

4-Her's view Colorado on exchange trip

by Sally Blair
Feature Writer

For forty-five Lancaster County 4-H'ers the first two weeks in July became a learning experience they will not soon forget as they traveled to Colorado and lived with 4-H families there.

The 4-H'ers and their four chaperones stayed in five counties in southwestern Colorado: San Miguel, Dolores, Montezuma, La Plata and Archuleta. Almost all those interviewed agreed that the biggest difference between Colorado and Lancaster County is the climate. While it was often 100 degrees there, there was no humidity and therefore was much more comfortable.

The topography was also quite different. Some lived

on plains and some lived in hilly areas, but the mountains were always in view. There were many opportunities for spectacular views of the Rockies, and the 4-H'ers captured the sights on quite a lot of film.

According to Robert Herr, leader of the Rough Riders 4-H club and a chaperone for the trip, it was really an enjoyable experience for those who went. He said most adjusted quite well to living with other families and many had the opportunity to participate in activities much different from things they usually do here.

Most visited the Mesa Verde State Park and enjoyed the unique cliff dwellings constructed by the Indians. Herr said some



Cherri Gochnauer looks at some of the souvenirs she brought along home from Colorado. Turquoise Indian jewelry was a popular choice for the girls.

taught them how to do the "bump."

The food was a little different from what he was accustomed to. "There was a lot of elk and deer, and they were really big on pineapple and pinto beans."

His brother, Jim, also participated, and he said he really learned a lot because of the great differences. He said he experienced "their kind of rain." When the rain clouds gathered he wanted to

stop fishing and get in the truck, but it proceeded to rain "on and off for five minutes, and then a half hour later it rained again."

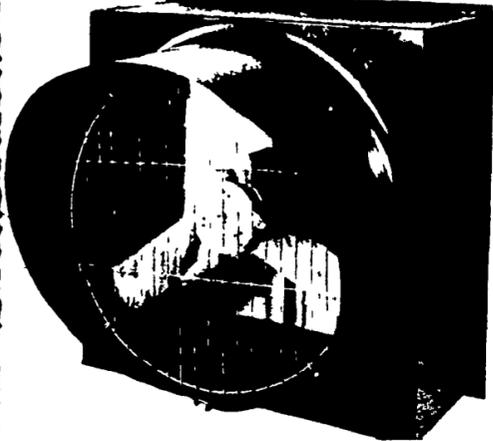
Although he liked it, Jim said he was really happy to return to Lancaster and "see the grass. I was ready to mow the lawn," he said. Jim noted that his hosts were eager to learn about Lancaster County and about the Amish.

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Ruth Ann Irwin looks over a road map as she recalls her experiences on the exchange trip.

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In reports at the 4-H County Council meeting the 4-H'ers mentioned cycling, water skiing, riding and hunting as other recreation they enjoyed while in Colorado. A highlight for all was playing in the snow at Wolf Creek Pass in the Continental Divide.

According to Herr, the southwestern part of the state is cooler and has a much shorter growing season than we are accustomed to here. He said there had been a frost in June, and many people had had to replant their gardens.

He noted that there was mostly ranching in the area, and many people work in lumber and construction industries. The area he visited is also a resort in the winter. He said it was also made clear to him that farms there are called ranches, even if there is as little as 10-15 acres of land. A big plus for Colorado, Herr said, was that the air was much cleaner, and nights were crystal clear.

Herr and Randy Glick, 18, a member of the Silver Spurs 4-H Club, both lived on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation, which was a unique experience for both of them. Herr lived with a land resource manager who worked with the Indians, and he said, "The Indians lived just like everybody else. Some were on small farms, and most had ordinary jobs. He said that the Indians had

small homes of their own for which they either paid low rent or carried mortgages with low interest rates.

Randy said that his host father did irrigation work on the Indian reservation. He said, "The Indians were everywhere, but they dressed modern just like us. Most of them had brand new pick-up trucks, and they lived in nice, modest homes like any development."

One difference he noted is in the attitudes of the people there. Distances were conceived quite differently, he said, "They think it is nothing to drive for 2-2½ hours to go somewhere. The people are also more spur of the moment. They were very nice, and don't seem to worry so much - they take things in stride."

He said the most valuable part of the trip for him was to meet "a lot of interesting people." He also thought it amusing that their style of dance is somewhat different. He said they do a "country-style jitterbug" which he learned but hasn't had a chance to really try out yet. He said the Lancastrians

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