Unit 41 to base: Gene Schnell

Marie Reynolds
PhilNews

It’s 7:30 a.m. when staffers begin to make their way onto the porch of the Backcountry Warehouse, hoping for transportation into the backcountry. Greeting each staffer, chaplain, and backcountry manager with a joke and a smile is Backcountry Distribution and Support’s main man, Eugene “Gene” Schnell.

Thirty-one summers ago in 1985, Gene began his career at Philmont directing the Philmont Training Center (PTC). From 1986 to 1990 he was the Director of Camping Headquarters Services, giving his infamous “Crew Leader Speech” to thousands of Scouts getting ready to go on the trail. From 1991 to 2007 he worked as the Backcountry Manager and from 2008 to the present he has maintained his role as Backcountry Distribution and Support Manager, widely known by his radio number “Unit 41.”

Gene has been a main contributor in creation and implementation of the Order of the Arrow Trail Crew (OATC) Trek and has been the OATC Trek Advisor since the program began in 1995.

He said, “I was part of the group that sat down there in the cabana years ago, rangers and what not, and we put this program [OATC] together. I’ve been committed to its success ever since and we’ve had close to 3,000 participants in 20 years. We have a lot of the participants return as staff; it’s a tremendous growth experience. It’s very physical; they build trails and then they bridge into their own trek under the leadership of some of the finest young men in the Order of the Arrow in the country. It is a programmed experience involving a lot of growth and personal development.”

Gene’s unceasing work with the OATC trek earned him the Order of the Arrow’s Distinguished Service Award.

Growing up in Scouting, Gene visited Philmont as a teenager in a council contingent, volunteered as a Scoutmaster for the National Junior Leader Instructor Camp (NJLIC) at Philmont, and has participated in 11 Philmont treks. “I love Philmont, every camp has its own particular assets. I like the more remote camps like French Henry, Crooked Creek, Black Mountain, and Apache Springs. Philmont has beauty everywhere you go, it just comes in different forms.”

Gene has devoted much of his life to Philmont, the Boy Scouts of America, and the great outdoors itself.

He said, “I am as comfortable with the national parks as I am with...”

Continued on page 6

93rd Annual Maverick Club Rodeo
Kate Johnson
PhilNews

This year’s annual Fourth of July Rodeo in Cimarron was truly a community event, sponsored by local businesses and ranch owners. The Maverick Club organizes this rodeo for July Fourth each year. Philmont staffers and full-time community members alike mixed in the crowd of spectators and contestants.

A parade through Cimarron started the day off, as the town’s population and Philmont staffers lined the street together. The rodeo’s grand opening began shortly...”

Continued on page 4

Stomping around at Cyphers Mine
Caleb Wong
PhilNews

The moment crews sit down on the porch, they are conscripted into one of the most storied professions that characterizes much of the American Southwest: mining. “Welcome to Cyphers Mine! We’re excited you’re here because you’re going to start working in the mine early tomorrow morning,” says a cheerful program counselor to kick off the camp welcome.

Cyphers Mine is a camp...”

Continued on page 3
The high-powered rifles of Sawmill

Caleb Wong
PhilNews

There is much to look forward to at Sawmill, especially at the unlikeliest of places: the porch. From the comfort of a rocking chair at Sawmill, crews can watch the sun shine over a gorgeous view of Philmont. Sunrise and sunset offer some of the best views of Philmont, but there is plenty else to do at Sawmill during the day, like rifle-shooting.

Sawmill offers crews the opportunity to practice riflery skills. On an expansive range a 20 minute hike away from the cabin, metallic targets in the silhouetted shape of bears, rams, and other animals are perched along tiered ridges downrange. Participants shoot high-powered, .30-06 caliber rifles that fire with a resounding, clear bang. Before they shoot, participants can make their own bullets in the cabin using reloading equipment and tools.

In addition to shooting instruction, the staff also provides context by explaining a short history of guns at the rifle range. Guns are more accurate and fire shots faster compared to other eras, as represented at staff camps such as Miranda and Black Mountain.

“We go into how rifleing came to be,” Program Counselor Matthew Alexander said. “Basically, it’s lands and grooves so that when you fire the bullet, it will spin down the barrel, giving it better range.”

Participants gain confidence from shooting at the gun range, though the loud rifles are intimidating, even while wearing ear protection.

“I feel there are a certain amount of kids who are timid at first, and once they realize how little our rifles kick and the fact that they just shot a high-powered rifle, it gives them a little bit of confidence.” Program Counselor Blake Watson said.

At night, participants can relax by playing a game of Pistoleros, which is a mixture of reflexes and charades. The players stand in a circle, and as the game progresses in a spirited, friendly fashion, players are eliminated until a winner emerges.

“They love to act silly, and when you reciprocate that, they have a good time,” Watson said. “They show staffers favor more than anything. Technically, I should have been out of the circle, but they want us to keep playing, so they choose people from their own crew to be out.”

Sawmill does not conduct an evening campfire, but the view offers the opportunity to bring their experiences at Sawmill full-circle. At 5 every morning, a staff member gets up to prepare coffee and hot beverages for crews who choose to watch the sunrise from the porch. The quiet time spent on the porch is an opportunity to prepare for the day ahead, whether spent at the other camp.

“It’s a great way to start the day,” Program Counselor Watson said. “I have plenty of time to think, to put myself in the right mood, put myself in the right mentality. It’s very meditative.”

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### July 17–July 23

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<td>Insanity - SSSAC TV rooms</td>
<td>6:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Daily Hike - Uracca (meet in front of SSSAC)</td>
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### Crew 706 T2 watches as Sawmill PC Matt Alexander demonstrates the final step in reloading expended cartridges which involves bullet seating for reloading rifle bullets. Tyler Sanders/PhilNews

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### While at Sawmill, Scouts are able to fire shots from a Ruger M77 Hawk-eye Guide Gun at the Sawmill Firing Range. Tyler Sanders/PhilNews

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### Pete Scifres guides Caleb Wong through the process of firing the Ruger M77 Hawk-eye Guide Gun at the Sawmill Firing Range. Sean McElligott/PhilNews

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**NEWs and Photo Team**

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From page one: Cyphers Mine

Contention Mine, pan for gold, make tools and souvenirs in the forge, and enjoy the stomp, an evening program of mining stories and songs. It is a challenge to hike to the camp from any direction, especially Hunting Lodge, but the program the camp offers makes the hike well worth it.

Contention Mine is the mainstay of the program at Cyphers Mine. In 1912, the year the camp is set in, Charlie Cyphers ran the St. Louis Mining Company. Although the mine is no longer operational, crews can explore the mine with the guidance of a geologist and program counselor. Composed of metamorphic rock, the mine serves as a living geology lesson.

The mine is also a fascinating exploration of mining processes. Miners specialized in different roles, such as mucking – shoveling rocks into carts – and drilling holes for dynamite to search for gold. While miners hoped to strike it rich, they had to subsist on low wages and risk serious injuries or death because of the possibility of a cave-in and other dangers like methane pockets.

“They had to watch out for all sorts of collapses,” Camp Director Jacob Trione said. “Muckers had to pull out 16 tons just to get their $1.50 a day. Mining life was very dangerous and very hard, and especially here, where they weren’t paid very well.”

Afterwards, crews work together at the forge to smith a tool they can take with them as a tangible memory of Cyphers Mine. As a team, Troop 1919 from Dale City, Virginia, forged a steel knife to take with them on their trek.

“I feel like the stress is gone – hitting metal with a hammer,” Westley Kingrey from Troop 1919 said. “This is definitely going to be one of the things I talk about at home.”

At Stomp, the cabin reverberates as the staff and participants sing in bouts of joy and sadness while thumping their feet on the ground. Songs such as “Boll Weevil” and “The Ballad of Love and Hate” connect the entrepreneurial, uncertain nature of mining with treks at Philmont. From any direction, the hike to Cyphers Mine is difficult and is – especially due to record-breaking rainfall – often wet and muddy. Stomp is an opportunity for crews to reflect on those experiences and find the silver lining in those trying times.

“There’s always that hope, in the end, that something good could come from it,” Camp Director Trione said. “That’s what we’re trying to go for: reflecting that mining life is hard, but if you really look for it, you can find the good in any situation.”

The staffs also tell stories of love and hate, high hopes and crushed dreams, life and death, and other oppositional emotions. The anecdotes the staffs share with participants collectively demonstrate the perseverance and hardship the miners experienced as they uprooted themselves to move out west.

“For a lot of those stories, they’re very situational.” Program Counselor Kelly Mazzabalde said. “You made the best of it and made a change. You can have it go to pieces or you can make something positive of it.”

While scouts visit Cyphers Mine, they are given the opportunity to forge an item such as this knife, forged by Kim Merry. This part of the program calls for the whole crew to work together creating stronger bonds between one another.

[Photo of scouts forging a knife]

James Smith explains mine features and the history of the Contention Mine to Troop 840 from Stafford, Virginia, while taking them on a tour of the old mine.

[Photo of James Smith and scouts]

While at Cyphers Mine, crews get to tour the Contention Mine to experience what it was like to work in a mine in 1912.

[Photo of a mine interior]
From page one: Maverick Club Rodeo

after, in the arena newly designated the Chope Phillips Arena in honor of Elliot Waite “Chope” Phillips. Events throughout the day included bronco riding, calf roping, bull riding, wild horse racing, pole bending, barrel racing, and a rescue race.

Debbie Kincannon, who placed third in the Senior Barrel Race said, “I’ve been doing it since I was six years old. I’ve always loved horses and loved rodeo.”

Mario Gonzalez, a seven-year-old barrel-racing contestant, enjoyed the rodeo and receiving a buckle for his performance.

Younger contestants compete separately from their older counterparts. One favorite is the calf scramble, in which a herd of kids attempt to claim ribbons from the tails of a herd of calves.

By far the crowd’s favorite events are bronco riding, bull riding, and wild horse racing. Young spectator Bayler Faulkner said, “I always thought it [bull riding] was cool because I saw it on TV.”

At this particular rodeo, none of the eight contestants were able to stay on a bull long enough to qualify (eight seconds). Two of the wild horses escaped from their enclosures into the arena, causing a scramble for the rodeo workers, but all four wild horse racing teams were able to compete, with Tim Bower, Alex Mott, and Andrew Ranken emerging victorious.

The event was a great way for community members to show off their skills and an exciting Fourth of July entertainment. The Maverick Club organizes the rodeo for the community each year, and funds raised from the event are also funneled back into the community as scholarships for local students, community improvement projects, and service projects for the armed forces.
Keeping Philmont fed: The Commissary

Marie Reynolds

In the puzzle of Philmont’s high-level operations, one of the most crucial pieces is feeding everyone on the ranch – both backcountry and Base Camp. Confronting this task head on is no other than the dedicated staff of the Philmont Commissary.

Located near Administration, the Commissary is made up of numerous buildings and warehouses labeled Yonder, Over Yonder, Way Out Yonder, and Way Around Yonder. Each holds a different role in storing and preparing all of the food that will go to the dining halls (PTC and CHQ), trail meal bags, backcountry staff camps, backcountry commissaries, PhilFiestas, and various banquets.

“Our main objective is to exceed our customer’s expectations,” said Samuel Carts, a commissary clerk.

The Commissary handles everything from a butcher shop to a supermarket-like warehouse, all contributing to feeding everyone on Philmont property.

Each day, commissary trucks get sent out to various staff camps, bringing food and supplies that Camp Directors have previously ordered. Each week, the Commissary has a special extra item that gets sent to all of the camps. According to Carts, they have had donuts, pineapple, and even avocados.

“We have a variety of food that camps can order from. There is a space on the order form for special requests, and if we have it we will give it to them. We do our best to be as accommodating as possible,” said Carts.

Commissary Clerk Ryan Knowles said, “It’s kind of like going shopping for the backcountry. You grab everything they order, put it in boxes, scan them, and give it to the drivers.”

For the Commissary, the challenge comes in the small but important details of their job.

Knowles said, “We have to double check every little aspect to make sure we’ve done it right. The most rewarding part of being here is when we don’t get any complaints. If you do your job right, no one notices this operation. It’s when you mess up that people take notice. If we don’t get any complaints, it means we’re doing something right.”

According to Carts, the department is made up of a tight knit group of people, all working towards the same goal.

“It’s rewarding that I will have these friends for a long time. We are always joking around but are serious when we need to be, and we always pull through even on days where it seems impossible,” said Carts.

According to Food Service Director Joey Fernandez, there is never a dull moment at the Commissary and Commissary Manager Derek Shinsky does a great job of making everything run smoothly.

Fernandez said, “Everyone needs to eat. If there is no Commissary or Dining Hall, there is no Philmont. The employees, you all, are a priority. We need to keep everyone fed and we need to do it in a safe way.”

With only 16 people working in the Commissary, they do an impressive amount of work to keep Philmont going. Every January, Commissary workers begin the process of preparing the trail meal bags for the summer season, sealing 383,000 bags by the beginning of May this year. They impact operations across the ranch, giving out approximately 1.5 million meals each summer between the dining hall, trail meals, and backcountry orders.

Commissary Clerk Knowles said, “We send out food for the chuckwagon dinners and the Mexican dinner at Abreu, so I feel like we really add to the experience that Scouts have--even with the trail meals so crews can continue hiking. We contribute to the backcountry experience, even though we are behind the scenes.”

Fernandez said, “Commissary works really hard. Food is the heart of so many places, even in the backcountry camps. If staff aren’t fed well, then they are unhappy people and won’t give Scouts the best experience they can have. When people are happy with food, it makes us happy.”
Relaxing lives at Philmont: James Gallegos

Kate Johnson
PhilNews

The scent of cinnamon and sugar fills the air as James Gallegos, activities manager, kneads out dough for cinnamon rolls. Making cinnamon rolls for each individual department is just one of a plethora of tasks that Gallegos coordinates. He said, “My job is pretty much to oversee what’s going on, make sure everything happens.” The Activities Department oversees both male and female tent cities, opening and closing campfires, workshops, evening activities for staff, daily hike-outs, and so on. Activities works to make life a little easier for staff, and provide programs for those who get bored on their days off.

Gallegos said, “I enjoy it, I really do. It’s a lot of fun. Activities is truly the only department that sees all of the campers: opening and closing campfires, for 23,000 participants.”

Gallegos is responsible for starting daily hike-outs to surrounding camps last year, and his plans for this year are “to successfully implement the workshops, because it’s something that we’ve never done before. We try to run about two workshops a week for expanding horizons, building skills, things that you may want to work on, or something you’ve never tried before,” said Gallegos, noting that those involving food appeared to be most popular with staff.

Gallegos was born in Albuquerque, and taught elementary and middle school around the state of New Mexico for many years before settling in Cimarron. He raised his family in Cimarron, working as the superintendent for the Cimarron school board alongside Scouters such as Owen McCulloch and Mark Anderson. Five of his nine children have worked at Philmont in the infirmary, the conservation department, and other positions throughout the ranch. After retiring from his full-time job, he decided to apply for a Philmont staff position last summer, “I had applied for mailroom or one of those types of jobs, but Mark Anderson stopped me and said ‘Oh no, we have a special job for you.’” Gallegos was hired as Activities Manager and still holds the position today.

Laughingly, he said, “How have I changed lives? That’s the Ranger saying ‘excellence will be tolerated but perfection is our goal.’ Philmont gives me the privilege of exercising servant leadership to the higher degree.”

From page one: Unit 41 to base

Philmont. Most of my backcountry experience came from the national parks in the Canadian wilderness, and I know the Grand Canyon as well as I know Philmont because I have taken so many Scout groups through it. In Canada, I was a survival instructor for the Parks Service and I taught people how to stay alive in extreme conditions.”

Not having spent a summer at home since high school, Gene spends the remainder of his year in his hometown of St. Louis, Missouri, teaching a wide variety of skills to youth.

“I teach engineering and technology in high school and some college and I am the head track coach for young men in St. Louis. I used to teach swimming and rowing and I love to run half marathons. My specialty back home is high adventure and teaching situational leadership at national leadership seminars. That’s my other life,” he said.

As backcountry distribution and support manager, Gene coordinates all information surrounding transportation into the backcountry.

“I coordinate the movement of vehicles, staff, and supplies throughout all of the areas of Philmont in the most efficient manner possible while maintaining the highest degree of customer service,” he said. “It’s sort of like playing chess with people and vehicles and supplies. Once I get up in the morning, everything just goes. My schedule changes all the time. Like George S. Patton said, ‘Accept the challenge so that you may experience the exhilaration of victory.’”

And according to Gene, the victory comes when he is able to see young people grow and develop. “I can help them realize that they have the capacity to turn their dreams into reality.”

When asked about memorable stories throughout the years, he laughed because there are so many, but concluded by saying, “all the success stories generated by watching individuals go out on the trail, and then seeing how it [Philmont] has impacted their lives when they come back.”

Each summer, Gene’s love for Philmont grows, which shows through his dedicated work ethic and inspiring interaction with staff and participants across the ranch. “I contribute to Philmont my commitment to excellence by personal example. I like to keep the bar high, so I’m a big believer in the saying ‘excellence will be tolerated but perfection is our goal.’ Philmont gives me the privilege of exercising servant leadership to the higher degree.”
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Relaxing at Hunting Lodge

Caleb Wong
PhilNews

Waite Phillips may have made his fortune in the oil business, but he will always be remembered for his most generous gift: more than 127,000 acres of land that is now known as Philmont. Before giving the land away, Phillips used the land as a summer retreat. He lived in the Villa Philmonte, fished and hunted in its mountains and valleys, and otherwise escaped into the wilderness to enjoy respites from the oil business.

Phillips built several cabins across Philmont, and today, participants may visit one of the many cabins – Hunting Lodge – to do what he did: retreat into the wilderness from the outside world. Set in the year 1941, Hunting Lodge is a staff camp in the middle of a historic transition. Staff members play the role of a surveyor, journalist, and other roles as Waite Phillips gradually donated Philmont to the Boy Scouts of America. To convey an appreciation of the history of the area, program counselors give participants a tour of the cabin and explain the history of Philmont to participants. Fur trappings, such as bear and mink pelts, are displayed in the cabin.

“It’s a matter of perspective,” Program Counselor Andre Fedotowsky said. “You’re told that it was given to us by Mr. Phillips, but you don’t really connect the land to that image until you actually come here.”

Ten minutes away, fly fishing awaits at the Cimarroncito Reservoir. The lake shore beckons crews to fly fish for cutbow trout, rainbow trout, and other fish species. A roaring dam and Cathedral Rock, which overlooks much of Philmont, frame the lake to create a secluded, cozy experience for fly-fishing instruction. For many participants, fly fishing offers the opportunity to try something new, even if they haven’t fished before.

“Every crew that we’ve had really enjoys [fly fishing],” Program Counselor Bill Smylie said. “It’s just a chance to get down to the reservoir; it’s a beautiful spot. Even if they don’t catch any fish, I think that they realize that just having that first experience out of the way and having someone guide you through it is elemental in picking up more fly fishing.”

Through intensive instruction, crews have the opportunity to hone their fly-fishing skills to help them become successful at catching a fish. “We give them a lot of personal instruction,” Smylie said. “We actually go down there with the crews and we’re giving them instruction the whole time, improving their casting while they’re in the water fishing, telling them the good spots, helping them with fish when they catch them. We’re there every step of the way.”

In the evening, Scouts have the opportunity to play Jeopardy and stroll along a wildflower walk. Occasionally, Hunting Lodge will host an informal campfire where campers are welcome to enjoy hot beverages, songs, and lively conversation under the evening sky.

The opportunity to enjoy the program and scenery at Hunting Lodge ties in with Waite Phillips’ generous gift of beautiful land he valued dearly, according to Program Counselor Smylie. “He didn’t have it just to own it and never enjoy it. You realize that he enjoyed this land as much as everybody else does, so it makes the gift that much more significant.”

Chaplain’s Corner: Reverend Kerry Cheesman

I have always considered Philmont to be a sacred place – a place to reinvigorate my body and my mind and my connection to God. I first trekked the backcountry of Philmont in 1972, and stayed on to be a staff member for the rest of that season. Since then I have trekked twice, participated in both Powderhorn and Philmont Leadership Challenge training courses, and taught at the Philmont Training Center multiple times. I am privileged to serve once again as a Philmont Chaplain, and love all of the challenges and the joys of serving the staff and campers here.

I am an Eagle Scout, as are two of our sons (who have both trekked and participated in OA Trail Crew at Philmont). My wife Maryann (who also works here at Philmont) and I are heavily involved in Scouting at every level.

At the moment most of our work involves Religious Relationships and Messengers of Peace, along with many phases of Venturing. We are our council’s Philmont ambassadors.

Although we are both native Californians (in fact we met at our local Scout camp), Maryann and I now reside in Columbus, Ohio.

My day job is Professor of Biological Sciences at Capital University, and my weekend job is associate pastor at University Baptist Church (American Baptist Churches, USA).

Much of my research emphasis has been on biomedical ethics, as well as the interface of science and theology (which I enjoy discussing with anyone who has an interest). Maryann is now retired from nearly 30 years as a Labor and Delivery Nurse. Together we have four sons and three grandchildren (with another on the way), so you can imagine that retirement for her is not a quiet time.

I look forward to meeting many of you along the Philmont trail, whether that be at Chapel, the dining hall, at PTC, or at a back country camp. And I hope and trust that God will once again allow me to have an impact on the lives of both campers and staff here at Philmont this summer.

More from Rev. Cheesman on Page 10
Listed last but not least on Philmont’s “Essentials for Hiking” list is a timepiece. Having this handy piece of gear will help you and your crew to stay safe and accountable while you are trekking through the backcountry.

According to Ranger Trainer Eli Jackson, a watch can be helpful in numerous situations on the trail: first aid, safety, and accountability.

“Watches are important for knowing how long it has been since you purified your water; 30 minutes is the recommended amount of time,” Jackson said. Once the Micropur© tablet has dissolved, you must bleed the threads, and then wait 30 minutes for full purification.

Jackson said that first aid situations also call for the help of a watch. When someone is injured or ill, it is important to know when the injury or symptoms occurred in order to tell the infirmary or backcountry staff camps accurate information about the patient.

Watches are commonly used to time hiking pace.

“We say that if you are going to take breaks, you should take under five or over 20 minutes, and you measure that by having something to keep time with,” said Jackson.

According to the Philmont website, “The reasoning for the two different breaks is the lactic acid buildup that will occur in your muscles after resting for more than five minutes. Lactic acid will leave your muscles feeling sluggish and you will exert much more energy if you hike during lactic acid buildup. After 20 minutes, the lactic acid will dissipate and your muscles will be able to move unrestricted.”

Watches not only aid in safety and health, but are used as alarms by many crews to ensure accountability and timely hiking. Second-year Ranger Willa Pendley-Griffin said, “It’s the first piece of gear crews use in the morning and the last piece of gear they use at night.”
Chaplain’s Corner: Be a lighthouse

Dr. Kerry Cheesman
Protestant Chaplain

At the World Scout Jamboree in Sweden four years ago, I was privileged to work as part of the Faith and Beliefs program area. The area included tents representing and staffed by different religions, including Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, Latter-day Saints, Muslim, Jewish, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, and Won-Buddhist.

Each religion planned activities for Scouts to do that helped them to explore what the important tenets of that religion are, and how they may be similar or different than the Scout’s own religion or upbringing. Each religion also held regular worship experiences that were open not only to adherents to their faith but also to Scouts wishing to visit or explore (much as we do here at Philmont).

In the center of this circle of tents was another tent, and outside that tent was a wooden lighthouse, the symbol of the Faith and Beliefs area. Scouts who came to our program area were invited to earn the Lighthouse Award (patch), by exploring four of the religious tents and doing an activity in each. The patch itself contained a stylized lighthouse, as did the daily reflection booklet that was given to all Scouts and leaders at the Jamboree.

On the first weekend of the Jamboree we held a “Lighthouse Ceremony” in the main arena. My best guess is that more than 12,000 people were in attendance. The hour-long celebration centered on Scouts talking about their own faiths, celebrating those faiths, and encouraging all Scouts to show the world their own hope and light – in other words, encouraging each one to Be a Lighthouse!

In the Jewish and Christian traditions we find many references to light and to sharing our light with the world. In Psalm 119, for instance, we find “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path” (NIV). In the Gospels we find several references, including: “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 5:16, ESV); “No one lights a lamp and puts it in a place where it will be hidden, or under a bowl. Instead he puts it on its stand, so that those who come in may see the light. Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are good, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are bad, your body also is full of darkness. See to it, then, that the light within you is not darkness” (Luke 11:33-35, NIV); and “While I am in the world, I am the light of the world” (John 9:5, NIV).

In the same way that we challenged Scouts from around the world to share their light and be beacons of hope for others, we need to challenge ourselves here at Philmont to do the same.

If God’s word lights our path, and – like a lighthouse of old – protects us from dangers and points us to safe harbors, then we as children of God need to also light the path of those we meet every day, offering them God’s lamp to protect them from the dangers of this world.

Whether we meet other believers or non-believers; whether we meet family, friends, or strangers; whether we meet Philmont crews or other staff – we have daily opportunities to light the way for them through both our words and our actions.

If each of us can be a Lighthouse, or a Beacon, for one person here at Philmont and one other when we return home, what a wonderful difference that would make. Each day as I am in the backcountry or at base camp, I am looking for ways to be a Lighthouse to others. Will you join me as a Lighthouse, as a beacon of God’s hope, to the world you experience every day?

Looking back at Philmont: 50 years

Jim Hall
Columbus, Georgia

It was 50 years ago this coming week I came to Philmont for the first time. Our group left Columbus, Georgia, traveled west on a charter bus – Took four days out. 1-20 West was not opened then. It had rained a lot and we were not sure we’d get to go out on the trail. Actually there was flood at Philmont. Our crew, Expedition 629-H-2, was met at Philmont by young Dave Caffey as our ranger.

We got to hit the trail. Two days later, crossing Hwy 64 headed to New Deans we had to take off our boots and wade across as the bridge was washed out.

The road was washed out to camp, so our resupply food was late coming to camp that evening by horse.

In fact, the staff had to share their supplies for our supper.

Guess what? We had hot dogs, beans and chips! Not bad.

Great trip. And – even though we were tired on day ten, walking down to the turnaround south of Indian Writings to meet the bus, by dark and the ending campfire, we knew we wanted to come back. I did.

Next summer our family came to the PTC where dad took some courses. I got to hit the trail again for five days, starting off the first night at Cyphers Mine and heading south. And so it goes with coming back to Philmont more than 20 times now.

I worked there in summer of ‘72 running the initial distribution commission. Visited many times over the years since, but the last two years my brother and I have had the pleasure of being chosen to come out in late-October and going hunting. We are headed back again this year!

More on looking back: The Trading Post at Philmont in ’65 was nothing more than a small stand that sold soft drinks, candy, chips and some Philmont logo items like belts, plaques, cups, and a few packs and frames. NOTHING like the Tooth of Time Traders store that my nephew worked in for four summers under Shelly.

When my brother and I came out to bring Chad home in August of 2011 we went over to the Seaton Museum. There inside the door on the left was a collection of packs and frames.

Oh my, I arrived at Philmont in ’65 with a wooden Army pack frame but had some money saved and bought an aluminum Cruiser frame that fit my canvas Camper pack. That was the thing back then. Then there in the museum was a aluminum frame and red nylon pack of the early 70’s like brother Steve had used at Philmont in ’71.

Now Steve, he came twice that summer. Got home from regular trip when dad, mom and my other brothers were headed back to the PTC. Steve wanted to go back and did two weeks later!

My fifty years since 1965

Not just the packs have progressed but EVERYTHING I carried except three things are now different than what I used to use backpacking.

Here is a short list: Ponchos then were old, heavy, yucky-smelling Army ones. The boots I wore were just new, unlined leather hunting boots (they didn’t make hiking boots back then.) We wore our regular BSA shorts, belt and Explorer shirts with a cowboy hat; no lightweight or wicking clothes. Most of us had a red wool Philmont jacket.

Flashlight: my tent-mate and I carried only one C size one and one extra set of batteries (no alkalines back then.) We used a Philmont issued green canvas 10’x10’ tarp, a plastic ground cloth and I had a lighter-weight down Army mummy sleeping bag.

At night we wore cotton long johns and clean wool socks. Our crew cooked on open fires and firewood was hard to find at camps, even early that summer. We were issued a BSA cook kit called a “Trail Chef” kit (aluminum) and we were issued THREE heavy metal buckets. You heated/boiled water in all three and kept them marked – one for clean, clean water to rehydrate the meals/cooking, one for washing dishes, and one for just rinsing. There were no cell phones back then but one guy brought a small transistor radio. We could only hear scratchy music one time when he went to the top of a ridge near Cimarron-cito. As for snacks along the trails, it was a grand thing to stock up on hard candy and peanuts when we finally got to the small store at Baldy Town. Our canteens (no Nalgene bottles then) were aluminum, round BSA ones.

Now for the three things that I still use today that are not different. I still use my brown nylon cup and my BSA Silva compass, as well as the BSA sewing kit I got back then.

A few years back I was looking in the sewing kit and found a dice. Back then in the BSA handbook it suggested carrying a dice in case you had to use a payphone in an emergency. Nowadays kids likely have never seen a payphone, and anyway, when most were taken out they took quarters.

Equipment has come a long way with what crews use at Philmont. But one thing doesn’t seem to change about coming to Philmont: You want to go back.
“Welcome to the Rocky Mountain Fur Company,” yell fur trappers as a group of participants enter Clear Creek camp. Located at the base of Mount Phillips, the camp is nestled along a slope that hints at the challenges that lie within. From rifle shooting to campfires, the staff is willing to go to great lengths from early in the morning to late at night to make participants feel welcome at camp—and they expect the same from the crews that visit the camp.

“We don’t run our own campfire because we want them to deserve it,” Program Counselor Shaun Frankow said. “If they build themselves a fire, that means they want to be at Philmont. That means they want somebody to come down and tell some tall tales. We don’t want to force anybody to be anywhere they don’t want to be.”

Set in 1831, Clear Creek—the official name for the camp—offers challenges that rise as tall as the trees that surround the camp. Participants can try their hand at shooting .50 caliber black powder rifles at the rifle range. Down the slope, visitors can throw tomahawks at a range worn by hundreds of successful throws, and they can also watch the staff demonstrate how to trap a beaver.

The rifle range is one of the main draws for many participants at Clear Creek. Situated uphill from the staff cabin, the rifle range transports participants to a time when shooters thought that hunting rifles were revolutionary. Although guns are more efficient and advanced now, the animated, friendly nature of the staff make the process of shooting a gun—from pouring powder from a horn to firing a shot downrange—exciting and cutting-edge.

Participants shoot three times—with the option to buy more shots—but they have the opportunity to take away something else they’ll remember long after they leave the range: a souvenir (if they set a personal item, such as a bandana, downrange) and the confidence that comes from trying out something new.

“It’s offering them an opportunity to do something they’ve never done before in a place they’ve never been before,” said Program Counselor Tyler DuBard. “They get up there and hear the ding of that target, and it gives them a lot of self-satisfaction, and lets them know they can accomplish something.”

Participants can also test their throwing skills at the tomahawk range. In the spirit of friendly competition, participants face off against each other in a tournament. Tomahawk-throwing is challenging because it takes great hand-eye coordination, but like rifle-shooting, there is great satisfaction when the tomahawk lodges itself in the target with a satisfying crunch.

“When the pressure is put on you, you get a little adrenaline,” Mountain Trek participant Dylan Dunn said. “When you do hit it, you feel a sense of pride.”

Engaging one-on-one with participants during program activities makes participants feel comfortable, especially for first-time shooters. Watching participants experience the thrill and satisfaction of shooting is also rewarding for staff members, according to Program Counselor Frankow.

“It’s not really the guns that I’m passionate about,” Frankow said. “It’s the opportunity to go one-on-one with a kid and teach them a new skill that they’ve never done before. You’re just sitting there talking to them face-to-face, only them, not their crew, and you get to know them.”

Addison Speer talks the process of shooting a black powder rifle on Wednesday, July 8, 2015 at Clear Creek.

Addison Speer explains the rules of the hatchet throwing contest at Clear Creek on Wednesday, July 10, 2015.
If you have ever taken a ride out to the backcountry, driven a Philmont vehicle, or even used a Philmont four-wheeler, you were able to have that experience because of the hard-working staff of the Philmont Motor Pool.

The Motor Pool handles all Philmont suburbans, trucks, four-wheelers, lawn mowers, dump trucks, white gas tanks, backhoes, fire trucks, and much more - basically everything with wheels and a motor.

Senior Vehicle Mechanic Jim Johnson has been a mechanic at the motor pool for 34 years. According to Johnson, the biggest change he has seen since he started at the Motor Pool is going from the old-fashioned carburetors to the computers and the technology involved in vehicles today.

“There’s more computer in a Chevy pick-up than we sent to the moon the first time,” Johnson said smiling.

According to Mechanic Jeremy Gruver, who has been at the Motor Pool for 12 years, they also maintain equipment from various other departments on the ranch.

“I enjoy working out here. We are kind of behind the scenes but we make everything move,” said Gruver.

A day in the life of a mechanic at the Motor Pool can change rapidly.

Johnson said, “We have about ten flat tires in the morning and then oil changes. Then we try to get all of the bigger issues taken care of in the afternoon. Lately with all the rain, we have to get everything done by 10 a.m. and go play in the mud the rest of the day.”

However, playing in the mud is not exactly what they do. Motor Pool staffers are called for all vehicle related emergencies: empty gas tanks, flat tires, or even a vehicle getting stuck in the mud.

According to Johnson, safety is their number one priority.

“Our goal is to have everything up and running smoothly by 5 p.m. If we can do that, then it has been a good day. Safety is my biggest priority; as long as the cars start and stop and I feel comfortable driving it myself, then I’ll let someone else drive it. If I don’t feel comfortable then it stays here,” said Johnson.

Located at the Motor Pool is also a gas station for Philmont vehicles to fill up before heading out.

Gruver said, “The gas pump shuts everybody down at 5,000 miles. It won’t give you any more gas until we get to the vehicle and check it. It’s all programmed through the computer. Everything comes in at 5,000 miles for an oil change and we will schedule it if it needs additional work.”

With there being more vehicles every year comes the challenge of keeping up with the new wiring and electrical systems, operating systems, and ways to keep everything moving.

Johnson said, “We are constantly learning, and it’s fun to teach the other mechanics things. If I can dream it up, my staff can fix it or build it.”

With only three year-round staffers and one seasonal staff member, the Motor Pool is constantly working to keep more than 200 Philmont drivers in motion.

“It can be challenging,” said Johnson, “but everyday is different and that is what I love about it. We respond to everything from flat tires to suburbans sitting on the side of a hill in the backcountry.”

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**Keeping Philmont in motion: the Motor Pool**

Marie Reynolds
Philm嫂

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PTC dining hall staffer Dave Hutson and motor pool staff member Judson Synnott work on a vehicle together. Synnott is a first year motor pool staff member and Hutson likes to spend time at motor pool on his days off.

Erin Irwin/PhilNews

Motor Pool mechanic, Jeremy Gruver, prepares a tire to be mounted onto a Philmont vehicle. Erin Irwin/PhilNews

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Ranger Mile: An introduction to Colorado’s fourteeners

Jason Mazurowski
Associate Chief Ranger

For most participants and staff, Philmont’s rugged section of the Southern Rockies is their first exposure to life above tree line. As a 14-year-old chubby teenager, emerging into the alpine meadow on Baldy’s north ridge was one of the most memorable moments of my life. Gazing over the plains to the east, Philmont’s rolling mountains to the south, and the Wheeler Peak Wilderness to the west, I was mesmerized by the vastness of it all.

And then, as I huffed and puffed my way up Baldy, I looked to the north. The jagged, snowcapped peaks of Colorado loomed in the distance, and ever since that moment, they have captivated me.

If you’ve already tackled most of Philmont’s toughest peaks after a few summers on staff, you may have also started looking toward our neighbors to the north. Climbing fourteeners can be a challenging, dangerous, but extremely rewarding endeavor well worth the long drive, early hours and sore muscles. Over the past few summers I have become more acquainted with fourteener territory. Here are a few tips I’ve picked up along the way to ensure a safe, successful journey.

Start Easy: There are 53 fourteeners in Colorado, each with multiple routes ranging in difficulty rated on a scale of Class 1 to Class 5. Class 1 routes can be ascended simply by hiking. Class 2 routes involve a small amount of scrambling, often on an unstable surface. For reference, I would easily consider the boulder field near the top of the Tooth of Time to be Class 2. Classes 3 and 4 involve scrambling and route-finding on steeper and more unstable terrain. Class 5 requires technical gear. Regardless of experience, I would recommend starting with an easy Class 1 climb to get a sense of the distance involved, and how your body reacts to higher altitude.

There are a number of easily accessible Class 1 climbs in the Front Range around the Denver area. Due to their accessibility, however, these peaks often tend to be crowded in the summer months, sometimes with up to 100 people on the summit at a time. In the Sawatch Range, Mount Elbert and Mount Massive – two of the highest peaks in the Rockies – are great introductory fourteeners. If you start early enough on these peaks you can often beat the crowds.

For those looking for a more secluded, but equally easy introduction, I would recommend the Collegiate Peaks near Beuna Vista and Leadville. Oxford, Belford and Princeton all offer spectacular views and relatively easy climbs. Once you feel comfortable with Class 1 routes, the Sangre De Cristos of Southern Colorado are slightly more challenging but a bit closer to home. Mount Blanca and Mount Lindsey’s Class 2 routes are perfect proving grounds for those looking to advance.

Do your research: There are many resources available out there to help properly prepare. Always know what you’re getting yourself into, including weather and road conditions. Consider any additional gear you may need such as a helmet or snowshoes. The most comprehensive book I have used is Colorado’s Fourteeners: From Hikes to Cliffs by Gerry Roach. I would recommend always using at least two sources when choosing a route, since opinions of route difficulty may vary from person to person. Trip reports and detailed route descriptions with pictures are available on websites such as 14ers.com or summitpost.com. Don’t forget to always tell someone where you are going, and provide a detailed route if possible.

Start Early: Most resources say to be off the peaks by noon. I would recommend even earlier, especially during monsoon season. There have been a handful of times that I’ve found myself sprinting towards the safety of tree line in the early afternoon, caught by a stray thunderstorm. Most trailheads allow camping at or near the parking area, and many people choose to fast-camp here and start very early, between 4-5 a.m. Others choose to backpack and set up camp closer to the summit. Either way allows for plenty of time to safely descend. Remember that reaching the summit is only half of the journey.

Don’t do it for the checkmark: Don’t climb a mountain simply to check it off your list. Enjoy the experience and take time to soak in the spectacular views and learn something about yourself. While fourteeners are more publicized, remember that there are plenty of peaks below 14,000 feet that are just as challenging and rewarding.
Out of Eden Milestones

628-H-2
One of our crew’s most special milestone experiences was during our last night at Ponil. After the cantina show we walked back to our campsite to sit outside and enjoy our last hours in the backcountry. As we sat, the skies cleared. So we lay down a ground cloth and gazed up at the breathtaking view of the stars. We finished our last devotional and talked about our trip and this beautiful world. Finishing our journey this way was possibly over our most special moment on the trail.

629-E
A major milestone for us was at Uracca. The crew came together as a team to successfully complete the challenge course, making me proud to see them work as a team even with low morale from long days and lots of rain. They showed me that through these few days, no matter what we are a team and, most importantly, a family on the trail.

630-I-2
We woke up on July Fourth to a sunny morning at Abreu Ranch. It was our fourth day of hiking and also the birthday of one of our advisors. We had a nice start to the day celebrating multiple birthdays, but when we reached the entrance to Trail Peak it took a turn for the worse. The sky was replaced with clouds and hail, but it didn’t stop so we had to move. During all this misery everyone held together and instead of complaining they started singing, and hiking and having a good time. In the end, even in the terrible situation it was still a happy celebration.

609-M-3
Our burrow refused to go to Elkhorn from Ponil. We had a mile left in our journey when it suddenly stopped. After trying for an hour to get it to move we had to send four boys to return it to Ponil. We were about three miles from Ponil when it stopped again. We tried everything to get it to move! We took everything out of the bags, took the saddle off, tried luring it with yellow flowers and even tried pushing it. Not one thing worked. The four of us became two as the other two ran to Ponil and two stayed with the burro. My friend and I stayed and we became so bored we started singing American Pie by Don Mclean. The burro slowly started walking toward Ponil. We stopped singing and started walking with it. As soon as we stopped singing, it stopped walking. We sang for an hour and a half, when we see a car come down the road. The burro starts to follow it back to Pueblano and Elkhorn. Our two friends jump out of the car followed by a ranger. The driver drives off only to meet us later. The ranger tries to coax the burro up the mountain and gets it pretty far. After 27 minutes we have to come down the hill. He runs to get the driver again and leaves us with the donkey. We wait for 42 minutes before I start singing again – THE DONKEY WOULD ONLY MOVE IF WE SANG. We then met the driver at Pueblano and got a ride to Elkhorn just in time for the food.

628-B-4
A major bonding experience and milestone experience for our crew was hiking out in a horse stable near an entrance to Head of Dean during a thunderstorm. Though we were soiled and soaked, we sang songs and laughed at jokes and kept morale high. When the rain flooded the stable, we dug trenches for the water the drain out, and eventually raced to the main cabin during a break in the downpour. It seemed miserable at the time, but we truly built bonds of brotherhood and have looked back and laughed at it many times.
Games

Word search

I U P S S Z H R C Z
A D W F W C N E Y O
S U S A G E P C G G
O A H Y R D A N N R
R Z R S N S G A U I
I Q V B U H X C S V
O O E L I O C A R D
N D Y V J L O L L M

A I B M U L O C Y K
N F M L Y K S B R Y
C O E A I T U K J E
P O M U R O L H F R
M B G O Q M B E L P
F P M Y L S O T K S
O C A H C A A T E O
A R R E I S S V T J

Constellations (9)
Camping Brands (10)

Sudoku

5 | 2 | 8
9 | 4 | 9
2 | 1 | 5
3 | 6 | 7
5 | 9 | 1
4 | 3 | 6
3 | 1 | 9
8 | 2 | 7

Solutions

7 5 9 2 1 4 3 6 8
4 2 8 6 3 5 9 7 1
1 3 6 7 8 9 2 5 4
2 1 4 8 6 3 7 9 5
8 9 7 5 4 2 6 1 3
3 6 5 1 9 7 4 8 2
9 8 1 3 2 6 5 4 7
6 7 3 4 5 1 8 2 9
5 4 2 9 7 8 1 3 6

Issue Five medium solution

5 2 7 3 6 9 4 8
4 9 1 5 8 7 2 6 3
3 8 6 9 4 2 7 1 5
8 1 9 3 6 4 5 2 7
2 4 3 8 7 5 6 9 1
7 6 5 2 9 1 8 3 4
9 5 8 6 1 3 4 7 2
6 3 4 7 2 8 1 5 9
1 7 2 4 5 9 3 8 6

Issue Five difficult solution
Above: Onlookers watch as a contestant rides her steed into the arena during the Maverick Club Rodeo’s Grand Entry on Saturday, July 4 in Cimarron, New Mexico. Erin Irwin/PhilNews

Left, above: Mitchell Thomas, NPS videographer, and Bryan Hayek, Philmont’s marketing manager, hike Little Costilla during one of their days off. Josh Galemore/PhilNews

Top left: A crew member of Rayado trek 620-RW-1 is welcomed back by rangers outside the ranger office. Josh Galemore/PhilNews

Left: David O’Neill and his daughter Lillie serve buffalo burgers and frito pies from the Kiwanis Concession Stand at the Maverick Club Rodeo on Saturday, July 4 in Cimarron, New Mexico. Lillie happily greets her customers and calls orders back to her dad. Erin Irwin/PhilNews

Above: Rangers Jon Shafer and Kieran Meyer watch for Rayado crews to return from trek. After spotting an incoming crew, rangers alert the rest of the office to celebrate their arrival back to base camp. Josh Galemore/PhilNews

Below: COPE instructors set up ropes at the COPE course on Thursday, July 9. Mitch Thomas/PhilNews