

Crew Chief (and Advisor) Crib Notes and Advice – 2021 Update

Please read carefully, then read again. There is a lot of hard-learned experience in this one document. If you read this carefully, and adhere to the advice and suggestions, you will have a much better trek. You have heard some of this from me during the shakedowns and other activities and meetings - but you won't find much of it in the Philmont literature.

[Three Hints for Advisors **for Colorado**: 1) If a fully uniformed adult walks into restaurants **BEFORE THE GROUP**, you are more likely to get minor discounts (like free drinks) and/or at least one free adult meal (maybe two). Specify the number you are bringing in, and ask if there's a discount. 2) If you skip breakfast on your last Colorado morning, go to the McDonalds at Exit 451 off I-25, just south of Raton. **DO NOT** stop in Walsenburg or Trinidad; **VERY SLOW, POOR SERVICE** (it's been that way for over 20 years; ridiculous!) To avoid errors, suggest everyone Write Their Orders on McD bags (pick up bags in advance in Colorado). 3) If you use Blue Sky Adventures, your bus should arrive at Basecamp around 9:00 am – if they intend to get there later, try to negotiate the earliest time you can get. **Also, if they'll do it, have Blue Sky keep all your Colorado leftover gear so you won't have to store it at Basecamp.**]

First 24 Hours At Philmont:

Crew Chief vs Advisor Duties - The Crew Chiefs are supposed to run the Crew; the Advisors are there to advise, and provide some common sense and experience in health and safety situations. Avoiding taking over the Crew is the hardest thing for most Advisors (including myself). If the adults are yelling out orders - then the adults ARE the Crew Chiefs. So for you Crew Chiefs, it's pretty basic: Make sure the adults don't have to yell out orders!

Remember, the Rangers work with the Crews through the Crew Chiefs, not through the Advisors. In fact, the Rangers will barely talk to the Advisors when you first arrive at Basecamp, so Crew Chiefs need to be ready hit the ground running as soon as your Rangers arrive. [Adults - Do NOT take this personally – it's just the way Philmont operates.]

First Arrival – The two Crew Chiefs will go into the office at the Welcome Center to check in, which takes roughly 20 minutes. They should do this immediately upon arrival, while everyone else is unloading the bus and forming pack lines based on Crews (not the whole Contingent in one line). The Assistant Crew Chiefs “may” be allowed to join them, but probably not, unless there's no-one else present – the adults will NOT be allowed inside, except maybe to take a photo of the Crew Chiefs (adults - ask permission if you wish to do so). You will receive a bunch of information, including your trail-bound tent assignments and maybe your dining hall meal tickets. With luck your Rangers will show up during the check-in; if they have not by the time you finish, go ahead and transfer your gear to your assigned tents, but leave one Adult behind from each Crew to keep an eye on your remaining gear and to let the Rangers know where you are when they arrive. If the Advisor's Lounge still exists (ask!), send an adult over to it to see if you can get some free fuel canisters and Bic Lighters, if needed. If it doesn't exist, ask the people at the Welcome Center Office if there is someplace where departing Crews leave these items.

Divide the radios between the adults and Crew Chiefs. Use different channels for the two Crews, **but have set times where everyone is on the same channel so you can discuss common issues** (maybe every 2 hours?) If this sounds silly, remember that cell coverage at Basecamp is spotty (2017), and won't be helped by many dozens of other cell users trying to connect. A radio call can save you 30 minutes of trying to find someone (it's a big place!) Keep radio use at Basecamp to a minimum, to avoid interfering with Ranch operations (sometimes the radios "cross-talk," especially when they're close to other, similar radios); avoid needless chatter.

When your Ranger shows up, **hand him/her the medical records, divided into Scouts and adults, alphabetized.** Also have the Philmont roster handy if he asks for it. [By the way, DO NOT tell the Ranger that you've been trained by experienced Advisors, as this will make some of them aggressive and/or defensive – they'll figure it out soon enough.] Once you're under the Ranger's control, he has a list of things to accomplish; these include: Adult Administrative Meeting, Medical Checks, Crew Photo, Trek Planning, Food Pickup, Equipment Pickup, Crew and Personal Equipment Reviews, Locker Assignments, and various Ranger training sessions on First Aid, Map and Compass, Emergency Procedures, etc. It's a busy sequence, and the 9:00 am arrival is critical to getting it done efficiently. You should be a step ahead of most Crews because you're bringing all our own equipment; however, Philmont will insist on issuing certain equipment items to you anyway (which you can toss in your lockers and turn back in when you return to Basecamp). **All Crew members need to wear a hat and carry a daypack with a full canteen, rain gear, and all medications, when you start the above sequence.** [You also need the "all of Philmont" map and your bear bags.] Tents need to be closed up every time you walk away from them; all valuables should at least be out of plain sight. There will be lunch and eventually dinner, plus a Crew Chiefs' Meeting, an Advisors' meeting, religious services, and an opening campfire. Expect a hot, dry, and dusty day, with maybe afternoon thunderstorms – and very little downtime except during the Adult Administrative Meeting and the Trek planning meeting; usually the Ranger uses this time to "bond" with the Crew. At some point you should do your first meal stripping and food distribution, remembering that the food has to be stored overnight in your lockers, **not in your tents.** Recall my suggestion for keeping the food weight equally divided throughout the trek, by selecting meals in a round-robin from lines of sorted meals, and having the trekkers mark their initials on each bag they picked up.

If necessary, at some point you will need to visit the Trading Post to buy the expanded maps (if we don't have them) and maybe fuel and Bic lighters (if you didn't buy them in Colorado and didn't find any at the Advisor's Lounge). I sometimes buy certain memorabilia at this time too, unless they obviously have too much to sell out while we're on the trail. If you can mail stuff home immediately, it greatly eases storage and transport issues (the Trading Post can do this for you). One adult will need to visit the Post Office to pick up the mail and the stoves and batteries package (only an adult is allowed to pick up mail); look for the American flag on the Logistics building. There is a laundry if needed. There is also a snack-bar, which hopefully the Crew will avoid (there may be time later).

Adult Administrative Meeting – Each Crews' adults will be asked to come in (usually all of you). The Crew's financial status will be checked. All necessary certifications (CPR, WFA) will be checked. Some basic information will be provided (varies by year). If you didn't get your meal tickets at the Welcome Center, you'll get them here.

Trek Planning – Each Crew’s Primary Adult Advisor, Crew Chief, and possibly the Assistant Crew Chief will meet with a planner. Bring your “all of Philmont” map and your trek confirmation letter/email. They will give you **the official copy of your itinerary (known thereafter as your “Crew Leader’s Copy” or “Life”**. Keep it carefully folded and protected in a zip-lock bag (usually with the maps). **Don’t even joke about losing it!** Don’t overly fold, mutilate, get it wet, or shove it in a pocket, either. The entire trek will be reviewed, with critical points (water, commissaries, closed trails, conservation projects, etc.) marked on your map and “Life”. You will schedule your bus for the following morning (go for 10 am). You will have to ask to schedule your horse-ride, if offered on your trek; this is critical, **because they won’t volunteer the information**. If you have both a Chuck Wagon dinner and a breakfast on your trek – not likely this summer - you’ll probably have to pick one or the other (if so, always pick the dinner). If you’re coming in over the Tooth of Time, you’ll have to request a Basecamp Lunch (as opposed to a trail lunch) for your final day, **ONLY IF you intend to get an early start that day and will be back by 11:00 am**. If you’re not coming in over the Tooth of Time, ask for the earliest possible pickup bus (which is usually 9:00 am*, and also request a Basecamp Lunch). If you want to see a museum or Villa Philmonte on the day of return, you probably need to schedule it here; if not, ask about this process if you’re interested. Additional Comment: Some adults enjoy these activities, but frankly they are of minimal interest to most Scouts. Then again, it’s the one and only time for most Crew members that they’ll ever be here, something to keep in mind. **Check the water board and trail conditions board (for issues that pertain to your trek) before you leave! (and write down anything that’s pertinent!)**

* If you get a later pickup time, USUALLY the bus drivers will take you back to Basecamp IF you’re waiting at the pickup point early AND they have space on the bus. However, there are no guarantees that they will do so.

Medical Checks – **Are always best done sooner versus later** – the later you go, the longer you wait. As noted, ALL PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE CHECKS. [Your Ranger will still have your medical forms.] Checks are usually very fast for Scouts; however, adults get a more rigorous check, including pulse and bp, and weighing if not slim and trim. [If adults know that their bp is an issue, drink no coffee that day!] Remember, zero tolerance on over the max weight! On bp – they will recheck the next day if you’re too high; if you’re still too high on Day 2, you go home! [Additional Covid checks are possible.]

Crew Photo – Mid-morning is best, so you’re not staring directly into the rising sun. Full uniforms are preferred, but Class B uniforms are acceptable. Sunglasses are not allowed.

Meals at Basecamp – There is an assembly in the courtyard at the dining hall. The food is served cafeteria style, no seconds on the line; includes side bars with salad, fresh fruit, sometimes PB&J and bread, or similar items – please ensure that your tables are clean before leaving.

Logistics – Initial Food pickup – bring your bear-bags and your “Life”; check packets carefully - what you leave with is what you get; you can’t go back later to complain that you were shorted. You can “meal-strip” later. Ensure you get your Micro-Pur, TP, Purell, and 2 bear bag ropes. Ask about non-secured storage, and getting some boxes, if you couldn’t get Blue Sky to keep your Colorado stuff while you’re at Philmont.

Gear Review – The Rangers will want to see the Crew gear, and everyone’s individual gear (they’re required to do this review). There is no way to escape, so just go with the flow. It “may” help to give him/her our equipment lists, but don’t expect a waiver if you do.

Religious Services - Both Catholic and Protestant services are available. 7:00 to 8:00 pm every night. Far north end of the campus (past the medical check area); follow the crowd.

Opening Campfire – Assemble at the Welcome Center at the corner **closest to the entranceway road** – this will get you one of the closest row of seats, which is desirable.

Day 2 - With luck, you will get the 10:00 am bus. You should get up at first light or soon thereafter. In addition to breakfast, you’ll need to retrieve your food; pack, empty and clean your tents; check out at the Welcome Center; set up a packline at the Welcome Center (secure your hiking poles!); and transfer all your non-trail items to your lockers. Make sure Uniforms are dry and sealed in plastic, and that no foul or wet stuff is mixed with clean stuff. Leave wallets, keys, etc., at the Security Office (you received a large envelope for this at the Administrative Meeting). If Blue Sky wouldn’t store your stuff, put **non-critical/low value** stuff in boxes or duffel-bags and move it to the “unsecured storage” in the warehouse - MARK WELL with the Crew #s!

You may see your Rangers at breakfast, but usually they show up just before your bus loading, looking like they woke up 10 minutes ago (they usually did). All of the Rangers on the bus (may be as many as 5) will give you a running commentary during the bus ride. Once dropped off, you’ll get additional Ranger training on map reading and trail planning and hiking protocols (usually an hour’s worth), and then you’re on your way. Usually the Ranger will be happy to let the Crew walk in the wrong direction, so be very sure of where you’re going when you start out.

On the Trail:

The Ranger – Will teach you all of the current Philmont protocols for camp setup, cooking, cleaning, bear-bags, etc. **Please cooperate fully with these teachings (don’t debate them on the basis of what we taught you here)** – you can always modify them later. You may wish to ask if you can do the tarp setup, etc., on your own, since you have your own tarps. The Ranger will be with you until your second morning on the trail, at which point he or she will hold a “Ranger Moment” assembly, and depart.* At that point you’re on your own for the rest of the trek.

[* This assumes Philmont will not have Rangers accompanying Crews on their entire treks to enforce Covid-related precautions. At this point, who knows....]

Rumor Control – On information dissemination to the Crew once you’re on the trail, you have two ways to operate; your choice: One, hold an “all-hands” Crew meeting each evening to discuss the day and what’s happening tomorrow. Or Two, the adults meet with the Crew Chief, Asst. Crew Chief, and the Naviguesser, discuss things, then those three Scouts meet with the rest of the Crew to relay what’s up. The first method ensures that everyone gets the benefit of the advice and discussion, unfiltered; the second method empowers the Crew Chiefs much more, but runs the risk of missing things if they don’t take careful notes. You can do it either way.

Maps - Decide who will carry the maps (you'll have 2 sets; one set is the backup, and is usually kept pristine). You can carry them yourselves, or give one of them to the new Naviguesser each day (you can have a single Crew Naviguesser if you like, though I recommend you use everyone in a day-by-day rotation). The adults may make recommendations on different trails to take the next day, during your daily discussion meetings. In most cases, these recommendations will be for alternate trails that offer better views or the possibility of an extra program (in general, that's only if you can get to such a camp fairly early in the day, and extra programs may not be allowed at all – you can ask about this at Trek Planning). Share the map(s) with the Crew during your discussions with them - **everyone should know what's happening, every day.** [Note: More on Maps and Navigation, further below.]

In a related information sharing protocol, you should try to hold sessions of “Roses, Thorns, and Buds” each evening with the entire Crew. [“Roses, Thorns, and Buds” is where each Crew member states what he liked the most, then the least, about the day, and what he's looking forward to tomorrow.] This may seem corny, but it's actually a very valuable exercise that can defuse tensions in the Crew. Issues? – **“Bring it up; talk it out; leave it here.”** You can use this session to offer additional comments or clarifications if anything was left hanging at the earlier discussion meetings. This can also be where you ask 3 important questions, every night:

A) Have we done everything we can to be bear-safe?

B) What time are we getting up?*

C) Have we done everything we can tonight for a quicker getaway tomorrow morning?

* As you already know, in general, you should always get up at dawn, except for Baldy (4:00 am) and the Tooth of Time (3:30 am). You should go to bed at dusk (8:30 pm) each night that you don't have a Staff campfire (and you definitely should NOT routinely have Crew campfires, even if they're allowed, as they just encourage everyone to stay up late, and are a lengthy, time-wasting pain in the ass to clean up properly the next day).

Crew Chiefs and the Crew - Always emphasize **“Everything is Everyone's Job.”** That includes the Crew Chiefs and Advisors. In general, everything gets done much faster - and better - when all hands are involved, ESPECIALLY during morning packup. Duty rosters are best employed for initial arrivals at campsites (use the Camp Setup Guide). Use the Adult Advisors to intervene if one or more Scouts are obviously shirking their duties, or if two or more Scouts have an obvious problem with each other - try to not get involved in antagonistic situations with fellow Crew members who won't comply with your requests or orders. It's the adults' job to do any necessary reaming - not yours. Since yours are all-111 Crews, this hopefully won't be an issue. If you find you DO need a duty roster, it helps to immediately announce (or even post) it at each campsite, so there are no questions on who's doing what, or when.

More on Duty Rosters - The only formal duty roster you definitely need is for camp setup and dinner prep and cleanup; **remember, the cooks for each meal also clean up!** If you do our usual meal-stripping, then breakfasts and lunches are all no cook and “on-the trail”, so no formal duty roster assignments will be needed for those. You'll need 2 - 4 cooks (yes, 3 is best) for

dinner; all other camp setup jobs: Water, water purification, tarp set-up, Crew gear organization, KP setup at the sump (JUST the setup!), tent set-ups, etc., are everyone else's jobs. You can rotate them formally, via a duty roster, or just get people to do them. Use the Camp Setup Guide (in the Appendices) the first couple of days to check off what needs to get done - after 2 or 3 days, it will be semi-automatic. Hold a mini-Crew meeting at each campsite when you arrive, divvy up all the jobs, and get after it. When setting up the cook/KP roster, try to set up a rotation such that 2 of the 3 people did it the previous night, and also that tentmates don't have to work together (in which case, there's no one to set up their tent, or take care of their packs, etc., because both Scouts are cooking and cleaning.) Start with some experienced people for dinner on your first night, just to make the first couple of nights easier.

Camp Breakdown - As you saw on our shakedown, it is possible and desirable to do a nearly complete pack-up before you go to bed each night; this is how to get out of camp quickly each morning (much more on this further below). You should always shoot for 30 minutes from waking up the Crew to circling up for exercises and departure. You may not make it at first, or ever, but you should still work for it. If you do it on your first two mornings, you will impress the hell out of your Ranger, most of whose Crews will have been taking 3 to 4 hours to get out of camp their first two days on the trail. The Crew Chief and Asst Crew Chief (and usually 1 or 2 Advisors) need to get up about 20 minutes earlier than the set time in order to get themselves out in time to wake everyone, pack themselves up, and get the bear-bags and sump gear back to camp, and start in on the tarp. This way, all Crew gear and food is laid out ready for pickup as soon as the Scouts are finishing their personal packing. Emphasize that you don't walk away from your tent for ANYTHING until all your gear is out and ready for packing, and your tent is folded up and ready to be strapped on someone's pack. This is in fact an excellent way to handle all items still in pieces (bear-bag setups, tarp, etc.); **don't leave any job three quarters done** - it then takes twice as long to finish. Failure to follow this protocol is by far your biggest time waster each morning. Finally, although it's obnoxious, calling off the time remaining ("We are leaving in 30 minutes," "We are leaving in 20 minutes," etc.) keeps everyone focused and moving; it's an excellent motivator. Another comment that should be made over and over during breakdown is "Drink some water!"

Make sure you both have alarm wristwatches, and know how to set and use them. If they won't wake you up even when you're really beat, get a louder one. If you still have problems, get an adult to wake you up each morning.

If you have Scouts who are perpetually late in getting out of bed, they should be woken first every day, by an adult - who should not walk away until they are clearly up and moving (mark their tents in some way so you know where they are). If you have Adults who want coffee, they should get up 30 minutes earlier to make, consume, clean, and pack it up. **Under no circumstances should a Crew have to sit and wait for an adult coffee break!**

Crew Gear - As we tried to do during the shakedown, the same Scouts/Advisors should carry the same gear EVERY DAY. This is why we put the initials of the person carrying each item on the item itself, so we're constantly not yelling out "**Who is supposed to be carrying this?**" 50 times every morning (which is what many Crew do for half their treks). You should also have the list of "who's carrying what" for quick reference handy - such a list is especially useful

if/when something is missing. This is not necessarily a permanent situation – if you need to shift weight, also re-label the gear and the list as appropriate. Remember that you will have Sharpies to re-label items, and a partial roll of duct tape in the blister kit for a new label, if needed.

As you saw during the shakedowns, you should do a similar division and name/initials marking with the food packages – and this starts at Basecamp with your initial food pickup. Remember that every Crew member selects a single package of each meal, so that 6 (or 7) people benefit at every meal, and your average food weight steadily decreases. Yes, it helps. We are usually one of the very few Crews (and maybe the only ones) that do this with their food packages.

IMPORTANT! - Always establish which breakfast and lunch will be eaten that morning, before people start packing their food packets (which meal number I mean - for example, “Breakfast #7 and Lunch #3”). Otherwise half the Crew will forget whether they packed these packets, and everyone will have to unload their packs at breakfast and lunch to find them (this is “the” disadvantage of our method, but only if you allow it to be) **ALSO, BE SMART – Eat your heaviest breakfasts, lunches, and dinners FIRST.**

First Aid - We have split out the foot and skin care materials as a separate First Aid kit, since this will likely be used far more than anything else except the Desitin and sunscreen. The Desitin will be kept with the toilet kit. The sunscreen will be in the Lotions bags (both of them). The “meds” First Aid kit is usually carried by the Medications Advisor, with the duplicate prescription meds, epi-pens, and inhalers carried separately by that same adult. **Only adults may carry and distribute medications.** Be careful to protect heat-sensitive medications.

Weight distribution - **USE THE SCALE.** You will quickly learn who can carry more, and who can’t - make proportional distributions. Don’t let anyone blow themselves out in two days trying to be a hero, and try not to let anyone be a total slacker either. [Remember also that guys who were tigers in Virginia may be kittens in New Mexico, due to the altitude.] Since everyone should have the same crew gear each day, the real weight re-distribution will be in the food and the trash. Basically the best way to do this is to determine the average number of food packages each person needs to carry, then have the 3 or 4 strongest hikers (the “A” group) take “X” packages from the 3 or 4 least strong hikers (the “C” group). For example, if the average number of packages for the food pickup was 6, then the “A” group takes 8 packages, the “B” group takes 6, and the “C” group takes 4. The only major exception to this will be if it rained overnight - in which case the tents, rain tarp, and especially bear-bag kits will be heavier and bulkier than usual, and so you “may” wish to ask people who are not carrying those items to take an extra meal packet or two off those who are carrying them. Usually, with the scale in use, you should find the Scouts will self-monitor and divvy up fairly reasonably; it’s hard to shirk with other people watching. Most of the Crew should be within a 10 pound range, with your weaker hikers carrying about 5 pounds less than the average, and your gorillas carrying about 5 pounds more than the average. As a guesstimate, 45, 40, and 35 pounds to start, at Basecamp. No-one should be way over the average, and unless they’re injured or sick, no-one should be way under the average, either. As I said several times during the shakedown, the scale is very likely the most useful item you have for maintaining a good Crew attitude, since everyone knows that everyone else is carrying their fair share. Your carry weight changes dramatically with your total food amount, but aside from food **your total carry weight also slowly but constantly decreases as you use up your consumables** such as Wet-Ones, lotions, fuel, vitamins, trash bags, etc.

Morning Circle Up's - Doing a quick camp sweep just before circling up is an excellent way to ensure no equipment gets missed, and enables the last Scouts to get their gear together while everyone else is doing this routine chore. Note that the sump colander, drying tarp, and all eating and cooking gear are the most commonly forgotten items, cause they're usually not in plain sight - they're still at the sump if they weren't picked up by the early risers. So **someone should always check the sump area**. The next most commonly forgotten items tend to be stuff hanging on trees - we all tend to look down during quick scans of a campsite. Dark clotheslines are often missed, especially early (this is why such items should be taken down the previous evening). Wait for everyone before circling up for stretching. While stretching, emphasize continuing to "camel up" on water - whenever possible, everyone should drink a whole liter from the time you get up til the time you finish stretching, then refill with purified water or at a tap (staffed camps only) as necessary before leaving the camp. **Don't chug a liter**, unless you enjoy diarrhea. If any remains, **use the last of the purified water to wash faces and clean hands**. Re-tighten boot laces as necessary after doing the stretching, using the double-loop system I demonstrated.

Hiking - Don't go tearing out of camp - start slow, then build. [This is a typical problem during shakedown, and tends to carry over.] If everyone is wearing their long gear cause they're cold, stop after a few minutes to allow people to strip clothes off, **BEFORE** they start to get really sweaty. Don't wait to start caterpillaring if you head immediately uphill (and you often do when you're leaving a camp); if the lead guy hikes up a hill til he's tired, the last guy in the line will be gassed by the time he gets to step off. The biggest issue upon starting hikes is the lead Scouts taking off and never looking behind them; make sure you monitor this carefully and continuously. This is how Crews end up split up into smaller groups. Remember my comment that "the head wags the tail, not the other way around." If you don't watch for this, you will have problems the entire trek. Avoid Advisor Abuse, and also avoid Scout Abuse - if the Crew wants to hike faster, take weight from the slower hikers and give it to the faster (or mouthier) hikers. On uphill, **always try to make it to the top of the hill before taking a packs-off break** - **"Don't Waste Your Break."** Trail breaks should be minimal (or better, none at all). As you saw on the shakedown, use of 2-man caterpillars enable everyone to help each other get their canteens out for a drink - they can put them back in on the next split. Trail breaks should be **no more than** 3 minutes (and rare); packs-off breaks should be **no less than** 20 minutes, and again at the top of long climbs. Take water breaks every 30 minutes (20 minutes in open sun) - **it's your job to watch the time!**

Trails and Navigation:

"Navigation Kits" - As previously noted, each Crew has two Navigation "Kits", each containing one "full scale" map of the entire Ranch, "expanded scale" maps of the North and South areas, a decent compass, and a UTM transparency that fits the grid system on the expanded scale maps (see the next paragraph for some brief comments on UTM). The maps are the most current versions. One of these kits is a backup and can be either used routinely or left in reserve (up to you!) You should always use the expanded scale maps when on the trail, but you should also always consult with the full scale map too - rarely, it shows details not on the expansion versions (dumb but true). In general, the maps are quite good, but there are sometimes printing mistakes (usually mirror image trails, creeks, or camps, or similar misprinting errors).

UTM – Universal Transverse Mercator is a system for assigning fairly exact coordinates to locations on the Earth’s surface. The coordinates are reported in terms of “Northing” and “Easting”, and (yes) it takes some training to understand (the military officers in the Crews will be familiar with this system). [I can give you some basic instruction if you want it, but see my comments below first.] As noted, the Philmont expanded scale maps have a grid overlay, and both Navigation Kits have a transparency that exactly fits each grid. Furthermore, Philmont has started to install UTM “posts” (4x4s upright in the ground) at various locations, as substitutes for the traditional signposts. These posts have their UTM coordinates routed into their North and East sides, and they were positioned exactly correctly when installed (i.e., the Northing side faces North, and the Easting side faces East); they may have shifted a bit since. **HOWEVER**, in my recent experience (2017) the locations of these UTM posts could hardly be more obvious; i.e., at major trail and road/trail intersections. It is possible that additional UTM posts have been installed in the Valle Vidal and other “off-Philmont” properties; if so, these may be more useful. Finally, the posts are made of wood, and doubtless a few were lost to the recent fires.

Signposts – Although they are (allegedly) no longer maintained, there are (were) still many dozens/hundreds of “traditional” signposts all over Philmont. Nearly all of these are arrow signs (i.e., pointed at one end) that indicate camps, peaks, or other important locations (for example, a conservation site). A fewer number of signs are painted. Signs may be nailed onto convenient trees or bolted on 4x4 posts. **IN NO CASE SHOULD ANY “TRADITIONAL” 4X4 “POST” SIGN BE TRUSTED** without consulting a map to confirm the indicated directions. It is routine for these signs to be misoriented! As with the UTM posts, some of these signs were certainly lost to the fires, and if so they were almost certainly NOT replaced.

Right of Way – There is a right of way on Philmont trails. Horses and Pack Animals (mules, burros, etc) are #1; uphill Crews are #2; downhill Crews are #3; cyclists are #4, and vehicles on backcountry roads are #5. Philmont teaches Crews to step off the downhill side of the trail in order to let horses and pack animals go by, but I have always preferred the uphill side because I am leery of having a 1000-2000 pound animal fall on anyone in the Crew. Be aware on local shakedowns that many horses in OUR area are often completely spooked by humans wearing backpacks, so it’s best to get well off the trail; this is not an issue at Philmont, where they are well familiar with backpackers. Although there is a mountain biking program at Philmont, to my knowledge it does not use any of the hiking or horseback trails, and so should not be an issue with respect to right-of-way. On vehicles (seen infrequently in the backcountry), obviously you should not assume the right of way, but in my experience they always stop to allow Crews to go by, unless those crews are taking a packs-off break on the side of the road.

Stream Crossings – There are only two significant streams at Philmont – the Cimarron and the Rayado “rivers”; of these, the Cimarron is wider and faster flowing, so it’s more of a danger. There are footbridges that cross both (and numerous other footbridges that cross smaller streams elsewhere), but most creek crossings are just done by rock hopping. Philmont requires backpackers to unbuckle their hip belts and chest straps when crossing ALL streams/creeks, so that a backpacker can get out of his pack if he falls in (a very hazardous situation if the stream is flowing fast and deep). While this is clearly overkill for many stream crossings, that’s the requirement. Some streamside trails have a very large number of crossings – for example, it has been reported that the North Forth of the Urraca has over 125 rock-hopping crossings!

Staff Camps, Programs, and Conservation Projects:

Staff Cabin Protocol - When approaching a Staff Camp Cabin, the Crew should stop well short of the cabin, and ONLY the Crew Chief and Asst Crew Chief should go up. **Always bring the Crew Leaders Copy with you.** The Crew will be invited up in a minute or two, unless there's already a crowd there, but even if the porch is free don't presume ahead of the invitation. When possible, place your packline well away from the cabin and other packlines – because close to the cabin is where the mini-bear herds roam – but keep it close enough that it's not an invitation to an opportunistic bear. Note that the staff will explain about water, programs, trash drop-offs, and more, at the camp, but you should also ask about water and any other issues at your next camp if it's a trail camp.

Campsite Selection – At staff camps, they will assign you your site. At trail camps, it's always worthwhile to check out the WHOLE camp before choosing a campsite; often, the first campsite you see is nowhere near the “best” site in the camp (in fact, the “end sites” are very often the worst ones in the camp). Again, use the Camp Setup Guide to help you organize your setup.

Programs - If you're not super stressed for time, always try to do the programs. They help make the trek, even if the Scouts are not particularly enthused about them at first glance. Some programs that look or sound boring turn out to be pretty interesting or fun. As noted above, if the Crew is willing to hike to staff camps that are not on the trek, and they can get there early, they can *sometimes* do whatever program(s) those camps offer. This doesn't apply to limited programs that are scheduled at Basecamp, such as horseback rides or Chuckwagon meals, but other programs MAY be available if you show up early. Don't be annoyed if you're refused an unassigned program; the staff is required to ensure that the assigned Crews have priority. Another “perk” you can get at a few non-assigned camps is the chance to take showers or at least clean clothes (unless there's a drought). And of course you can always fill up on purified water. Backcountry campfires are open to campers at close-by trail camps, whether scheduled on your “Life” or not, and these are almost always worth the effort, even if they'll cost you some sleep.

Trek Enhancements - I will review your treks to determine possible trek enhancements. It is no longer allowed to switch assigned camps; therefore, the only way to enhance treks is to take different trails from camp to camp, and maybe catch additional programs along the way (see the previous paragraph). In other cases, it is possible to walk a ridgeline trail instead of a valley trail - these often give much better views, but also are more dangerous in the afternoons if there are thunderstorms (another reason to hike early!) It is also possible to add miles to become a so-called “Triple Digit Crew” - that is, a Crew that hikes 100 miles or more on its trek; this is not formally recognized by Philmont, but is considered to be a mark of distinction. Certainly Triple Digit Crew see the most of Philmont possible on their treks.

Conservation Projects – Each Crew is required to do 3 hours of conservation work while on the Ranch. Since the fires of 2002 (and subsequent fires) and the resulting flash-floods, most of these projects have involved remediation efforts on burned-off hillsides, building new trails that are higher than the flood-plains, and cutting new campsites (or at least new tentsites) that are WELL above the flood-plains. Your PRIMARY conservation site is assigned at trek planning; if that project is washed out due to heavy weather, you will either be asked (by the conservation

specialists on site) to do a project at a different SECONDARY site at a later date, or – if there are no such sites – to do some conservation work on your own at one or more of your upcoming campsites. If you have any remaining staff camps, you can ask the Camp Director if they have work you can do at or near that camp. The 3 hours count towards a 50-Miler Award.

Food, Food, Food! (see more under “Commissaries” further below):

Meals (Breakfast) – As I have stated repeatedly, eating breakfast in camp is a terrible time-waster, and invariably turns what should be a 30 minute packup into 2 to 4 hours. There is no urgency to pack up when everyone knows you’re eating breakfast in camp. Always try to eat on the trail, at a decent overlook point if possible, after you’ve hiked for 30 - 60 minutes. Try not to hike for longer than an hour unless you have a specific spot you’re trying to get to (e.g., Baldy Town). Find a view or at least a pleasant spot to sit down. **MAKE SURE EVERYONE GETS A VITAMIN!** - the vitamins cover the nutritional gaps in the food. The vitamins are in the Assistant Crew Chief’s Office. If you have a really brutal climb as soon as you start, everyone should get one breakfast item at camp to “tide them over” til the (actual) breakfast.

Meals (Lunches) – If you get on the trail as early as you should, most of the time, you’ll already be at your next camp, or at a program camp, around lunchtime. If you still have a big hike, or a strenuous activity after lunch (Conservation Project, etc.), it’s a good idea to eat most of lunch a little early (for strength), but also to save something for after the activity if possible.

Meals (Dinners) – There is a Dinner Prep List in the Appendices. 5:00 pm is about as late as you want to go before starting dinner. 4 pm is not too early to start a complex meal, or if you have an early evening activity to attend (e.g., burro racing, staff campfire, etc.) Most dinners take about 2 hours start to finish.

Dinner for Lunch? – If you’re heading to a dry camp, eating dinner for lunch at your last water point (and then lunch for dinner at the camp) is an excellent idea. Similarly, **if you have a trek where you get late (evening) rain instead of afternoon rain every day, that’s another situation where you may prefer to have dinner for lunch every day.** If you do this, watch the time – it usually takes 3 hours (not 2) for dinner for lunch versus a “regular” dinner, because you have to unpack and repack a lot of gear – which is OK if you’re already at your next campsite.

Trash - Always make a quality effort to compact or at least stack trash as soon as it’s created - having to disassemble an unorganized trash pile to re-compact it is usually a sticky, unpleasant mess (and is a bear hazard for the person(s) doing it). Hold stacked trash down with a small rock. Keep rolled trash together and compacted with a strip of electrical tape. Double bag all trash, and place it in a sash trash-bag. The trash will end up being a fairly heavy item after 3 or 4 meals, especially if the Scouts are not eating all the food, so it should be included during pack weighing. I personally prefer to pack the Crew trash myself, on the outside of my pack, to minimize food/trash odors inside my pack, and I recommend that trash be carried by an adult if they’re willing to do so. Trash may (and should be) discarded at any staff camp - but you have to ask permission to do so; don’t ever leave it on a porch without permission, especially overnight or very early in the morning, because a bear might get to it before the staff does.

Post Dinner (whether an actual dinner or lunch-for-dinner) – When KP is done, set up tents if not already done. If the weather is decent, start the camp semi-breakdown to make the morning getaway faster (see next section!) Then everyone should change into their next day's clothes, and (if allowed) wash the stuff they were wearing all day (cold water rinse only), and if it's warm and breezy hang everything up overnight (it may only partially dry, but that's better than nothing). If most of your clothing is synthetic, it will dry quickly. [Obviously, clothes washing is challenging if it's raining – you can try to hang things under the tarp, but that's rarely successful.] If you have a drought situation (no clothes washing), everyone should do a wipe-down with the Anti-Bacterial Wet-Ones while they're changing. Call for personal and Crew smellables. Pack and raise the bear-bags and “oops” bag.

Preparing for Quick Getaways - Fill all canteens as needed for camelling up in the morning and the next day's hike. If the Crew has a long, dry hike and needs to walk away with 4 canteens full, then prepare (purify) extra water in the 2 ½ gallon bladders, so it's already ready to go the next morning. At the sump, re-assemble and pack cook sets and personal eating gear (it has to stay at the sump, but it can still be pre-packed there). Pack all non-smellable (non-bear-bag) Crew items that aren't needed overnight. If the weather is “perfect,” take down the tarp. Unless it is warm or breezy, think about packing away wet clothing (it won't dry overnight anyway if it's really cold and still). Even if it's allowed, don't have a Crew campfire. Hold a Crew Meeting and/or session of “Roses, Thorns and Buds,” and head to bed. Unless there's a Staff campfire*, the Crew should always be in bed by dusk (typically around 8:30 pm). Change from your post-dinner clothes into your sleep clothes. Place boots and the post-dinner clothes (which are the next day's hiking clothes) right next to your tent, in protective plastic bags.

* Late Programs/Campfires – Be sure to have the site **completely** buttoned down before leaving for the program or campfire (as if you're going to bed, not going to a program). Flashlights, canteens, cold weather gear, and rain gear are required for all late programs and campfires, even if the weather is perfectly clear and warm. Carry the extra gear in your daypacks.

Water, Water, Water!:

Potability and Availability – The water is OK to drink at **almost** all staff camps (but not all), so always ask first. At virtually all trail camps, the water needs to be purified. Remember, **just because it's coming out of a spigot DOESN'T mean it's safe to drink!** If you're going to a Trail Camp, it is always worth asking the staff at the last Staff Camp you pass through what the water situation at your trail camp is; they may not know, but if it's dry usually they know it and will warn you. If they don't know, you can ask Crews coming from the opposite direction if they passed through your next campsite, and if so what the water situation was at that site. If an adult is willing, please check the water situation at EVERY camp you pass, and write it down, so you can update the water board at basecamp when you return.

The water at **most** staff camps is purified and decent tasting. Two exceptions are Indian Writings and Ponil, which both have unpleasant tasting “sulfur water” (so try and get yours elsewhere). It's safe to drink; it just smells and tastes bad. I usually take and purify water from the creeks at Indian Writings and Ponil, rather than drink the tap water at those two camps.

Amounts of Water - If you have a short hike, or if the hike you're taking "short hops" from staff camp to staff camp, then you obviously don't need to carry 4 full liters of water. At 2.2 pounds per liter, it is worth keeping an eye on how much water you're carrying! If you "camel up" on water before you start, and hike early (before it's hot), then you can probably get away with one full liter for each 2.5 miles to the next water point. This is a rough gauge which you can adjust upwards (more water) if you're unsure or if there is a lot of up elevation in the trek. If you have a long hike that will take you into the heat of the day, and especially if you're hiking high altitude ridgeline trails or through the burned-off areas (that have no water sources), then camel up at your last water source and leave there carrying 4 liters. Always be conservative (take more if you're unsure), and when possible always ask the staff about water situations.

Water at Dry Camps - If a rainstorm or thunderstorm comes through while you're at a dry camp, you can safely collect water off your tarp, after first letting it run a few minutes to clear off the dirt and dust. You will still need to purify this "tarp water," however, just to be safe. Once canteens are refilled, additional "tarp water" can be used to clean yourselves with a bandanna or rinse your clothes; this is especially helpful during droughts, when personal or clothes washing at showerhouses and wells is restricted or forbidden.

Showers, A – The major staff camps MAY offer showers if there are no drought restrictions. It is also possible that showers will be offered only at camps that have individual stalls, and if so those are likely few and far between. In the past, showers were communal with time frame separations of adults and Scouts as well as male and female. Most shower-houses also offer wash troughs for rinsing clothing. If showers are available, everyone should take advantage of the opportunity – **DON'T GO GRUNGE!**; it's foolish, unhealthy, eventually quite malodorous, and often results in nasty rashes and even illnesses.

Showers, B – At most, your Crew will have 4 showers on your trek; 2 or 3 is a more likely number. **If the current (early 2021) information is correct, you may have none or only 1.** If your Crew will have no showers, or only 1, then everyone should use the antibacterial wipes in the Crew gear – **ONE wipe per person per day** (that's all we have!) Hands, Face, Armpits, and Crotch, in that order. Dispose of wipes in the trash – never in the latrines!

Showers, C (and Clothes Cleaning) – Use ONLY Camp-Suds. You MUST remind the Scouts that a LITTLE (2 or 3 drops) of CampSuds goes a very long way, and - even more importantly - that they MUST keep track of OUR bottles. If you run out, or forget our bottles, you'll have to buy more at the Trading Posts, and they're rather expensive. If the shower houses have only individual stalls, you will need to provide everyone with a bowl baggie with a squirt of CampSuds each. On clothes-cleaning, rinsing several times (no soap) is adequate, even though the clothes won't look clean (you're just trying to get the salt and food odors out of them). Even if water use is not restricted due to drought conditions, personal showers should be limited to 5 minutes/low flow at max. There are usually a large number of other Scouts and Advisors waiting for showers, so be quick and don't use all the hot water up. Even if there's not a crowd waiting to get in, however, conservation of water and fuel are worthwhile goals for all trekkers.

Note that it is **FORBIDDEN** to wash yourselves or your clothes in the streams or creeks at Philmont. However, unless there is a drought situation you can take water out of a stream and

wash well away (200 feet) from the stream. You can also collect water off the tarps during rainstorms, even if there is a drought. Avoid using water from the Cimarron River for any purpose.

Commissaries, Trading Posts, Swap/Swipe Boxes, and More....:

Commissaries - This is where you get your food and other consumables during your trek. Crews usually have 3 or 4 commissary pickups. **Remember to bring your Crew Leader's Copy with you to all Commissaries, including Baldytown.** You also need an adequate number of bear-bags to hold your food pickup (backpacks for Baldytown), **all your empty micro-Pur packets**, money, and enough help to carry everything back to your campsite. If you're going to meal-strip at the Commissary, bring scissors and a roll of electrical tape. You can leave unwanted food with the staff or in the swipe-box; the staff will usually take your Gatorade. Also remember, **you need to get more than just food** - most importantly including Micro-Pur tablets, Campsuds, toilet paper, small trash-bags, salt-and-pepper, zip-lock plastic bags, and fuel either at the Commissary or at the associated Trading Post, if you need any of those items. Always double-count all your meal items, and check it against your "Life" - once you leave, what you've got is all you get; there's no going back later and complaining that you were shorted. Most commissaries also give away fresh fruit to arriving Crews, typically apples and/or oranges. Every member of the Crew should definitely take advantage of these offers - if they don't want theirs, they can give it/them to another Crew member.

Meal Stripping at Commissaries - As discussed elsewhere, this is an important means for losing some weight and minimizing fuel use. This is very important, because Philmont now gives Crews a LOT of food (in some meals, excessive amounts, and a lot of it is just sugary junk, too). In summary: First, dump all cook-items from the breakfasts, including Oatmeal, Cream of Wheat, Hot Chocolate, and anything else requiring cooking. Replace with peel-and-eat items from the other meals, if available (if it isn't, take items from that day's lunch). Next, if the Crew has decided on water-only for their trek, dump all the drink mixes - this saves a really sizable amount of weight! If present (they may not be), strip the lunches of half the Spreadables (the Crew usually won't eat more than 1 can for 4 Scouts. You should ask the Crew first about this (I was surprised in 2007 and again in 2017 that my Crew wanted to keep all their Spreadables, and they did actually eat them). Look at all other items with a critical eye. Again, **don't carry stuff you won't eat.** [To remove or add items from meal packets, tear or cut as small a hole as possible in one corner of your food bags, trade items in and out, then twist the bag shut at the point of the hole, and use the electrical tape to wrap around the neck to re-seal the bag.] When you're done, divide up the meal packages among the Crew members in the usual way, marking initials on all packages in a round-robin rotation. This can be done back at your campsite.

Trading Posts - Most (maybe all) commissaries also have an associated Trading Post. These are where the Crew can purchase some consumable items, if needed, notably Camp-Suds, Hand Sanitizer, and Fuel (half-size cannisters only). They also (usually) have other useful replacement items, such as batteries, flashlights, Bic lighters, sunscreen, bug repellent, lip-balm, some minor medications, canteens, ponchos, etc (you shouldn't need any of these!) Finally, they (usually) have a small selection of supplemental food, typically things like Clif bars and Powerbars, also coffee. Since about 2000, they have carried only one candy, that being Toblerones. If Scouts

wish to buy bars or candy, they should restrain themselves to 1 or max 2 items. Note that 111 Crews traditionally buys everyone one package of Toblerones each, at each Trading Post.

Fuel - As you know, you are using MSR WindPros and cannisters. Each Crew will have 2 large cannisters, which is a lot of fuel but not enough if you're burning it for nothing - monitor this carefully. You can always leave any full or partially full canisters at any staff camp or swap-box after you cook your final dinner (you can't bring it home anyway).

Excess Food You Want to Keep – As you saw on the shakedown, usually there's some "good" food from many meals that didn't get eaten. Sometimes the Scouts are keeping this as a snack for later; other times they are just giving it up to anyone who wants it. This food can be saved in a separate bag for use in the breakfasts where items needing cooking were removed, or for a Crew-wide snack when everyone is hungry for something/anything.

Swap-Boxes - All unwanted meal items can also be used in trade for other items in the so-called "swap-boxes." These are cardboard or wooden boxes where all crews dump their unwanted food. Most staff camps and all commissaries have them. However, they are often a terrible mess, so if you're willing to spend the time to sort them, you can get the "pick of the litter" on the good stuff, and the staff won't care if you ignore the informal one-for-one rule on trades - that is, the "swap" box becomes a "swipe" box. At some (maybe all) camps, the swap box is always a swipe box; that is, take whatever you want. Work with the staff when doing the swap-box reorganization - ask them for empty boxes, and sort everything by general type: All desserts, all dried fruits, all drink mixes, all major meal items, etc. Toss away all the obvious trash and old food items; sometimes that's more than half of the stuff in the box. Trade in your unwanted items for what you'd like. If the items you take are dirty or sticky (and they often are), clean them off with a wet bandanna (and wash the bandanna afterwards). Wash your hands THOROUGHLY after sorting or pawing through any swap-box!

Bears, Mountain Lions, and Other Hazards:

Bears - Hopefully, everyone will have read the Bear Safety Treatise I have referred to in my various talks. **The Crew Chiefs and Advisors should work together as Bear Safety monitors during the entire trek.** Note that because the bear problem is CONSIDERABLY reduced from the 1960's and 70's, your biggest enemy is complacency - a Scout forgets a candy wrapper in his pocket overnight – and nothing happens - so obviously Bob was full of it when he was talking about bear safety. Always guard against people thinking that bear safety is a needless pain in the ass - that's what gets people mauled. It's worthwhile to note that there are more bears at Philmont today than in 1973, when I personally saw 23 bears, and had many more wandering around my campsites every night. If there is a drought, the bears will be increasingly desperate for food, and so you need to be even more careful. Don't end your trek with a mauled Scout.

Bear-bags and Critical Medications - Remember to put the first aid kit on the top of your "oops" bear bag - so you can get it easily if need be. **Anyone needing an inhaler or an Epi-Pen, make sure that's WITH HIM and NOT IN THE BEAR BAG (ditto for the second ones with the assigned adult).** These latter items are stored in a boot with a sock stuffed on top of it/them.

Smellables - On personal smellables, it is worthwhile to ask each Scout personally if he has anything, at least the first few nights. A general scream for smellables is usually semi-ignored by the Scouts, especially if they're all sitting down and yapping. Specifically ask about trash in pockets, food-stained clothing, personal meds, etc. Remember, don't blow your cool if someone forgets an item and brings it to you after we've already raised the bear bags; if you do, no-one will tell you about any similar errors for the rest of the trek – and that can be a fatal mistake.

Mountain Lions - There are allegedly many more mountain lions at Philmont the past few years, and a few have been observed stalking Rangers. This is a very serious danger - bear attacks are rare and very rarely fatal, but (although also very rare) mountain lion attacks are usually instantly fatal unless you're wearing your backpack. To my knowledge, no Scout or staffer has ever been attacked by a mountain lion at Philmont – and you certainly don't want to be the first. There is little enough in the way of protective measures - First, everyone should adhere to the buddy system, even for minor tasks. Second, buddy pairs should always **“Walk and Talk.”** To put it in negative terms: No Scout should do any exploring alone. No Scout should run any errand alone. **No Scout should ever run down a trail, especially alone.** No Scout should take a dump (in a cathole away from camp) alone. And so on. All these precautions are especially critical when you're camping at remote trail camps or hiking on trails where Crews are infrequently seen. Also, **Trust Your Instincts!** - **If your “sixth sense” is screaming, PAY ATTENTION.** If you feel like you're being watched, turn your glasses or sunglasses around on your head; they look like eyes. Also keep an eye ABOVE you (tree branches and ledges) as well as around you (mountain lions attack from above and behind their prey). Always remember, **at Philmont you're not on the top of the food chain.**

Thunderstorms - Don't walk ridgeline trails if there's thunderstorm occurring - or even in the area. Lightning can strike up to 5 miles from the actual rain-front, and most trekkers are carrying a lot of metal. If you're on a ridgeline, try to get down to a lower trail. If this is not possible, and you're going to get hit by the storm, drop your packs, and have everyone spread out through the trees off the very ridge itself, and wait it out under your ponchos or rain-gear. Your Ranger will give you more details on this issue. You can safely hike the lower valleys during a thunderstorm, but everyone should space out at least 30 feet between hikers. 30 feet is a LONG way between people, and the natural tendency is to crowd up - watch out for this. **If you have sizable hail falling, stop and hold your packs over your heads to avoid injury.**

As you know, I usually hike through rain wearing just a waterproof hat, then quickly change into dry clothes under the tarp when I arrive at camp, putting raingear on over the dry clothes. This works well, unless you're in a situation of very cold, heavy rain or hail, or all-day rain when you still have a very long way to go. In this case, you're better off stopping and putting on rain gear. However, if you try and hike a steep uphill wearing your rain-gear, you will be a soaked, sweaty mess in 10 minutes, even if it's cold - don't do this unless absolutely necessary.

Night Hikes – You may have as many as 4 or 5 night hikes. Two are actually pre-dawn: The day you go to Baldy, and the final day when you're heading to Basecamp via the Tooth of Time. The others will be for campfire programs. On the latter, bring flashlights, warm clothes, and rain gear, and **ABSOLUTELY STAY TOGETHER on the return.** The lead Scouts should keep a slow pace and warn everyone of anything hazardous on the way back to camp.

Horseplay - For what it's worth, about half of the **accidents** resulting in Scouts returning to Basecamp for treatment are a direct result of horseplay in camp. The most prominent cause is running through the cooking area, followed by unauthorized bouldering or climbing, followed by throwing rocks. [By the way, throwing rocks is illegal in the entire state of New Mexico.]

Miscellaneous:

Photos – Each Crew should have 2 cameras – and ONLY 2 cameras. Both should have new batteries installed at BaseCamp, which should easily last the whole trip. Usually the Advisors carry the cameras, but the second one can be handled by a responsible Scout. ***It Is Very Important that the Crew Photographers Carry Their Cameras Handy at All Times, and Make Serious Efforts to Document Their Treks But Not Duplicate Each Other's Pictures.*** Scouts can borrow a Crew camera anytime. Except for staged or scenery shots, always try for closeups of Scouts doing things – distant shots of people, or of activities, are generally uninteresting.

Diaries – I recommend keeping a diary. It can be written, but it's easier if it's digital (but transcribing it at home later can be a real chore). This can be written by a Scout or an adult. It's a good idea to solicit for diary points at "Roses, Thorns, and Buds", or during dinner prep.

Flashlights – Each Crew has 2 of the new Streamlights, and every Crew member has an LED headlamp. New lithium batteries should be installed in ALL electronics at Basecamp; those should last the entire trek. Note that replacement AA and AAA alkaline (not lithium) batteries are usually available in the back-country trading posts, but they may be sold out late in the season because all leftover inventory has to be returned to Basecamp and stored til the following summer. Because of their weight, we do not carry replacement AA or AAA batteries.

Baldy – There are two Baldy "To Bring" Lists in the Appendices; List A is for ascents that pass through Baldytown on the way up, while List B is for ascents that pass through Baldytown after summiting. [A few treks do not visit Baldytown on their summiting day; their commissary pickup is at a different location, or at Baldytown on a different day.]

The Last Trail Day and Return to Basecamp:

Return to Basecamp – Crews should try to get back to Basecamp as early as possible, whether coming over the Tooth or from a bus pickup point, because you have a LOT to do. Don't waste the day hanging out for hours at your last camp. Upon arrival, check back in at the Welcome Center for Homebound Tent Assignments, meal tickets, evaluation forms, and a check-out list (which has to be initialed by the staff at every listed station). If you get back early, you can think about hitting a Philmont museum if you scheduled one, or going into Cimarron on a Philmont bus (these have to be scheduled at the Welcome center, and there are limited seats!) Schedule your breakfast (Continental or regular) based on when Blue Sky is picking you up (and call Blue Sky to confirm your pickup time). Re-install batteries in radios. Start the paper chase with your check-off list. Recover your locker gear and Security gear, and your "open unsecured storage" gear at Logistics, if any. Air out your uniforms (at least hang them up in your tents). Showers,

your last set of clean clothes, Trading Post (see Below), Post Office, Phone Calls Home, Admin Center for **Photos, Patches, and Awards (keep secure!!!)** Avoid “hanging out” at the Snack Bar and Trading Post; that just absolutely kills the day. Update the water board and the trail conditions board if you maintained a log. Prep backpacks for return trip (re-pack everything tightly again). Dinner in town vs at Basecamp – a better meal than at Basecamp, but in town takes a LOT of time. It’s also more difficult when you’re taking the bus back and forth, because you’re competing with everyone else on the buses for limited eating options*. If you try to go to town for dinner, may want to ask your Rangers if they’re available and can come (at our expense). Religious services (7:00 pm) and closing campfire (8:15, I think).

[* Restaurants in Cimarron – Cimarron House of Pizza (formerly Simple Simons); outdoor under an awning. Creamee (light meals in addition to ice cream and shakes); indoor. The Porch (a deli); may be outdoor/unknown. Ask the Rangers about best places! **PRE-ORDER** at least 30 minutes in advance, including drinks, especially for the Cimarron House of Pizza!!!]

Trading Post/Memorabilia – Get bolo ties (5 different colors!), Adventure patches, and “all-of-Philmont” maps. Again, ask if it can be mailed home; much easier than carrying it all. Scouts must buy their own belts, buckles, and anything else they want. There is a LOT of stuff to purchase at the Basecamp Trading Post!

Closing Campfire – At the Logistics Pavillion – **Try to assemble at the corner closest to the Tooth of Time, again to get the closer seats at the campfire.** This is usually a very lively affair and a lot of fun – don’t skip it for another ice cream cone. Note that the Snack Bar will be wall-to-wall after the campfire – I don’t recommend it, but I’m not 16 years old anymore. I usually complete the evaluations after the closing campfire, and recommend that the Crew Chiefs do the same; obviously, both can be done earlier if there’s adequate free time.

Departure Day:

Reveille well in advance of breakfast. Don’t make this morning needlessly stressful by sleeping in (you can sleep on the bus!) Showers if desired. Full uniforms.

You have a choice of breakfasts – Continental (early) or Regular (normal time). If Blue Sky is coming early, go with the Continental breakfast (yes, it’s pretty skimpy).

Finish packup. If you can, re-pack every pack in its blue stuff sack, to save time at the airport. Form pack lines at the Welcome Center circle on the posts (again, hiking poles underneath or all bound together for shipping). Clean tents (brooms at Welcome Center), and secure the flaps. Turn in check-off list and Crew Chief and Advisor evaluation forms at the Welcome Center before departure (these can also be mailed after you get home). **EVERYONE** should hit the Welcome Center bathroom before getting on the Blue Sky bus.

If time allows, we have usually hit an “all you can eat” buffet lunch in Denver before heading to the airport. This covers for the Continental breakfast, if that’s all you had that morning. An alternate is to get to the airport quickly, and allow everyone to eat at the terminal restaurants.

On return, award ceremony at the airport. RECOVER ALL CREW GEAR IF POSSIBLE and if it's not too late, and establish an assembly time for the following night to clean, sort, and re-pack all gear. Make sure everyone knows that the clean-up session is mandatory, not just if they feel like it and have nothing better to do.

Any questions on all this, y'all know where to find me.

- Bob (2021 update of 2009, 2010, 2012, and 2014 versions)

Appendices:

Basic Camp Set Up Procedure, Outline for Crew Chiefs

Dinner Prep Reminder List

Baldy Equipment List A

Baldy Equipment List B

It is an excellent idea for you to print off and carry copies of these appendices (pick the applicable one for Baldy), along with a copy of the **Crew Gear List** (which is a separate handout due to its unusual formatting).

Basic Camp Set Up Procedure, Outline for Crew Chiefs [This assumes you've already been assigned a campsite at a staff camp, or that you've already selected a good site at a trail camp.]

Crew drops packs at the site - does not unpack yet!

Find Bear bag site(s), Firepit, and Sump - establish Bearmuda Triangle - determine where to locate the tarp (should be near or over the firepit, on level ground if possible.)

Circle up the Crew - develop plan, if necessary make assignments off the Crew duty roster. Always emphasize: Crew Duties FIRST, and completed before any personal concerns (except First Aid or Dehydration) are addressed.

Establish Tenting Area - Make sure your choice is not only outside the Bearmuda Triangle, but is also free of debris from yesterday's crew, and is "safe" with respect to the "Three W's" - Wind, Wash, and Widowmakers. [Also Wildlife if Philmont has added that fourth W.] Note that it's best not to set up tents, unless it's already late or if weather is absolutely perfect (i.e., no chance of rain - THIS IS RARE!) [The only time tents should be erected early is when there is extensive free time, and the Scouts would like to relax/sleep in their tents; also rare.] Check under nearby rocks for other Crew's trash!

Empty ALL Crew Gear and food from packs and place it on the gear tarps - assigned Scouts erect the tarp, assigned Scouts get and if necessary purify water, assigned Scouts set up the KP at the sump area, and assigned Scouts get bear bag ropes up at the cable, properly tied off. [Note: If the Crew is soon leaving the campsite for program, all food and smellables (including personal smellables) must go up in the bear bags before leaving - if so, modify the last assignment as needed.]

Assigned cooks isolate the meals for that camp, along with the trash bag, First Aid kit, and other critical items. Once sorted, all other food and non-critical smellables go up the bear bags. The set-aside items will go up in the carabiner "oops" bear bag (immediately if leaving camp), with the upcoming meal(s) and First Aid kit on top for easy access.

If upcoming program will take you out of camp, get pack covers on packs, and (if room) place under the tarp for best rain protection. If you're at a Staff Camp, you may wish to bring compacted trash to drop off at Staff Cabin (however, unless you're leaving very early it may be better to wait 'til departure, to minimize trips to the Staff Cabin.)

If no program, or when return from program, start upcoming meal prep by 5:00 pm at the latest. If there's an after dinner program, start at 4:00. Unless it's raining, non-cooking Scouts set up tents during dinner preparation, outside the Bearmuda Triangle, on level ground if possible. Again, beware of the Three/Four W's. If it's raining or threatening to rain, you may wish to wait 'til just before dark to set up tents, to keep them as dry as possible for as long as possible.

On those rare occasions that the Crew would like (and is allowed) to have a fire, set it up, and ensure it's safe (no wind!, and with adequate water nearby to put it out.)

Dinner Prep Reminder List - Only cooks in the cooking area – HARD RULE.

- Determine which dinner (supper) you're eating. In general, **eat the heaviest dinners first!**
- All cooks wash their hands (with Anti-Bacterial Wet-Ones) before starting.
- Lay out the kitchen "clean surface" mini-tarp. Lay the meal packets, bowls, spoons, bowl baggies, and needed utensils on this tarp.
- Collect all of the packages for that dinner. **OPEN EVERY PACKAGE** before starting, and remove and sort the contents. **READ THE DIRECTIONS for the dinner entrée before starting.** Figure how much water is needed. Decide if there's anything in the packages that you're NOT going to eat (if so, set them aside for re-packaging later). Saved items can be saved for other meals, or put in the swap box at the staff cabin or commissary.
- Save all package bags – keep flat and neat, hold down with a small rock. These can be used later for trash compacting or to lay dirty utensils on or in.
- Rinse the boiling pot before use.
- Set up stoves **VERY** securely on flat, stable surfaces. If this is not possible, suspend pots from branches using clotheslines. Do not create a potential meal-spill disaster! Use the wind screens even if there is no wind (they conserve fuel!)
- **Use scissors to open the dinner entree** – don't tear them open, and don't use knives!
- **Use 10-20% MORE water than is called for, and cook 25-50% LONGER than is called for.** Remember that water boils at a lower temperature at Philmont, especially at high altitude sites above 10,000 feet. If there's room in the water boiling pot, add extra water for cleanup later. If not, have fresh water ready to put in the pot once the hot water has been transferred to the insulated pot.
- Do not light the stoves until you're ready – don't waste fuel!
- Prep dinner. Remember, once you've transferred the hot water to the insulated pot, add the powder to the water with stirring, not the other way around. Also, pour all powders downwind of yourself and other cooks – don't "dust" yourselves! **NOTE THE TIME WHEN EVERYTHING HAS BEEN ADDED.** Stir every 5 minutes. Use "bowl baggies" to lay **DIRTY** utensils on. **DON'T PLACE DIRTY UTENSILS ON THE CLEAN SURFACE!**
- Give a 5 minute warning for dinner; remind everyone to clean their hands and get their canteens. Get the bowls, bowl baggies, and spoons cups out.
- Philmont Grace – **Explain the meal** – Use the serving cups to distribute correct portions - Eat together – Eat Neat!
- Collect all bowl baggies – try to keep flat and neat. Conduct cleanup (usually only spoons and utensils need cleaning). The cooks are also the KP team! Leave cookware/utensils at the sump.

Baldy Equipment List A (for ascents going through Baldytown on the way up; this allows you to leave backpacks and some items at Baldytown before summiting).

Note: It's best to pre pack everyone's daypacks, plus the backpacks you're going to take, the night beforehand - this saves a lot of time the morning of the hike, plus helps to prevent you from forgetting critical items in the rush (in the dark!) to get going. Since they'll contain smellables, **packed daypacks should be put up in 1 or 2 bear-bags overnight.**

Crew Gear:

* Backpacks, 2 or 3 for each day's worth of food you're picking up; 2 packs per day for small crews; 3 packs per day for large crews. Backpacks should also include everyone's shower stuff, clean clothes, and dirty clothes to wash at Baldytown.

- Cameras.

- **Crew Leader's Copy - Don't Forget!** - Need for the Commissary and Programs!

* Crew Money (to buy fuel, batteries, and Trading Post munchies at Baldytown).

- First Aid Kit - if stripped, emphasize foot care, Advil, Maalox, personal prescriptions.

- Food - Trail Breakfast and Trail Lunch (suggest eating Breakfast at Baldytown, lunch on the summit).

- Map and Compass (the expansion map including the Baldy area is the best choice).

- Micro-Pur tablets - note that only Baldytown has pure water available! - None at Copper Park or Aztec Mine/French Henry!); take enough tablets for 2 liters per person.

* Shower Stuff (CampSuds).

- Suntan Lotion (even if it's cold!, even if it's raining or cloudy when you start!)

- Toilet Paper, U Dig It Shovel.

- Meal-stripping scissors and electrical tape.

- Assistant Crew Chief's Backpackers Office

Personal Gear:

- Canteens - 2 Liters (refill both at Baldytown (purified water) before beginning ascent).

- Clothing I - if very cold or very windy at dawn, bring cold weather "layers."

* Clothing II - towels, clean clothes for Baldytown (for after showers, if available).

- Daypack for each Crew member (including those carrying backpacks!)

- LED Headlamps (for pre dawn hiking and Aztec Mine Tour (if doing)).

- Hat (if cold, bring your knit cap).

- Personal Money for munchies at Baldytown Commissary (if any).

- Rain Gear and Pack Covers (even if "perfect weather" to start! - it's a 14 hour day!)

- Sunglasses (if you have).

- Hiking Poles (very important if going down the Copper Park draw!)

Items marked with an * are left at Baldytown before summiting (this is because you'll be returning to Baldytown after ascent, either directly, or via French Henry).

Baldy Equipment List B (for ascents going through Black Horse or Copper Park on the way up, and returning through Baldytown after summiting, either directly or via Copper Park/French Henry; these routes require carrying stripped backpacks over the summit).

Note: It's best to pre pack everyone's daypacks, plus the backpacks you're going to take, the night beforehand - this saves a lot of time the morning of the hike, plus helps to prevent you from forgetting critical items in the rush (in the dark!) to get going. Since they'll contain smellables, **packed daypacks should be put up in 1 or 2 bear-bags overnight.**

Crew Gear:

- Backpacks, 2 or 3 for each day's worth of food you're picking up; 2 packs per day for small crews; 3 packs per day for large crews. Backpacks should also include everyone's shower stuff, clean clothes, and dirty clothes to wash at Baldytown.
- Cameras.
- **Crew Leader's Copy - Don't Forget!** - Need for the Commissary and Programs!
- Crew Money (to buy fuel, batteries, and Trading Post munchies at Baldytown).
- First Aid Kit - if stripped, emphasize foot care, Advil, Maalox, personal prescriptions.
- Food - Trail Breakfast and Trail Lunch.
- Map and Compass (the expansion map including the Baldy area is the best choice).
- Micro-Pur tablets - note that only Baldytown has pure water available! - None at Black Horse, Copper Park, or Aztec Mine/French Henry!); take enough tablets for 2 liters per person.
- Shower Stuff (CampSuds).
- Suntan Lotion (even if it's cold!, even if it's raining or cloudy when you start!)
- Toilet Paper, U Dig It Shovel.
- Meal-stripping scissors and electrical tape.
- Assistant Crew Chief's Backpackers Office.

Personal Gear:

- Canteens - 3 Liters to start (2 liters from Black Horse or Copper Park; refill to 2 liters minimum before leaving the latter camps).
- Clothing I - if very cold or very windy at dawn, bring cold weather "layers."
- Clothing II - towels, clean clothes for Baldytown (for after showers, if allowed).
- LED Headlamps (for pre-dawn hiking and Aztec Mine Tour (if doing)).
- Hat (if cold, bring your knit cap).
- Personal Money for munchies at Baldytown Commissary (if any); also postcard stamps.
- Rain Gear and Pack Covers (even if "perfect weather" to start! - it's a 14 hour day!)
- Sunglasses (if you have).
- Hiking Poles (very important if going down the Copper Park draw!)