

New Providence Boy Scouts make 70-mile trek in New Mexico

Published: Sunday, July 29, 2012, 10:53 AM Updated: Sunday, July 29, 2012, 10:58 AM

IP By [Independent Press](#)



The New Providence crew after the trek

By Kevin Urness New Providence Boy Scout Troop 1

On July 9, nine Scouts and three adult advisers from New Providence left Newark Liberty Airport heading west to Colorado and New Mexico for the time of their lives. They were part of Crew 711F4 from New Providence Troop 1, and the flight was leaving for Denver.

Once in Denver, the crew of Scouts and advisers boarded a bus to Colorado Springs. They would be staying two days in Colorado sight-seeing and enjoying some of the best that the state has to offer. These two days were spent to get used to the altitude and included a visit to the U.S. Air Force Academy, a short hike through the Garden of the Gods, and a rafting trip down the Arkansas River. The crew enjoyed its time in Colorado, but it would be nothing compared to the 10-day, high adventure expedition they were about to embark on.

The adventure consists of hiking nearly 70 miles through the vast wilderness of Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, N.M., while carrying all of the crew's belongings on their backs and sleeping at a different camp every night. There were also many activities that the Scouts and adults would be participating on the way.

Including many challenging and entertaining events, the itinerary that the crew chose was filled with fun activities. The crew participated in many shooting sports, including shooting 12-gauge shotguns and .30-06 rifles. They also climbed spar poles like loggers, fly fished like the fishermen, and also practiced roping cows like cowboys do. Other programs they participated in were rock climbing and 3-D archery.

The 62-mile trip through Philmont's south country included stays at nine camps. There was a wonderful sunrise from sawmill camp, and the crew greatly enjoyed the music and entertainment from the Beaubien and Crater Lake campfires.



The view from the Tooth of Time

Leading the crew was Crew Chief Presley Stevenson, Chaplain Aide Kyle Mountney and wilderness “guia” Perry Spiegel. The wilderness guia is the Scout responsible for teaching the others to respect the beautiful nature they are hiking in. Greg Norton was the lead adviser and played a major role in preparing the crew by planning many training hikes and handing in necessary paperwork. For 10 days, the members of the expedition endured sweltering heat, cold winds, and dangerous thunderstorms with hail. Though they ate many freeze-dried meals, they survived the two weeks just fine.

Having a fantastic experience, the crew thoroughly enjoyed going to Philmont. Some of the highlights were climbing to the tops of Mount Phillips, Comanche Peak, Trail Peak and the Tooth of Time. The best view was from the Tooth of Time, where you could see mountains as far as the eye can see along with the New Mexico desert. Though there were tough mountains to climb and an elevation change of 6,500 to 11,741 feet, the hikers rose to the occasion and stepped up to face the challenge.

“I really loved spar pole climbing,” Perry Spiegel said. “It was a unique experience.”

“The trip as a whole was a rewarding experience. The crew struggled together, but we all finished and that was a great feeling,” said TJ Jonovich.

On Day 12, the crew returned to base camp after 12 miles of hiking, their longest day on the trail. All of them were dirty, tired, and hungry for food that was fresh and not freeze-dried. Once they had all showered up, everyone went into Cimarron for a delicious meal of burgers, French fries, soda and ice cream. Finally, the next day, Crew 711F4 left Philmont for Denver Airport once again. It was a great feeling arriving back to Newark after such a grueling but worthwhile journey.

The Scouts and advisers on the trip included Corey Barnwell, Will Delaney, TJ Jonovich, Garrett Michaels, Kyle Mountney, Andrew Norton, Perry Spiegel, Presley Stevenson, Kevin Urness, Mark Barnwell, Tom Jonovich and Greg Norton.

When all was said and done, 711F4 was joyful for their great accomplishment and glad to have seen the Rocky Mountains in all of their splendor and majesty. Whatever challenge they faced along the way, they persevered, saw some amazing places, and successfully completed the great adventure.