



Members of two Bedford Boy Scout troops traveled to Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico in June. Pictured above, kneeling: Walter Rainey, Joey Cieslik, Duncan Harris, and Jerome Cole. Standing: Joe Cieslik, Todd Harris, Josh Herold, Tim Herold, Larry Phelps and Peyton Phelps. Jerome Cole and Peyton Phelps are members of Venture Crew 333. The rest are members of Troop 332.)

Boy Scouts hike, camp, work on trail at New Mexico ranch

Eight members of Boy Scout Troop 332, sponsored by the Free Methodist Church in Bedford, and two members of Venture Crew 333, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus local Council 1166, went hiking at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico from June 26-July 6.

Philmont Scout Ranch is the largest youth camp in the world, located on 137,000 acres in the Sangre De Cristo range of the Rocky Mountains. Philmont was started in 1938 after Waite Phillips donated the land to the Boy Scouts of America so that many youth could experience the beautiful mountains of northern New Mexico. The Scouts carried everything they needed to survive in the mountains with them in backpacks ranging from 40 to 60 pounds. Every day the Scouts had to eat breakfast, break camp and hike about 5-8 miles to the next campsite where tents would be set up, a rain fly put up, and bear ropes strung. Putting everything that might attract a bear into a suspended bag – including food, sunscreen, toothpaste, duct tape and other personal items – is very important, as there are bears and many other

exciting animals in the mountains.

The Scouts enjoyed activities such as geocaching, goat milking, fly tying and fly fishing, archery, flint knapping, rifle shooting and tomahawk throwing, at the staffed camps.

One of the Scouts' favorite activities was participating in a three-hour service project. They hiked two hours on part of a newly built trail and put their muscles to work helping to build the trail. The Scouts learned just why they were helping to build the new trail when the next day they had a very hard, steep climb on "Fence Line Trail" to their next camp. The new trail will replace "Fence Line Trail" with grades not exceeding 8 percent.

In addition to the many fun activities, the Scouts experienced the history of Philmont. There are many famous and fascinating characters associated with the ranch. The Scouts visited Kit Carson's old house; they saw many cabins of settlers and "mountain men" in the mountains. These houses are still maintained by the Boy Scouts. The scouts saw the fishing cabin of Waite Phillips. After completing their Philmont trek, the scouts toured his mansion and were awed by the mag-

nificence and history of the former summer residence of Phillips.

One might ask why anyone would want to go on an 11-day, 57-mile hike in the mountains. The answer is simple: it's FUN! The scouts worked together as a team. They helped one another to complete tasks. They enjoyed God's country in a very real manner, as they climbed Mount Phillips and saw the beauty of the mountains.

Boy Scout Troop 332 is no stranger to high adventure. Their previous trips include hiking 33 miles of the Appalachian Trail in the Smokey Mountains and canoeing and fishing at Boundary Waters in Minnesota. These high adventure trips are a lot of fun for the boys, and present a challenge through which the Scouts improve themselves in all areas of life. If any boy age 11-17 wants to join the Boy Scouts, they may contact any of the Scouts from Troop 332 or Larry Phelps at 279-3884.

Dave and Libby Mullis very graciously gave several of their days to drive the scout troop to and from Philmont. The trip would not have gone so smoothly or have been as enjoyable without their generosity.