

High Adventure

A ROYAL RANGERS MAGAZINE FOR BOYS

SUMMER 1973



CANOE COUNTRY
GO WEST, YOUNG MAN

In This Issue

Wood **3**

Canoe Country **4**

Go West Young Man
Go West **8**

Camp Stove **12**

Wetland **13**

Comedy Corner **15**

The Wandering Calf **16**

High Adventure

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PURPOSE

This quarterly magazine is de-
signed:

To provide boys with worthwhile,
enjoyable leisurely reading.

To challenge them in narrative
form to higher ideals and greater
spiritual dedication.

To perpetuate the spirit of the
Royal Rangers program through
stories, ideas, and illustrations.

WOOD

-HELP SAVE IT

By JOHN
PERRY



Wood. It's one of America's most valuable resources. Look around. It's everywhere—furniture, newspaper, magazines, building materials and even clothing.

Yet, wood is growing scarce in many areas. Ramping forest fires, carelessness and misuse are rapidly reducing our once-plentiful reserves. What can one do to correct the problem? Plenty.

Become wood conscious. Each year the average American discards 540 pounds of paper. That's a lot of paper. In Los Angeles alone, 10 million pounds are thrown away daily. How many trees are involved? 17 for each ton of newsprint. Timber!

What about recycling? Paper reclamation centers are sprouting up across the land. They need newspaper, magazines and even cardboard cartons. So, start stacking. Help turn old materials into new products. And earn cash doing it.


When writing use both sides of a notebook. That reduces waste by 50 percent. Even better, use old envelopes, scrap paper, cards, paper bags and light cardboard. Buy a small blackboard. They're handy, economical and save lots of paper. Magic slates are also cheap and fit in a book or large pocket.

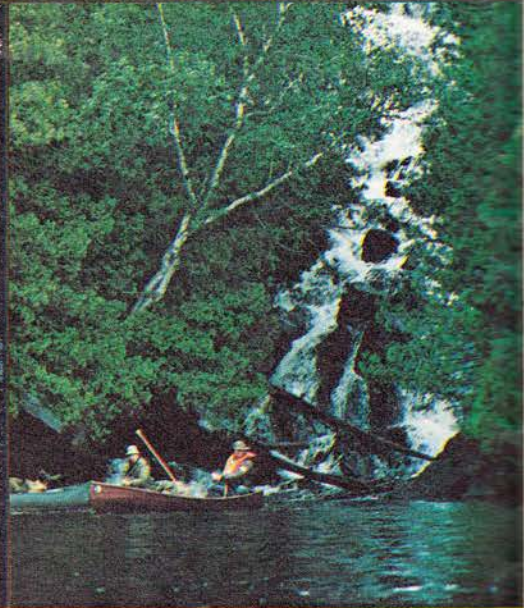
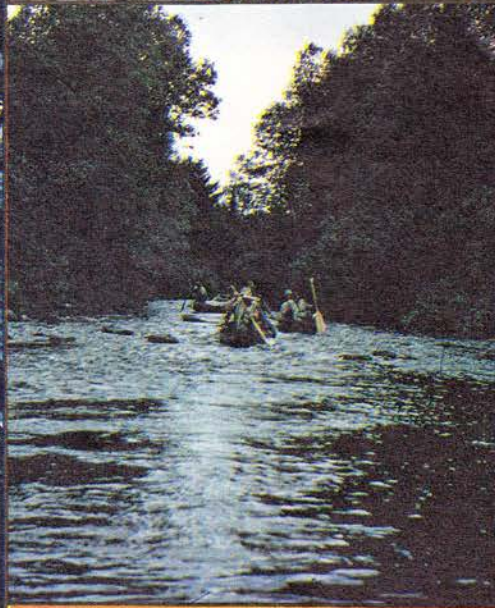
Think about magazines. Many are never read by subscribers. Others are skimmed and then thrown away. Why not share yours? It's one way of saying to a friend: "I like you." Magazines can also be given to libraries, service organizations, and hospitals. They're appreciated.

The family phone book can also serve double and triple duty. Write on old ones or use them to make papier-maché objects. They're also good coloring books for little children.

America has a terrible solid waste problem. It involves 30 million tons of paper a year, 7 million automobiles, 100 million rubber tires, 4 million tons of plastics, 48 billion cans, and 26 billion bottles. And don't forget all those "trash can" items from broken pencils to paper clips and gum wrappers. They count up.

This problem can be remedied. How? Get involved. Be an example to others. Industry hasn't caused it all. Neither has the other fellow. Paper ecology starts at home. And that's where most folks live.

America can't wait until tomorrow. It needs help today. Your kind of help. Are you ready? 



CANOE

By David Barnes

COUNTRY

Moose Lake lay quiet and shining in the early morning sun as we unloaded our gear at the canoe landing. For a moment we stood looking across the tranquil water at the hazy shoreline in the distance. The momentary silence was suddenly broken with the shout, "OK everybody, grab a canoe and let's get loaded." The group sprang into action selecting partners, loading gear, and launching the canoes.

I was part of a group of 17 men and older boys preparing for a 56-mile canoe trip into the boundary waters of Minnesota and Canada. The group was under the leadership of Minnesota District Commander Les Hughes, who was assisted by two experienced guides. Our route would take us through some of the most scenic canoe waters in America. We had spent the day before in Ely, Minnesota, buying last-minute items, and visiting several of the nationally known canoe outfitters. Now at last we were on our way—ready for adventure in a mecca for canoeists. Anticipating the excitement and fun ahead, the mood of the group was light and jovial. My canoe partner was Paul Johnson, who outweighed me by many pounds. This made the back of our canoe lower, and the front higher than the other canoes. "Hey!" someone said, "their canoe looks like a speedboat getting ready to top some waves." "Yeah," I answered, "we're geared for speed." Then someone noticed the canoe occupied by my dad and Les Hughes. My dad is 6' 3" and Les is about a foot shorter. "What do you know," someone laughed, "there goes Mutt and Jeff!" Then Paul Johnson shouted, "Les is the only guy I know who has to stand up to look over the keel of a canoe." "That's nothing," Les jokingly replied as he looked at Paul's stocky frame, "we had to make an extra wide canoe just so Paul could get in!"

After the complimentary amenities, we pulled our canoes together for a short prayer. Then we pointed the bow of our canoes up the long arm of Moose Lake.

The next hour was spent adjusting to the routine of paddling. The speed at which the canoe glided across the deep, blue water gave us an invigorating feeling of accomplishment.

Sparkling waters, tree covered small islands standing like dark-green sentinels, and rocky shore lines, met us at the turn of each bend in the chain of lakes. There was the constant feeling of vastness, solitude and kinship with nature, that you experience when you travel in a wilderness area.

The portages were a challenge. It was necessary to dock the canoes and unload them. Some of the canoers would hoist the 70-pound canoes over their heads, rest the carrying pads on their shoulders, and carry them across the strip of land to the next lake. The other men lugged the large Duluth packs with the remainder of the gear. It was always great to be back into water again. At the first portage (there was 14 in all) we climbed up over a hill beside a large waterfall. It was an experience I'll never forget!

Some of the links between the lakes were narrow strips of rapids. At some of these we would run our canoes as far through the rapids as possible, then "walk" our canoe the remainder of the way through, rather than take the longer, harder portage. We would wade in the shallow water on either side of the canoe and glide it along. The splashing, slipping, and maneuvering made it a fun time.

We usually stopped for lunch on one of the many beautiful islands that dotted the lakes. Sitting on a log, munching your lunch surrounded by some of the most beautiful lake scenery in America, is a terrific way to take a lunch break.

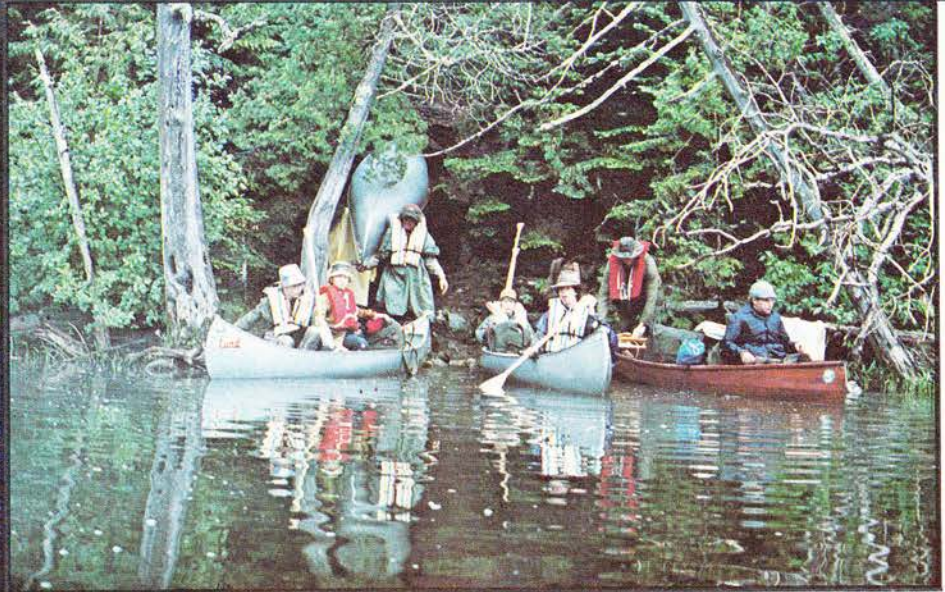
Camping on some of the many, ideal campsites along our route was an adventure in itself. The campsites were usually located on a high point of an island. After beaching the canoe and setting up camp, we put on our swim trunks and headed back to the lake for a swim. Some of the fellows broke out their fishing gear to take advantage of the excellent fishing. At the first overnight stop, my dad discovered a waterfall near the campsite. By sitting in a certain spot below the falls, the water would fall directly on your shoulders creating an effect similar to a massage. Man, it felt great on our sore shoulders and arms! The pool at the foot of the falls was churning similar to a whirlpool. What a treat after paddling for several hours!

Then for a hearty evening meal and "wow!" what an appetite! But, with plenty of good food we were soon satisfied. With a sense of satisfaction we sat back and enjoyed the breathtaking beauty of a lake-country sunset.

Of course, no Royal Ranger event is complete without a council fire in the evening. Sitting around a campfire in the heart of a wilderness with a great bunch of guys silhouetted against a dying sunset creates unforgettable memories. Naturally, there was the latest jokes, stunts, and an inspiring devotion.

Just before turning in the first evening, I stood on a point looking out across the lake glimmering in the moonlight. Distant islands stood out like dark, mystic fortresses. Then from out in the lake came the haunting, lonely cry of a loon.





Then it was "sack time." Let me assure you that you have no difficulty going to sleep on a canoe trip! We left the night to the loons and the other creatures and fell into a deep, restful sleep.

Sunrise in the wilderness lake country is another great experience. After breakfast and packup, we hit the waterways again.

This was our basic routine except for a stop at the forest service wilderness cabin. And the most interesting experience of all—a visit with Knife Lake Dorothy. Dorothy, for personal reasons, had moved to an island on Knife Lake over 40 years ago, built her own cabin and began living a solitary life. Her summer solitude was broken by an occasional wilderness canoeist. During the winter she lived alone. All her supplies were brought in by canoe or packed in on snowshoes in the winter. Because of the many canoeists who visited her during the summer, Dorothy decided to launch a business venture. She carried in root beer syrup from Ely, Minnesota, some 50 miles away. With spring water she made her own root beer. During the winter she cut blocks of ice from the lake and stored it in a dugout cellar. During the summer she cooled the root beer with this ice. Dorothy has been featured in several magazines. One article about her in the *Saturday Evening Post* was entitled, "The Loneliest Woman in America." Her exploits and ingenuity were well known throughout the area—so we were looking forward to meeting this remarkable woman. Around a bend in the lake we spotted her cabin and storage buildings. A few minutes later we were met at the landing by a gray-haired elderly lady with an exuberancy that belied her age.

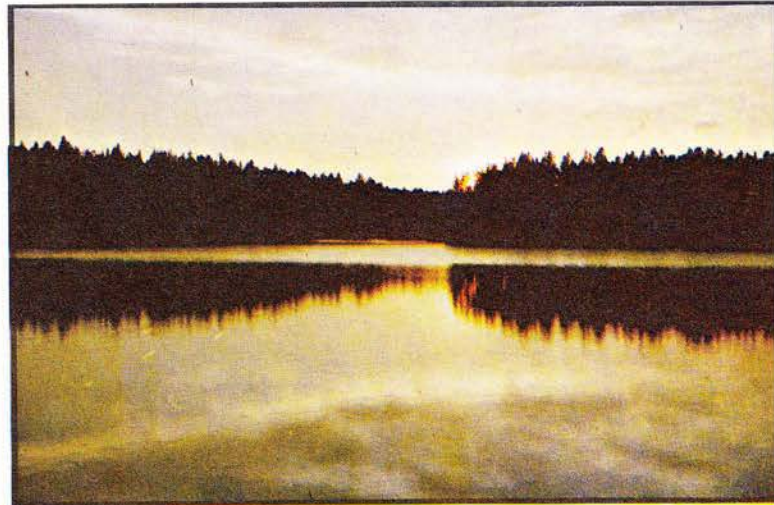
While we drank her delicious root beer and munched candy bars (she had packed these in too), she entertained us with tales about her experiences with bears and other wild creatures. She had a fence built from canoe paddles given her by different groups making the stop. We added one of ours. It was with great reluctance that we launched our canoes and left this fascinating lady of the wilderness.

On our last day we were walking our canoes through some large rapids in knee-deep water. My canoe partner, Paul Johnson stepped into a hole, slipped down and went completely under. All that was left on the surface was his black F.C.F. hat. Paul came up and sputtered, "come on in Dave, the water's fine!" I was laughing so hard at Paul that I soon lost my footing and slipped, too! Our canoe went bouncing down the rapids by itself. I was just one of many who were thoroughly soaked before we got through the rapids. We were all laughing good-naturedly. There was no real danger (we all wore life perservers) and, since it was the last day, who cared if we got soaked?!

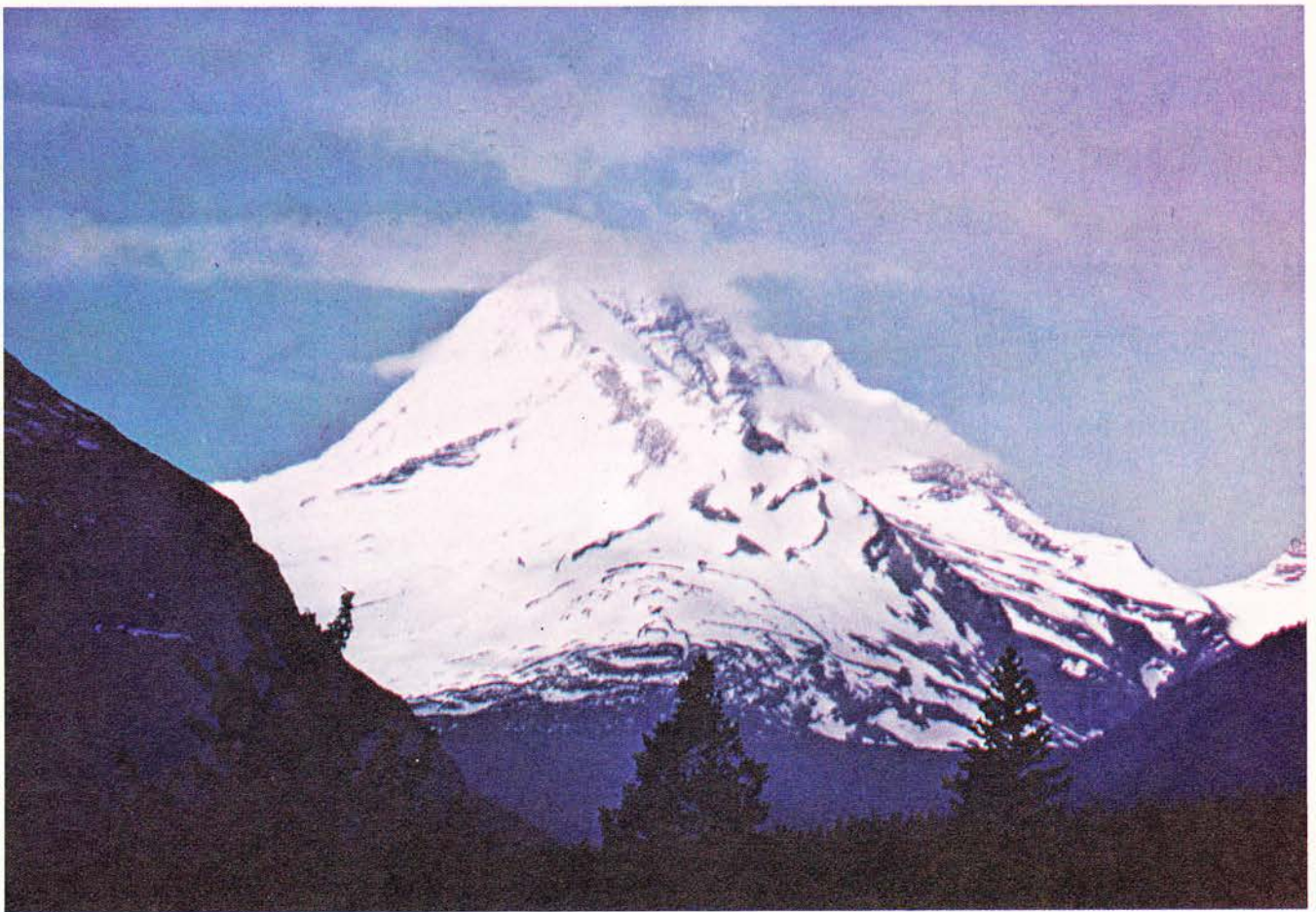
When we saw our home landing in the distance, we started racing to see who reached it first. The race turned into a water fight as we gleefully splashed each other with our paddles.

As we approached the landing, a man was standing on the shore watching us. "How far have you fellows been" he asked, "fifty-six miles," we replied. Looking at the Royal Rangers emblem on some of our shirts, he pondered, "The Royal Rangers must be a pretty rugged bunch to come in that strong after a trip that long!"

After unpacking and storing the canoes, we stood on the shore looking back toward the way we had come. My mind was a kaleidoscope of past sights and sounds. I turned to Paul and gasped, "wow, what an adventure!" "You better believe it!" Paul affirmed. The beckoning wilderness seemed to agree. *EDITOR'S NOTE:* This area has now become the route of the Royal Rangers National Canoe Expedition for leaders. It is also being utilized by the Minnesota District as the site of their canoe trail for boys. Royal Ranger groups from throughout the U.S.A. are invited to take this trip. For information write Les Hughes, 6237 Brookview Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55424. 🍁



GO
YOUNG
GO



WEST BIG MAN WEST

By CHARLES W. CLYMER



"Go west young man go west," Horace Greeley said this well over 100 years ago, and finally in the summer of 1972, the Johnny Appleseed Chapter of the Frontiersmen Camping Fraternity, followed his advice.

This "high adventure" all started in the minds of two Royal Ranger leaders: Commander Sonny Green, the Royal Ranger Aide-de-Camp for the Ohio District and Commander Ray Lambert, F.C.F. leader for the State of Ohio. Under the guidance of these two men, twenty-five boys and five men made a 5,200-mile journey through some of America's most beautiful scenery.

The trip actually began one sunny afternoon in late July. A rendezvous point had been chosen in Toledo, Ohio. As boys started to arrive, excitement mounted. Packs and equipment were shuffled and reshuffled, packed and repacked in anticipation of leaving on the highest adventure in some of their young lives. Finally all was ready, all the vehicles were packed and gased. Our leaders called us together, in a circle in the middle of a parking lot and asked God to keep His hand upon us throughout the trip.

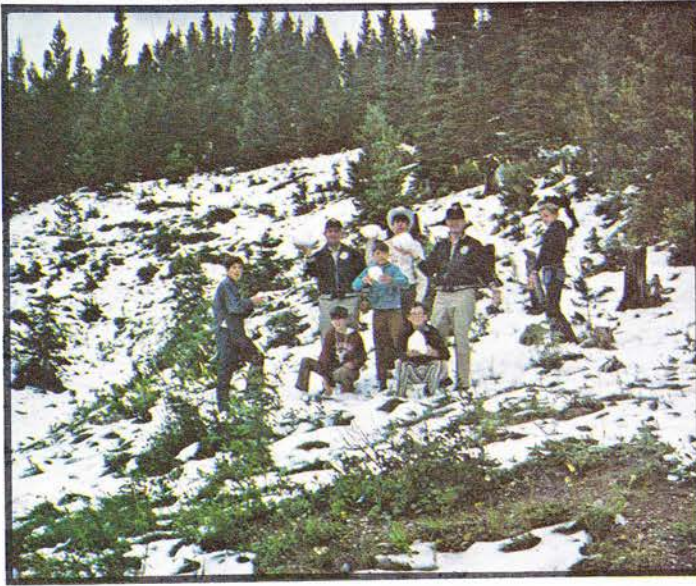
The first leg of the journey carried us nearly a full mile to the first quick service hamburger joint we could find.

Sheer bedlam seemed to reign as the twenty-five boys and five men swooped down on the poor unsuspecting restaurant. With each individual's stomach full, the long journey began with a chorus of voices and the strumming of guitars which had been brought to wile away the miles.

The caravan itself consisted of five vehicles; three cars, a pickup truck and a van. At each stop, there would be a shuffling of boys from one car to another—from the van to the truck—from the truck to the cars and any combination that the boys could think of to confuse the adult chaperons. Yet somehow miraculously, we arrived back home with the same number with which we started.

Just outside of Chicago, we drove through a driving rain and tornado which literally blew some other vehicles right off of the road. But, the hand of God, kept the vehicles rolling Westward ever Westward. Our greatest difficulty throughout this particular situation, was keeping the overly helpful heads of each Ranger from in front of the driver's eyes as they all strained to see through the piercing rain. This, if pictured by somebody outside of the van, looked like one windshield with nine noses glued to it!

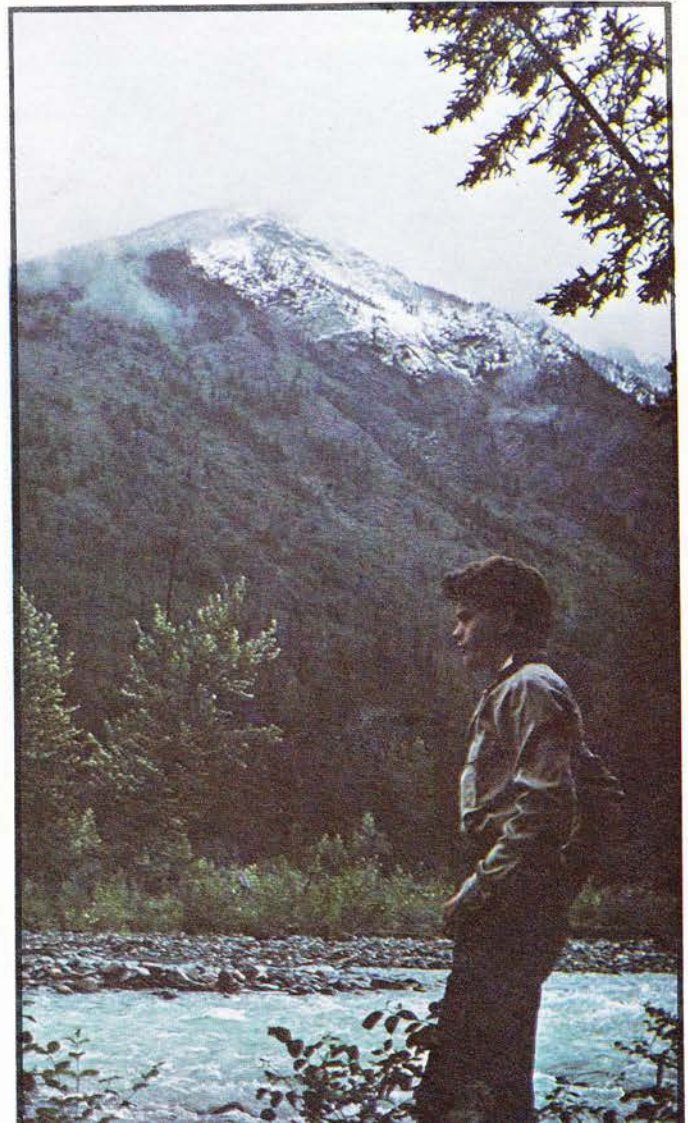
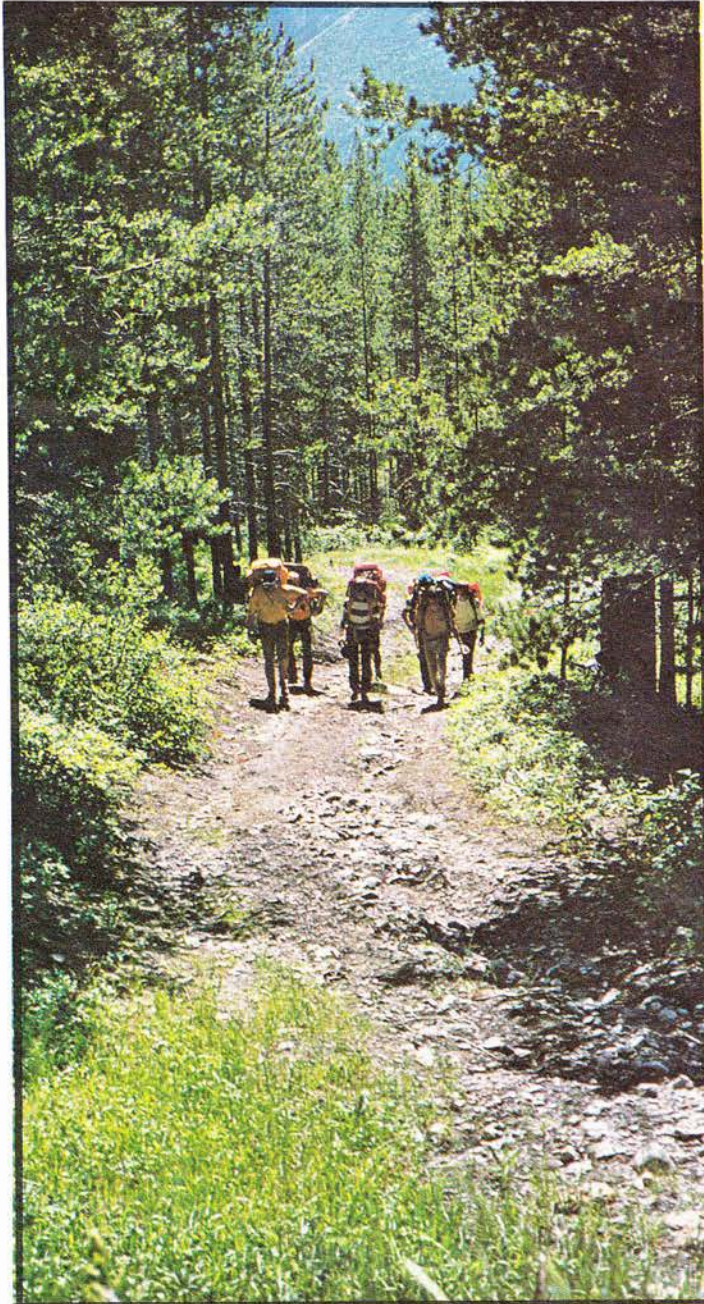
Somehow through gas stops, pit stops and countless food stops, we arrived at the first of our pre-planned campsites, Fort Lincoln, North Dakota. Luckily, Fort Lincoln, is an improved camping grounds, equipped with all the modern conveniences of home, most important of these being showers. The only drawback to the conveniences at hand, was the lack of warm water.



Finally, it came. In the early evening of the second full day of driving, we sighted the snow-capped peaks of the far Southeastern portion of Glacier National Park. It seemed that all of a sudden these towering mountains sprouted out of the horizon and climbed to 10,000 feet. Dreams of climbing the distant mountains were now in sight and the reality was on the horizon. By the time we reached the park grounds proper, things had quieted down for the night, and we, not wanting to cause any major disturbance, decided to spend the night in the vehicles.

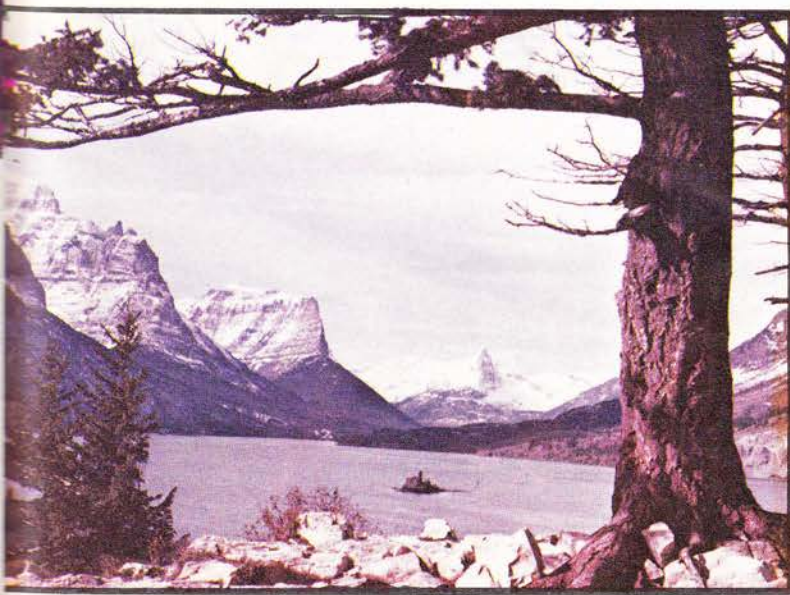
Each vehicle led by an adult supervisor had its own devotions this night. One young man who had been plagued with indecision, made a dedication to Christ. It seemed like the welcome of arrival lifted a burden from all the weary travelers, and the majesty of the mountain settings all around us funneled some of God's richest blessing right down to us renewing our strength.

Next morning, no one needed prompting to roll out of the sack and start the day. All knew that this was the day we would backpack deep into the heart of the Southern portion of what is undisputedly known as some of the most beautiful country in the United States. With imaginations flaring



about the adventures that might occur, we proceeded to the ranger station for final clearance and instructions. We were informed by the head park ranger, a forty-three-year seasoned veteran, that this was the latest summer thaw he had seen. Since the area we were to be camping in was high in the mountains, he warned of the threat of hungry bears starved by the absence of berries due to late summer thaws, raiding our camp. He also informed us that three menacing bears that had been involved in an incident in a more highly populated camping area, had been captured and released a short distance from our prospective campsite. We were told, not just warned, that under no circumstances were we to keep food of any kind, toothpaste, or even hair oil within a 200 yard radius of camp. This we learned, had stemmed from unfortunate fatalities in the past. We were cautioned of the defenses if attacked by one of the bears.

At the jumping off point, each boy worked like a percision machine equipping himself with the necessities for a backpacking trip. It was necessary for each boy to carry a portion of the food, and this they readily accepted. The training and hard work that goes into making a good Frontiersman, really paid off now.



There was wildlife all around us. Some you could see and some you felt. We were lucky enough to catch a glimpse of a pair of mountain goats, an eagle, several marmots and a few grouse. We found fresh elk tracks in numbers too large to count, but it seemed they were always just out of sight or hearing. The knowledge of their presence kept us alert to every faint sound in hopes of a glimpse of this, one of God's most graceful creatures.

We finally arrived at the Fielding campsite. We were situated on the banks of a fast rolling mountain stream with snow-capped mountains all around. A more picturesque spot would be difficult to find even in this park. It was late afternoon before the camp was set up and the counsel fire for evening devotions was laid. The horseplay took on a new high pitch seeded by the pent-up energy from the confinement of travel. A log bridge of sorts was constructed, and general overall exploration of the area took place.

It was just before dusk when we gathered around the counsel fire for an evening of fun and devotions that will be remembered for a lifetime by all present. This was truly a sight to behold, men and boys standing in groups of five or six with their arms raised to heaven praising God, and in return receiving an infilling of the Holy Spirit. This went on for hours.

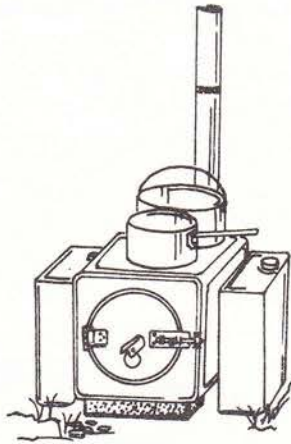
The next morning, I was a member of an expedition of exuberant boys and men who had decided to climb the highest mountain in our immediate area. This attempt is truly a high adventure story in itself. We found that scaling a mountain in late July isn't easy with the wind blowing thirty miles per hour and with it snowing and freezing.

We arrived back at camp; tired, cold, and very wet. With dry clothes and some food, camp settled down for the evening. One of the boys reported noticing some strange tracks in the sand near our food cache, but this was dismissed as just that much more of idle chatter. Little did we know this incident was to be the beginning of one of the high points on our camping trip. The next morning we were paid a visit by one of the four park naturalists who had come out to take a look at us and check to make sure that everything was still alright. We informed him that everything was fine and we were planning to break camp that day, and move on South to Yellowstone National Park. He started back up the trail and to our surprise turned around and came right back to camp. He indicated that he had something to show us that we would be interested in. We all followed him to the spot just a few yards from camp, and he knelt and showed us the paw print of a large grizzly bear which he said had been placed there a few hours before. To give you some idea of the size, it measured seven and one-half inches from heel to toe and just over three inches from toe to claw mark. By backtracking, we

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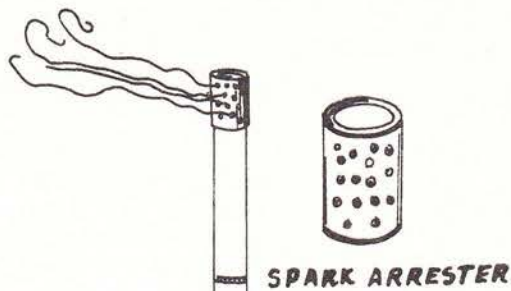
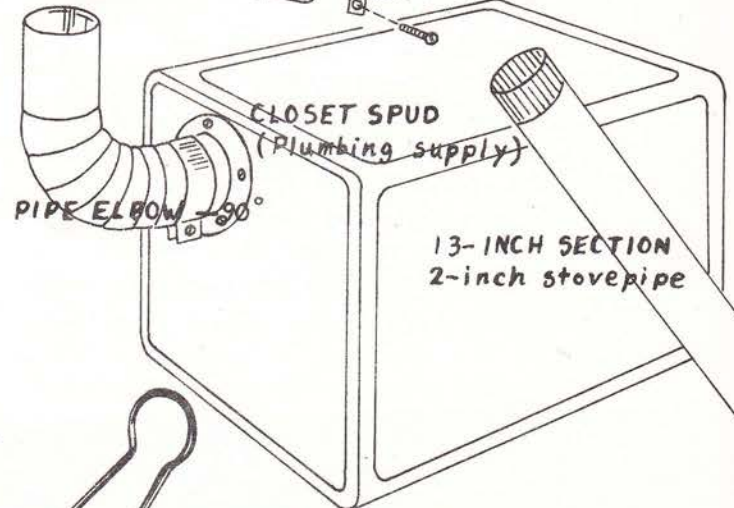
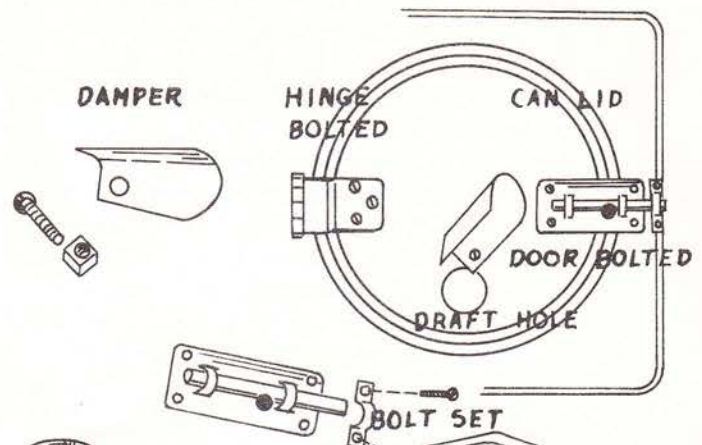
CAMP STOVE

By Elton Bell



A plus feature of this stove can be gained by placing a two-gallon can of water at each side of the stove. Much heat is given out at the sides of the stove—this is used to supply ready hot water for dishwashing immediately after each meal. If these "saddle tanks" are used, stove would set on bricks to raise the tops of the cans; otherwise a large gridle or pot would hit the side cans.

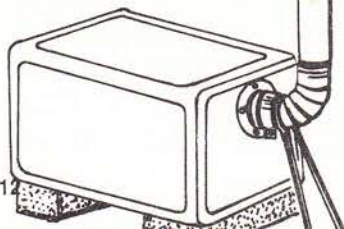
DOOR DETAILS



SPARK ARRESTER

FIVE STOVEPIPE SECTIONS

5-GALLON SQUARE CAN ROUND LID



"HAIRPIN" STOVEPIPE SUPPORT

In many areas of the nation open cooking fires are no longer permitted in the forest. The camp stove described here will make it possible for Rangers to legally cook in these areas. It also has the advantage of eliminating blackened pot bottoms. Materials needed are as follows:

1. Five-gallon square can—type with round lid, used by potato chip manufacturers, is best.
2. Closet spud—two inches in diameter.
3. Drain pipe elbow to fit closet spud.
4. Five sections of two inch smokepipe—each 13 inches long and crimped to fit end to end.
5. Heavy-gauge wire stovepipe support.
6. Spark arrester made from can with holes punched.
7. Stove door—the lid that came with the can.
8. Hinge to hold door to stove.
9. Door fastener.
10. Damper—piece of tin to cover draft hole.
11. Stove bolts and nuts.

WETLANDS

By JOHN ELLER

Put on your wading boots and roll up your trouser cuffs for we now set our sights on the animal communities in *wetlands*. These habitats are most interesting to the careful observer and exercise far greater influence in the exciting world of nature than most people realize.

All lakes are doomed to die. Sediment composed of silt, partly decayed plants and animals that once lived there gradually pile up at the bottom. Consequently, as the accumulation of dead material becomes deeper, the water above it becomes more shallow. This process, over a period of years, can slowly turn any lake or pond into a wetland.

As a pond fills in, the vegetation slowly converges on the remaining open water. Water lilies choke the water surface, while bulrushes, sedges, and other emergents reach steadily inward from the edge of the pond. As the vegetation changes and the pond becomes increasingly shallow, the animals of the habitat change also. Pond life disappears, and marsh life moves in.

What is so exciting about that? There are more than seventy million acres of swamplands in the continental United States supporting an almost unbelievable quantity and variety of wildlife; fourteen-foot alligators in the Everglades, the exceedingly rare whooping crane in Texas, countless thousands of muskrats in Iowa marshes, and millions upon millions of ducks in the prairie potholes of Minnesota and Dakotas.

Our dynamic wetlands are actually in-between stages in nature's ceaseless change and may be divided into three groups: bogs, swamps, and marshes. As we attempt to define these, it should be kept in mind that some may become dry fields one day although the process is very slow. This is often speeded up by drainage. But all have one element in common which is water.

A *bog* may be defined as wet spongy ground, frequently surrounding a body of open water, and usually developing in a relatively deep lake with poor drainage. Concentrated in the Northeastern and Great Lakes region, bogs are characterized generally by extensive *peat* deposits, floating *sedge*, or *sphagnum* mats, *heath* shrubs such as cranberry and leatherleaf, and often by the presence of *coniferous* trees such as black spruce and various cedars.

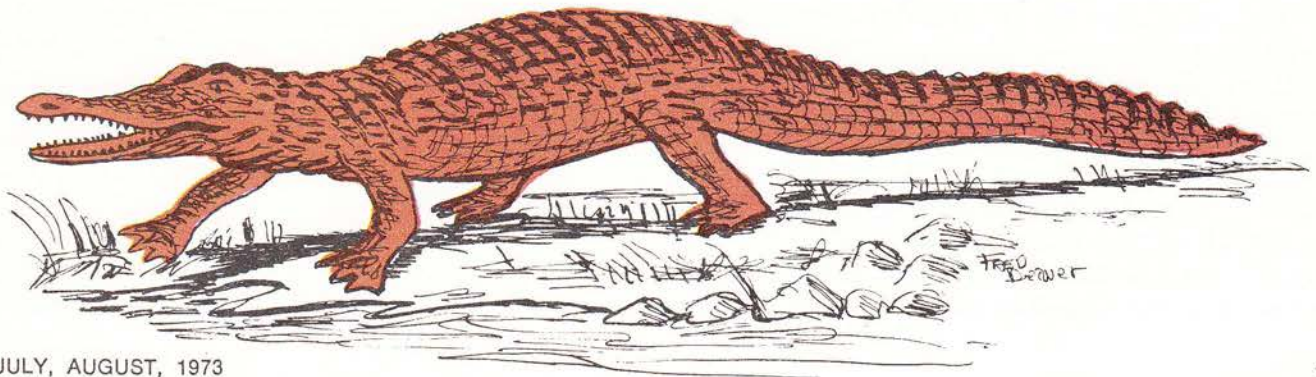
A *swamp* is wet spongy area of land saturated and intermittently covered with water. These are concentrated east of the Mississippi River and are characterized by moss, shrubs or trees, such as maples, gums, tamarack and cypresses. Swamps usually have better drainage than bogs, and sometimes succeed marshes in shallow water basins. They have also been known to develop in sluggish streams and flood plains.

In the *Mangrove* swamp, maritime trees or shrubs throw out many *prop* roots and from dense masses as in the Everglades of southern Florida and the Okefenokee swamp of southeastern Georgia and northern Florida. Such areas support deer, bobcats, and opossum on the *hummocks* (small islands in the swamp), and alligators, otters, frogs and fish in the water covered areas. The *prairies* (water overshadowed by dense growth) provide excellent living conditions for many types of aquatic life. Our spectacular waders such as heron and egrets are also supported in the Southern swamps.

A *marsh* is a treeless form of wetland, the most abundant of the three and the most widely distributed. They often develop in shallow ponds or depressions, river margins, tidal (seashore) area, and *estuaries*. Marshes may contain either fresh or salt water or a mixture of both. Prominent among the vegetation are cattails, grasses, and sedges. Northern and Western marshes support mallards, pintails, black ducks, teal and others.

The animal population of wetlands, as in any habitat, changes as the vegetation does. Until submerged aquatic plants such as pondweeds become established, certain animals such as ducks cannot live there.

Female alligators, for example, lay their eggs in a fresh water slough, preparing a mound of decaying vegetable matter and mud in which to deposit them.
(Continued on next page)



Wetlands have a constantly fluctuating environment, and whether it is a bog, swamp, or marsh, whose water may be fresh, salty, or *brackish* (part fresh and part salt), each has a distinct *ecosystem*, a unique roster of plant and animal life contributing to the community as a whole.

In reality, bogs are nature's time capsules, recording changes in the climate and landscape of the surrounding area. Botanists can study the composition of lake sediment and determine the progress of a bog for hundreds of years or more. Conditions in the layers of mire reveal a record of forgotten times.

Many bogs in the United States are covered by sphagnum moss, of which there are more than 250 different species. Often, this moss will leave a few *eyes*, or small areas of open water. This floating matter produces what is sometimes known as a *Quaking bog*. Pressure on the mat at one point will cause disturbance for some distance away.

Trees and other plants growing in sphagnum bogs usually exhibit a conspicuous zonation, with bands of different kinds of plants growing at various distances from the center. The water lily and sedge give way to water willow, pitcher plants, shrubs, and then trees.

One reason for protecting our wetlands lies in their biological productivity. Productivity in

marshes, as in any ecosystem, is its "output" in terms of living things—plants, marsh crabs, ducks, muskrats, to name a few—brought about by the interaction of the community.

About 1931 the duck population of North America reached its lowest point. Wholesale drainage of wetlands for proposed agricultural use had deprived innumerable waterfowl of effective and necessary breeding grounds. Many of these marshes had been created by damming of small streams by beaver colonies. But the beavers had been trapped out and their dams rotted with time. The result was that the water level was lowered and the marshlands decreased.

Steps were taken to restore many of these marsh areas. Lands were purchased by the federal government. Semipermanent dams were built; the marshes reappeared and the ducks multiplied. Muskrats found food and shelter where there had been none. The whole ecological structure of the habitat was brought back into proper balance.

There was once 127 million acres of wetlands in the United States. These have been reduced to about 74 million acres. What remains is disappearing at a rate of one percent each year. Our dynamic wetlands *must* be preserved! The survival of many plants, animals, and perhaps, even man himself, depends on it! 🌿

(Continued from page 11)

found this to be the strange signs in the sand near our food cache, and it circled three sides of our camping area. The ranger told of its immense strength and capabilities of its shredding large trees to get at the tasty grub worms inside. We all pictured it shredding our sleeping bags to get at the tasty people inside! The excitement of the find soon wore off, and we all went back to the sad task of breaking camp for the hike back to the vehicles.

Then to our dismay, the van wouldn't start no matter how much it was coaxed, primed or pushed. So, the van was tied to the back of the truck and towed into town. We found at the local garage that the timing gear was broken and would require a full day and a half to install a new one. This created quite a dilemma of what to do with our time, but we found that the local Plains Indian Museums and gift shops were willing to accept our time and of course, our money. We also found that God works in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform.

It was about 6:30 in the morning of the second day when things began to move around the vehicles. People got up and began to stretch and all of a sudden the cry "fire" rang out! A nearby house, occupied by nine small Indian children, was in full blaze. The Royal Rangers without hesitation jumped into action, rescuing the family from the house, administering first aid and literally carrying

a full-size car out of the range of the flames which had completely engulfed the house by this time. The fire had been started by one of the children who had poured white gas into the coal burning stove.

The garage finally repaired the van, and we were back on the road heading south towards Yellowstone.

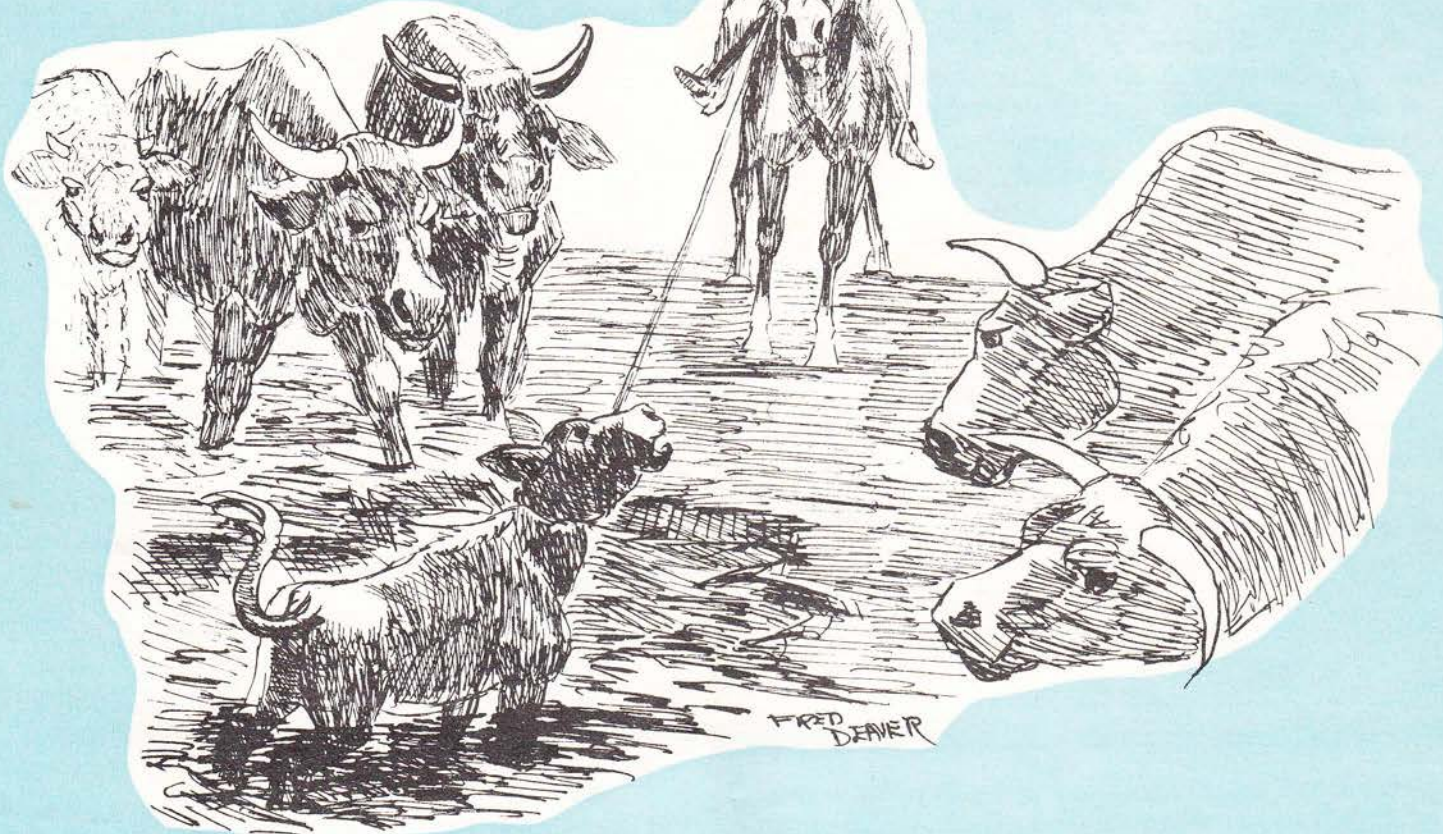
We toured Mammoth Hot Springs and then traveled deeper into the heart of the park. One of the boys spotted a herd of cow elk grazing in a marsh just off of the road and the innocent elk not expecting Rangers for dinner, were surprised to find twenty-five visitors stalking up all around them with cameras clicking wildly. Back in the vehicles and on down the road again, we came upon one of the renowned park bears begging for goodies from car to car, but the Rangers not being ones to share their rationed food, were reluctant to give up a few morsels to this playful little fellow. By now, even the orange peelings were considered food by the hungry boys. We traveled farther into the park searching out its beauty and seeing its wonders. We had arranged to spend the night in Cody, Wyoming, so we reluctantly left Yellowstone.

The next day, my particular group, decided to visit some caves which one of the pastor's sons told us about. He led us deep into the heart of one of the local mountains and we discovered all sorts of passages and chambers possibly never before visited

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THE WANDERING

CALF



It was a beautiful spring day in Texas. All the cattle on our ranch grazed peacefully on the tender new spring grass. That is, all but one. From out of the herd emerged a young white-faced Hereford calf. He wandered aimlessly through a patch of wild flowers on down to the edge of Big Sandy Creek. He stood on the creek bank for a few moments staring down at the cool clear water. Slipping the sloping bank, he started across what appeared to be a sandbar, to the water. Suddenly his feet began to sink. Instead of a sandbar, he had walked into a quicksand bog. The calf began to struggle to free himself. But the harder he fought, the deeper he sank, until he sank down to his stomach. His stocky body kept him from sinking lower. He was completely stuck. The frightened calf lifted his head and bleated a cry of distress. The mother cow heard him and rushed to the creek. The wise old cow knew in a moment what had happened. She came as close to the bog as she could, and bawled her encouragement. But there was nothing else she could do.

Some of the other cattle heard her bawling and joined her at the edge of the bog. They stood helplessly as the calf continued his cry of distress.

I too heard the bawling and rode my horse toward the creek. As I neared the scene, the cattle parted to let me through. They seemed to sense

that I could render help beyond what they could do.

I immediately dismounted and took a rope from off the saddle horn. With a carefully aimed throw, I roped the calf around the neck. I then tied the end of the rope securely around the saddle horn. Mounting the horse again, I began to slowly pull the calf out. In a few minutes I had pulled him to the safety of firm ground.

Once he was freed, the calf began to shake himself free of water and mud. The mother cow carefully inspected the calf who suddenly began to buck and romp for joy.

Remembering this experience reminds me of a great spiritual lesson. Many young men, like the little calf, have wandered—wandered away from the goodness of God. Like the little calf they too have become trapped—trapped in the “miry clay” of sin. Psalm 40:1-2. Their parents and friends may pray for them, but they cannot free them. Those bound by sin must have help beyond the human realm. They must have the help of Jesus. It’s wonderful to know that He is ready to help—that He is ready and willing to reach down and lift out of sin all who ask Him. So if you’re stuck in sin, ask Jesus to help you—He’ll set you free.