

Local Boy Scouts complete Philmont adventure in New Mexico

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By [Cranford Chronicle](#)

On June 30 nine Boy Scouts from Troop 80 in Cranford and three adult advisers stepped on a plane at Newark Liberty International Airport to begin the adventure of a lifetime. This group of boys and men ranged in age from 13 to 46 and was known as Expedition 702-G-02.



Members of Boy Scout Troop 80 at the end of their trek at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, N.M. The Scouts, from left to right, are Ricky Barry, Matt Capone, Ben Chung, Ian Philip, Tom Philip, Tom Piacentini, Ryan Pringle, Kevin Roman, and Justin Sitler. Their adult advisors, from left to right, are Steve Philip, Dave Pringle, and Mike Roman.

They spent two days in Colorado Springs acclimating to the Rocky Mountain altitude. In Colorado Springs, the crew toured Red Rocks, a Colorado State Park, and whitewater rafted 16 miles in Class three and four rapids on the Arkansas River. The crew stayed two nights in the University of Colorado's dormitories and then hopped onto a bus and took a three-hour bus ride to Cimarron, N.M. Here the crew would embark on a 12-day journey through the Sangre de Cristo Mountains at Philmont Scout Ranch.

The trip consisted of 10 days of backpacking through Philmont's backcountry, which covers more than 214 square miles of expansive wilderness, with elevation ranging between 6,500 feet and 12,441 feet.

Their itinerary consisted of many fun and challenging activities at different camps in the back country. Some of the programs included on the itinerary were rock climbing, spar pole climbing, traversing a bouldering wall, viewing ancient Indian petroglyphs, seeing the only known Tyrannosaurus Rex track in the world, climbing to the peak of Mount Baldy and the peak of the Tooth of Time, and attending to two campfires, one at Pueblano Camp and another at Rich Cabins. On the trek they went from the North Country of Philmont to the South Country, covering over 100 miles of trail. They stayed at a total of nine camps, which included Anasazi, Cook Canyon, Rich Cabins, Pueblano Ruins, Copper Park, Santa Claus, Devil's Wash Basin, Cimarroncito, and Tooth Ridge Camp.

The crew leader for the expedition was Tom Philip, the chaplain's aide was Justin Sitler and the wilderness guide — the scout responsible for teaching and executing environmentally friendly ideals — was Ryan Pringle. For 10 days the crew backpacked through rain, thunderstorms, lightning, hail and heat, and they ate freeze-dried meals while carrying all of the essentials that they needed to survive on their back.



Members of Boy Scout Troop 80 atop Wilson Mesa at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, N.M. The Scouts, from left to right, are Ricky Barry, Matt Capone, Ben Chung, Ian Philip, Tom Philip, Tom Piacentini, Ryan Pringle, Kevin Roman, and Justin Sitler. Their adult advisors, from left to right, are Steve Philip, Dave Pringle and Mike Roman.

The group had an amazing time. Some highlights were when the crew was able to get their boots branded at a Clark's Fork camp and when they climbed two of the peaks at Philmont, including the tallest peak on the ranch, Mount Baldy, measuring 12,441 feet. The crew also participated in a conservation project, helping to construct a trail between two back country camps.

"My favorite parts of Philmont were definitely the rock climbing and climbing Mount Baldy," Ian Philip said. "I also enjoyed watching the sunrise from the Tooth of Time, which was very cool."

"The best parts of Philmont were the breathtaking views as we hiked up massive mountains," Ricky Barry said.

When the crew got back to base camp, they were dirty, smelly and yearning for real food. They went into the town of Cimarron to get burgers, fries and ice cream and then headed back to the ranch for a tour of the Villa Philmonte, the former home of Waite Phillips, the man who donated the land for the ranch. The next morning the crew hopped back onto a bus to head to Denver International Airport, stopping for an all-you-can-eat buffet along the way. Once arriving back at Newark airport, the crew members were greeted with open arms by their parents, signifying the end of an epic journey.

The scouts and advisers included Matt Capone, Ian Philip, Ricky Barry, Justin Sitler, Ben Chung, Ryan Pringle, Tom Philip, Kevin Roman, Thomas Piacentini, Mike Roman, Dave Pringle and Stephen Philip.

All of the members of crew 702-G-02 had an amazing time on this adventure of a lifetime and enjoyed the challenges they faced, the views from the trail and the programs that they participated in along the way.