

PHILMONT NEWS

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ISSUE NINE



John Lauber, CD of Ring Place, third place winner in #iPhoneonly category in 2015 Staff Photo Contest

Coding the digital ranch: Jaime López

Caleb Wong
PhilNews

By registering for a trek online or ordering a past or current photo, you have benefited from the work of Photo Lab Manager Jaime López. The photos are a valuable memento of time spent at Philmont. López also spearheaded the system Philmont customers will first interact with. López's programming skills have rooted him deep in several web-based projects that are revolutionizing the way Philmont customers register

units and build their crews before hitting the trail.

Years before his time at Philmont began, López laid the foundations of his vast knowledge of coding through a degree in electronics engineering at the Universidad de Concepción in Concepción, Chile. He said programming requirements associated with coursework was the impetus for his involvement in web-based projects after graduation.

"You learn a lot about hardware [in college], but you also learn a

lot about software to control the hardware. I took software classes, but it wasn't as advanced as what I'm doing now. I was super-interested in it, so I started building webpages for people," López said.

During college, he taught himself web development skills and soon partnered with friends to form a startup software company. The company developed web-based systems for hospitals. Later they built wireless sensors to monitor industrial environments using cloud computing.

In 2013, López began dabbling web-based systems for Philmont. The first goal was to make more than 200,000 crew and staff photos publicly available. On launch day, the finished photo website attracted nearly 8,000 visitors.

In March, 2014 López began coding a website that would replace traditional hand-written crew rosters by enabling crew leadership to submit all participant information online prior to arriving at Philmont. López spent the next five months implementing

utilities for the roster system used by seven basecamp departments in 2014. The ability to easily locate participants with only fragments of known information proved to be extremely useful.

Mailroom Manager Linda Anderson said the system makes it easy, and even fun, to match incoming mail with expedition numbers even if the package includes limited or illegible information.

"It's kind of like a scavenger

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A Million Miracles signing at Philmont

Marie Reynolds
PhilNews

Opening up his newly published book, *A Million Miracles*, Author David Mullings points to his favorite picture. When you first look at it, a rather mundane image presents itself, but then you see the two words plastered above a door in CHQ that perfectly capture the essence of Philmont: *Change Lives*.

A Million Miracles is a chronology commemorating Philmont's 75th year and one millionth participant to hike in the 137,493 acres of "Scouting Paradise."

"I hope they [readers] receive an

Continued on page 3



Jaime Lopez, of Concepción, Chile, is building Philmont's new roster system, making it easier for crews to coordinate and register for treks. Justin Gilliland/PhilNews

Philmont's backbone: The Infirmary

Marie Reynolds
PhilNews

The raw, rugged, and natural beauty of the backcountry is what attracts thousands of Scouts to Philmont each summer, but it is that same rawness that can cause unplanned accidents and injuries. Though some injuries such as blisters, small cuts, and scrapes can be expected, more serious issues can occur. For this reason, standing by the side of each staffer and participant are the dedicated staff of the Philmont Infirmary.

According to Assistant Chief of Medical Services Toph White, the

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NEWS AND

August 7- August 13

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Friday, 7	Saturday, 8	Sunday, 9	Monday, 10	Tuesday, 11	Wednesday, 12	Thursday, 13
8 a.m. Daily Hike - Crater Lake (meet in front of SSSAC) 6 p.m. Live broadcast from <i>Nautilus Research Vessel</i> with staffer Sarah Burgess - Walcutt Room 6:30 p.m. PIYO/Zumba - SSSAC TV rooms 8 p.m. Dodgeball - Baldy Pavilion	6:30 a.m. Insanity - SSSAC TV rooms 8 a.m. Daily Hike - Dean Cow (meet in front of SSSAC) 8 p.m. Float night - SSSAC kitchen	6:30 a.m. Yoga 1 - SSSAC TV rooms 8 a.m. Daily Hike - Ute Gulch (meet in front of SSSAC) 8 p.m. Pizza workshop - SSSAC kitchen 9 p.m. Bible study at Protestant Chapel porch	6:30 a.m. Yoga 2 - SSSAC TV rooms 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Brat Day!!! - Baldy Pavilion 7 p.m. Patch trading - PTC South Tent City 8 p.m. Tortilla making workshop - SSSAC kitchen	8 a.m. Daily Hike - Chase Ranch (meet in front of SSSAC) 4 p.m. Self defense class - Yoga room 5:45 p.m. Western night - PTC 6 p.m. Environmental seminar - Baldy Pavilion	8 a.m. Daily Hike - Clarks Fork (meet in front of SSSAC) 5:45 p.m. Western night - PTC 6:30 p.m. PIYO - SSSAC TV rooms 8 p.m. S'more night - Baldy Pavilion	8 a.m. Daily Hike - Indian Writings (meet in front of SSSAC) 5:15 p.m. P90X - SSSAC TV room 9 p.m. Bible study at Protestant Chapel porch

Homesteading at Crooked Creek

Kate Johnson

PhilNews

Crooked Creek is a peaceful homesteading camp where Scouts can capture chickens, milk a cow, meet goats and burros, make candles, and participate in other homesteading activities.

"We've had crews stay here and catch chickens for three hours, and they absolutely love it. It was something that I never expected to be the highlight for kids while they were here," said Program Counselor Kate Herries.

Program Counselor Levi Lynn agreed: "They really enjoy catching the chickens and putting them on their heads. They just like the challenge." If participants can keep the chicken comfortable enough to stay on their head long term they win bragging rights.

Crooked Creek is a camp that crews often visit just before or after summiting Mount Phillips. Programs do not occur at assigned times, but rather whenever a crew is interested.

Lynn said, "it's a really relaxed camp so we get to

talk to the Scouts more. We get to socialize with them."

Evening program includes milking the cow, Elizabeth, and poo flinging. For the poo flinging, crews must create a simple skit to provide some context while they shovel poo into the compost heap, which is rather amusing for staff.

Herries said, "It's usually the highlight of my day. You get those crews that just they absolutely love it and they put the time and effort into it."

Herries said, "I always think people underestimate homesteading camps," noting that many people view homesteading camps as nothing but a lot of chores. However, she said that, "it's out here we give people the opportunities that they really wouldn't have at home. We get crews that this is the first time they've ever been up close to animals, or the only time that they're ever going to be able to milk a cow. It's really cool to be able to give kids these opportunities."



Crooked Creek Program Counselor Kate Herries watches Zach Alvarado of Troop 319 from La Crescenta, California, milk Elizabeth the cow during evening program on July 29, 2015.

Leanora Benkato/PhilNews

From page one: Coding the digital ranch

hunt, but it's fun," Anderson said. "It's so much more useful than what we had before."

In Mid-August, 2014 the company that hosted Philmont's online registration and lottery for more than 15 years cancelled their contract.

"There we were in mid-August; registration was going to go live on October 29, and we had nothing," News and Photo Services Manager Bryan Hayek said. "I called Jaime and said, 'Hey, I have an opportunity for you. We need a registration system and I think you're the person to build it. We have a very narrow window and I think we can get it done and even make it better than it was before.'"

In the months that followed, López invested 575 hours in the

new registration system. Upon launch customer feedback poured in, making it clear that the new design was successful.

Adult Advisor Louis Berklich wrote, "This truly is the easiest BSA website I've ever used. It's clean, crisp, clear, simple, [and] extremely well thought out."

Advisor Dev Hawley wrote: "Fantastic registration process! The website is intuitive, efficient and clear."

López next spent 900 hours coding roster system features enabling customers to submit roster information, itinerary priorities and travel plans online. The system was programmed to share timely feedback with crew leadership regarding any missing information. For example every crew

must have two CPR certifications, Venturing crews require co-ed advisors over age 21 if there are co-ed youth, etc.

Participant modules are not the only upgrades for year two of the roster system. On average, 22 basecamp staff engage with the system daily. Staff come from 15 departments such as: Mail Room, Security, Trading Post, Rangers, Registration, Chaplains, NPS, Administration, Welcome Center and Logistics.

Ranger Scheduling Coordinator Katie Heiss said new search features enable her to match rangers with desired crews based on hometown or individual participant information. She's also able to provide rangers with specific information about each crew be-

fore they arrive.

"It's nice to know more about the crew that you're going to have because the dynamics between an all-female or a co-ed crew are going to be different than an all-male crew," Heiss said. "It's good information for the ranger to have."

Camping registrar Betty Pacheco remembers her staff typing 22,000 campers' information into previous systems and is really happy with changes brought by the new roster system. "We had two to three people in an eight-hour work day typing, and even at that, the data was not always correct," Pacheco said. "With the new roster system, the groups enter the information online, and in turn, we can pull it off the system."

While the roster system

launched on May 7th, López continues to build new system features every day. "Bryan is always looking to add new features," López said. "We discuss them and then I build them. He's the mind behind it, so he's the one that's talking to other departments to see what their needs are."

"Jaime is one of the most patient people, I have ever met," Hayek said. "He's always interested in making people happy and wants these systems to be the best they can be."

López is leaving Philmont after the summer season; Philmont is looking for talented up-and-coming programmers who are eager to step into López's shoes to continue increasing efficiency for crews and ranch staff.

From page one: A Million Miracles signing



David Mullings points out his favorite picture in his book "A Million Miracles" - A ranger touching the sign "Change Lives" as he walks out of the Ranger Office. Josh Galemore/PhilNews

appreciation and an understanding for the experience Philmont delivers. Philmont is very unique, there is no place like it on Earth," Mullings said.

Mullings currently lives in Ouray, Colorado, and has worked in the newspaper business for much of his career. Having previously lived in Raton, he was an editor for the Raton Range as well as for the Albuquerque Tribune. Mullings began writing his first book, *A Million Miracles*, in 2013 and it was released at the beginning of summer 2014.

"The research was daunting at first, having not written a book

before. I could write a newspaper story blindfolded. It took about three months of research for me to gather information and figure out what I was working with. It's a history book, so I tried to spice it up with interesting information throughout," Mullings said.

A Million Miracles is a short read, but is one rich in history and nostalgia surrounding the memorable experience Philmont offers.

"The book had to be a book for everybody, not just the die-hard Philmont people but for those unfamiliar with Philmont. I originally approached it saying 'I already know everything about



David Mullings, writer of "A Million Miracles," signs copies of his book at the Seton Memorial Library. Josh Galemore/PhilNews

Philmont, this is just going to be a job.' I spent roughly four weeks at Philmont, and the more time I spent here the more enthusiastic I got and I didn't want this book to just be dry, bare-bone facts. I wanted to capture the feeling and spirit of Philmont, and I hope I did that," Mullings said.

A Million Miracles is available in the Seton Museum, the Tooth

of Time Traders, as well as online through Amazon. According to a book review by Author Conrad Wesselhoeft on Goodreads, Mullings went above and beyond in writing a story balanced in history and emotion.

Wesselhoeft wrote, "Author David Mullings vividly captures the history and spirit of Philmont--from Wild West days to

present times, with many succulent mini-bios along the way. He casts a painterly eye on the landscape--from Baldy Mountain to the ranch's igneous-rock icon the "Tooth of Time," and all the surrounding canyons, rivers, and forests. By book's end, I was ready to ditch my Seattle armchair and--in the words of Huck Finn -- "light out for the territory."



Above: Black Mountain PC Taylor Morgan holds the camp's cat, Taos Lightning, on July 28, 2015. Taos Lightning kills about four rodents each day.
 Leanora Benkato/PhilNews



Aiden McGovern of Troop 359 from Wilbraham, Massachusetts, fires a 1861 Springfield black powder rifle at Black Mountain on July 28, 2015. Black Mountain staff members teach participants how to properly load and shoot the historically accurate guns.
 Leanora Benkato/PhilNews



Sean Mansfield helps coach PTC participant Cameron Williams up the Climbing tower at Miners Park.
 Tyler Sanders/PhilNews



Right: Nathan Williams of Troop 730 from La Crescenta, California, laughs as he feeds a burro for the first time at Crooked Creek on July 29, 2015. "The lips feel so weird!" he exclaimed.
 Leanora Benkato/PhilNews



Above: Rayado Program Counselor Eric Young from Fort Collins, Colorado reheats a piece of iron with visiting crew member Aidan Kats from Queens, New York.
 Josh Galemore/PhilNews

Below: Peter Rusinak of Troop 62 from Massachusetts hangs his tent to dry at Outfitting Services on Sunday, July 26, 2015.
 Doyle Maurer/PhilNews



Left: Caitlin Herrera, of Colorado Springs, Colorado, searches for an Activities package.
 Justin Gilliland/PhilNews

From page one: The Philmont Infirmary

Infirmary is comprised of five crucial parts: the clinic, emergency response, medical recheck, Infirmary tent city, and training.

The clinic is a licensed Infirmary in the state of New Mexico as well as a teaching facility, housing a full team of medical staff including physicians, medics, and nurses. Any Philmont staff or participant can go to the clinic for assistance. For more than 50 years, Philmont has partnered with the University of Kansas (KU), offering a subinternship for fourth year medical students in a monthly rotation. KU medical students run radio calls, evaluate patients, create treatment plans, and have the plan approved by a physician.

Because the Infirmary runs on a 24-hour schedule, a day in the life of an Infirmary staffer can vary. Beginning around 6:30 every morning, everyone is getting ready for rounds: checking on all patients to figure out who is ready to go back out on the trail, who may need more care, and who may need to go off-site to get lab work or x-rays.

“After rounds, the rest of the morning is treating patients throughout the day. The radio room is waiting for incoming calls from the backcountry as well as organizing who is headed back out. Sometimes there are emergency calls where we have to drive out, hike in, provide care and get them to an offsite facility. A lot of our work here is responding,” said White.

Because of the nature of Philmont, the backcountry staff play a huge role in the Infirmary’s operations.

“The strongest component for our Infirmary is the backcountry staff because they are the ones that are communicating and letting us know what is going on. We do all the training on how to evaluate a patient on the radio, so they are our eyes and ears. If there is an emergency where we get a cell-phone call here, we radio the nearest staff camp and ask them to grab their medical bag, some hiking gear, and they have to go find these people and start helping

them. We also use conservation and the ranger department a lot when we need extra people to help carry the medical gear or guide us in the right direction,” said White.

On average, the Infirmary receives one call a day to travel into the backcountry to provide care.

“The majority of the calls we go out on are pretty stable. Many times we get out there and the situation has already resolved itself,” said White.

For the Infirmary staff, the reward comes when they are able to get a patient back out on the trail.

“Sometimes people are sick or hurt. Every once in a while we do have something that is pretty serious, and we can say that we’ve been able to keep somebody alive. Nobody expects that, but sometimes things happen. Crews have spent two years planning, so their expectation of Philmont is going to be up here,” White said, raising his hand high. “And then something happens and all of sudden their expectation is down here,” he said motioning lower. “If we can get them better and on the trail, that’s awesome. There are challenges and we can help them overcome them. We want everyone to see the ‘We All Made It’ plaque at the end of their trek.”

At Medical Recheck, staffers interact with each and every single Philmont staff member and participant before they hike, something that not many other departments get to do.

Medical Recheck coordinator Johnny Ulibarri said, “We go over each participant’s health form with them so we are aware of their medical conditions. Sometimes we have to send them to the clinic if we see something we’re unsure of.”

According to the recheck staff, they usually have to take two or three people over to the clinic a day for things such as elevated blood pressure, previous medical history, or issues regarding the height and weight limit. Recheck is a crucial stop for crews because they make sure there are no existing health problems that could cause issues while on the trail, as



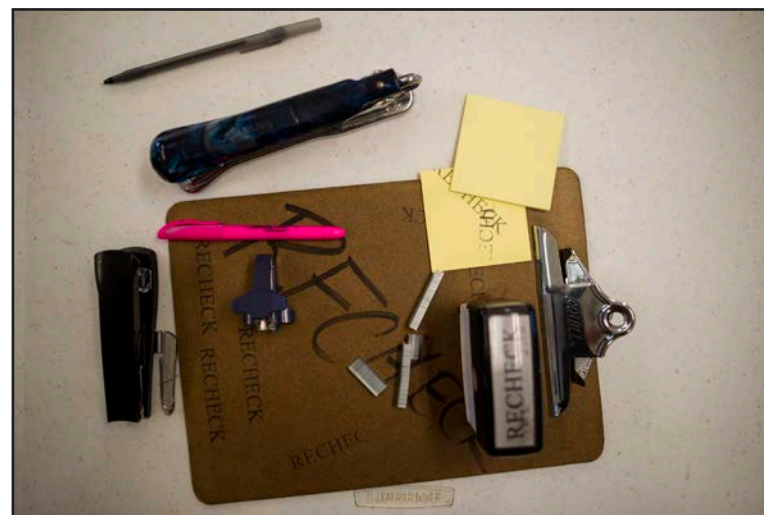
Kennedy Watson (left) of Dripping Springs, Texas, and Johnny Ulibarri (right) of Albuquerque, New Mexico, perform routine medical rechecks. Justin Gilliland/PhilNews

well as making sure the Infirmary will not have to expend resources if someone gets hurt on the trail because they were not prepared.

“When we see that kid who got taken over to the Infirmary after their recheck, and then they come back and say ‘I can go!’ with that look on their face, that is pretty neat,” said Ulibarri.

There are learning opportunities everywhere you look at Philmont, and the one Infirmary prides itself on is the continued training they do throughout the summer for medical students, Philmont staff, and participants.

“We train all of the Infirmary staff, as well as something called ‘training the trainer’. In the beginning of the summer we get someone from each department to do the eight-hour first-aid course, and then they teach their staff members. We are also responsible for training all of the backcountry staff--between 250-300 people. We continually do rechecks at PTC, first-aid training for late arrivals, CPR training, and Philmont first-aid for crews who come here without it. Training never stops. We think of our jobs largely as training, response, and care,” said White.



A clipboard at medical recheck. Justin Gilliland/PhilNews

The Infirmary staff work and live very closely, creating a team dynamic like that of a family. They each have a goal of caring for the individual person in order to get them back to the experience Philmont has to offer.

“We are really good at communicating what needs to be done and working together. Our job is to help make people feel better, stabilize them, and get them a higher level of care if they need it. We are providing care for the whole person. It’s never just the medical side of it, it’s the personality. We need to be knowledgeable about the issue, plan ahead,

and make improvements along the way. We hold our staff to a higher standard,” said White.

Though the Infirmary staff do not provide program, they support it in every aspect. They are ready and waiting for anything from blisters and scrapes to providing care for serious medical emergencies in Base Camp and throughout the backcountry.

“We are always willing to help in any way that we can. No matter how busy we are, we are never out of resources. Drink water, take care of yourself, and wash your hands. We will always find a way to help,” said White.

Don't trade your trek for a cheeseburger: Urraca Mesa

Caleb Wong

PhilNews

“Every land has a story, and every story has a beginning,” said Program Counselor Stephen Terry, kicking off a spooky evening campfire. At the foot of Urraca Mesa, Urraca holds a campfire every evening recounting ghost stories and the history of Urraca as the land transferred ownership over the years. Ghost songs punctuate stories and background music underscores climactic moments.

According to legend, Urraca's beginning is fraught with danger. A battle took place on the mesa between two brothers, the Lord of the Outerworld and the Lord of the Underworld, for the souls of the Anasazi, a Native American tribe. The Lord of the Outerworld prevailed in the battle and banished his brother into a portal beneath Urraca Mesa. Only magpies, birds of the Corvidae family known as “Urraca” in Spanish, can enter or open the portal, symbolizing their potent power to traverse between different worlds.

“If a magpie utters your name under this mesa, you will die within 24 hours,” Terry said. “They are said to be disembodied spirits left on this side of the portal when it closed.”

The history of Urraca Mesa is as rich as the ghost stories told about the mesa. After the Native Americans and Spanish inhabited the

land surrounding Urraca, trappers such as Kit Carson hunted in the area around Urraca Mesa for beaver pelts. Later, ranchers raised cattle on the Urraca Ranch, which Waite Phillips later purchased in the 1920s.

During the day, crews shape the story of their trek on a challenge course. After a sunrise hike to Inspiration Point which offers soaring views of the Tooth of Time and the south country, crews can walk on tightropes, balance on a board, climb a climbing wall, and conquer other challenges designed to hone teamwork skills.

“I'm not sure if they know consciously that they're taking a lot away from it, but they are,” Program Counselor Meredith Tate said. “They start listening to each other more, whether they acknowledge that or not. They start looking at problems in different ways and start asking other people what their opinions are. They're not as likely to rush into stuff.”

In three minutes and 20 seconds, all seven members of Troop 721H from Garland, Texas, made it over the climbing wall. What they learned from completing the challenge course will be shared with other Troop members and will be remembered for a lifetime.

Crew member Johnny Pernich said the challenge course taught him to use teamwork skills to successfully complete the challenge



The staff at Urraca hosts campfire under their porch sharing ghost stories of the Urraca Mesa while the rain falls down around them. Urraca is the only non-interp camp that has a campfire as part of their program. Tyler Sanders/PhilNews

course with his team by setting the example in front of others.

“You don't want to make your troop do something that you wouldn't do yourself,” Pernich said. “If you're leading from the back, you don't know if that's not the case.”

At the campfire, Program Counselor Tate offered a unique perspective about the challenges crews face at Philmont at the end of the Urraca campfire.

“Don't trade your trek for a cheeseburger. Stop thinking about the things that you don't have and start thinking about the ones that you do. You have a crew that's here for you. They've got your back. Ten years from now, you're not going to remember the cheeseburger you had. You're going to remember this adventure.”



Johnny Pernich from Troop 202, is the first hoisted to the top of the wall by his crew on the challenge course at Urraca Mesa. The crew surpassed the posted time from the first try with a time of 2 minutes 20 seconds during their second attempt. Tyler Sanders/PhilNews



Scouts from Troop 202 out of Salt Lake City, Utah, play a game before heading for the obstacles at the challenge course. Tyler Sanders/PhilNews



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Essentials for hiking: First Aid

Marie Reynolds

PhilNews

Philmont is made up of staff and Scouts who are outdoor enthusiasts from across the world. If a medical emergency were to arise in the backcountry, there are two things you would need: a person trained in wilderness first aid and first aid kit full of the items necessary to take care of the issue. Lucky for us, rolling in at number five on Philmont's "Essentials for Hikers" list is a first aid kit.

With outdoor adventure comes a sort of adrenaline rush; the excitement to be hiking through the backcountry with everything you need carried on your back. With spirits high in anticipation of a memorable experience, many peo-

ple can forget the importance of being prepared if their adrenaline gets the best of them.

Infirmiry Medical Recheck staffer Adrienne Cirrotti said, "If someone does get hurt, it could be a while until a medical professional will get to them, so its imperative that they not only have a crew member trained in first aid but also have a first-aid kit in tow."

Common trail injuries to prepare for with your first-aid kit are minor cuts, blisters, bruises, scratches, and burns.

Philmont recommends crews bring the following items in a backcountry first aid kit: 25 assorted Band-Aids, blister kit (Moleskin), 10 gauze pads, antihistamine (Benadryl), tape, disposable

alcohol wipes, elastic bandage, triple antibiotic ointment, Hydrocortisone cream, CPR barrier device, Tylenol, triangular bandage, Ibuprofen, small scissors, antacids, throat lozenges, medicated foot powder, tweezers, non latex gloves, and a Ziploc bag or small Biohazard bag.

"Everyone gets blisters. Eventually the boots will get to you, so Moleskin is very important to have," said Cirrotti.

The Tooth of Time Traders carries five different brands of first aid kits ranging from \$9-\$60 based on duration of trip, group size, and amount of items included.

Just as the Boy Scout motto states: Be Prepared. Most hiking injuries can be avoided simply by



First aid kit essentials Justin Gilliland/PhilNews

planning ahead. Whether you are headed out on a trek, hiking on days off, or going on your own adventure outside of Philmont, hav-

ing the tools you need in a first-aid kit can make all the difference in having a successful and memorable wilderness experience.

Every crew leaves happy: a visit to Black Mountain

Kate Johnson

PhilNews

"Halt! Who goes there? What brings you into our encampment?"

Program Counselor Taylor Morgan (Private Morgan Morgan to crews) welcomes arriving crews. Gunshots echo from the range and hammer blows ring from the forge as crews experience program at Black Mountain Camp.

The year is 1866, shortly after the end of the Civil War, and this is a Union Outpost. Staff have running water in the creek, and hike all their supplies into the camp from the drop-off point-- a steep uphill hike from the camp to the road. The five staff members inhabit a one-room cabin built in 1892 with a wood-burning stove for cooking. The camp is located in a fertile green valley reminiscent of a jungle.

The staff are enthusiastic and the Scouts enjoy the interpretive characters-- staff members pretend to duel participants or lecture them in a military fashion.

"These are the biggest guns on Philmont! Get excited!" says Program Counselor Justin Duncan. Crews have the opportunity to shoot 1861 Springfield black powder rifles here, even learning to load the rifles themselves, using a ramrod to push powder, patch, and ball down into the barrel.

"I told you how to do it the first

time. Now you're going to tell me," Camp Director Daniel Edwards coaches a participant through the process of loading the rifle. Crews shoot at targets such as their own hats or bandanas. Staff will shoot items for participants who did not put a hole through their own target during their three shots, but would still like the souvenir to take home.

At the forge, crews can choose several projects to create and take home with them: a J-hook, an S-hook, a flathead screwdriver, or a butterknife.

After participants all have a turn pumping the bellows and hammering hot metal on the anvil until the chosen project is completed, the item is rubbed with beeswax to fill the pores of the metal and help prevent rusting. Steve Rick, a well-known blacksmith who now lives in Cimarron, did some of his early blacksmithing in the Black Mountain forge.

"We get adults thanking us for showing the boys something that they've never seen before and really getting them to use their hands and build," said Edwards. In the evenings, the staff have a military flag-lowering and play Bandyball, a game of baseball with special rules, with participants.

Morgan said, "We get a lot of compliments on our program here. Every crew leaves happy."



Above: Program Counselor Taylor Morgan, in character as Morgan "Manifest Destiny" Morgan, delivers his introduction to Scouts of Troop 808 from Bayamon, Puerto Rico, upon their arrival to Black Mountain on July 28, 2015.

Leanora Benkato/PhilNews



Left: Lead balls sit in a wooden tray beside loading and cleaning tools in the shooting area at Black Mountain on July 28, 2015.

Leanora Benkato/PhilNews

Keeping the ranch connected: The Mailroom

Marie Reynolds
PhilNews

Staying connected to the outside world can be difficult to do at Philmont, but with the dedication of the staffers of the Mailroom, people are able to stay in touch not only with others across the ranch, but with their family and friends from home.

"It is a hub of activity here. We can be here and the whole world comes to us," said Mailroom Manager Linda Anderson, who has worked in the Mailroom for 10 years.

Each summer, the Mailroom handles all UPS, FedEx, and U.S. Postal shipments to and from the ranch for all seasonal staff and participants. On an average day, the Mailroom sorts approximately 130-175 packages and 800 letters, as well as all the inter-camp (I-Camp) mail.

I-Camps are free to all Philmont staff members and can be sent anywhere on the ranch. According to the Mailroom clerks, all kinds of things are I-Camped.

"We've had watermelons, pineapples, Frisbees, cat toys, kiwis, potatoes, Jolly Ranchers, and a lot of other random things [I-Camped]," said Mailroom clerk Matthew Fournier.

According to Anderson, the Mailroom has seen some major changes throughout her time as manager. All UPS mail used to be picked up at Administration, located down the road from Camping Headquarters. Now, all of those packages go straight to

the Mailroom, making their daily routine much more efficient.

"We interact with both trailbound and homebound crews. The trail bound crews are usually coming to pick up gear that they have previously shipped out here, and crews who fly out have to ship out stoves and fuel bottles, as they cannot have those on planes. Every year there are more and more people sending out special food because of allergies and such, so that's another thing they are picking up. With homebound crews, they have to ship stoves and fuel bottles and any other gear home. They come back here as part of their check-out process to pick up any mail that was sent here for them while they were in the backcountry, so we connect with them again," said Anderson.

For the Mailroom staff, interaction with crews and staff is the most rewarding part of their jobs.

"This is a place where you can interact with all the staff and essentially every participant, so you are connected with everyone. Getting to connect with them keeps me young, and I love getting to be a part of what's really going on here. I think I would be miserable if I was at home and all this was going on and I wasn't a part of it in some way. We get to make people's days when we hand them a letter or a package. We see the smiles and the excitement, which is a lot of fun," said Anderson.



The mailroom staff busily sending and receiving mail. Justin Gilliland/PhilNews

son. The Mailroom consists of six staffers: one manager and five clerks. Though there are only six people, they do their best to make sure everyone is able to stay connected inside and outside of Philmont's property.

"I've got an entire staff of team players. In the morning, we usually have all the drivers, Chaplains, and Backcountry Managers lined up wanting to get mail for multiple

camp. Watching my staff just descend in on those like ants is amazing. They have a really strong team spirit of anticipating what needs to happen and then just doing it. I don't think I've had to prompt anybody since early June," said Anderson.

If you have extra packing materials, the Mailroom is always in need of more. Accepted items include peanuts, bubble wrap, and boxes. They are also able to recycle lighters, matches, and batteries.

Though deliveries are beginning to slow down in the last few weeks of Philmont's summer season, planning and ordering of supplies for next summer has already begun.

Mailroom Clerk Caitlyn Herrera, enthusiastic about her time working in Mailroom, said, "This place is the best. It's a great atmosphere to work in and we get to meet everyone, so it's an awesome way to get involved at Philmont."

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Bringing the backcountry to life: Backcountry Warehouse

Marie Reynolds

PhilNews

The natural beauty of Philmont speaks for itself, but when you add the camps, the program, and the dedicated staff of the backcountry, you get something even more impactful; you get a wilderness experience to last a lifetime. Directly facilitating the adventure that millions of Scouts and staff have experienced is no other than the committed staff of the Backcountry Warehouse.

Located next to the Mailroom, the Backcountry Warehouse (BCW) supports anything and everything that occurs in the backcountry. Stacks of boxes and miscellaneous items fill the warehouse, containing anything from material for campfires and interactive learning experiences to equipment the staff need to make the backcountry their home for the summer.

Backcountry Warehouse Manager Blake Jones said, “We can anticipate needs and get supplies, but a lot of people request things from us or we call them to find out what they need. Molly Smith runs the interp clothing wardrobe where everything is stored, maintained, and cleaned. We also have our in-house gunsmith, Jacob Brown, to maintain and repair damaged firearms so we can get those operating in a safe way.”

Gunsmith Jacob Brown said, “I monitor the firearms that are used on the ranch for all the camps and some of the PTC guns. I ensure that they are safe to fire, they work, that they are clean at the start and end of the season, as well as making sure the shooting camps have the supplies they need. I’m big on firearm safety, so to be able to come out here where it’s a controlled environment and young men and women are learning how to safely use firearms, that’s the most important thing about this job for me.”

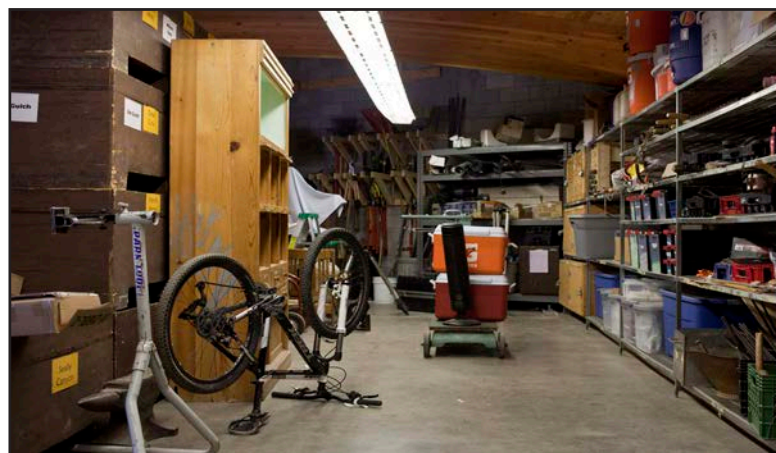
With only four BCW staff, they are constantly working hard to make sure everything runs smoothly for backcountry staffers and participants.

Backcountry Warehouse Assistant Manager Tim Gneier said, “It’s a department that not a lot of people know about, but it’s a crucial one for the backcountry operation to continue. All the people that work in the backcountry are the happiest, sweetest people you could know, so working in base I get to know everybody here, but at the same time I get to know everybody out there. We are kind of like a hidden support group. We are always actively looking for ways to improve backcountry program to enhance the experience for the participants and quality of life for backcountry staffers.”

For the BCW staffers, their day begins around 7:20 a.m. to coordinate the vehicles being sent into the backcountry, largely handled by Backcountry Distribution and Support Manager Gene Schnell. Not only does the BCW supply vehicle transportation, but information for people to coordinate their own transportation into the backcountry by bus. From then on, staffers are filling backcountry orders and working on special projects such as getting ready for “Gather” of the backcountry camps and next summer’s operations.

“Gather” prep has begun, meaning the BCW staffers are collecting information to organize what camps are coming in when and getting all boxes that will hold backcountry camp materials back in order.

“Camps will tell us what they wish they had this year so we can provide that for the next summer. Even though we still provide support, the end of the summer season kind of ceases to be about this year and goes into how we prepare for the next. We’re asking ourselves what we need to do so the camps can have a better program next year than they did this year. There is always trial and error going on, so each year keeps getting better. As everything is winding down out there, we are going to amp back up into



Above:
A rifle from Ponil lays in pieces on the gunsmith table in the Backcountry Warehouse.

Josh Galemore/PhilNews

Left: Various items including bicycles, axe handles, coolers, and rock climbing gear fill Philmont's Backcountry Warehouse (BCW). The BCW acts as a hub between basecamp and the backcountry and provides backcountry camps with the majority of their program and living materials.

Josh Galemore/PhilNews

more activity in getting ready for the next season,” BCW Manager Jones said.

According to Assistant Manager Gneier, the backcountry warehouse contains bikes, bike parts, kitchen materials, guitar strings, ropes, tools, and countless more backcountry necessities.

“We have a good relationship with the commissary and merchandise warehouse. If someone requests something and it’s anywhere on the ranch, we can probably get it in the next two hours, but it takes phone calls and favors,” said Gneier.

In order for their operation to run smoothly, the BCW draws resources and support from many other departments on the ranch

including Merchandise Warehouse, Maintenance, Administration, the Ranger department, Conservation, and Commissary, among others.

“Even though there is a small group of us that work here, we still have departments across the ranch helping us, so it’s a very big operation. We make sure to help each other, because otherwise it wouldn’t work. This is the big hub for everything going in and out of the backcountry, so everybody works together,” said Gunsmith Brown.

The atmosphere at the BCW is busy but also friendly and welcoming to anyone who comes by.

“This work can get repetitive, so it requires very focused peo-

ple, and we’ve got that this summer. It’s a good group. Everyone understands the backcountry needs, so it’s very nice to have these three to work with,” said Jones.

The BCW staff are dedicated in supporting every aspect of the backcountry, their main goal being to provide backcountry staff with the tools they need to give Scouts the best program experience Philmont can offer.

“I like to know that what we are doing is having a huge effect on program. It’s really rewarding when we can deliver or fix something that is seemingly small, and they are happy and excited about it. It’s awesome to get that feedback,” said Gneier.

Ranger Mile: The nearby Clear Creek Trail

Colin Bowser

Associate Chief Ranger

What are you doing tomorrow? Have a day off? You could take a nap and maybe do some laundry, I don't know, maybe watch TV or look at Facebook. OR, you could take advantage of your day off and go on a sweet hike! There are so many awesome hiking opportunities, both on and off the ranch. Need a hiking partner? Be sure to check in at the Silver Sage Staff Activities Center (SSSAC) to join a daily group hike, or to coordinate with other staffers to find a hiking partner and maybe even a ride!

You can also check with Gene

Schnell at the Backcountry Warehouse to see if there are rides into the Backcountry that you might be able to utilize to get further out than the Turnaround (just be sure to give advanced notice and remember that there is no guarantee that a ride is available). Remember, you can talk with other staffers or swing by the Ranger Office to get advice or recommendations for hiking opportunities. We want to help you enjoy your days off!

Even if you only have one day off, there are many hikes that you can enjoy, including nearby off-Ranch locations. One really great hike can be found in the Cimarron Canyon State Park, just a few miles

west of town on Highway 64. Remember to stop at a pay station to get a day use vehicle permit (it's only \$5 per vehicle). Look for a small sign indicating the Clear Creek Trail (on the south side of the road), park at the trailhead and walk east along the south side of the road about 30 yards to find the trailhead.

Now it's time to hike! Enjoy this gradual trail that wanders up the canyon through a Ponderosa forest and groves of Quaking Aspen. Oh, and it follows the Clear Creek, which includes up-close views of numerous waterfalls. After 3-4 miles, the trail will fizzle out. Bring a sack lunch to enjoy on the trail, or enjoy a meal in Eagle Nest or Ci-



One of the numerous waterfalls along the Clear Creek Trail.

Jason Mazurowski

marron after the hike.

The Clear Creek trail is awesome, but it is just one idea. So

get together with some friends or co-workers and plan a great hike together. Enjoy!

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Bringing history to life: Kit Carson Museum

Caleb Wong

PhilNews

The Kit Carson Museum at Rayado is located only seven miles south of Philmont Camping Headquarters, but takes visitors more than 150 years back in time to 1858.

Easily accessible off of New Mexico Highway 21, the museum offers a wide variety of program opportunities: gardening, blacksmithing, tours of La Hacienda and the Maxwell House, woodworking, weaving, homesteading, and the opportunity to purchase replica items from La Posta.

Although visitors can now blacksmith and take tours of the Kit Carson Museum for educational purposes, it was once a fort where soldiers stood guard against the Ute and Apache Indians. Later, it served as a rest stop for travelers on the way to Santa Fe.

"This was a big stop on the Santa Fe Trail," Camp Director Amelia Trenga said. "This was if you had to stop to get more supplies [or] if your wagon broke and you needed the blacksmith to fix it. It was much more about getting there than taking a leisurely trip."

Since its start as a fort and trading post, the property has passed through the hands of the Maxwell

family, the Abreu family, the Rayado Colonization Company, the Chicago Livestock Company, the Stauble Family, and Waite Phillips before being turned over to the Boy Scouts of America around 1940. For ten years, the BSA used the property as Cattle Headquarters before the BSA built an adobe museum named after Kit Carson to portray what life was like in 1858. Today, the living history museum is open to Philmont participants, as well as the public.

Crews can visit the museum during their first or last days on the trail to participate in program activities. Blacksmithing, one of the most popular programs at the Kit Carson Museum, beckons crews to create an item as a group and take it with them as a tangible reminder of their time at Philmont. Whether they create something their first or last day on the trail, blacksmithing teaches crews teamwork, according to Program Counselor Marie Bertrand.

"It's cool to let them make something that they can take with them," Bertrand said. "They get pretty creative with it. A lot of crews will make J-hooks, but some crews like to make letters. There was a crew the other day. Their crew nickname was the 'Pack Street Boys.' They

wanted to make the letter P, so that's what we did in the forge."

Jared Jagiello, a participant from Troop 153 in Queens, New York, made a J-hook with his crew on the trail. Jagiello said he wants to do blacksmithing when he gets home because creating a unique object out of a metal rod was a rare, but exciting moment for him.

"It's not something you do everyday," Jagiello said. "You get to see your piece come together."

Camp Director Trenga said the programs at the Kit Carson Museum create a living history environment. At the museum, crews realize that history is not just a collection of facts and dates, but a story that they can touch and interact with. Through the interactive programs, historical events such as the Mexican-American War and the Santa Fe Trail are brought to life.

"This is the most interactive museum most people will ever go to in their lifetime," Trenga said. "We get a lot of questions from 15 year old boys about the history that they, at first, probably didn't care about, but we actually try to make them care and get them interested and tell them something that will make them want to learn more when they get home."



PTC Trailblazer, Michael Baker, from Houston, Texas works on building an S-hook with the help of a blacksmith at Rayado. Josh Galemore/PhilNews

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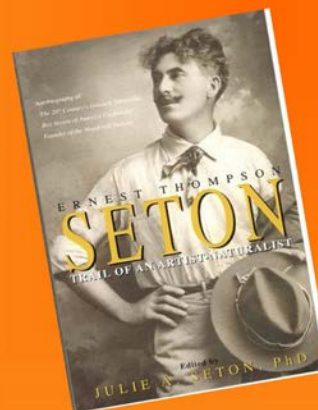
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Climbing at Miners Park

Caleb Wong

PhilNews

“Buffy the Vampire Slayer, you’re on belay,” yells a staff member as they lean back to belay a fellow staffer up the rock. “Buffy on rock,” yells a staffer back to the belayer. After the safety check is finished, the climber begins to make a steep, challenging climb to the top.

Every morning, staffers at Miners Park help participants to complete challenging climbs at three locations. Two man-made climbing walls, a traverse wall and a vertical wall, are located near the main cabin, but the most challenging climb, a 50 foot ascent up Betty’s Bra, is located a 40 minute walk from the main cabin.

Staff keep crews safe, but also in high spirits through funny nicknames and accents to mentally relax crews for the climb. Before crews climb up Betty’s Bra, they yell out in the direction of Crater Lake that they’re ready to climb to pump themselves up.

“A few of us will choose accents for the day, so we definitely try to lighten it up and keep morale high,” Program Counselor Amanda Engle said. “We like to keep things fun and safe.”

At the top, climbers enjoy soaring views of the south country, but the real reward is the euphoria that comes from overcoming fears of climbing.

“It’s a very low-risk activity, considering all the equipment we have, but it has a high perceived risk, and that makes people really scared,” Camp Director Jeff Schirtzinger said. “Everyone’s really excited, especially the ones that struggle to reach the top. Sometimes, they’re so excited that they forget to look around.”

It takes perseverance and patience to make it up to the top, according to Jonas Nuns, crew member from Troop 1044 in Garland, Texas.

“You’ve got to work your way up there one [handhold] at a time,” Nuns said. “If you get stuck, you need to stop and think about where you are and use the terrain to help you.”

Although crews may have climbed in rock gyms before, participants climbing on Betty’s Bra must be able to spot and reach subtle holds in the rock.

“Down here [on a man-made climbing wall], the holds are very visible,” Program Counselor Engle said. “They’re colored, they’re sticking out from a platform. You see them, whereas on the real rock face, you have to feel for them. Some you can’t see, and you have to blindly reach for it.”

Although each participant puts in individual effort to reach the top, teamwork helps each climber to strategically reach the top of the climbing wall.

“They’ll really talk each other up and talk to each other to decide where the next hand or foot will go,” Engle said.

When a crew ascends to the top of Betty’s Bra, the participants are not the only ones rejoicing. The staff celebrate their climb along with them because they have to climb to the top of Betty’s Bra every day.

“Being forced to climb every day puts you in the Scout’s shoes,” Engle said. “Here, you never forget [the climbing route] because you have to do it everyday. It’s always fresh, so if they say ‘Where do I go?’ and you’re up at the top and can’t even see them, you



Owen Tomlinson belays Casey Weber from Troop 242 on the climbing tower at Miners Park. Tyler Sanders/Philnews

can still tell them where to go after day. You could lead them ally vital benefit that we have because you’ve climbed it day up blindfolded. That’s one re- here.”



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Gearing up at Outfitting Services

Marie Reynolds

PhilNews

A favorite for Ranger work days, a stop crews make on both end of their treks, and the place where numerous staff members visit the food wall, Outfitting Services offers tremendous support for a wide range of people each and every day.

Outfitting Services provides necessary gear for each crew that comes through. They are the first commissary crews see, so they give crews their first three-and-a-half to four days of food, depending on the itinerary. On the equipment side of things, Outfitting Services rents out packs, sells white gas, and gives out tents, Micropur, accessory bags, toilet paper, cooking pots, dining flies, bear ropes, strainers, and scrapers.

Each day the Outfitting Services staffers work consistently to get crews and staff what they need in an efficient and friendly manner. According to Outfitting Services Manager Sam Spalding, each day they serve 35 crews on average and receive anywhere from 80-120 boxes of food per day, adding up to approximately \$10,000 worth of food being sorted into their warehouse every morning.

"It can be a lot of work. Its not the hardest job out there, but we have long hours and pretty consistent work. We try to balance that with high-level customer service. The biggest thing that I have tried to cultivate this summer is a friendly and laid-back atmosphere. If someone comes in for trail meals, we'll say 'yeah, take what you need.' That is what we are here for. In the past, staff would grill people about backcountry access permits or kick people out if they weren't wearing uniform. Whats the point in that? The way I see it is that if you are working at a Boy Scout camp, you should be able to trust the staff in being honest and doing the right thing," said Spalding.

Outfitting Services staffers keep their head in the game by focusing on the bigger picture of what Philmont is trying to accomplish each summer: giving Scouts a memorable outdoor experience.

"My favorite part is being able to see all the crews. They always have to come back to us, whether it be to return equipment or dump extra fuel. I really like talking to crews and seeing how their trek was; how their gear was and gauging what their favorite trail meals were. The food wall is a constant hub of activity, so during the day when I'm stressed I can just walk over there and talk to staff that come by," said Spalding.

According to Spalding, the workload this year has been significantly greater than previous years, and because the Outfitting Services staffers are top notch this summer, they are doing an incredible job of doing what they need to do to make the operation efficient.

"We are keeping an eye on the amount of value of what we are doing. I was talking to one of my staff about it, and they were just blown away by the fact that between the tents, Micropur and food we give out per year, it's over a \$1.5 million value. That is not including pots or packs or anything else, so it is quite an investment. To think this is run by a bunch of 18-23 year olds, and only 15 of us, its pretty amazing and rewarding," Spalding said.

This summer, a new challenge the Outfitting staffers have taken head on is washing the tents crews take on the trail.

"We washed about 1,200 tents last year. This year, we've washed about 2,500. The most we have helped crews to wash in a day was 150. We are encouraging a mixture of things from hygiene and customer service to keeping up with bear procedures," Spalding said.

This summer, Spalding has implemented a new aspect of working in Outfitting called 'shadowing a ranger', where Outfitting staffers shadow a ranger when they come through to pick up crew gear.

"It gives them a glimpse of what the Rangers are doing when they come here and an opportunity to see if they want to become a Ranger," Spalding said.

The dynamic of the Outfitting staffers makes for a friendly environment, welcoming anyone who



Troop 62 Scouts from Massachusetts hang their tents to dry at Outfitting Services on Sunday, July 26, 2015. Doyle Maurer/PhilNews

needs help acquiring gear or just wants to stop by. According to staffers Sam Harbaugh and Thomas Hall, Outfitting Services is a loving family; always having fun and joking around with crews.

"Working in Outfitting Services is a good first-year job to have. You get to interact with so many different staff members and people across the ranch. We learn the ropes of Philmont as a whole just because everyone comes through here," said Hall.

Being one of crews' quickest stops in Base Camp, it is obvious that the Outfitting Services staffers understand the value of their work, striving to be as efficient and friendly as possible to make sure crews have the tools they need to have a memorable Philmont experience.

"We've developed into a brotherhood of sorts. We spend a lot of our off time hanging out together, and I think that has had a really huge impact on how we interact with everyone that comes through here. I try to put a lot of effort and positivity into this job, and the perseverance and positivity they have shown back throughout the summer has been amazing," Spalding said.



Stainless pots sit on a shelf in Outfitting Services. Scouts visit the building for all of their equipment needs before they leave for the backcountry. Doyle Maurer/PhilNews



Jake Sykora (left) and Conrad Milliken (right) hang their tents at Outfitting Services to check for holes and any other imperfections on Sunday, July 26, 2015. Doyle Maurer/PhilNews

Games

Word search

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

Coding Terms (8)

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

Circuit Board Components (7)

Sudoku

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

Difficult

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

Medium

Solutions

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

Issue Eight medium solution

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

Issue Eight difficult solution



"The Crossing" by Tucker Prescott, First place winner in Camper Activity and First place winner over all



"Glasses Jacket Shirt" by Matthew Shultz. First place winner in #iPhoneonly



"Bonito Grazing" by Tucker Prescott, First place winner in Animals and Wildlife

2015 Staff Photo Contest winners



"In the Mine" by Zachary Garmoe, First place winner in Living History



"Milk Time" by Doyle Maurer, First place winner in Humor



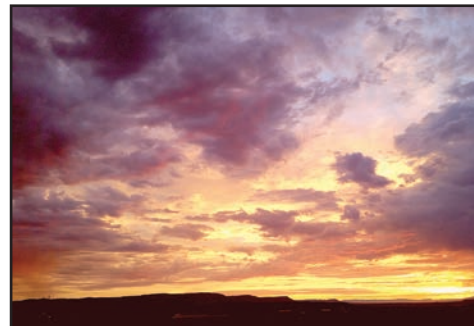
"Belle" by Mitchell Fransen, First place winner in Group Selfies and Second place winner over all



"Tooth Ridge" by Nathan Glover, First place winner in Landscapes and Third place winner over all



"The Blacksmith" by Tucker Prescott, First place winner in Portraits



"East Tent City Looking East" by Paul Movley, First place winner in Philmont Skies



"Cons" by Hannah Stewart, First place winner in Staff Activity