



PHILNEWS

Issue No. 5: Stories of Spirit, Service, and Self-Discovery



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Wildflowers at Indian Writings. Photo by Muriel Alldredge.

Rising from the Ashes: Ute Gulch

By Riley Brown



Ute Gulch recovering from the burn.
Photo by Gabriel Milby.

In May 2018 the Ute Park fire ripped through 26,000 acres on Philmont Scout Ranch and another 10,000 on neighboring properties. A time that was seared into the minds of many, the fire lasted 20 days before it was contained, charring Cimarroncita, destroying Dean Cow's cabin completely, and encircling Harlan's camp. Although structural damage was inevitable in light of the burn, Ute Gulch survived the fire with both of its structures remaining intact. Now, seven years later, Ute Gulch has fully risen from the ashes, proudly opening its doors for the first time since the fire.

Serving as a commissary and food pickup stop for crews, Ute Gulch is a hub of activity in 2025. Despite the burnt surroundings there's still some large pockets of trees that protected Ute Gulch's structures in the midst of the burn. Operating in the burn scar, means it's critical in keeping Scouts hydrated, with less shade and a higher risk of sunburn. Matt "Milk" Capicchioni, the current Camp Director at Ute Gulch commented "I spoke to some advisors that were here in 2017," and they said that before the fire there was a huge canopy of all green, so much green that it was dark." The staff reflected that even despite the burn the open views are incredible. Parts of the mesa and sides of the gulch were visible as well as a stunning contrast between the burn scar and beautiful wildflowers.

Fire consciousness is a huge part of

Ute Gulch's core since its reopening. The staff encourage crews to have fires at their campsites to burn additional fuel in order to helpfully remove them from the landscape. This results in creating defensible space around the main structure at Ute Gulch. That process manages vegetation in order to reduce the likelihood of ignition and slow the spread of a wildfire. Additionally, Scouts have been taught to put out embers before going to bed as well as restrictions that go along with responsibly tending a fire at a campsite. Reforestation efforts have also been implemented around the ranch. Restorative thinning and reforestation have been a foundational part in revitalizing the greater Philmont area as a whole. The Cita Seedling project has been a huge factor in planning 10,000 seedlings by Scouts with collaboration from the University of New Mexico and the JTH Forestry Research Center at New Mexico State University. The seedlings will not only restore the Ute Park burn scar, but revive the forest ecosystem.

Even with current reforestation progress there's still huge strides to be made. "I'd love to see [Ute Gulch] back to its former glory and the huge canopy, but I don't foresee that happening in my lifetime since it's such a big project." Capicchioni stated. However, despite the long way to go hope remains on the ranch, especially within the advances Ute

Rising from the Ashes: Ute Gulch

Gulch has already made since 2018. “It’s good to [be] back open and have people hiking through areas that were previously shut off.” Capicchioni beams, “I’m proud to be the camp director at Ute Gulch for its first year back.” Although the hike into this commissary camp might serve as a

reminder of the damage wildfires can leave behind, the hike from it instills a powerful lesson in resilience, stewardship, and the importance of protecting the land for generations to come.



Crews receiving food from Ute Gulch. Photo by Gabirel Milby.

Counselor Corner

By Dr. Luke Arnold, PhD, LMFT, NCC



With the long days and nights of summer, some camp staff feel that they are always in performance mode. It seems like crews, visiting staff members, co-workers, and the single digits are all watching us. Depending on the day depends on how well we handle this real or perceived pressure.

Health Assured tells us that perceived stress is about our feelings about the lack of control and unpredictability than the actual stressors. Perceived work stress is a serious issue. It can cause tension, headaches, pain, and fatigue; digestive issues and stomach problems; anxiety, irritability, and anger; a lack of focus and motivation; depression; eating disorders; substance abuse; and sleep disorders. We do our best when we are at our

best. Here are some more self-care strategies as we are in the home stretch of the season:

- Go for a stroll (or 2 or 3).
- Check out the local farmer's market.
- Tidy one small space in your work or living area
- Make a summer feel-good playlist.
- Try a new exercise.
- Reconnect with someone.
- Do a needs personal assessment.
- Continue to practice mindfulness.
- Create an end-of-year success plan.



Chief Among Them

By Matt Bolden



Charles Moreau. Photo by Sarah Peplow

The measure of a life is its service. This quote, the official motto of my alma mater, is attributed to The First President of the Republic of Texas and the Seventh Governor of the State of Texas, General Sam Houston. The meaning behind it, essentially illustrating that a life spent in service to others is a life well-spent. This sentiment is echoed by none other than Scouting's very own Order of the Arrow. Philnews got a chance to speak with Charles Moreau, a Kwahadi Lodge Chief in New Mexico, about the recent National Council of Chiefs (NCOC) with 500 participants that took place at Philmont and its impact on his life as well as the lives of others.

"NCOC is all about teaching chiefs how to be better leaders and how to better run our ceremonies for the future," Moreau explains. NCOC gives the opportunity for lodge chiefs and vice chiefs to congregate as one on Philmont property and gain valuable knowledge to better run their OA lodges and be stewards of their environment and communities. Not only can chiefs develop their skills at NCOC, but Moreau highlights the traits that make a good lodge chief, saying, "Listening is probably one of the biggest ones, both in judgement and listening to other's suggestions. Another one is a counterpoint to this, but it's knowing when to stand your ground on something. There's times where you have an idea that you know you can

execute on point, and somebody suggests something that might be better, but it's not as easy to execute, you have to be firm in your vision during those moments." The duality of leadership is highlighted by Charles realistically here. Listening to others is a skill of paramount importance, especially when you are trying to lead a team that has diverse visions and goals and needs strong direction.

NCOC could be held anywhere with a Scouting presence in the entire country, so why Philmont? Charles explains, "Philmont is a very special place in scouting, especially in New Mexico. I love that we have this place that's well known across the nation, and has such a presence here in our state. It's why I've wanted to attend here since I was a Cub Scout." To answer it simply, Philmont is a one of a kind place. It is the largest camp in the world by land area, has an incredibly rich history, and is beloved by many as HOMe.

While at Philmont, NCOC participants were able to put their service to work and committed to repainting the fences at the Cimarron Grist Mill. The service ingrained in the whole event off is a hallmark of Scouting. The NCOC also coincided with a celebration of the 30th anniversary of the first OATC. Volunteer work and public good is the lifeblood that keeps Philmont going 24/7, 365 days a year. The NCOC isn't just a gathering of

Chief Among Them

lodge chiefs to sit in a conference room for a week. It's a celebration of what makes Philmont what it is today; a place to gather, to learn, and to grow. Charles highlighted this point at the end of the interview: "I've loved the idea that we have this place in New Mexico that people come to visit and go 'man this place is beautiful'; It amazes me that we have this space."



Rock in commemoration of the Vaca Trail.
Photo by Gabriel Milby.



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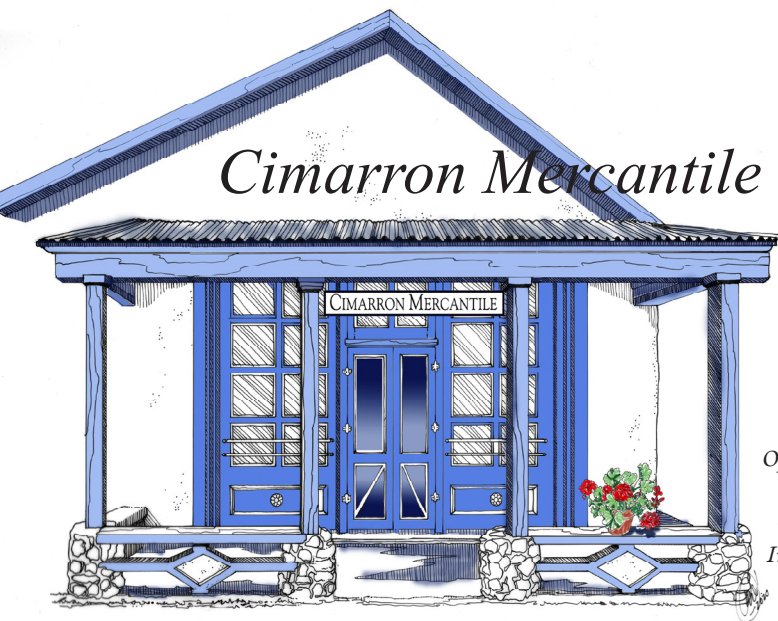
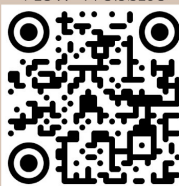


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The Art of Phil-Fiesta

By Owen Traub



Staffers rave out at Crater Lake. Photo by Muriel Alldredge.

Working in the backcountry, or any department on ranch for that matter, can sometimes get busy. Scheduling conflicts make it hard to spend time with friends. Co-workers rotate in and out as they take time off. The days start to blur together in the routine. Sometimes, all that a Phil-staffer wants is to celebrate their summer achievements with good friends, food, and festivities. For this reason, the Phil-Fiesta was born.

As years passed, basecamp departments and backcountry staff began organizing their own Phil-Fiestas at their respective workplaces with varying themes. Phil-Fiestas have taken many forms over the years as staffers think up

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new activities and traditions to include. In years past, Harlan's 2017 Viking theme involved a huge feast with an entire table full of viking-esque cuisine – no plates allowed. In 2023, Fish Camp hosted a mocktail party, setting a 'moody' ambiance in the cabin and serving some of the finest backcountry concoctions such as the Fin and Tonic, Long Island Iced Trout, and Moscow Burro. This season, Metcalf hosted a backcountry wedding between two rangers, complete with an Elvis Presley officiant (Camp Director Ryan Gates) to seal the deal. Following this, Pueblano set the bar high with a 7/11 themed fiesta on 7/11 including a makeshift replica of the gas station chain and a working Slurpee machine. Although the locations and themes of these fiestas differ, they share a common goal of bringing staff members together for fellowship and to celebrate their many accomplishments. Typically, the event is scheduled for an evening where the crew load is low so that the staff can celebrate without interrupting participants experiences. Topher Busch, known by Scouts as the beaver-loving bossman character, 'Tofu', is the Camp Director at Crater Lake and originator of the Crater's 2025 Phil-fiesta - Crater Rave! Fiestas offer a rare chance for all

camp staff to come together, enjoy fellowship, and appreciate the incredible place they've called home for the summer. In order to ensure the fiesta's success, Topher and the rest of the Crater Lake crew sent out invites to departments at base and backcountry camps, cooked a delicious pasta dinner for guests, provided a live DJ, and topped off the night with sweet treats like cake and fudge to satiate post-dance party cravings. After the Continental Tie and Lumber Co. evening 'meeting' concluded, staff attendees waited in line to have their staff ID's checked by the Crater Lake crew and danced the night away under the disco ball alongside a gorilla, a sentient hot dog, and even Spider-Man himself (you had to be there). Phil-Fiestas are a great way for camps to schedule times where their friends will all be together in one place and other staffers are welcome to visit without fear of obstructing programs, especially in the backcountry. When

staffers are constantly coming and going on their days off, participants take priority, and the radio is your only source of communication with civilization, it can be overwhelming. Phil-Fiestas allow staff to take a breath and celebrate the beautiful scenery, their personal accomplishments, and the friends they've made along the way.



Long exposure indoor rave. Photo by Sarah Peplow.

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ve, Philmont here's to thee, Scouting Paradise, Out in God's country tonight.



Philmont Through My Eyes

By Norah Bruce

Birds the color of flames darting across the trail, somehow disappearing seamlessly into the greenery.

Lewis's woodpeckers watching me walk to the parking lot, hidden behind leaves of the cottonwoods.

The jolt of excitement after hearing a Sora call repeated in the recently restored wetlands of Lower Bonito.

The gentle yellow of the many flowered Gromwell lining the back country roads, dotted with white sweet clover, like summertime Christmas lights.

Rattlesnakes dancing away in the undergrowth, the epitome of grace and danger.

Pronghorn families watching warily as our work truck putters on by, the young darting to hide behind the legs of the adults.

Turkey Vultures riding the thermals, soaring around ridges and over valleys as the sunlight glares through the tips of their wings.

Ladybugs amassing on top of the Tooth of Time, hill-topping on some of the highest peaks in the state.

The silent way a young bear moves through the thick woods despite its size.

Coyote Willows determined to survive in dried-up creeks, tangled up into thickets.

Invasive Musk Thistle's gorgeous magenta flowers, nodding above the rest of the greenery as it takes over the landscape.

The Say's pheobe scolding me as I peer into her nest to check if any of her four babies have fledged.

Creeks filling the air with a gentle babble, smoothly licking over rocks, branches, and my toes.

The way the Smooth Brome leans, pushed over by gusts of wind.

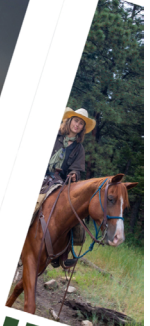
Giant Ponderosa pines standing tall, leaving me to wonder what history they've seen go by.

Prairie dogs standing on their tippy toes, carefully keeping an eye on me as I pass, little arms dangling all goofy.

PHILNEWS PHOTO CONTEST

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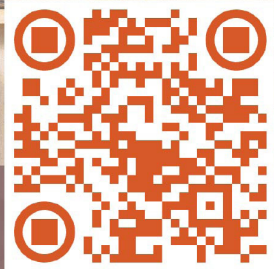
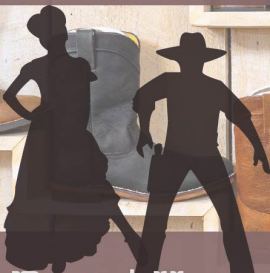
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TOOTH OF TIME TRADERS



NEW ITEM

Camperships Change Lives

By Owen Traub



Troop 990 hiking to Tooth Ridge Camp. Photo by Julia Manipella.

You don't need a top-of-the-line quarter-zip or the latest high-tech hiking boots to chase high adventure, but for many, the cost can still feel out of reach. While many troops seek out and organize fundraising opportunities, it's not always enough to cover the full cost of a Philmont trek. Waite Phillips, Philmont's benefactor, believed this experience should be for the many, not just the privileged few. A place where every Scout, regardless of financial means, could find adventure

and growth. That belief continues to guide Philmont today by ensuring access through camperships, so every Scout has the opportunity to experience the adventure. Philmont began awarding camperships in the 1950s, turning Waite Phillips's vision into reality. The Waite Phillips Scholarship Fund remains the largest and most enduring source of campership support. Since then, generous donors have continued the campership legacy—creating new endowed scholarships, contributing to existing funds, and helping ensure that cost is never the reason a Scout misses out on a Philmont experience. In 2025 alone, 1,022 camperships were awarded, totaling \$573,451 in assistance. These campership funds donated by individuals, families, and organizations are awarded based on donors' criteria and the applicant's needs or achievements. In 2025, Philmont awarded over \$600,000 in camperships. Thanks to these donors, hundreds of Scouts each year are able to experience the adventure, growth, and camaraderie that Philmont provides, an experience that might otherwise be out of reach.

One such Scout is Ashlin from Troop

Camperships That Change Lives

154, who received the Deimler Campership after losing her home to a fire. “It’s been a long road, and Scouts has definitely helped me with that,” she shares. “I’m glad I joined because I’ve learned that Scouts are resilient. Scouts bounce back better than most.”

Without her campership, Ashlin may not have been able to attend Philmont. Her story is just one of many that shows how Philmont and its donors help bridge the gap for families facing financial hardships.

Ashlin reflects honestly on the challenges and rewards of her trek: “It’s a tiring hike, but it’s so worth it when you get to see what you’ve done. Philmont has had its ups and downs, but I’m glad I’ve been here.”

In addition to treks, camperships are

also available for individual programs, NAYLE (National Advanced Youth Leadership Experience), and programs at the Philmont Training Center. These opportunities ensure that more Scouts, Venturers, and Scouters can participate in leadership development, training, and high adventure regardless of financial barriers.

At its core, Scouting is about ensuring every young person has the chance to grow, lead, and explore and camperships open that door.

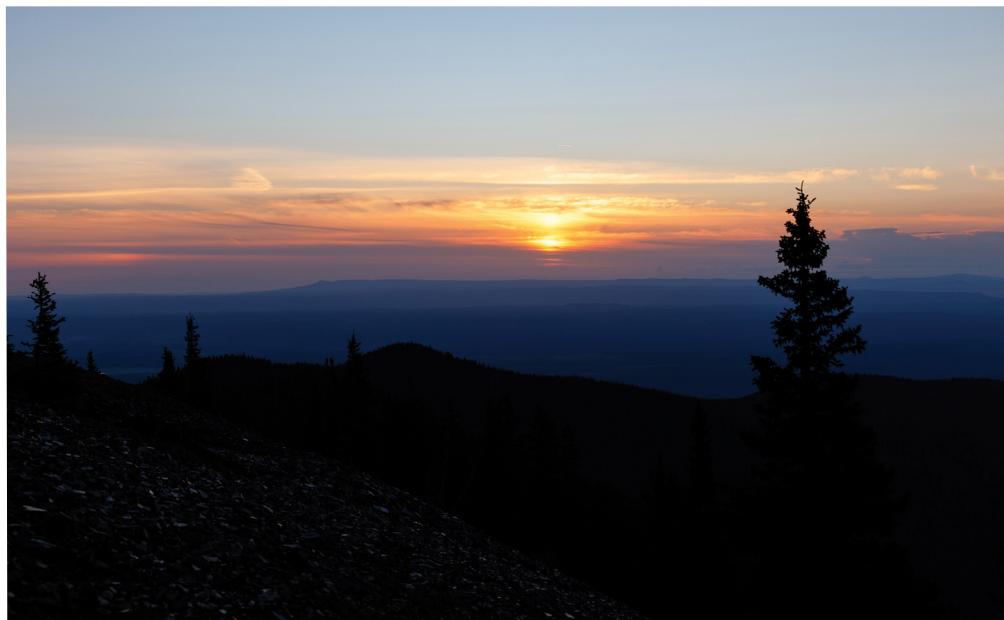
Below is a list of Philmont Scholarship funds. If you would like to make a donation please contact Philmont. You can also “round-up” your purchase at the Tooth of Time Traders as all proceeds go to Philmont’s campership fund.

Campership & Scholarship Opportunities at Philmont Include

Waite Phillips Campership Fund
Deimler Foundation Scholarship Fund
Philmont Campership Fund
Bovay Scholarship Fund
PTC Campership Fund
NAYLE Scholarship Fund
Edward A. Pease Scholarship Fund
Jim and Linda Ryffel Leadership Fund
Philmont Campership Endowment Fund
McGurkin Philmont Scholarship
Andrew LaPadula Scholarship Fund
JH Browne Scholarship Fund
Curtis Scholarship Fund
Philmont Staff Association

The Spirit of Philmont

By William Wille



Mt. Baldy at sunrise. Photo by Muriel Alldredge.

When it comes to planning a trip to Philmont, the conversation almost always turns to gear, advance training, and other preparations.

And rightfully so.

As a first timer who recently completed trek 7-6, I was very preoccupied in the months, weeks, and especially days leading up to our 20-hour Amtrak trip on July 6. Would this 57-year-old flatlander from Illinois actually be able to complete multiple back-to-back days of this rigorous trip? They don't call it high adventure for nothing!

After six nights and seven days, I could thankfully say none of my fears -- altitude sickness, proper training, an old high school "water on the knee" track injury -- came

true, not even a single blister. Even Mother Nature cooperated during monsoon season! In addition, aside from a few minor flareups and breakdowns you would expect on this kind of trip, Scout Spirit stayed high and our crew got along well throughout the trip.

As we know from Philmont History, oil magnate Waite Phillips made an initial donation of 35,000 of his 300,000 acre working ranch in 1938 and by 1941 brought the total up to more than 127,000 donated acres for the creation of what was first called Philturn Rocky Mountain Scout Camp. It was made in the spirit of "for the benefit of the Boy Scout organization" because he was so

The Spirit of Philmont

impressed by the Scouting program. The spirit of Philmont might not always be intentionally thought about during the thousands of steps on the trail or the whirlwind of activity at basecamp before heading out. Really it took me a few days of distracting myself from the rigors of this physical challenge that it struck me. I can think of so many staff, from cashiers to basecamp offices; porch talks at staffed camps; those working conservation sites and in the middle of the burn area; the performers of the opening and closing campfires and the campfire show at Clarks Fork; and staff appearing at random places along the trails; that everyone was full of scout spirit. I can't remember anyone seeming like they were even close to having an off day. This is more than a summer job. It is

clear that everyone genuinely wants to be here, help you, and make your trip to Philmont, whether it's your first time or your fifth, memorable. I also felt as though everyone had an answer for anything I could ask. This especially included our ranger, Ethan E. He was with us step by step for the first two days, patiently and painstakingly explaining everything from navigation on the trail, to purifying water, cooking, cleaning, setting up camp, finding the Red Roof Inn, and so forth. Our scouts, in a thank you card they signed and gave to him at the end of our trip, said he "prioritized his time and had the utmost patience with those who struggled" even after a long, demanding day on the trail. He was amazing! Probably one of the most impactful

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times was our first night on the trail when Ethan took us out to an overlook at Toothache Springs. From that awe-inspiring vista view somewhere around 7,800 feet, he invited us to note in silence five things that we could see and hear.

After we shared, Ethan then told us his Philmont story about his first trek back in 2018 and how it changed his life, so much in fact that he chose it as the location for his college internship. Like the other staff, it was not just a summer job, not just a requirement. He specifically chose to be here to share his passion. We then closed out by committing ourselves to the Philmont Wilderness Pledge. What an inspirational first evening! It is this leadership and spirit that then filtered down through to our

crew leader, wilderness guide and chaplain's aide. You could argue they completed requirements just to earn their badges, but that didn't take away from the focus they had fulfilling their respective roles. And I would be remiss not mentioning the camaraderie, encouragement, and high fiving that was always evident with Scouts and Scouters that you crossed on the trails.

I'm sure Mr. Phillips is looking down with a huge smile, knowing that the spirit in which he made his majestic donation is alive and well to this day throughout Philmont. Thank you for such an impactful experience!

William Wille is a registered leader with Troop 40 from Yorkville, Illinois.



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Milestones, Momentum, and Memories

By Andrea Watson

As the sun begins to set on another unforgettable summer at Philmont, it's clear that 2025 has been a season of impact, growth, and restoration. From the first crews that hit the trail in June to the final treks of August, tens of thousands of Scouts and leaders explored Philmont's rugged beauty, challenged themselves, and grew as teams and individuals. With more rainfall than we've seen in recent years, the Ranch was alive with color. Lush meadows, full creeks, and vibrant wildflowers offered a stunning backdrop for every adventure.

Whether you were in the backcountry or back in Base, big things were happening all around Philmont.

Restoration in Action

After years of recovery, the reopening of Dean Cow and Ute Gulch for the first time since the 2018 Ute Park Fire marked a powerful milestone. These camps, once symbols of loss, are now active again thanks to the tireless work of our full-time and seasonal staff. Hundreds of Scouts also played a hands-on role in restoring Cito Creek, building dam structures that are already slowing runoff and



General Manager Andrea Watson.

helping rehydrate the valley floor.

PTC Turns 75

The Philmont Training Center celebrated its 75th anniversary this summer with a week of tours, talks, and trailblazing moments. The new “Stay and Play” program was a resounding success, and the first class of PTC Trailblazers was recognized alongside Silver Sage honorees. It was a reminder that Philmont isn't just about backpacking—it's about lifelong learning and connection. A Century and a Comeback In a fitting tribute, Norton Clapp's home troop, Troop 100 from Washington, marked their centennial by summiting Baldy—the very peak made part of Philmont thanks to Clapp's 1963 purchase of the Baldy Country. Meanwhile, conservation

crews and Scouts launched a new reforestation effort in the Ute Park burn scar, planting seedlings that will help rebuild the forest for future generations.

The People Behind the Numbers

Behind every itinerary, every bear bag line, every backcountry delivery, and every smiling porch staffer, there's a person who made it happen. One participant summed it up best in a recent note:

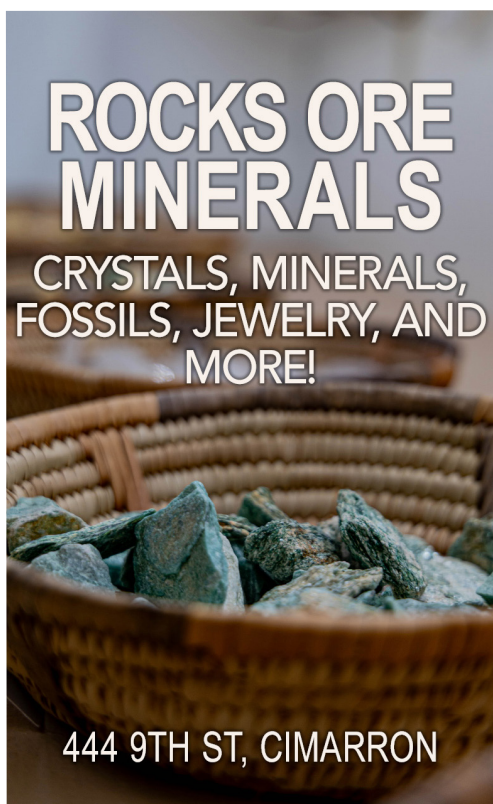
"How the staff can keep an operation so large and complex running so smoothly for so long is beyond me. Yet, they do it. What's more, they do it again and again and again... There's a culture of professionalism among Philmont staff that I wish were more widespread in the

corporate world."

From Base Camp to Beaubien, Philmont's seasonal and full-time staff are what keep the experience extraordinary.

You Made This Possible

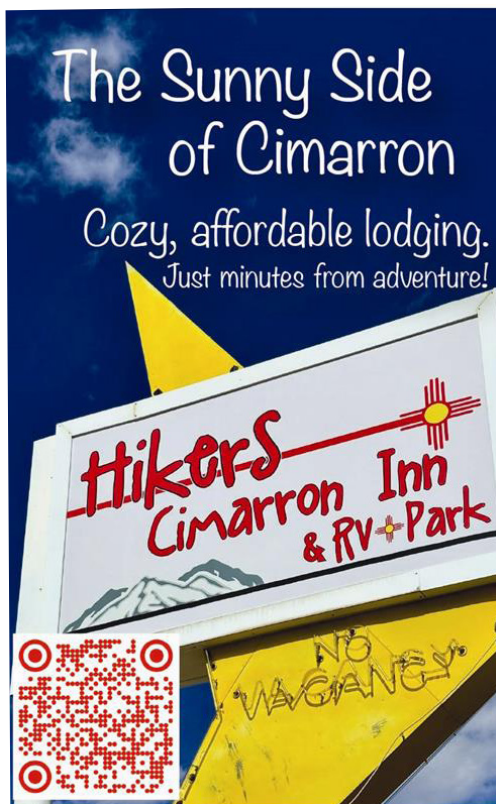
As General Manager, I want to personally thank each of you who helped make this summer a success. The impact you've made stretches far beyond one season. Because of your dedication, we reactivated long-closed camps, honored our history, invested in the land, and created the kind of experience that changes lives. I'm incredibly proud of what we accomplished together this summer and even more grateful to be part of a team like this. Thank you.



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MIAMI 80± ACRES 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom home with water shares, roping arena, steel barn with shop. Other historic barns, Pipe corrals. Far enough off road to be private. 2350 SHW 21, Miami NM 87729. **\$569,999 asking price.**

COOL CIMARRON CANYON LIVING, 3 BEDROOM 2 BATHROOM 2,321 sq ft home built 2009 with amazing back covered porch and attached two car garage. 29665 HWY 64 Ute Park, NM 87729. **\$535,000**

MAXWELL PLACE 39.65± deeded acres, 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom 2 story home. Property is on pavement with big views of the mountain range, mature cottonwood trees, 1 apricot tree, irrigation rights, domestic water meter, older well, barns, useable outbuildings, including root cellar compliment this property. 461 Elm Tree Rd. Maxwell NM 87728.

MIAMI 40 ACRES 320± Deeded acres, 180.80 Irrigable acres, center pivot, mid 2000's modular home, two water meters, two barns and one large

**LOTS IN TOWN NEAR ST JAMES
AND NEAR THE BANK.**

GRAND NATIONAL BED & BREAKFAST

Cimarron, New Mexico



Grand National Bed and Breakfast is a historical home built in 1856. Originally part of the Maxwell Land Grant serving as their headquarters, it later became the National Hotel for travelers on the Santa Fe Trail in the "untamed" West. It is now open as a bed and breakfast for guests wanting to relax and enjoy this beautiful area.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Calendar Events

- 8/4 Trivia, 8pm-10pm
- 8/6 Jam Night
- Ice Cream Night Tuesday, 8pm
- Chapel, 7-8pm

Business Hours

- National Scouting Museum:
8am-5pm
- ToTT: 7am-6:45pm
- Villa: 8:30am-5pm
- Yurt: 8am-12pm & 1pm-5pm
- Cantina: 9am-6:45pm & 8pm-10pm

Work at Philmont Full Time

Electrician
Lead Maintenance Technician
Maintenance Technician - Backcountry
Ranch Technician-Farms and Roads
Supervisor Facility Services-Farms and Roads
Housekeeping Lead



Looking to join the Philmont team
after this summer? Check out our
website!

Dan Beard

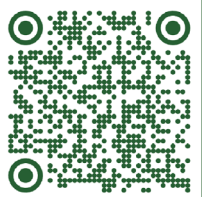
Beatty Lakes

Metcalf

Baldy Mountain

Cook Canyon

PHILNEWS ONLINE



PHILMONT SCOUT RANCH

17 DEER RUN ROAD
CIMARRON, NEW MEXICO 87714