It gave me a lot of information, a lot of resources, a lot of contacts that I could go with. The second time I came, we were integrated with the Zia Experience for the first time. That was so much fun! We had a lot of hands on experience, instead of classroom, I highly recommend it. This year, it also changed again. We got so much done, and we met so many interesting people. And of course, it's all about the youth. It's got to be about the youth."

The largest joy of the Adaptive Special Needs course and the Zia Experience is the way all the adult conference members be-

come friends and see how the Zia participants grow together.

"By the end of the course, we're all friends," said Jacintho. "When the youth come in, they're socially shy, and do not know how to interact. And usually by day three, they're out in the playground playing with the rest of the youth that are here for different courses."

"If we never had this Zia experience, it would have been a loss for us," said Caballero. "So, we want other people to know about this experience." Conference participant Corey Yasuda recommends this course for "people involved at all levels within our Scouting leadership, because everyone needs some adaptations in helping anyone move forward in Scouting."

As Philmont continually adapts to participant needs, there is a promising future for this program: a Zia Trek. While there are still many things that need to be arranged, there is a very real possibility that some Zia participants may be earning their own Arrowhead patches in the future!

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Mingle With Experts at Scouting U

Scouting U (Continued from page 1)

training events. Scouters can come for just a half week for one class or stay all week and participate in two classes.

Half week sessions include subjects like facilitating training classes, unit leader training, developing a strategic training plan, and fundamentals of EDGE. Leaders involved in advanced training like Wood Badge and NYLT have sessions for these topics as well. Check out all the course offerings during Scouting U on the Philmont webpages. Note that the Advanced District Administration and District Operations Level 2 conferences are specifically reserved for council professionals.

Guests can also combine a half week of Scouting U with a half week of Family Adventure Camp to make it a full family vacation while enjoying New Mexican hospitality at Philmont Scout Ranch.

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PTC Schedule Full of Classes

PTC (Continued from page 1)

23-29. In addition, conferences for Key 3 leaders, youth attending NAYLE, and anyone interested in improving relationship building within Scouting will be in camp. Scouters helping those with special needs will find plenty of support in the Adaptive Special Needs conference, and the Zia Experience (See story on page 7) will enable Scouts with special needs to enjoy Philmont's offerings.

What better place and time to explore a Scout's Duty to God than in God's Country during July 7 to 13? The Religious Relationships Conference will assist leaders in helping scouts of all faiths understand topics like religious emblems and "Duty To God" in the scouting program. During this week there is also a conference specifically for those in the Baptist Scouting Ministry.

From July 14 to 20, Scouting in the Catholic Church will be featured. During this same week in July, conferences in scoutcraft and outdoor skills are featured. "Finding Your Way" guides leaders through orienteering and geocaching, and "Scout Pioneering" takes those skills up a level by providing ideas on incorporating skill challenges into camporees.

Scouting U takes over PTC during the week of July 21 - 27. See the separate article on all that is happening then.

These are just some of the many conferences happening at PTC this summer. Ambassadors should take a look at the entire line-up [here](#) to steer volunteers to the activity that most fits their interests.

P2

Reservations for PTC Housing

Reservations for housing accommodations are made after selecting a conference. Scouters have their choice of Terrace Tents, Deluxe Tents or roofed housing depending on availability. Meals are included as part of the conference or family camp fee.



A cattle roundup crew digs into their chuckwagon meal. (Photo By William Henry Jackson - Library of Congress Prints and Photographs, Public Domain)

Chuckwagon Cooks Provided Hearty Grub on the Cattle Drive

Chuckwagon (Continued from page 4)

Philmont.

In the spring of 1866, Charles Goodnight and Oliver Loving drove their herd of longhorn cattle from central Texas west to the Pecos River and then followed it north to Fort Sumner, New Mexico. From there, they continued along the stream to Las Vegas then kept going up the well-established Santa Fe trail through the area known as the "Cimmaron Dry" because the river sometimes disappeared. The cattle were delivered to railheads in Pueblo, Denver and Cheyenne.

Charles Goodnight came up with the idea of feeding cowhands along the trail from the back of a sturdy old civil-war covered wagon fitted with a field kitchen complete with a fold-down table for a work surface and built-in slots to store pots, pans and kitchen utensils. It was provisioned with plenty of beans, salt pork and flour for making basic frontier grub or "chuck". Other features to facilitate cooking were added such as a water barrel and a canvas sling for firewood. Thus the

chuckwagon was born and became a fixture of cattle drives throughout the west.

Second in command only to the trail boss, the "cookie", sometimes called the "old woman" because of the apron he wore when cooking, was in charge of the chuckwagon. He was usually a grizzled trail hand who also served as barber, tailor, banker, dentist and doctor for the crew.

At Philmont, chuckwagon dinners are a popular alternative to the usual one-pot trail food. Fortunately, crews do not have to endure basic grub that was common on the cattle drives. Instead, they get to enjoy hearty chili cooked up by camp staff with the assistance of crew members. Complimenting the chili are homemade biscuits and peach cobbler.

Chuckwagon dinners are a featured attraction at Philmont staffed camps with western themes. These include Beaubien, Clark's Fork and Ponil. Crews stopping at these camps can also participate in other western activities like riding horses, branding souvenirs, and practicing their roping skills.

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