

# Crew Member and Parent Guide



for the  
**Watchu Experience**  
And  
**2024 Philmont  
Expeditions**

**Patriots' Path Council, BSA**

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*This guide was developed by the Patriots' Path High Adventure Committee to support our Philmont contingent crew members and their families.*

*The links (underlined) in this printed guide are "live" in the online version at [www.watchu.org](http://www.watchu.org).*

## Welcome to The Watchu Experience and Philmont

Philmont Scout Ranch - the Boy Scouts of America's premier high adventure base in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of the New Mexico Rockies. You and your entire family are about to embark on a once-in-a-lifetime adventure to this magical place.

The Watchu Experience is Patriots' Path Council's trail to Philmont - eighteen months of fun, preparation, training and teenage high adventure leading to your trek at Philmont. The Watchu Team is a large group of Scouts and Scouters with years of Philmont experience. Its mission is to assist all Philmont expedition advisors in their responsibility to prepare, train, and develop the team skills required to achieve a successful, exciting, healthy, and fun adventure.

Before you know it, you and your crew will be on the trail in the Philmont backcountry, putting your training and preparation to the test. We know that you will be ready for that challenge! Welcome to the adventure!



BOY SCOUTS  
OF AMERICA®

PATRIOTS' PATH COUNCIL

**The Watchu Experience**

*Patriots' Path Council's Trail to Philmont*

## The Watchu Experience

### *Patriots' Path Council's Trail to Philmont*

The 18-month [Watchu Experience](#), Patriots' Path Council's Trail to Philmont, consists of five distinct phases:

- I. Starting the Adventure
- II. Getting It All Together
- III. Are You Ready?
- IV. Traveling and Touring
- V. Your Philmont Trek

We, the Watchu team, look forward to assisting you, your family, and your adult advisors as you and your crew prepare for your never-to-be-forgotten Philmont adventure. Philmont is a major challenge - it is NOT "just a hike!" Keep this guide handy - it provides the information you need to successfully prepare for Philmont.

You should have already completed the online application at <https://scoutingevent.com/358-2024Philmont> and submitted it along with your deposit (a portion of which is non-refundable). **Failure to submit applications and deposits in a timely manner may result in your crew's place in a Patriots' Path contingent being revoked and given to another crew on the Waiting List.**

Making subsequent payments per the schedule, using the coupons enclosed with this guide, is required for you to remain a member of the crew.

## **I. Starting the Adventure (February to August)**

The first seven months of your Watchu Experience is the time to take care of financial matters, required training, and team building.

**Crew and Family Gatherings** - Your adult advisors should meet periodically with the crew to plan fund-raising and team-building activities, and to discuss participation requirements and training. Families should be included at these gatherings, when appropriate.

The [Watchu Experience Website \(www.watchu.org\)](http://www.watchu.org) - The Website contains all the information about Patriots' Path Philmont expeditions. Pages 21 and 22 of this Guide provide an overview of what is available on the Website. Check the site on a regular basis - there you will likely find the answer to any question you may have. In particular, the [FAQs](#) page has the answers to years of questions about Philmont and the Watchu Experience.

**Payments / Philmont Scout Account** - Each crew member has an individual Scout Account for Philmont with Patriots' Path Council. Three of the five payments are due during this first phase of Watchu, which is the time to be concentrating on fundraising.

**Financial Assistance** - Financial assistance is available through Patriots' Path Council's Adventuresship Fund and the Waite Phillips Scholarship Funds. One application for both scholarships can be found at <https://247scouting.com/forms/358-adventuresship>.

**Fundraising** - Given the 18 months from initial signup for a Philmont trek until hitting the trail, the cost is around \$6 a day. Start saving early for this life-altering experience -

begin now planning and earning money for your adventure. Patriots' Path provides an opportunity to help Scouts "pay their way:" participating as a crew or an individual in the Fall [Popcorn Sale](#) is a great way to earn a significant portion of your Watchu Experience fee. Other opportunities for the crews includes dinners, car washes, yard work. The list is endless for both the crew and individuals to raise money to pay for the Watchu Experience and your Philmont adventure.

**Full Crew of 12** - Patriots' Path **requires** a full crew of 12. If your crew does not have 12 members, recruit in your unit or neighboring units for additional members to fill your crew - in fact, all crews should **over-recruit** to develop a waiting list of potential replacements. Be prepared - a sad fact is that every year several crew members must drop out of the contingents for a variety of reasons. Having people on a waiting list ready to replace someone unable to continue with your crew means your crew will minimize the disruption that occurs when a crew member is lost. Further, crews with less than 12 members are subject to a fee surcharge.

**BSA Registration** - Each member of the crew must be a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America. There is no rank requirement for youth. Parents in the crew who are not already registered BSA members must complete and submit an application. All adults are required to complete the online [Youth Protection](#) training program.

**CPR and Wilderness First Aid** - At Philmont, each crew on the trail must have at least two members with current CPR and [Wilderness First Aid](#) training. The Watchu team recommends that three members complete the training. A pre-requisite for the WFA course is current CPR certification. Make sure your CPR certification is valid for both the WFA courses offered in the fall and for Philmont during the summer.

**Physically Fit** - Philmont is physically demanding - any crew member who does not meet Philmont's [weight for height](#) or [blood pressure](#) requirements for participation, as stated in Part C of the [BSA Annual Health and Medical Record](#), **must** start now to qualify. **Anyone failing to do so will not be allowed into the Philmont backcountry and will be sent home.** But simply meeting the weight for height and blood pressure requirements is not enough - every crew member must embark on an individual physical fitness program to meet the backcountry challenges of a Philmont trek. You and your doctor should review the participation advisories on the [BSA Annual Health and Medical Record](#). Admission to the backcountry is dependent on a fully completed and signed medical form, and no other form can be substituted. The form will give your crew advisors the medical information required for crew training events. Be assured your medical needs will be superbly administered during your stay at Philmont, as the Philmont Medical Department is a teaching hospital for the University of Kansas Medical School.

**Team-building** - A key to a successful Philmont trek is the crew acting as a smoothly functioning team. The Watchu Experience has partnered with Patriots' Path Council's Challenging Outdoor Personal Experience team at Mount Allamuchy Scout Reservation and staff at Sabattis Adventure Camp to provide special team-building opportunities for both advisors and crews:

- [Watchu Advisor Skills](#) - Advisors will be invited to an outdoor skills sessions to learn some of the Philmont specific skills needed for a successful trek. This half-day (morning) session at Camp Wheeler will take place on Saturday, May 6, 2023. This will enable you to take the Philmont methods back to your crew to practice during your Fall and Spring shakedown outings.
- [COPE & Climbing](#) - the COPE program at Mount Allamuchy, will help your Philmont crew become a well-functioning team. A series of challenging scenarios requires the crew to work together to achieve a common goal and provides opportunities for crew members to demonstrate their leadership abilities.
- [Sabattis Adirondack Treks](#) - Patriots' Path's Sabattis Adventure Camp has developed a week-long high adventure canoeing, hiking and combination treks.

Check out the brochures, the Watchu-specific inserts, and the [Watchu Experience](#) Website for details about these programs and prices to participate.

Do you have questions? The answers to years of advisor and parent questions have been collected in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the Watchu Experience Website, [www.watchu.org](http://www.watchu.org).

## II. Getting It All Together (September to April)

The second phase of the Watchu Experience, the following eight months, is the time to assemble the gear necessary for your adventure, to learn Philmont-specific methods of hiking and camping, and continue building your crew into a team. It is also the time for the crew's adult advisors to complete the administrative items necessary for your Philmont trek.

**Advisor Briefings** - the adult advisors from your crew will participate in a series of four [Advisor Briefings](#) held in October, January, March, and June. These briefings concentrate on the information that the advisors need to train and prepare their crew. The October briefing will include a review of all Patriots' Path and Philmont requirements for trek participation, listed on the [Watchu Passport](#).

**The Watchu Experience Advisor Guide** - the [Advisor Guide](#), distributed at October's Advisor Briefing, outlines the responsibilities and obligations of the adult advisors related to training the crew for a successful Philmont trek.

**The Watchu Network** - Chief Watchu communicates with the advisors of our expedition crews by e-mail. [Watchu Grams](#), issued on a regular schedule, provide timely information crew members need for a successful trek. Each crew should create a family e-mail network for forwarding Watchu Grams to all crew members and families, as well as for crew-specific messages about meetings, shakedown, family gatherings, etc. Watchu Reminders and Alerts, issued less frequently and on an as-needed basis, include reminders about coming events as well as changes to information provided previously. There will also be occasional messages of a general nature.

**Equipment** - The necessary gear is described on Philmont equipment lists for both [individual crew members](#) and the [crew](#) as a group. The Watchu staff will provide [recommendations](#) and insights so that you have exactly what you need for your adventure. Crew members should first concentrate on the [Four Expensive Essentials](#) of boots, sleeping bag and mat, full rain suit with both jacket and pants, and a backpack. In particular, good equipment at a reasonable price is available from the Patriots' Path Outfitters (<https://www.ppcoutfitters.com/>).

**Monthly Gatherings** - Your crew will meet approximately once a month for training, fun, and fellowship. Shakedown hikes will allow the crew to learn about equipment and Philmont camping procedures. Your crew will also meet to discuss the activities they wish to participate in during their Philmont trek, and select the five Philmont trek itineraries that most interest them and meet their abilities. A few of the gatherings will include your entire family. These gatherings are the essence of your Watchu Experience. They will be focused on fun, anticipation, and the excitement leading up to your great adventure in the high mountains of New Mexico.

**Team-building** - There are multiple activities that are excellent exercises for crew development. Most of these can be included with your monthly gatherings. You can also create a dedicated activity like a winter backpacking trip or the Klondike Derby to facilitate team-building. These activities should provide a great opportunity for your crew to work together and have an outstanding adventure at the same time.

### III. Are You Ready? (May and June)

All crews and all crew members are expected to attend the Watchu Mountain Adventure, Friday May 3 to Sunday, May 5, 2024. This weekend will complete your crew's training and let you put it to the test. The staff of veteran Philmont Scouters will be available to answer all your questions. Please note carefully - **this will be an SAT weekend**. If you plan to take the SAT exams in 2024, schedule them for another time. You can reschedule now, but probably not later.

All crews gather on Watchu Mountain for a simulated Philmont experience, including camping, cooking, backpacking, and backcountry living. One of the highlights is a "rugged" 8-mile hike designed to test each crew's hiking readiness. Others are two evening multi-media shows and an individual trail planning session for each crew with an experienced Philmont trekker to help get the most out of your Philmont trek.

Often the Watchu Mountain Adventure is referred to as "a mid-term exam" because it serves to define the "gaps" between "where the crew is in its preparation " and "where it needs to be" to be ready. It is a weekend of self-evaluation.

Each crew returns home with a concrete list of gaps which must be closed during the remaining weeks before leaving for New Mexico. These gaps define the final weeks of crew development and training. According to Chief Watchu, closing the gaps will assure a wonderful Philmont experience.

#### **IV. Traveling and Touring (Late June and July)**

You will fly to Colorado and spend two fun-filled and excitement-packed days and nights in the Front Range of the Rockies. Activities may include a visit to the Air Force Academy, riding to the top of Pikes Peak, or whitewater rafting on the Arkansas River. You will spend the nights at a modern hotel in Colorado Springs with access to their recreation facilities .

#### **V. Your Philmont Trek (July)**

Time to put all your training and preparation to use! You will spend 12 days at Philmont Scout Ranch, the Boy Scouts of America's premier high adventure base. After a day of various check-in tasks, your crew will board a bus for a trailhead and eleven days / ten nights in the Philmont backcountry. In addition to spectacular scenery, your crew will work as a team to meet the challenge of summiting high peaks and will participate at staffed camps in western-themed programs such as rock climbing, black powder rifle, and horseback riding. Indeed, Philmont is much more than "just a hike"!

**"The only things we keep  
permanently are those we  
give away."  
- Waite Phillips**

Waite Phillips donated most of the land that is now Philmont Scout Ranch to the Boy Scouts of America.

## What is a ...?

*Those new to Philmont need to know the definitions of these commonly used terms*

**Crew** - a group of twelve Scouts and Scouters who together train for and undertake a Philmont trek.

**Crew Number** - a unique designation for each crew, consisting of three numbers for the month and date of arrival at Philmont, a letter for each expedition arriving that day, and a number for the crew within the expedition. For example, 708E2 would be the second crew in the "E" expedition arriving on July 8. Note! - as crews often consist of individuals from more than one unit, troop numbers are not used to identify crews. The Philmont assigned crew number must be used.

**Advisor** - an adult member of a crew responsible for health and safety, and training the youth members. At Philmont, the crew will be led by youth, not the adult advisors.

**Lead Advisor** - the adult member of a crew responsible for all administrative functions and the first point of contact for any of your questions.

**Contingent (or Expedition)** - several crews from one council who travel together and arrive at Philmont the same day. Each summer Patriots' Path Council typically sends several contingents (expeditions) of four crews each to Philmont.

**Trek** - an eleven day/ten night backpacking trip on the trails of the Philmont back country.

**Itinerary** - one of the pre-planned routes through the Philmont backcountry with a variety of program opportunities.

## Payment Schedule (for full crew of 12)

PAYMENT	DUE DATE	AMOUNT
Deposit	With Application	\$675
1	April 15, 2023	\$540
2	August 15, 2023	\$540
3	June 15, 2023	\$540
4	October 15, 2023	\$540
5	January 15, 2024	\$540
6	April 15, 2024	*
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$3,375*</b>

\* Notes: There is an additional 3% charge for all credit card payments which is the council's cost, Total subject to adjustment (if necessary) due to fuel cost or other factors

### Patriots' Path Council Refund Policy

For all of the High Adventure activities offered by the Patriots' Path Council, Boy Scouts of America, a great deal of planning and purchasing takes place well in advance. This includes plane and bus transportation, lodging, program activities, meal plans, brochures, etc.

As stated on the application, \$100 of the initial fee is non-refundable. When an individual cancels his reservation prior to departure, he risks losing some, if not all, of his balance paid to date. Only those monies which have not yet been committed to any of the above can be refunded. The High Adventure Committee Chairman and the Program Director, who oversees High Adventure activities within the Council, will determine the amount of the refund, if any.

All requests for refunds must be made in writing and submitted to Patriots' Path Council, Attention: High Adventure Programs, 1 Saddle Road, Cedar Knolls, NJ 07927. It is possible that airline tickets may still be obtained for your personal use. It will be your responsibility to contact our travel agent to make this arrangement.

## **Trip Insurance**

Patriots' Path Council does not provide trip insurance for its Philmont participants as it is less expensive for individuals to purchase trip insurance for themselves than it is for the Council to purchase a group policy. The Council strongly recommends that each family consider purchasing trip insurance that may best meet their needs.

## **Travel Dates**

<b>Expedition</b>	<b>Depart for Colorado</b>	<b>Arrive at Philmont</b>	<b>Return to New Jersey</b>
627	June 25	June 27	July 9
628	June 26	June 28	July 10
629	June 27	June 29	July 11
713	July 11	July 13	July 25

## **Patriots' Path Council Travel Policy**

Travel arrangements for all participants in Patriots' Path Council sponsored High Adventure activities requiring group travel will be made by Patriots' Path Council. Everyone is expected to travel with the group. Exceptions for individual special arrangements will only be considered and approved by the High Adventure Committee Chairman and the Program Director in unique circumstances and for compelling reasons. The alternate arrangements must be made by others. There will be no adjustment of the activity's fee for any portion of the program that is not utilized. In the case of disabled members, Patriots' Path Council will make special arrangements when necessary.

## Your Watchu Experience Fee Includes...

For each crew member:

- One Patriots' Path expedition [Crew Member Guide](#)
- One Philmont *Guidebook to Adventure*
- Two Patriots' Path Council expedition patches
- One Patriots' Path expedition Base Camp T-shirt
- One Patriots' Path expedition tour (carry-on) bag
- One ultra-light daypack
- One nylon bag and two luggage tags for transporting back-packs

For each crew:

- One Watchu Experience [Advisor Guide](#) for each advisor
- On-line Philmont *Guidebook to Adventure—Advisors Edition* (download)
- One Philmont *TREKS Itinerary Guide* (download)
- One *Philmanac: Guide to the Philmont Backcountry*
- Watchu nameplate for each advisor
- Four 2-hour Advisor Briefings
- Half-day Watchu Skills Session
- Access to the Watchu e-mail network

May's Watchu Mountain Adventure:

- Demonstrations of Philmont camping techniques
- Five meals with Philmont trail food
- Rugged 8-mile shakedown hike
- Individual crew trail planning session
- Two multi-media shows



The Tooth of Time

A 15-day Rocky Mountain adventure:

- Round trip air transportation to Colorado, the Rocky Mountain State
- Bus transportation, room, and 6 meals during a [2-day tour](#) of the Front Range of the Rockies in Colorado, with activities such as:
  - ◊ A ride to the awe-inspiring 14,110 foot high summit of Pike's Peak
  - ◊ An exciting 9-mile, Class III and Class IV whitewater rafting trip on the Arkansas River
  - ◊ A visit to the spectacular Manitou Indians' "Garden of the Gods," including a hike and a multi-media show
  - ◊ Access to your Colorado Springs hotel's recreation center
- 550-mile round trip transportation to Cimarron, New Mexico on a modern motor coach, including a meal on the return to Colorado
- 12-day high adventure Philmont backcountry trek
- Tour of Waite Phillip's Villa Philmonte home at Base Camp

## **Emergency Contact Information**

### **Philmont Scout Ranch**

17 Deer Run Road telephone: 575-376-2281  
Cimarron, NM 87714 fax: 575-376-2636

*Note: The Philmont telephone number is answered 24-hours a day during the summer and during regular business hours at other times. For emergency contact, have the crew member's full crew number (for example, 706F5) available before calling*



## The Four Expensive Essentials

*These items make great gifts for any occasion.  
Put them on your wish list.*

Philmont's [Guidebook to Adventure](#) contains check lists of the personal gear needed for a Philmont trek as well as crew gear provided by the crew or by Philmont. These check lists, developed with 75 years of Philmont-specific backcountry experience, are definitive - you need nothing more, nor should you have anything less. Review the [Personal Gear List with Tips](#) in the [Equipment](#) section of the [Trek Preparation](#) page of the Watchu Experience Website ([www.watchu.org](http://www.watchu.org)) for features you should be looking for when choosing your gear.

While you may have much of the personal gear needed already, you might need to buy at least some new gear, including one or more of the "Four Expensive Essentials." While good gear can be expensive, by shopping around (including at the Patriots' Path Outfitters) you can outfit yourself with quality equipment at a reasonable cost.

**Backpacking Boots** - a good pair of lightweight backpacking boots that fit well while wearing heavy outer wool socks and light inner polypropylene socks. Although not absolutely necessary, waterproof boots are nice to have if you can afford them. Boots, three pairs of outer socks, and three pairs of inner socks come to about \$170.

**Sleeping Bag and Mat** - a good synthetic sleeping bag rated for at least 25 degrees and weighing 3 pounds or less, with a mat. The bag should stuff into a small stuff sack. Don't forget to line the stuff sack with a plastic trash bag for extra protection against getting wet. A sleeping bag with stuff sack comes to about \$120. Excellent ground mats or pads can be purchased for about \$35. This combination will provide for a comfortable

sleep plus plenty of insulation from the ground.

**Rain Suit with Jacket and Pants** - a sturdy, lightweight rain suit, both jacket and pants, with plenty of ventilation. Good rain suits can be purchased for about \$70. A poncho **will not** do at Philmont. At higher elevations a drop of 40 degrees in only a few minutes with hail or even snow is not uncommon. The rain suit not only keeps you dry, it provides an insulation barrier to help keep you warm and prevent hypothermia. A poncho does not provide that protection.

**Backpack** - a rugged backpack with plenty of capacity for carrying your personal gear as well as water and your share of crew gear and food. External frame backpacks should have a capacity of about 4,000 cubic inches (66 liters) and 4,600 cubic inches (75 liters) for an internal frame backpack should do it. When selecting a backpack, the weight of the backpack itself is very important and should not be overlooked. Good backpacks weighing 5 pounds or less are available for approximately \$140. Philmont rents both external and internal frame packs for approximately \$30. If members of Philmont crews don't care to buy a pack, they can borrow a friend's for training and rent one at Philmont. If you decide to purchase a pack, keep in mind that external frame packs are designed for the kind of hiking you will experience at Philmont. However, if you already own or simply prefer an internal frame pack, it will serve you equally well.

The [Equipment](#) section of the [Training Videos](#) page of the Watchu Experience Website ([www.watchu.org](http://www.watchu.org)) has a number of videos that show features to look for when shopping for the "Four Expensive Essentials" as well as other equipment needed for a Philmont trek.

## Watchu Mountain Outfitters

The Watchu Mountain Outfitters (WMO) provide quality Base Camp and backcountry/rafting gear to the members of Patriots' Path Council Philmont expeditions. **Your Patriots' Path Philmont fee includes one Expedition Base Camp T-shirt, suitable for use both during the day in Base Camp and on the trail; two Patriots' Path Expedition Patches for your uniforms; one ultra-light daypack; and one Expedition Tour (Carry-on) Bag;** and you should consider purchasing extras. But the Watchu Mountain Outfitters offer much more. Check out the following page and the [Trading Post](#) on the Watchu Experience Website, [www.watchu.org](http://www.watchu.org) for information on other products available.

Every purchase of merchandise from the Watchu Mountain Outfitters helps to contain costs for all Patriots' Path contingent crews. All profits go directly into the Watchu program; strictly for the benefit of the Watchu/Philmont participants.

Merchandise can be ordered either as an individual or as a crew, using the [Order Form](#) on the [Trading Post](#) page of the Website. If ordering as a crew before the deadline of the January Advisor Briefing, the Hikers' Dozen discount is available on any Watchu Mountain Outfitters item - buy 11 and get one free!



Look for the logo on genuine Watchu Mountain Outfitters merchandise! You can visit the Watchu Mountain Outfitters at the Advisor Briefings, during May's Watchu Mountain Adventure, and on-line at [www.watchu.org](http://www.watchu.org).



**PPC EXPEDITION  
BASE CAMP  
T-SHIRT  
\$15.00**



**WMO BACKCOUNTRY/  
RAFTING T-SHIRT  
\$21.00**

Go to the Watchu Mountain Outfitters online [Trading Post](#) (or use the Quick Link) for additional information, to see other available items, and to order using the online [Order Form](#).

Each Philmont trek is a physically demanding backpacking hike at high altitude, and in a hot, dry environment. The goal of the Watchu Experience is to give you the information you need to prepare yourself and your crew so you can meet and enjoy that challenge.

## The Watchu Experience Website

<http://www.watchu.org>

All information relating to the Watchu Experience is posted on the Internet at <http://www.watchu.org>. Bookmark this important site and refer to it often for information about preparing for a Philmont trek, copies of all Patriots' Path forms and documents, the answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), and an on-line version of this guide. The Watchu Experience Website includes the following pages:

**Quick Links:** Fast access to the most frequently visited items on the Watchu Experience Website.

**Quick Start:** General information about Watchu and Philmont for those new to the Watchu Experience.

**The Watchu Experience:** Who is Chief Watchu? What is the Watchu Experience? What is the Watchu Mountain Adventure?

**Calendar:** The schedule of Watchu and Philmont events, including the Advisor Briefings, the Watchu Mountain Adventure, and travel dates.

**Administration:** Applications, forms, and payment schedules.

**Crew Development:** Get your crew up and running like a Swiss watch. What is a Crew Leader? Chaplain Aide? Crew Correspondent? *Guia*? How should a crew be organized?

**Trek Preparation:** Well-tested suggestions to get the most out of your Philmont trek and the unique experience it provides.

**FAQs:** Do you have a question about the Watchu Experience or Philmont? Chief Watchu thinks you will find your answer here.

**Training Videos:** A series of videos to assist you in learning about equipment and Philmont camping techniques.

**Photos:** Super pictures of the Watchu Mountain Adventure, the Colorado Tour, Philmont, and Autumn Adventure.

**Favorite Links:** Lots of places to visit for extra information.

**Site Map:** Site contents listed both alphabetically and by topic, and all forms.

**Help:** Do you need to check with the Watchu Administrator? Do you need financial help? Do you need to call Philmont? Or would you simply like to pass on your thoughts about the Watchu Experience or our Website?

**Search:** Having trouble finding information on a particular topic? You can search for it by keyword(s).



The Villa Philmonte, at Philmont, was Waite Phillips' summer home. It is located across the road from Camping Headquarters. Have your Ranger help schedule a tour and earn the Villa patch while you are in Base Camp.

## Uniform Fact Sheet

**At Watchu events and while traveling:** During all Advisor Briefings, May's Watchu Mountain Adventure, on the day of departure, during the flight, throughout the entire Colorado tour, most of the first and last days at Philmont, and the entire return trip, all Patriots' Path Council expedition members will be in full official BSA (unofficially called Class A) uniform, with no "look-alikes" or exceptions.

### Official BSA Uniform:

- BSA shirt with Patriots' Path Council expedition patch
- BSA belt
- BSA pants: short, long, or switchback ... your choice
- BSA socks: short or long ... your choice
- Boots ... the boots you intend to hike in
- Hat ... good sun protection hat required, crew design optional
- Neckerchief ... not required, but crew design, unit, or Watchu is appropriate
- Watchu name plate (required for advisors)

**While in Base Camp at Philmont:** Council T-shirts, crew T-shirts, Philmont T-shirts, or scout T-shirts with scout pants and crew hats (unofficially called Class B uniforms) are appropriate. However, we expect all Patriots' Path Philmont crews to dress in official BSA uniform for dinners, religious services, and both the Opening and Closing Campfires.

**On the trail:** Your dress will be trail clothing. Until you return to Base Camp at the end of your trek, you will be dressed for the trail.

## **Re-live the Great American West at Philmont**

Philmont Scout Ranch and the surrounding area abound in history. The Anasazi first lived in the area. Crews visiting Indian Writings camp can participate in an archeology program and see petroglyphs (rock drawings) they left behind. The Apache, Ute, and Comanche came later; Apache Springs camp offers crews several Indian lore programs.

The first Europeans in the area were the Spanish. The opening of the Santa Fe Trail brought Americans interested in trade. The trail passed through Philmont and wagon ruts can still be seen. Crews visiting Rayado can tour a trading post that was run by mountain man Kit Carson that supplied passing wagon trains. The mountain men hunted, trapped and "rendezvoused" in the high country. Miranda, Clear Creek and Black Mountain camps have mountain man programs like black powder rifle, tomahawk throwing, and others.

After the Civil War, homesteaders settled the area. Abreu, Crooked Creek, Black Mountain, and Rich Cabin camps each have programs associated with those early settlers.

Gold was discovered on Baldy Mountain in the 1870's, setting off a gold rush that brought prospectors. Crews can tour mines and pan for gold at both French Henry and Cyphers Mine camps, and blacksmithing is offered at several camps.

The railroad came in the early 1900's and the Continental Tie and Lumber Company supplied timber for ties. At Pueblano and Crater Lake crews climb spar poles like lumberjacks.

Waite Phillips bought the ranch in the 1920's and constructed several back country cabins to entertain his friends hunting and fishing. Those cabins are open today for tours by crews.

## Tips for a Great Trek

*Years of preparing crews for Philmont have proved the following are keys to a successful trek.*

1. **A Philmont crew is youth led.** The advisors' responsibility is to prepare the youth to lead.
2. **Each crew member must be in excellent physical condition.** [Body weight](#) and [blood pressure](#) (both described in Part C of the [Health and Medical Record](#)) must be under control and well within the recommended ranges (not just below the limits). Of special importance is proper hydration - start now to improve your water drinking habits.
3. **Advisors must know the medical history of each crew member.** Each crew member should provide a copy of your current [Health and Medical Record](#) (and if not included, your most recent sports or camp physical), as it is needed for all crew activities. The *Record* submitted to Philmont must be less than one year old; when yours is completed, make a copy for your records and give the original to the crew advisor. Xxxxxx xxxxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx xxxxxx
4. **It's Not Just a Hike!** Philmont treks are much more than a walk in the mountains - many find the backcountry programs, based on the environment created by nature and the spirit of the people who populated the country, to be a life-altering experience.
5. **Hiking is a Team Sport!** Consistently rated the top Watchu tip, everyone must be trained to be committed to the success of the entire crew and to ask at all times, "What can I do to make this hike a success for my crew mates?"

## **The Philmont Hymn**

John Westfall, 1945

Silver on the sage  
Star-lit skies above  
Aspen covered hills  
Country that I love

Philmont here's to thee  
Scouting Paradise  
Out in God's country,  
Tonight

Wind in whisp'ring pines  
Eagle soaring high  
Purple mountains rise  
Against an azure sky

Philmont here's to thee  
Scouting Paradise  
Out in God's country,  
Tonight

## **Philmont Grace**

For food  
For raiment  
For life  
For opportunity  
For friendship and fellowship  
We thank Thee, O Lord  
Amen

# Where is Philmont?

Philmont Scout Ranch is located in the rugged backcountry wilderness of the Sangre de Cristo range of the Rocky Mountains near Cimarron in northeastern New Mexico

