

## **2010 NEW MEXICO STATE RALLY**

### **EAGLE NEST, NEW MEXICO**

In the Sangre de Cristo mountains of northern NM, the view from our RV's was of an expansive, green valley backed by majestic 12,441' Mt. Baldy. Eagle Nest, NM is the pivotal point in the "Enchanted Circle" which encompasses Red River, Questa, Taos, Angel Fire and back to Eagle Nest. Truly "enchanted" the circle can be driven at an easy pace in less than a day.

When Holiday Ramblers entered from the East they drove through historic Cimarron, the eastern edge of the 137,500 acre Philmont Scout Ranch (largest in the world), and Cimarron Canyon carved out 40 million years ago by the trout filled Cimarron River forming the spectacular Palisade Cliffs. This is further enhanced by the growth of spruce, aspen, piñon and ponderosa trees. Descending from the summit of Eagle Nest Pass at 8,300 feet, crystal blue Eagle Nest Lake spreads out into the Moreno Valley, by which sits the town of Eagle Nest. Those who entered from the west drove from historic Taos, NM through the Taos Valley, over the Palo Flechado Pass and descended into the Moreno Valley next to Angel Fire Ski Resort. No setting could be more pacifying or beautiful for a rally. Golden Eagle RV Park sits perfectly in the center of the "Circle."

Five states (AZ, CO, NM, NV & TX) were represented at the Sangre de Cristo Roundup including two Region Directors, one past Region Director and two State Managers. Since early parking night was a freebee if you signed up by May 10<sup>th</sup>, many were in attendance to enjoy a Father's Day Social with gourmet hors d'oeuvres, prepared by our hosts Bridgette and Bruce Manaka. After opening ceremonies on the first official day, an informative introduction to the local history was presented by historian and wildlife expert, Jack Schweitzer at the newly opened Enchanted Circle Gateway Museum. This groundwork prepared us for our coming week of Northern NM exploration. In the afternoon, Frontier Mountain Man expert, Gary Bowman, in period costume demonstrated the art of camping and cooking on the frontier. Attendees learned to make fire from flint and steel and cooked a meal with satisfying results. The first day concluded with a beautiful drive to nearby Red River and dinner at Texas Red's steak house.

The second day was spent touring Cimarron Canyon en route to the town of Cimarron, the Philmont Scout Ranch, and Rayado, town and former adobe ranch of Kit Carson that sits next to the Santa Fe Trail. In a perfect dovetail with Eagle Nest history, costumed historian Henry Ostrander gave an outstanding tour and lecture, placing us in time with the period. We dined at noon where we had the opportunity at the Philmont Dining Hall to talk with Scouts, leaders and parents from around the world. Next we received an open house tour of the Philmont Villa, built by philanthropist Waite Phillips of Phillips Petroleum, that sits in the center of the main Ranch complex. Through the years this beautiful mansion has been the host to many dignitaries such as Will Rogers and Wyle Post shortly before their unfortunate crash landing in Alaska in 1935.

Ernie LeDoux and family, descendants of French fur trappers, and their friends provided an exciting roping demonstration at a Cimarron arena and corral. Sixteen-year-old Holly, one of the calf ropers, won the day capturing two calves in pro-style. Our day concluded in another historic location, the St. James Hotel. The evening was spent surrounded by ghostly cowboy occupants of the past: the Earp brothers and their wives, Buffalo Bill Cody, Jesse James, Black Jack Ketchum and many more. Eating in the barroom with a ceiling full of original bullet holes topped off the day.

A "free day" was in order allowing all to do their own thing from a potpourri of choices. The Rally's final day was spent visiting the Rocking T Bar C Ranch over-looking Black Lake, just south of Angel Fire, well known as the site for the filming of popular TV movie "Lonesome Dove." This working ranch owned by Tom and Cindy Germscheid, once belonged to the Martinez family who owned all of Moreno Valley. Their neighbor, Robert Cook, a descendant of the Martinez family, gave us a tour of the family homestead built in the 1800's, which remains much the same as it was in the beginning. The Rocking T Bar C and the ladies of Holy Angels Mission Catholic Church hosted our visit with an

open Ranch tour and fed us a superb chuck wagon lunch fit for the king of cowboys. As a show of our appreciation, we Ramblers donated a total of \$575.00 to the building fund for their church to be built in the valley.

It is necessary to point out the fantastic hospitality and home cooking we enjoyed at every breakfast and three delicious meals at the Golden Eagle RV Park. Bruce and Bridgette are the best in the west. The 2010 NM State Rally concluded with contented campers planning to return as soon as possible to this mountain wonderland.

Rossanna Hays