

High Adventure

A ROYAL RANGERS MAGAZINE FOR BOYS | WINTER 1985-86

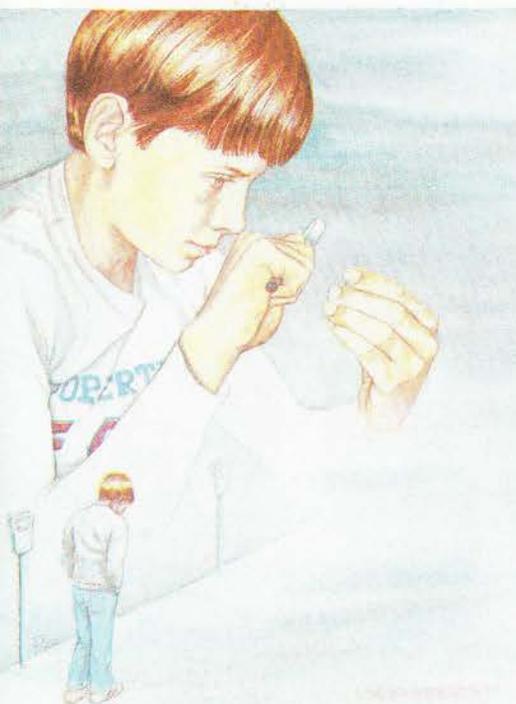
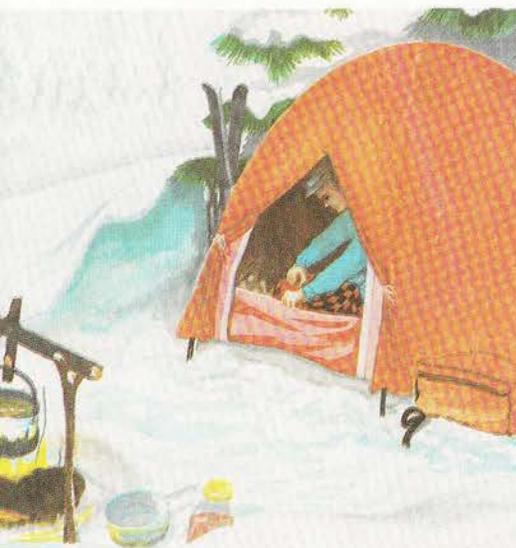


THE CHAMP
TRUE LIFE ADVENTURE
JAKE AND THE 3-LEGGED BUFFALO
TREASURES OF THE SNOW

FRED DEAYER
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High Adventure

WINTER 1985-86



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Our compass was lost,
the snow was falling harder,
and a dense fog disguised
the way out.

I began to pray,
"LORD, PLEASE HELP US
GET OUT OF HERE!"

TRUE LIFE

A D V E N T U R E

BY ZANE RUDNIK

Suddenly, the silence was shattered by the sound of snapping twigs! My heart began to pound as I anxiously anticipated the appearance of the trophy for which I longed.

In my mind, I envisioned a six-point buck stepping out of the trees into the path. My muscles tightened as I pulled my rifle to my shoulder. I expected to see a deer at any moment.

Steve and I waited. Silence.

The animal seemed to vanish into thin air. We hoped for another chance. We continued our trek up the mountain, our compasses directing the way. We knew without a doubt the deer were out there—all we had to do was find them.

The sun was almost all the way up now, but the winter air bit through my many layers of clothing. My legs began to ache from the climb. Steve was several yards in front of me, and I struggled to keep up with his hurried pace.

He was the expert and was used to rugged conditions. I got the feeling it was going to be an awfully long day.

Just then we saw the spot of brown moving through the trees. I quickly forgot the cold, my aching legs, and my hunger. My thoughts now focused on the deer in front of us. He hadn't spotted us, but was moving at a rapid pace. We began to trot in pursuit of the deer. The plan was for Steve to make a wide circle around, while I continued straight ahead. At least one of us was bound to get a good shot.

In our excitement, we barely noticed the light snow that had begun to fall. Snowfall was common this time of year, and we felt confident it would pass without incident. Soon we would find out how wrong we were.

Our chase took us down the side of the mountain and into a deep ravine. We followed the ravine for about a mile, twisting and turning through the moun-

tain slopes, until finally it came to a dead end. Our prey had gotten away from us. All we could do now was try again.

First, we had to get out of the ravine, and the only way out was to climb. We started to make the steep climb. My legs grew weak, and I had to stop and rest often. My heart beat so hard it hurt. Breathing became difficult, and the thin mountain air only made it worse.

Finally, we reached the top. I was exhausted, but the climb was over. Unfortunately, we had another problem.

"Where are we?" I asked Steve.

"I'm not sure," he answered, "but we can use our compasses to find the way."

Snow was falling harder now, the wind blowing stronger than before. The temperature was dropping quickly. A dense fog had settled over the mountains around us, and there was no way

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ►



we would be able to see our way out. We had no choice but to rely on our compasses.

Steve reached for his compass. It was gone! Somehow, it had been lost in the chase. We still had one left.

I handed Steve my compass so he could chart our course. I was anxious to get out of the wind and cold, but the look on Steve's face was not encouraging. The compass was broken. We were on our own.

We had planned to be back at camp for lunch, but our deer chase had thrown us off schedule and it was now in the middle of the afternoon. The more we walked, the hungrier we got. Our only concern was to get back to camp and to get there quickly.

I began to worry. I had read of instances where hunters had been caught in blizzards, developed hypothermia, and died. Without food or matches, and only a dwindling supply of orange drink, we were in trouble.

By now we could barely see ten feet in front of us. It was snowing harder than ever, and the fog was not lifting.

**"The compass was broken. We were on our own!"
"... a cry of pain. Steve had slipped on a snow-covered rock and banged his knee hard."**

Trudging through snow up to our knees, Steve and I grew more tired with each step. Steve had to stop several times to let me catch up with him. To be separated now would be disastrous.

Finally, we came to the edge of the mountain. We thought for sure we would be able to see where we were. There wasn't much we could see, but Steve shook his head.

"This isn't the right way," he said. "We're going to have to head back the other direction."

For the first time it occurred to me

that the "expert" wasn't quite as sure of where we were as I thought he was. I was really getting scared.

We turned around and started tromping back the direction we had just come. My fingers, in spite of my gloves, were numb from cold, and so were my feet. My body felt completely exhausted. Soon I was so tired I just wanted to lie down and go to sleep. It was then I began to pray.

"Lord, please help us get out of here. You said You'd never leave us nor forsake us, and I know You're here with us right now. Please, Lord, don't let us die up here."

I knew God had heard my prayer, but all I could feel was the bitter cold and the exhaustion in my body. Still I was determined to trust Him to the end.

Steve moved several yards ahead of me because I couldn't keep up with him. I was alone with my thoughts. My mind went back to my family at home. I thought of my mother and how she always worried about me. I hated to think what she would go through if she heard the news that I was lost in a

snowstorm in the mountains.

Suddenly, I was jolted back to reality by a cry of pain. Ahead of me, Steve had slipped on a snow-covered rock and banged his knee hard. He sat wincing in pain as I watched helplessly. He was tough and could handle the pain, but I didn't know how long he would last. He stood up and we walked on. Each step became a painful one for him, and I wondered how long he would be able to walk, even if we did find a way out soon.

Just then we came upon what appeared to be a hidden mountain trail. We had no idea where it led or even if it was a trail. But, we began to follow it.

The trail was so rocky that even walking downhill was difficult. It seemed that every other step we fell helplessly to the ground. Each time we stood up again, I thanked God one of our rifles

hadn't accidentally gone off.

We walked what seemed miles, and the injured knee continued to swell. As the darkness approached, we knew if we didn't find our camp soon we'd be stuck out there all night. I couldn't remember ever feeling as miserable as I did then. I knew the Lord was giving me the physical strength and the will to keep going.

At that moment I looked into the falling snow and prayed I would see a glimmer of hope. There before us was a road. Where it led I didn't know, but we got on it and began walking. Surely someone would come down the road and give us help.

Finally, through the blowing snow I saw what looked like the outline of a pickup truck. As we got closer it began to take shape. It was Steve's truck. I could hardly believe my eyes. We were back at our camp, which was now al-

most completely covered with snow. Only the tip of our small tent stuck out above the drifting snow, and even the truck was half covered.

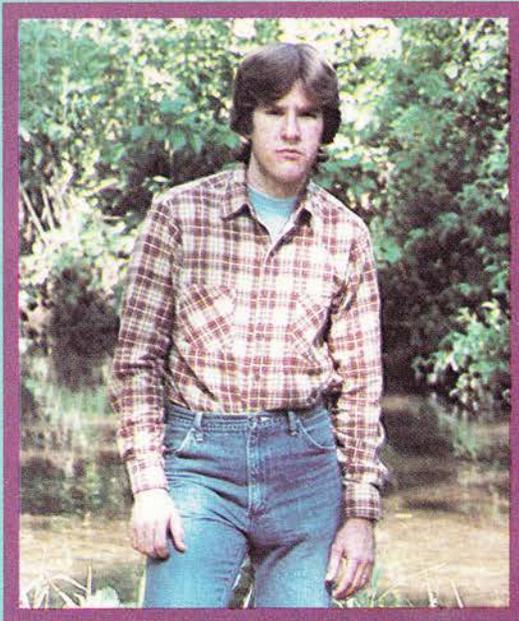
But, we were back safe, and that was all that mattered. I looked at Steve in relief.

"I'm sure glad you knew where we were," I said.

Steve returned my glance and replied, "I didn't have the slightest idea where we were and still don't."

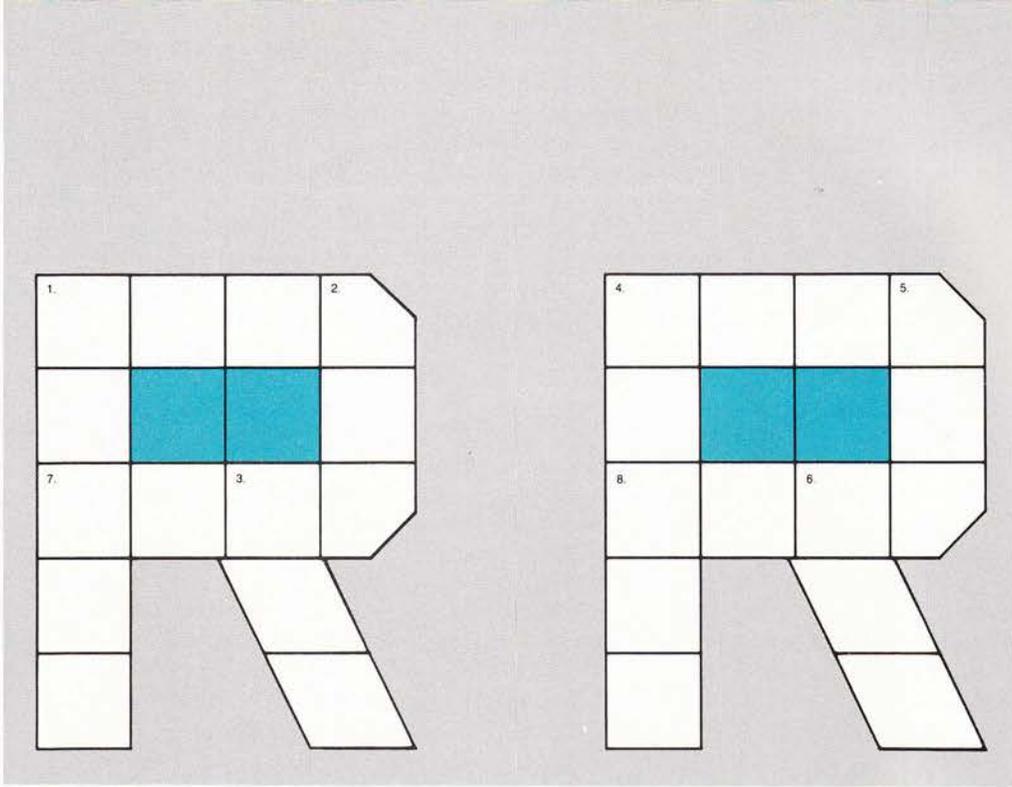
In that moment, I barely felt the freezing cold and the gnawing hunger within me. I suddenly realized it was God who had brought us out and kept us safe. I was overwhelmed by a feeling of awe and gratitude.

I searched for words to adequately express my gratefulness, but there were none. All my frozen lips could say was, "Thank You, Lord!" ★



Zane Rudnik Biography

Zane Rudnik was born and raised in Colorado. He was 13 when this true-life adventure occurred. He was a Royal Ranger in his home church, Calvary Assembly of God, Brush, Colorado. Steve Balken, Zane's hunting companion in the story, is now a Royal Rangers leader in that church. Zane said, "It was through Steve that I became a lover of the outdoors, hunting, and fishing." Zane is a junior, studying mass communications at Evangel College, Springfield, MO.



ROYAL RANGERS

CROSSWORD

PUZZLE

BY BONNIE ELLER

DOWN:

- 1. Royal Rangers Motto
- 2. A dessert
- 3. Opposite of night
- 4. A point of the Royal Rangers Code
- 5. Adam's wife
- 6. A color in the Royal Rangers Emblem

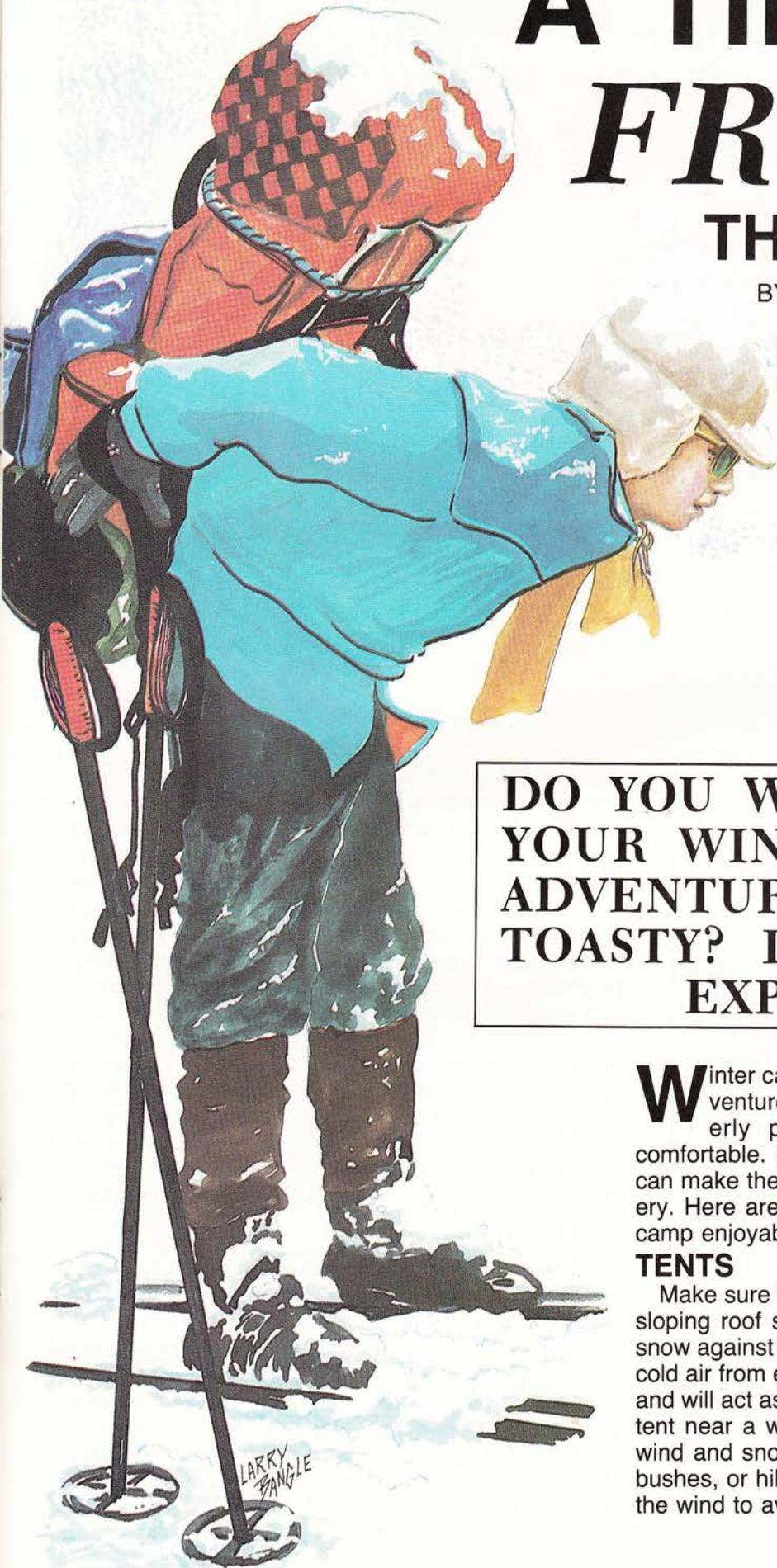
ACROSS:

- 1. We shall "_____ if we faint not"
- 4. Opposite of hate
- 7. National _____-de-Camp
- 8. Yesterday

A TIP FROM *FROSTY*

THE BEAR

BY PAUL STANEK

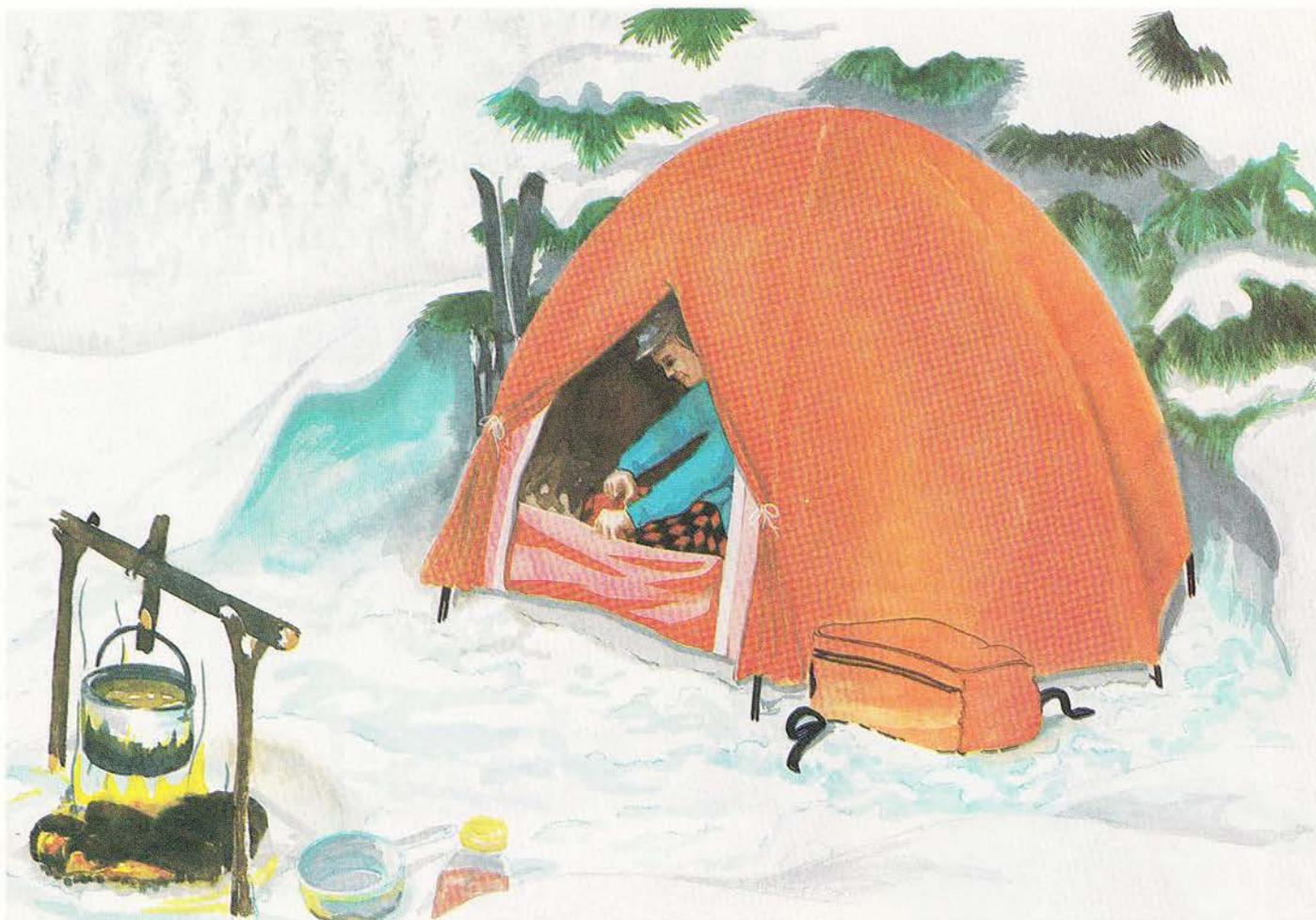


DO YOU WANT TO MAKE YOUR WINTER CAMPING ADVENTURES WARM AND TOASTY? LISTEN TO AN EXPERT . . .

Winter camping is an exciting time for High Adventures. It can be fun and enjoyable. If properly prepared, one can be warm and comfortable. Knowing the tricks of winter camping can make the difference between success and misery. Here are a few tips that will make your winter camp enjoyable and rewarding.

TENTS

Make sure that your tent is of the type with a high sloping roof so that snow will fall off readily. Bank snow against the side of your tent. This will keep the cold air from entering in from the bottom of your tent and will act as an insulator from the cold. Place your tent near a wind break so to protect yourself from wind and snow drifts. Good wind breaks are trees, bushes, or hills. Turn your tent entrance away from the wind to avoid cold chills.



FIRE

Keep tinder kindling in the tent with you in order to keep it dry. Build your fire just outside of the entrance of your tent.

SLEEP GEAR

There are a variety of different sleeping bags. A good fabric for sleeping is Dacron II or Dacron 88. The best bags are down-filled bags. The army mummy bags are inexpensive and very serviceable. For added warmth, one may add blankets to the sleeping gear. Use wool if possible. The ground bed is a very important factor. Remember that 75% of body heat is lost downward and 25% is lost upward. Make sure that you have enough insulation beneath you. A foam mattress, straw, hay, or newspaper spread out underneath the sleeping bag will help keep body temperature in. The amount of body heat contained will determine one's comfort during the night.

CLOTHES

Dress for the occasion. Wear clothes and shoes for winter adventures. Wear clothes that are loose fitting and warm. Change undergarments and socks before bedding down. Undergarments and socks, moist from the day's body perspiration, will bring the danger of chill and coldness. Dry clothes will provide

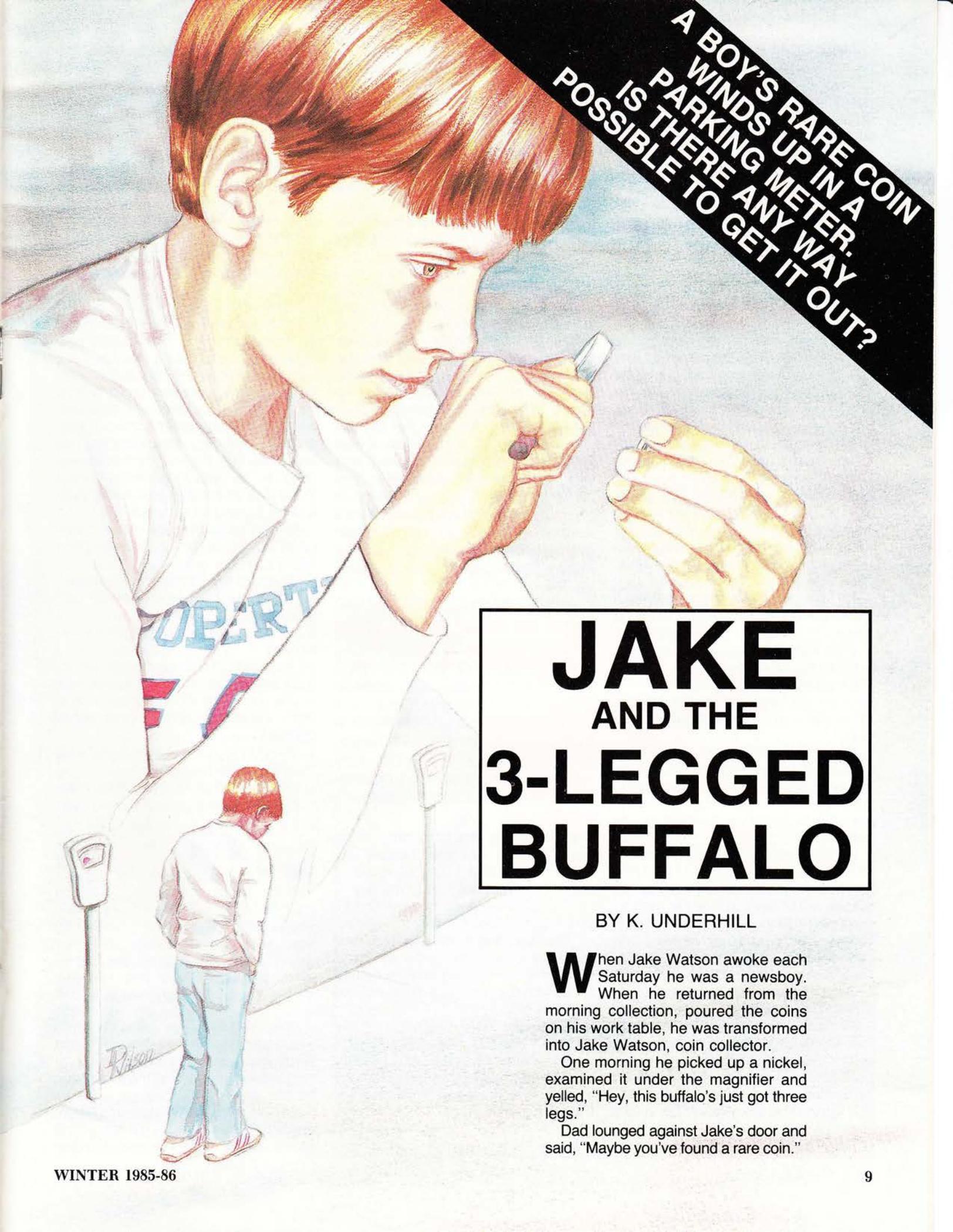
much better insulation than moist or wet clothes. The amount of clothes will determine comfort. Too little clothing will expose the body to the icy climate. Too much clothing can cause sweating and a drop in body temperature. Dress according to the weather as well as to the type of physical activities. Dress and undress in your sleeping bag. You will be much warmer and more comfortable for it. Put your boots or shoes in the bottom of your sleeping bag. Your foot gear will neither freeze nor be unbearable in the morning. Wear proper gloves that will repel moisture and contain body heat. Gloves should fit but should not be too tight. Make sure that the glove is long enough to protect the hand and wrist. A hat is very important. An uncovered head may cause faster reaction to the cold and elements. A hat, hood, or ear muffs will protect the head and give added comfort.

CANTEEN

Protect your canteen and water supply from freezing. Keep it near your body or near the campfire. Remember not to fill your canteen completely full. Water expands, and the freezing water could burst the canteen.

These are but a few suggestions to help make your winter camp fruitful. Just remember to keep dry, keep warm, and follow the principles of Ranger Camping.

Now let's go camping! ★



A BOY'S RARE COIN
WINDS UP IN A
PARKING METER.
IS THERE ANY WAY
POSSIBLE TO GET IT OUT?

JAKE AND THE 3-LEGGED BUFFALO

BY K. UNDERHILL

When Jake Watson awoke each Saturday he was a newsboy. When he returned from the morning collection, poured the coins on his work table, he was transformed into Jake Watson, coin collector.

One morning he picked up a nickel, examined it under the magnifier and yelled, "Hey, this buffalo's just got three legs."

Dad lounged against Jake's door and said, "Maybe you've found a rare coin."

Jake studied it. "This is a 1937D. I have a regular of that date so I'll have to keep this one separate." He consulted his coin catalogue. "Well, what do you know! This little five cent piece could be worth \$250. Oh boy! That's a new bike. Maybe a Moped."

"Whoa now," cautioned his father. "Better have an expert look at it. I've heard that coins can be altered." He, too, squinted through the magnifier. "But that sure looks like the real thing. They may be able to tell you at the hobby shop."

Jake's book confirmed his father's caution about three-legged buffalos. It read, "A leg can be shaved quicker than you can say Denver Mint!"

Monday morning he wrapped the coin in a soft cloth and added it to the usual jumble of possessions in his pocket. He carried it all day, taking it out at lunch to show some friends.

After school as he passed the Medical Building, a car screeched to a stop. One of his newspaper customers, Mr. Dave Jenson, jumped out and gently lifted his little daughter in his arms. Jake could see blood oozing through the towel wrapped around one knee.

"An accident," Mr. Jenson told Jake. "She may have to have stitches."

"I'll take care of your parking meter," Jake called to the worried father as he carried his daughter to the elevator.

Jake fumbled through the mess in his pockets as he hunted for change. Then he remembered that extra chocolate milk at lunch. *Oh no*, he thought. *Why, that leaves nothing but the buffalo.*

His knees grew weak. *I can't!* he thought. *It isn't reasonable. Mr. Jenson surely would understand. He couldn't expect a fellow to put a rare coin, worth goodness knows how much, in a parking meter.*

He jammed his fists in his pockets and started down the street. Three meters away he was struck by the fact that he would have to face Mr. Jenson next Saturday. Besides, in Royal Rangers last Wednesday night he had raised his hand to ask God to help him be of service to somebody.

Could he borrow from someone? He looked for a familiar face. *All strangers.*

Perhaps in the excitement he could just sort of forget the meter? He could just hear Mr. Jenson in court. "But Jake promised he'd put a coin in that meter. I was sure that I could depend on him. But I guess kids are all alike. Their word means nothing anymore."

Jake clamped his teeth down hard

on that one. His word! He spun around, ran back to the meter and with shaking hands he pushed the nickel into the meter with his thumb and watched the arrow spring up to one hour.

After learning that Tammy Jenson would be fine Jake ran home. He arrived all out of breath, ignored the snack his mother had for him, and slammed the door to his room.

She let his temper wear off until his father came home. Then, together, they knocked on the door.

"Can we help?" they asked.

He invited them in and told them the whole story. Mother began removing the old Star Wars spread from his bed. "This is pretty kiddish for you, I've been thinking. I picked up a new one the other day." It was red and white plaid. Real sharp! "There are curtains to match. I'll get those up tomorrow."

As they went down the hall to supper, Dad laid his arm across Jake's shoulders. "Boy, you've grown a foot taller." Jake found he was hungrier than he thought.

Next morning as he went down Main Street, he saw a policeman opening and emptying parking meters. He raced up to the officer.

"Good morning! When do you empty the meters in front of the Medical Building on South Elm?"

The officer scratched his head, thought a little, and asked, "Why?"

"Well, I've got a three-legged buffalo in there I'd like to get out."

"You crazy or something, Boy? What's a three-legged buffalo?"

After hearing the story, the officer said, "I'm sorry, but when I empty that meter I can't give you your nickel. I have no right. It belongs to the city."

"But, what happens to these coins? Where do you take them?" asked Jake.

"After each day's collection the coins are taken to the bank, emptied into the automatic coin counter and the money is deposited to the city's account," replied the man.

"But, when do you empty the meters on South Elm?" Jack persisted.

"Friday afternoon. But I can't see that it helps you," answered the officer.

"Neither can I but I'll think of something. I've got 'til Friday." Jake's spirits lifted and he began to feel alive.

As he turned down South Elm, he

counted five meters, then gave the sixth a friendly pat. "Hi-ya, Pal. Take it easy in there."

School that day was a real chore. Jake couldn't answer a single question thrown his way. Not until afternoon class in government did an idea come to him.

When Mrs. Grant asked him the function of the mayor, Jake said loudly, "The mayor! That's it. The mayor!"

"Something on your mind, Jake?"

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Grant. I don't know what the mayor does but I'm sure going to find out."

"Very well. Report to us tomorrow."

"Yes, Ma'am!" He had been given an idea, a dim one, but it had possibilities.

In the last period study hall Jake hurriedly studied about local government. He found that the mayor's office is usually in a building where the city government offices are located. He imagined that the mayor had something to do with taxpayers' money. Yesterday he had become a taxpayer. Even if it was just a nickel.

At the City Building the mayor's secretary smiled at him and asked, "May I help you?"

"I need to see the mayor," Jake said.

"Oh? May I tell him what about?" she asked.

"A three-legged buffalo," he answered.

"A what?" She flipped a box on her desk and spoke into it. "A young man to see you." She looked uncertainly at Jake. "He says it's about a three-legged buffalo."

"Send that young man in here," said the voice from the box.

Mayor Fredericks and Jake introduced themselves.

"Now, Jake, I've always wanted to see a three-legged buffalo nickel. Do you have one?"

"Sir, do you mean you're a collector, too? Everyone thinks I'm crazy when I mention such a thing. I'm glad to find someone who knows what I'm talking about."

"Yes, indeed, I'm a collector. And I was a lot older than you before I knew there was such a thing as a three-legged buffalo. Now, tell me about your trouble, Jake."

After hearing the whole story, Mayor Fredericks said, "Jake, I'll tell you a secret. All the years I've been in office

I've been itching to go through those parking meter coins. You and I both know that every day more of our regular coins are going on the rare coin list. Many people aren't aware of this or are not interested in collecting. Wouldn't it be great to go through those coins, pick out what our collections need and replace them with regular coins out of our own pockets?"

"Isn't there some way?" Jake asked. "I just have to get that nickel back. That meter is emptied Friday afternoon. That's three days from now so we haven't much time."

"No, we haven't," Mayor Fredericks admitted. "Let's see how much time we really have."

He picked up his phone and dialed. "Let me have Max Martin, please." To Jake he said, "Max is head cashier at the bank. Hello, Max. This is Fredericks at the City Building. Say, when do you regularly process the Friday meter collection? Oh, early Friday afternoon. But do you ever get busy and not process them until just before closing time? Oh, fine!" He looked at Jake with a smile. He continued his telephone conversation. "Could you keep these coins separate for a while after they are counted and not add them to your coin bins until four o'clock? I'll talk to you later about it, but there's a young man here with quite a problem and I'd like to help him if we can."

Turning to Jake he asked, "Now, do you know of any other fellows that are coin collectors?"

"Several."

"You see, if we can work this out, we could provide a steady source of unpicked-over coins for coin club members. I know the bank officials have been a little concerned about the lack of savings accounts for the really young businessmen in our town, like you. They would like to get acquainted with you fellows and show you that the banking system of this country is a service to you. Now, if we could form such a club, there is a nice room at the bank where we could meet on Fridays. If the bank could delay depositing those coins, the club could go through them and keep the ones they want for their collections, paying them back for any coins collected. You could find your buffalo and the members would get to feeling at home in the bank. Do you suppose the fellows will allow me to stick around and watch?"

"Undoubtedly!" Jake assured him. "I'm going home and getting on the phone."

"Keep in touch, now. Call me tomorrow about this time," challenged the mayor.

"You bet! And to think I was scared to come down here. Thanks a lot, Mr. Fredericks."

The following afternoon Jake learned from the mayor that the first meeting would be Friday at four. Jake phoned other collectors and told them to come equipped with coin folders and magnifiers.

Just before drifting off to sleep that night a horrible thought made Jake sit upright in bed. Just how many coins were collected in those meters in a week's time? How would he find his buffalo in that mountain of money? How could he know his buffalo? He fell back with a groan. Oh well! Two days ago he had given up hope. Now, things were going along better than he had thought possible. He'd wait and see how things worked out.

At the bank, Friday after school, Jake found six friends, coin folders under their arms, waiting outside the bank. He herded them inside and found Mayor Fredericks waiting for them.

The mayor introduced them to Mr. Martin, who took them back to a room with a long shiny table and leather chairs. Mr. Martin said he was glad to meet them, that the bank felt this room should be used for something besides board meetings.

He called to a cashier. A clerk wheeled in a table with a deep box about two feet square. Jake groaned when he looked in.

But Mr. Martin set a small box down in front of Jake. Jake is looking for one certain coin that he sacrificed in

order to help someone last Monday. We think it is in this group of coins."

Jake dumped them on the table and spread them out.

He applied his magnifier, and there it was safe and sound. For a second time in all this week his knees were weak, but this time in relief.

"Let's see, Jake," said Mayor Fredericks. He picked up the coin carefully by the edges. "Yes, sir. That's a real one. Finding one of those happens just once in a lifetime."

There was one little thing that bothered Jake.

"Mayor Fredericks, I can't figure out how you knew which meter it was in."

"Why, Mr. Jenson showed me," explained the mayor.

"You mean he made a special trip to show you which parking meter?"

"Well, we didn't know how else to do it," said the mayor.

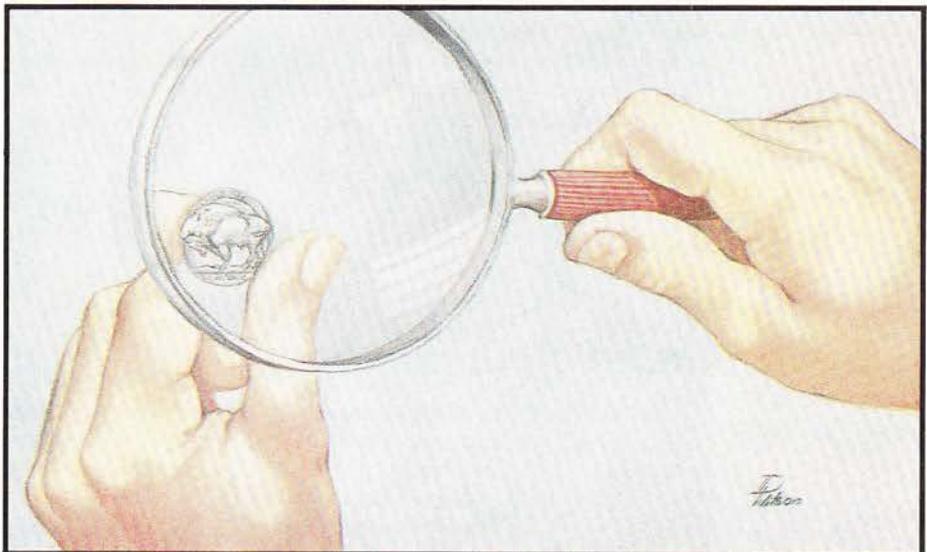
"I didn't expect you to go to all that trouble. It might have taken all day, but I guess I would have found it. Maybe." He eyed that box of coins.

"Jake," said Mr. Fredericks, "we think a good citizen deserves a little help. Now you've got your buffalo nickel and we've got our coin club, so everything has worked out fine."

The following Saturday the little Jenson girl met Jake at collection time.

"I can walk around now, Jake," she said. "See my stitches? Daddy said they caused a lot of excitement."

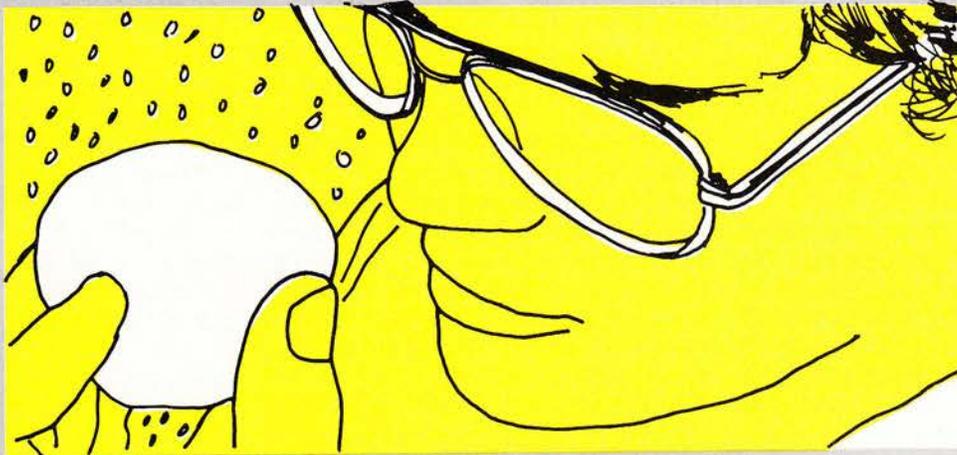
"You can say that again, Tammy," Jake said. "You can sure say that again." ★



TREASURES

O F T H E S N O W

BY MURIEL LARSON



The next time you see it snowing, catch some flakes and look at their designs. And think of the beauty and power of their great Designer.

Do you live where snow falls? Isn't it a wonderful, magical moment when you see the soft, white flakes of the first snowfall of the season start coming down from a leaden sky?

A mysterious excitement fills us as we see the white blanket cover the roads, yards, and fields toward evening. And it's more fun than, "Hurray, no school tomorrow!"

How is it conceivable that so many tiny, fragile flakes last long enough to pile into massive drifts that stop traffic? How many of them do you think it takes to make such a drift? Millions?

That's amazing, isn't it? But how much more amazing it is that each one of those snowflakes has its own unique six-sided or six-rayed symmetrical formation! If you examined them under a microscope you would see beautiful perfect designs.

These frozen crystals consist of tiny needles which combine to form the designs. They always do this at precise angles of sixty degrees. Perhaps even more amazing is the fact that the longer rays of the six-armed stars are usually

hollow tubes!

Although men of ancient times had no microscopes, they observed with the naked eye the perfect forms of snowflakes. The famous Greek philosopher, Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), referred to this amazing discovery.

Is it possible these perfect designs came into being by themselves? Compare a garbage dump with a precise design drawn by an artist. The garbage fell helter-skelter out of a dump truck; but the design had a creator. Even so, snowflakes have a Creator, the same omnipotent God who made us!

To prove His dominion over all creation, God asked Job, "Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow?" (Job 38:22).

Consider also that this same God made you. If He lavished such perfect care in the design of a snowflake, how much more is He concerned with every detail of your life? For you are made in the image of God, inwardly, if not physically (Genesis 1:26). God loves you. ★



BY BETTY LOU MELL

The bell rang, desks slammed shut, chairs scraped along the floor, and everyone scrambled for the door as Miss Kelsey raised her hand. She shouted, "Remember, class, today is the deadline for watercolor sketches. If you have a submission, please leave it on my desk."

I washed the skyline, blending blue with orange, then highlighted the fence post. "Miss Kelsey," I called.

"Yes, Tom?"

"It's still wet, but I'm done."

She came to my side and slid her glasses halfway down her nose. "That's lovely. I'd like for you to enter it for judging, Tom."

"Ah, everyone would laugh, Miss Kelsey."

"You're very talented, Tom. You have no idea how difficult watercolors are, or you wouldn't say that."

"They're easy, Miss Kelsey," I replied.

"Easy for you, Tom. You have a God-given talent. That's why you should

continue to study. And if you won the contest, you could go to the University for twelve free art lessons," Miss Kelsey beamed.

I nodded, then shrugged. "Well, if you think it's good enough."

"Do you think it's good enough? After all, if you don't have confidence in your work, what good is it? You're an artist, Tom. You're untrained, but it's there in everything you do."

I could hardly believe it. She called me an artist! I tried not to smile too much, but as I walked out of the room, I'm not even sure my feet touched the ground. Outside, Skeeter and Breeze came running.

"I have a fight lined up for you, Moose," Skeeter reported.

"Ah, Skeeter," I frowned. "I have to get to the store."

"The kid's a push-over," Breeze explained.

"Then why don't you fight him?" I asked.

"You're the Champ," Skeeter

grinned. "Besides, he called you a name."

I looked at him and scowled. I was tired of fighting, but I followed Skeeter to the warehouse where a gang of kids stood in a circle. As we neared, everyone started cheering, patting me on the back, and shoving me toward the middle of the ring.

Inside, a kid danced around. He smiled as I removed my jacket, then threw a punch at me before I ever turned around. I grabbed him with both arms and lifted him off the ground, squeezing with all my might. He gasped for air and pounded on my shoulders as his eyes bulged.

"Let him down, Moose!" Skeeter shouted.

I dropped the kid and grabbed my jacket. He just sat there, his hands on his stomach. My anger was gone and I felt sorry for him, so I reached to give him a hand up.

As we left the warehouse Skeeter

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ►



laughed, "I told you it would only take a minute." As we neared my dad's store I said, "See you tomorrow." I pushed the door open.

"Tom," Dad bellowed, "you're late. Get those canned goods stacked, then go up and eat."

Stacking canned goods is something that has to be done, but it's not something I look forward to doing. I got the job done as fast as I could then headed upstairs.

"Hi, Mom," I said, kissing her on the cheek.

"How was school, Tom?" she asked ladling soup into my bowl.

"Got a C- in math."

"At least that's passing," she sighed.

"I entered an art contest today," I added.

"That's nice."

"I could win twelve free art lessons at the University."

"Don't get your hopes up, Tom," she replied.

I crumbled crackers over my soup and ate in silence.

When the store closed for the night, I left my parents sitting in front of the TV and went to my room. Quietly, I slid the sketch book from under my bed and went to the fire escape and sketched the lighted city below. I sketched until my eyes burned and the lines blurred, then I went to sleep.

Saturday, after working in the store, I climbed to the roof where I could be alone and draw. There was a ship in the harbor. Instead of sketching it

where it was though, I drew it on the high seas with big waves and clouds. Deep inside, I wished I could show it to someone. My friends wouldn't understand though, and my folks weren't very interested.

"Hey, Moose," Skeeter yelled across the roof. "What are you doing?"

I shut the book and slid it behind my back. "Nothing," I replied.

"Big Moose reading a book?" he laughed. "Don't let anyone catch you. Champs don't do that."

So I kept the art contest to myself and really didn't dream that I had a chance, although I loved to draw and paint, and wanted more training.

On Friday when I entered Miss Kelsey's classroom, my hands began to sweat. When the last student was seated she raised her hand. "Class," she said, "I have the results of the contest. I'm pleased to say we have three winners from the school, and one from this classroom."

The kids all started clapping and cheering as Miss Kelsey pointed to me.

"Thomas Wood," she said proudly, "would you please stand."

I stood while the kids clapped and cheered some more. My heart beat fast, and I could hardly breathe. I wanted to jump up and down with excitement. A dream came true. And not one person was laughing.

On the way home my buddies congratulated me. Breeze said, "Boy I didn't know you were so good. I'm proud to be your friend."

When I got home and ran into the house, I shouted, "Mom and Dad, I won the contest."

"What contest?" Dad mumbled.

"The art contest at school," I explained. "I won twelve art lessons at the University. I'll go every Saturday morning."

Dad frowned and shook his head. "Saturdays are out. That's our busy day at the store."

My heart stopped. "Dad," I pleaded, "Miss Kelsey says I have a God-given talent. Besides, it's the only thing I'm really good at."

"You don't have to be good at anything! The store will be yours one day. Forget about art," he grumbled.

"Dad, all my life you told me not to worry. You told me everyone's good at something and one day I'd find out what I'm good at. Well, art is what I'm good at. I love it, Dad, and I draw every chance I get."

"You never said anything about it before," he replied.

"I never felt so good about it before. It's always been there, and now that I've won the contest I have a chance to really develop. Dad, everyone thinks I'm big and strong, but not good for much of anything." I bit my lip. "I could stock shelves Friday night. I'd work as long as it took."

Mom touched Dad's sleeve. He looked up and nodded. "Yes, you're right, Tom." He clasped my hand and looked into my eyes. "You're growing up. You need a chance to explore new experiences. But if I find those bins empty you're in trouble."

That first Saturday, as I jumped off the streetcar, Skeeter met me at the corner. "Hey, Moose!" he called. "Some dumb kid said your drawing was dumb. I told him to meet you by the warehouse."

"Why?" I asked. "So he doesn't like art?"

"You gotta show him who's boss," Skeeter pleaded. "You're the Champ!"

"Am I?" I shrugged. "I'm tired of fighting, Skeeter. I have better things to do."

"Hey, Moose," Skeeter sneered, "ever since you won that art contest, you're changing. You're not forgetting who you are, are you?"

"Forget who I am?" I called. "No, Skeeter. I don't even know who I am yet, but I'm finding out!"

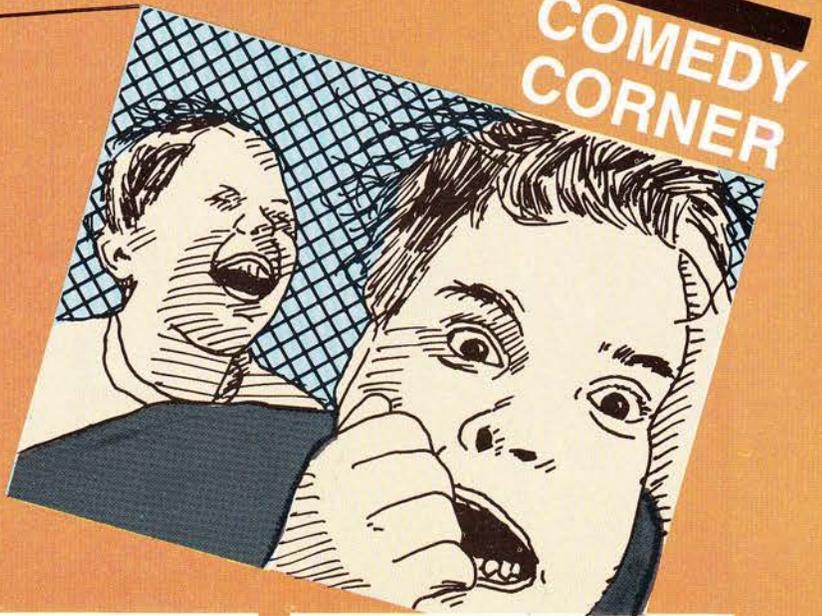
Skeeter's face turned an odd shade of purple and I knew if I could only capture his expression on paper, I'd get an 'A' in portraits for sure. ★

THIS ISSUE'S FUNNIEST JOKES

LEADER: You missed class yesterday, didn't you?

ROYAL RANGER: No sir, not a bit!

Doug Hanna
Shreveport, LA



COMEDY CORNER



A Royal Ranger, in full outfit and about to leave for a hike said to his mother, "This could be a long hike, Mom, I'm handling the compass today."

Helen Lozanoff
Johnstown, PA

Three men were arguing over whose profession was first established on earth.

"Mine was," said the surgeon. "The Bible says that Eve was made by carving a rib out of Adam."

"Not at all," said the engineer. "An engineering job came before that. In six days the earth was created out of chaos. And that was an engineering job."

"Yes," said the politician, "but who created the chaos?"

Thomas La Mance
Modesto, CA

ANSWERS TO:
ROYAL RANGERS

CROSSWORD

PUZZLE

R	E	A	P
E			I
A	I	D	E
D		A	
Y		Y	

L	O	V	E
O			V
Y	O	R	E
A		E	
L		D	

Probably the world's greatest energy conservationist was Christopher Columbus. He got 3,000 miles to the galleon.

Warren Bebout
Morro Bay, CA

Preacher: Do you want to go to heaven?

Buckaroo: No, sir.

Preacher: Of course you want to go to heaven when you die.

Buckaroo: Oh yeah, when I die. I thought you were getting up a crowd to go now.

Doug Hanna
Shreveport, LA

Then there was the scientist who crossed a potato with a sponge. Tasted terrible, but it sure held a lot of gravy.

Warren Bebout
Morro Bay, CA



A LOT OF US LIKE TO SEE HOW CLOSE WE CAN GET TO DANGER WITHOUT GETTING HURT.

BY MURIEL LARSON

In the town where I grew up, we had a pond. After several days of freezing weather, most of the church teens would gather there after school. We'd sit down on a fallen tree and pull on our ice skates. Smaller kids would run with their sleds and belly-flop onto the ice, skimming across the slick surface. Some of the older guys would start a bonfire, using the dead wood lying around.

The ice was thick and dependable where we were. But over by the bridge where the water ran in fast from the Barnegat Bay inlet, water rippled through holes in the thin ice.

"Watch me skate between those holes without going through!" one daring soul declared.

"You'd better not try it!" I called. "That water is cold!"

"Don't worry about me!" he answered. "Here I go!"

And off he sailed across the ice with sweeping strokes of his long legs. We

all stared after him, wondering if he'd make it. He didn't.

"Help! Help me!" he yelled. So some of the older guys skated out, getting in as close as they dared, and extended a branch to the shivering dummy.

"Well, this isn't so bad, we might say. 'I don't see why the church is so against it.' Or, 'I don't see what's so bad about the crowd I go with.'"

You'd have thought he'd learn, but he didn't. Later he came back to the pond and did the same dumb thing again. But the rest of us learned from his experience.

Unfortunately, a lot of us like to see

how close we can get to danger without getting hurt. Likewise, we toy with mild temptations that might lead us into some real trouble. "Well, this isn't so bad," we might say. "I don't see why the church is so against it." Or, "I don't see what's so bad about the crowd I go with."

Others may see we're skating on thin ice and try to warn us. Or we may hear or read a Scripture verse that rings a warning bell to us. Something we see in our friends may do the same.

Do we brush it off and plunge toward thin ice and a miserable experience? And if already we've had a miserable experience, have we learned anything from it?

The Bible warns Christian believers, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:15-17). ★