

WESTERN LORE PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The mountains and plains grasslands of Northeastern New Mexico have served as areas for raising beef cattle since the days of Lucien Maxwell's original settlement on the Beaubien and Miranda Land Grant in the 1840's. Essentially, the present day ranches that have evolved are cow/calf operations whose major emphasis lies in raising calves from adult cows. Other outfits specialize in pasturing beef steers in mountain areas through the summer months.

In the rugged terrain of this part of New Mexico, cattle are still tended by men and women on horseback. As such, present day ranches represent a continuation of the beginnings of the western cattle industry when men on horseback rode herd on the large open range ranches of the 1880's and 1890's.

Consequently, the most plausible approach to Western Lore programs at Philmont is to portray life on ranches as it is today in Northeastern New Mexico and to then draw comparisons with those ranches and the cattle industry of the past.

The following books will be helpful in becoming acquainted with the western cattle industry and the cowboy from the past to the present. Although, not a definitive bibliography, it covers the overall spectrum of the subject and will prepare you with the background information needed to present your Western Lore program.

- Adam, Ramon F., *Western Words*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1944)
- Forbis, William, *The Cowboys*, (New York: Time-Life Books, 1973)
- Grant, Bruce, *The Cowboy Encyclopedia*, (New York: Rand McNally & Co., 1951)
- James, Will, *Smoky*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926)
- Langmore, Band and Tyler, Ron C., *The Cowboy*, (New York: William Morrow & Co. Inc 1975)
- Lomax, John A. and Lomax, Alan, *Cowboy Songs*, (New York, McMillan Publishing Co., 1938)
- Mora, Jo, *Trail Dust and Saddle Leather*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946)
- Murphy, Lawrence R., *Philmont*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press 1972)
- Rollins, Phillip Ashton, *The Cowboy*, (Albuquerque: Univeristy of New Mexico Press 1979)
- Ward, Fay, *The Cowboy at Work*, (New York: Hastings House, 1976)

In portraying the present day life on ranches in Northeastern New Mexico, there are several activities that you can involve your campers in to illustrate the cowboy's work. The actual details presented in each program feature will be worked out by your staff as a whole through your own research and from information gathered at staff training.

WESTERN LORE

Page 2

ROPING – Cattle are roped by men on horseback for a number of reasons, e.g., to catch calves for branding, to stabilize cattle in open pastures so then can be doctored when sick, etc. Using either posts or roping dummies, you can demonstrate the different loops used and then let campers try their hand. Fun games can be developed, like “rope the log”, that can help hone the skills you have taught!

BRANDING – Cattle are branded to display ownership. At the branding station you will have the opportunity to brand a variety of camper souvenirs with the Philmont cattle and horse brands. While the branding, you can tell them how calves are actually branded and marked and why it is done, and some of the history of when/how/why branding was developed. .

CHUCKWAGON DINNER – Prepare a meal of stew and peach cobbler out of your chuckwagon. Although chuck wagons are no longer used on ranches in Northeastern New Mexico, you can tell how the chuck wagon was used historically as a mobile commissary to feed cowboys on the long cattle drives and big roundups.

HORSE TALK – Horse rides are a popular part of the program at the Western Lore Camps, and are led by wranglers in the Ranch Department. By using a saddled horse as a program tool, they can explain reasons why horses are needed to tend cattle. They will point out the parts of the saddle and bridle and the horse, and why they are built the way they are.

You can discuss your own clothing and explain how each piece protects the cowboy in his rigorous work. At this time, you might give a brief history of the western cattle industry and how it has evolved into the ranch operations of today.

This talk is best given to each crew first, if possible, as it introduces the campers to your subject. All other program features then follow and add specifics to the actual work done by cowboys.

CAMPFIRE – At an evening campfire, you have the opportunity to sum up a cowboy's life and philosophy. Sing traditional cowboy songs and tell why a cowboy sang. Through cowboy songs and stories, you can impart something of what cowboys believed in.

CLOTHING – At a Western Lore camp, you will appear to be a real cowboy to the campers who visit you. You, therefore, will want to dress like one. Study the pictures of cowboys found in the books listed in the bibliography. Most important to your outfit will be western boots and a western hat. Philmont will supply the entire wardrobe, but you are welcome to bring items like boots or a hat to complete your outfit, or other miscellaneous props like spurs, chaps, etc.

NOTE: Clothing styles will vary at each of our three Western Lore Camps. Ponil staff will appear in a wardrobe reminiscent of the Old West in the late 1800's. Clark's Fork western attire is modeled in the mid 1950's and will wear a style of clothing that resembles the popular clothing brand called “Rockmount Ranch Wear”. Beaubien staff will have jeans and pearl snap shirts, and model a time period in the late 1930's, around the time Philmont was given to the Boy Scouts of America!