# Philmont Training Program

# for

# Crew 241 & Troop 241 crews

**When: 3rd Sunday of each month, 5:00 – 6:30pm in the Wittenburg Room at AELC, unless there is a planned hike or offsite training. We will start promptly at 5pm each month, so please be early!!!**

**Why: This training is being offered to help develop crews to maximize their experience at Philmont. The crews that are the best prepared in their mental attitude, scout skills, physical fitness, and crew camaraderie will have the highest level of success.**

- This training program contains some hikes for all crews. This is not intended to represent all hikes done prior to Philmont.

- It is STRONGLY encouraged that each crew hike on their own as a crew several times to practice all of the skills that are taught throughout this training program. The only way you can prepare yourself to function as a crew is to backpack as a crew for both day trips, and weekend backpackers.

- The practice hikes and training are NOT to get you physically fit. That is your personal responsibility. You owe it to yourself and your crew to get in outstanding physical condition. Otherwise you will cheat yourself, and even worse, your crew. This adventure is challenging enough if you are in pristine physical condition, so don't add that as a barrier.

- A goal is to have every scout and leader of every crew earn the Leave No Trace award before going to Philmont. This will insure you are prepared, and can focus on the trek, and not instruction while on the trek.

**Special Notes:**

1. Your crew needs to determine how many training hikes or backpacking weekends are required. That will depend on your needs as to getting the job done, proper preparation, and whether or not everyone is ready for the trek physically and mentally.
2. Have a pack shakedown before every backpacker trip.
3. Review and evaluate after each hike or backpacker.
4. Match the adventure to the skill level of the crew!!! Don't bite off more than you can chew and ruin the trek. Challenge yourselves, but remember to focus on the goals of the trek, and the goals of the crew.
5. Your crew is as fast as its slowest hiker. This does not mean that person is a slow hiker. Never outpace or out walk any member of your crew. Nobody is ever left behind. Keep this in mind when putting your crews together. Faster hikers may need to slow their pace, and slower hikers may need to push their pace to find a common pace that works for the entire crew.

## *September Program Features: 5:00 – 6:30pm, Wittenburg Room*

1) It's only 9 months away! Slide show of Philmont 2008. Get a glimpse of the incredible landscape and programs that are in store for you.
   - Presented by Josh Minnich & Kyle Noss; 15 Minutes

2) Crew Breakout Sessions – Please discuss the following as a trail crew for 30 minutes. The goal is to get some idea how the three troop crews may divide out.

   a) Scouts and leaders, what are your individual goals for this trek?
   b) What are you hoping to accomplish individually, and as a crew?
   c) What is your primary reason for going on this trek?
   d) What are the individual strengths and skills you bring to your crew?
   e) What kind of hike are you looking for? Maximum adventure? See the most country? Balance country and programs? Maximize program?

3) Fitness Plan. You will be presented with a fitness plan developed by a physician exclusively for preparing for long term backpacking or mountaineering trips. You will learn why you need to <u>start preparing now</u>, and how your fitness along with your attitude will define your trip more than the trail and programs.
   - Presented by Tim Minnich; 15 Minutes

4) Trail Crew Method. You can hike as a group, but do you really know how to hike and function as a trail crew? You may know what the trail crew method is, but do you really know what the roles are? How do you know even when you have roles defined whether or not you have a disciplined or undisciplined crew? Why is the trail crew method so important and required for Philmont? How do you know when you have the right mix of scouts and adults in their respective roles?
   - Presented by Tim Minnich, Curt Fitterling, Barry Noss; 30 Minutes

Close with Philmont Grace.

*Tip: Make sure you have developed a financial plan to achieve your goal to get to Philmont! Review your gear requirements and update your Christmas List!*

Notes:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

## *October Program Feature: Day Hike on Horseshoe Trail (local)*

Purpose of this hike with a FULLY PACKED backpack is the following:

1) Introduction of Leave No Trace principles on the trail.
   a) Water conservation and utilization.
   b) Cooking via the 1 Pot meal system for each crew. Yes, we will cook a meal.
   c) Human Sumping (get ready for this one!)
   d) Selecting campsites, and what to do when you take down your tent.
   e) How to go to the bathroom in the woods. Yes, we're serious.
   f) Other LNT principles will be introduced and practiced as time allows.
   - Presented by Casey Noss, Kyle Noss, Josh Minnich, Curt Fitterling – divided into each crew to provide instruction

2) Reaction/Practice to various weather conditions you can expect at Philmont such as hail and lightning storms. Do you know what to do???
   - Presented by Casey, Kyle, Josh, and Curt. They all did this at Philmont. **NOTE: All leaders should have already taken the BSA on-line training course "Preparing for Hazardous Weather"**

3) Assess the physical fitness of the crew. All adults are responsible for the assessment.

4) Assess organization of packed gear. Evaluation of how well and accessible gear is packed. Would it stay dry?

5) Assessment of attitudes on the trail. Do you have the right scouts and leaders in your crew? Does your crew get along? What problems can you see that need to be addressed between scouts, between leaders and scouts, and between leaders?

*Tip: <u>You may need to make adjustments in crews somewhere along the line. Don't be locked in if it looks like it won't work, or can work better with some changes</u>. This might not just be scouts, this could be adults as well.*

Notes:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

## *November Program Features: 5:00 – 6:30pm, Wittenburg Room*

**Fitness Plan check-in. Who has started? Who hasn't? Each month, you will be reminded that time is of the essence to get into shape.**

1) Top 10 Ways to Fail at Philmont. What are things that you can do, and not do, that will trip you up at Philmont?
   - Presented by Josh Minnich, Kyle Noss, and Curt Fitterling; 15 Minutes

2) Attitude can make all the difference in the world. 30 minutes
   a) What is the right attitude on a long term adventure like Philmont, or other treks?
      - Led by Tim Minnich
   b) What happens when things go bad? How will your crew support you?
      - Led by Barry Noss
   c) The Dark Side…. What is it, and why is it not always so bad when it happens?
      - Led by Vince Bruno

3) Breakout Sessions – 30 Minutes
   a) Leaders (Scout Room)- What does it mean to be a trail crew advisor? How/who should be your adult trail crew advisor for your crew? What problems should you expect to encounter and be prepared to handle on the trail with scouts *and* adults? This session will help you think about and make that decision.
      - Led by Curt Fitterling, 2-time Philmont Adult Crew Advisor, and Trail Crew Advisor for 100-Mile Wilderness Venture Crew Outing.

   b) Scouts (Wittenburg Room) - How will you select your Crew Leader, navigator, medic, pacer, etc.? This session will help you evaluate each other's skills over the next 6 months so that you can determine who the best person for each job is.
      - Led by Josh Minnich & either Brendon or Tim.

Close with Philmont Grace.

*Tip: You must expect that both scouts and leaders will have bad days on a long term trek. This may be due to injury, dehydration, not feeling well, interpersonal conflict, etc. The important thing is to understand that this will happen so it will not be a big deal when it does. Just keep moving on and get the most out of your experience. Remember, the dark side will come, and just knowing that can save the day.*

Notes:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

## *December Program Features: Day Hike at Blue Marsh Lake*

**Fitness Plan check-in. Who has started? Who hasn't? Each month, you will be reminded that time is of the essence to get into shape.**

Purpose of this hike with a FULLY PACKED BACKPACK is the following:

1) Practice the Trail Crew Method. Before hiking, review the responsibilities of each role.
2) Rotate scouts through roles to give them practice as the Scout, Navigator, Crew Leader, and Pacer.
3) Make sure that they are each doing their jobs, and not just out for a hike. There will be no benefit if you do not have each person do their roles.
4) Practice Leave No Trace principles on the trail.
   a) Water conservation and utilization
   b) Cooking via the 1 Pot meal system for each crew.
   c) Human Sumping
   d) How to go to the bathroom in the woods according to Philmont guidelines.
   e) **Secure a LNT conservation project from Blue Marsh Rangers prior to taking the hike**.

*Tip: Pay special attention to each scout in the roles of scout, navigator, crew leader, etc. When they perform the roles, guide and counsel them on what they should be doing, but don't be afraid to let them struggle. Learning comes from mistakes. If they miss a trail turn, let them go the wrong way for a little. Practice navigation constantly, use the map and compass as much as possible.*

Notes:

## *January Program Features: 5:00 – 6:30pm, Wittenburg Room*

1) Breakout as a Crew: If you have not yet received your itineraries for 2009, review 2008 itineraries and begin to discuss which itineraries best meet the goals of your crew. 30 – 45 minutes. Narrow down your selection to no more than 5 itineraries.

2) Packing as a crew. Shared versus individual gear. Toothpaste, bug spray, sunscreen, etc. How can you begin packing and working together as a crew? How much redundant stuff do you carry? 15 Minutes

3) Packing as an individual. What do your clothes weigh? Do you have the right clothes? Let's look at a perfectly packed Philmont backpack for a scout (prior to crew shared gear). How to keep it dry. Put together a list of what you need. 15 Minutes

- Led by Josh Minnich

Close with Philmont Grace

*Tip: No matter how tempted you are, do not take any cotton. Also, there are many lightweight 40 degree sleeping bags that are a good deal at www.campmor.com, or www.killerdeals.com This might be a good time to lighten your load. Also, look at how to waterproof everything in your pack. It rains almost every day at Philmont!*

Notes:

## *February Program Features: 21st and 22nd*

Wilderness First Aid & CPR Certification at AELC for all Philmont Leaders.

Close with Philmont Grace

Notes:

## *March Program Features: 5:00 – 6:30pm, Wittenburg Room*

1) Navigation Training - Everyone needs to know navigation, not just the navigators. What's more, adults should be experts, not just the scouts. 1 Hour, 15 Minutes

   Training will focus on the following:

   i) Navigation using map and compass
   ii) Triangulation
   iii) Properly using magnetic declination
   iv) The Navigator/Scout partnership in the Trail Crew

   - Training presented by Erik Eddy, Crew 241 member, Philmont 2008 attendee, and National Orienteering Champion. Other crew members will support training in crew breakouts.

2) By this time, you should have potential Philmont itineraries. Breakout as crews and review the itineraries. From your prior discussion, decide which itinerary best fits your crew's goals for the trek. 15 Minutes

Close with Philmont Grace

*Tip: Recommend an additional hike this month with the individual hiking crew. Who is emerging as a crew leader? Who takes an interest in leading? Who would be a good person to develop a pace for the entire crew? Who is creating problems in the crew?*

*Evaluate and help the scouts assess their strengths and weaknesses hiking as a crew.*

*A good disciplined crew never hikes ahead or out of sight of any of their members! If this is happening, correct this.*

Notes:

## *April Program Features: Camping and Hiking at French Creek State Park -- 2nd Weekend in April (Troop Outing & Crew Outing)*

Purpose of this WEEKEND TREK with a FULLY PACKED BACKPACK is the following: Camping can occur in the group tenting site at French Creek.

1) Practice the Trail Crew Method. Before hiking, review the responsibilities of each role.
2) Focus on navigation skills. French Creek is great because there are so many criss-crossing trails and many ways to get to the same end point.
3) You will be given multiple starting and ending points. The navigators must determine the trails to follow, and work with the scout to locate all trail junctions and reach the destination.
4) Map and compass will be constantly used to verify that the proper trail is being used.
5) The crew must estimate an arrival time to each location based upon the pace of the crew, and determining distance, and topography. Practice how well you do at estimating hiking times at each point.
6) When appropriate, the scouts will also triangulate their position on the map.
7) Adult leaders must also practice these skills among themselves (separate from the scouts). If the scouts make a mistake, let them go. This will also happen at Philmont. They need to be able to realize and correct their mistake. This may mean backtracking, or taking another route. Adults, your job is not to fix all their mistakes, it is to help them learn and realize how to do this on their own.
8) Again, make sure that they are each doing their jobs, and not just out for a hike. There will be no benefit if you do not have each person do their roles.
    - Trails for each crew will be developed by Tim Minnich and Erik Eddy.
9) Practice Leave No Trace principles on the trail.
    - Water conservation and utilization
    - Cooking via the 1 Pot meal system for each crew ALL weekend, including in camp.
    - Human Sumping

*Tip: Your crew should be ready to choose their Crew Leader, Navigator, Chaplain, Pacer, Scout, and Medic. At the end of the hike, reflect on the hike and discuss these roles. The navigator should be your best navigator up to this point. Their skills can continue to be developed. The entire crew will be dependent upon this scout's ability to navigate at Philmont!!!*

Notes:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

## *May Program Features: Individual Crew Development*

This month, determine what training your crew still needs, whether it is navigation, pacing, working together, or what have you. Plan your own individual crew training.

Recommend a crew full weekend hike this month where everything should come together! If it is going to be really bad weather and rain, all the better. The crew needs to be able to function, hike, camp, and keep dry. A weekend with some rain is a great opportunity to test those skills, and also attitudes!

*Tip: Recommend an additional hike this month with the individual hiking crew. Use the roles you selected in April. Try your new Crew Leader, Navigator, Scout, Pacer, etc.*

*Evaluate and help the scouts assess their strengths and weaknesses in their roles. A good disciplined crew never hikes ahead or out of sight of any of their members! If this is happening, correct this.*

Notes:

## *June Program Features: As Scheduled By Each Crew - Critical*

1) Crew shakedown of gear
2) Hand out all crew gear among scouts
3) Review travel plans and individual documentation requirements
4) Provide parents with all relevant information

Notes:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

# The Trail Crew Method of Hiking and Backpacking

By Curt Fitterling, Associate Advisor, Crew 241 coachfitt@hotmail.com
www.bsa241.org

I was first introduced to this method on my first High Adventure Trek at Philmont in1972. As time went on, and several High Adventures later, I came to realize that it was the most efficient, practical, and safest way to get a Trail Crew from point to point together as a team.

Team is the key word here. The Trail Crew Method (TCM) utilizes everyone's resources. By using the TCM method, we find out each Crew members strengths, and put them to the best advantage for the crew.

Each member of the crew has a job. Crew Chief, Scout, Navigator, Pacers, Medic, Sweep, Adult Trail Advisor, Assistant Adult Trail Advisor. Each has a place in the hike line with a specific order. Here are some basic rules of the Trail Crew Method.

**First Rule:** YOU MUST SEE THE HIKER IN FRONT OF YOU AND THE HIKER IN BACK OF YOU AT ALL TIMES.

**Second Rule**: ANYONE, AT ANY TIME, CAN CALL A STOP IN THE HIKE IF NEEDED. Use 3 blasts of a whistle and have the crew come together to the hiker.

**Third Rule:** THE ADULT ADVISOR BRINGS UP THE REAR; HE OR SHE IS THE LAST LINE OF DEFENSE.

**Hike Lineup**

#1 The SCOUT: Forges out ahead, looks for trail markers, and reports trail conditions, is in constant communication with the Navigator and Crew Chief as needed. Must be able to read the trail and also navigate (is cross-trained as a navigator). Stops at ALL trail junctions, turns, and trouble spots. Needs to know where his crew is at all times.

#2 The NAVIGATOR: The Crew's best Map and Compass person. Knows where the Crew's location is at all times. Gives directions verbally to the Scout. Reports to the Crew Chief (is cross trained as a Scout).

#3 The PACER: The Crew will need several pacers. Depending upon the need will determine which Pacer will be in the lead (fast, moderate, ascending or descending). Placement will be the job of the crew chief. The pacer does just that, they set the speed of the pace for the crew so that everyone in front slows to their pace, and everyone behind picks up to their pace. The pacer needs to accommodate the slowest hikers and move them a little, and slow down the faster hikers.

#4 The rest of the Pacers fall in behind. Your best First Aid person will be in charge of the First Aid Equipment. This person does not necessarily do the First Aid, but must know the equipment and how it is needed. His location must be centered in the group. One of the pacers can hold the job of MEDIC.

#5 The MEDIC is responsible for checking on the well being of the crew. Reminding them to hydrate, take a snack, break when necessary, and watching out for hot spots on feet before they become problems.

#6 The SWEEP: This is your fastest hiker. This person is responsible to pick up any stragglers. Has to be able to move up and communicate to the Crew Chief as to the condition of the Crew and suggest the pace of the Crew. He is also responsible to keep in touch with and know where the Adult Advisor is at. This person can also be referred to as the Assistant Crew Chief.

#7 The CREW CHIEF. This has to be your most resourceful and best people-person scout. A natural leader. Must be able to read the crew and put the best person in charge of whatever job is called for. This person is the heart and soul of the Crew. Needs to be proficient in Outdoor Scout Craft, but does not need to be an expert in all. His key attribute is how to use his resources, and be able to make quick responses to unforeseen situations. Must have a working relationship with the Adult Crew Advisor. His position in the Hike Line is wherever he or she is needed at the time. The Crew Chief is also responsible for the overall well being and morale of the crew. This scout should have the ability to motivate and inspire other scouts to do their best and adapt to the situation at hand.

#8 The ADULT CREW ADVISOR. He or She is the last person in line. He or She is the last line of defense. Is responsible to Advise and direct the Crew through the Crew Chief, but must know when to step in when the situation calls for it. Is responsible to see that the Crew's Training matches their abilities and scope of the Adventure. Oversees the planning and preparation of the Trek selection. Has the overall responsibility of the welfare and actions of the crew. It is strongly suggested that the Adult Advisor have some type of First Aid/CPR certification, and for more rigorous treks, the American Red Cross Wilderness First Aid certification.

Note: There needs to be two deep Adult leadership on all treks or adventures. If females are part of the crew, a female adult needs to be part of the crew. If you have more than one hiking crew, each Trail Crew needs two deep leadership.

THE CREW IS A TEAM. IT HIKES, CAMPS, EATS, AND MEETS ITS GOALS AS A TEAM. PERSONAL SUCCESS COMES FROM THE SUCCESS OF THE TEAM. WHEN IT COMES TO HIGH ADVENTURE, YOUTH AND ADULT WELFARE IS DEPENDENT ON ALL MEMBERS OF THE CREW!!!