

It's Holiday Time

Now is the time for each crew member to be working on the "[Four Expensive Essentials](#)"- boots, rain gear, sleeping bag, and backpack. These items make outstanding holiday gifts. Your crew needs to be prepared for the exciting months of camping and backpacking adventures ahead. Remind your crew member families to check page 17 of their *Crew Member Guide*, or on-line with the quick link at our [Watchu Experience](#) Web site, www.watchu.org. With a [Quick Link](#) you can also access "[Personal Gear Tips](#)," a discussion of features to consider when looking for the gear on the Philmont Personal Gear Equipment List.

Watchu Mountain Outfitters Order Form: While delivery will not be until after the holidays, it is also time to review the Watchu Mountain Outfitters "[Order Form](#)." The form provides an opportunity to order high quality expedition and backpacking items. Return the form no later than the evening of the January Advisor Briefing to qualify for the Hikers' Dozen discount when ordering 12 of any one item, as well as to guarantee that you get the items and sizes you want - delivery will be at the Briefing in March.

Expedition T-Shirts: Everyone needs a few extra T-shirts - why not order one or two extra Watchu/Philmont T-shirts? The Base Camp T-shirts are a material blend and color which works great at Philmont. They look super and can be worn throughout your stay at the Ranch. In Base Camp and along the trail your crew will look sharp and be the talk of the ranch. Or hit the trail with the Watchu Mountain Outfitters' moisture wicking polyester T-shirts - it is great both for use in the backcountry at Philmont and while whitewater rafting in Colorado.

Council Expedition Patch: A prior Watchu Gram described our historic Watchu/Philmont council shoulder patch. Most crew members order a few extra for trading and collecting - you can choose either the one for the current year or ones from prior year expeditions.

"[Return to the Summit of Scouting](#)" by Bill Cass: Bill writes of his three summers on staff, and of his return years later with his son on a trek. He will further whet your appetite for your adventure next summer. Copies of this book are in stock at the Council office - contact Beth Miller-Porter to get your copy.

Click the "[Trading Post](#)" [Quick Link](#) on the Web site (www.watchu.org) to check out the above items and other merchandise available from the Watchu Mountain Outfitters,

like the popular headlamp, bandanas, or zipper pull thermometer. Note the sharp looking Patriots' Path crew on the Trading Post page celebrating the completion of their Philmont trek at the Cimarron Art Gallery. That will be you in a few months!

Phil Fact: From the *Philmont Program Handbook*, 1952 - "Elk, one of the largest and most magnificent of North American big game animals, were exterminated in the wild state in New Mexico in about the year 1900. They made their final stand in the Sacramento Mountains near Philmont. Elk have been reintroduced in the state and are becoming reestablished in several localities, including the Cimarron area."

Watchu comment: Elk are now well-established at Philmont. The 2002 Patriot's Path Autumn Adventure crew saw a herd of more than fifty in the meadow at Apache Springs.

Purple mountains rise above Ewells Park camp,

Captain Richard Ewell

Rayado Military Post, Maxwell Land Grant, New Mexico Territory
Officer Corps, United States Army Western Expeditionary Group