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Local Boy Scouts Hike New Mexico Wilderness

Submitted by Dan Lyons



Back row, from left: Craig Stewart, Jack O'Melveny, Tucker Fife, Will Lyons, Brian O'Melveny, and Dan Lyons; front row: Soren Faulkner, Nicholas Kim, Griffin Ansel, Daniel (Ranger), Connor Stewart, Will Fehrstrom, and Thomas Boneysteel Photo provided

steep climbs and descents and afternoon thunderstorms.

"They may meet only one other group of Scouts on the trail in an entire day of hiking," according to Backpacker Magazine. "Even in the most crowded destinations, each Scout group camps in isolation, out of sight and sound of all other groups." The crew made what amounts to a Scouting pilgrimage with their trip to Philmont Scout Ranch, which is the Boy Scouts of America's premier high adventure camp and the largest youth camp in the world serving nearly one million participants since 1938.

A crew of teenage Scouts and their leaders went on a life-changing summer trek through the Sangre de Cristo Mountains at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, N.M. Philmont covers 214 square miles of vast wilderness with trails that climb from 6,500 feet to as high as 12,441 feet. During their trek the Scouts from Orinda's Troop 237 hiked 55 miles over six days.

The group of Scouts and their advisors carried everything they needed to survive during the trek on their backs while hiking from camp to camp. They participated in back country programs along the way including roping, vintage black powder rifle shooting, branding and milking goats. "Shooting our hats with the black powder rifles was really fun," according to Will Lyons, one of the Scouts using his hat for target practice.

The trek included a conservation project where the Scouts learned and participated in reducing and managing fuel for forest fires by cutting down and clearing dead trees. Along the trek, Scouts endured tough challenges including backpacking in bear and mountain lion territory,

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