Among the Crews

Published on Saturdays at Porky Gulch - 2032 Feet Above the Sea

VOL. I., NO. 2 JUNE 26, 1982 FREE

BRIGHT IDEAS

1) Leave hot water in plastic urn overnight, and it will already be preheated for the next day. Saves even more propane this way.

2) Mizpah has a very attractive weather board that even works! It is a picture frame with glass that has all the standard headings where the picture should be, and they write on the glass with a magic marker. It is easily erased the next day, a claim which the old contact paper method could not make.

3) Include on your OTC signs a warning that too much instant coffee in your cup can ruin your drink. Suggest they go light, perhaps a quarter of a teaspoon, and then add to it if it's not strong enough. Chances are it will be strong enough.

4) Please, when sending copy down for the newsletter, write on lined paper, if you can find it, and write as clearly as possible. Deciphering blots on a strip of toilet paper is no easy task. Thanks.

NOTE: We need more of these ideas. This is the type of thing we need to communicate to all crews.

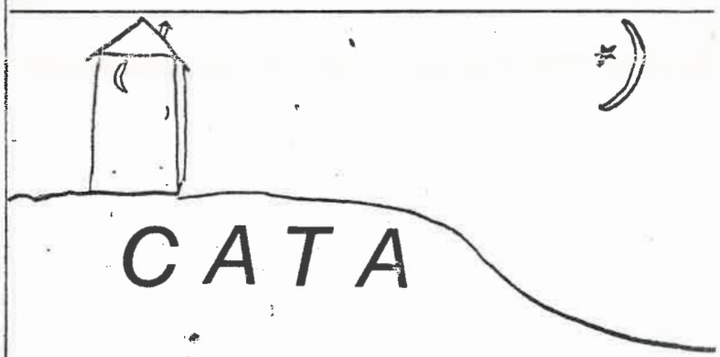
BAD NEWS FROM THE BACKCOUNTRY

Crawford Notch, June 19, 1982. A Massachusetts woman arrived at the AMC Visitor Information Center at the site of the old Crawford House Hotel today to report a break-in to her auto, which had been parked at the Ethan Pond Trail. The break-in occurred that morning, sometime between the hours of eleven and one. The woman and a companion were on a brief day hike at the time, having left their car at the trailhead, on a short side road off Route 302 in the Crawford Notch State Park. When they returned to the car, it had obviously been opened, and a pack and its contents, and items from a second pack, were missing.

The incident, which sad to say is not the first of its kind in the White Mountains, was reported to NH State Police. Its occurrence is a reminder to all hikers, whether day or overnight, guests to the mountains, or residents of them, that there are unscrupulous persons around who on occasion stoop to such depths, and one should exercise reasonable caution to avoid the inconvenience and heartbreak of being their victims. It is unwise to leave valuables in cars parked in such remote locations as White Mountain trailheads, especially if such tempting items are visible from outside the car. While incidents of last summer indicate that storing valuables in the trunk of a car does not necessarily make them safe from theft, such an alternative is preferable to leaving them open to the prying eyes of a high-country hoodlum.

Any further incidents of this nature should be reported to the proper authorities, either the local police, the NH State Police, as well as the AMC at Pinkham. If particular trailheads appear to be the "target" of such criminals, more direct advisories to hikers--and more direct action by civil authorities--may be in order.

by Peter Crane



A PRIVATE PLACE

The ghosts of another winter season in Carter Notch haunted the darkest corners of the hut, waiting for the new croo to chase them away for the summer. Beside the lake an ice pick gave silent testimony to the harsh winter that had just left the notch. The tattered sail of the thrown-together iceboat, the "Cata-Maran" decorated the west wall of the hut. Jars of moldy sun-tea and mayonnaise lined the no-longer refrigerated window ledge. Some of these treasures were thrown out by the croo; others were stored in the woodshed, until everything from the winter had melted away like the ice from the ramparts. Except the cast-iron woodstove, which squatted stubbornly in front of the OTC counter, scornfully sneering, "You can goat all those mayo jars and moldy chocolate cakes, but I dare you to do anything to me. I like it here in the hut, and that's where I intend to stay. Besides, your woodshed is packed to the roof, and if you put me outside, you know

what Waddell will say." The stove had made some very good points, and the crew searched frantically for another spot, while the heavy iron stove mumbled something about hernias and slipped discs. The crew had just about exhausted all of the possible spots and was considering just heaving the stove in the lake and pretending it had been raided, when one of the crew members came rushing back like a bee from a flowershop. "I've got it! We can store it in that thing!" She pointed over at a small, square structure resembling a miniature rocket, halfway between the hut and the bathrooms. The hut crew gathered around the structure, quietly sizing it up. The hutmaster broke the silence. "It just might fit." "But will it hold?" wondered a crew member out loud. He stepped inside. "I'm not sure. Let's all get in. If it holds us all, then we'll know it's okay." They all stepped inside the mysterious rocket-like building. In the middle of the floor sat a white metal cylinder with a hatch on top, which they figured must be an escape hatch, should the craft catch fire. They half expected to see Bill Reifsnyder poke his head up through the hatch conducting a fire hazard survey. The door swung shut. The crew members all looked at one another excitedly. One person started making rocket noises. Another opened the hatch. A fly buzzed up and out. "Look, there's Earth", somebody murmured. "One small step..." "What the hell!?!" a booming voice awoke them from there reverie, "are you doing in the outhouse?" It was Mike Waddell. They opened the door, and sheepishly walked out into the light of day. The last one out closed the hatch. It had been a fun ride, and now that Mike was there, they'd tell him all about the woodstove, and the full shed and the ghost of winters past. Mike would know what to do.

by J. Dunn

CLOUD LAKES HOSTELRY

RANDOM PEBBLES FROM THE ROCKPILE

Wind, Fire, Earth and Rain.
From you I come, to you remain
(Blackfoot saying)

The 82 season has started smoothly by all appearances, each hut performing efficiently and cheerfully in their appointed tasks. Though models of organization, energy, and goodwill, dark rumors and evil humors surround the huts, adding a subtle new dimension to the hut experience, that of cloak and dagger meetings, cryptic messages, days off, and shuttle diplomats. Deep rumbles of discontent reach Lakes from the west. Threats of a western secession loom menacingly above the Presis. Greenleaf, fast becoming a Fort Sumpter, seems to be the source of these emanations. From the Flea come outrageous demands:

1) Real counts for Galehead & Lonesome
2) A real number for Lonesome
3) A real pack trail for Zealand
4) The right to keep the Flea Croo Room as is, and
5) The bestowal of the title of "Grand Cosmic Hutch and Short-wave Radio Operator" upon "Jefferson" Bill Blaiklock.

Efforts are being made to enlist Lakes in the secessionary force, since as the Flagship of the AMC, it is in ideal geographical position for an all out assault upon Pinkham, if any resistance is put up. The first line of defense to overcome would be Joe Gill's strategically placed SSG's (Skoal Spittoon Gaboons). All have multiple chaw capability. Confidential sources inside the movement feel that all huts in the system (including the 10th hut in Randolph flats) will join the rebels except for perhaps Cata, who will emulate Switzerland in the dispute. As of now, most crew kitties are being held in trust here, in numbered accounts.

Oddsmakers give the rebels abou 3 truck trips before capitulation. "Two weeks without fresh yogurt or Foyt will bring them around," Commander Wave was heard to say. He seemed confident in the ability of his helicopter air force under the leadership of Joe Brigham to outmaneuver the self-propelled packboards held by the rebels and the recently developed bungie-launched "serving plate" technology proven so effective above treeline. The west realizes it is lost without the United Lakes Navy and lucrative offers are being proposed: croo switches, a high band, front door mail delivery, and real coffee top the list. Captain Dave Huntley remains unmoved by the offers, though at night, he is sometimes heard to scream something about a propeller...These days, however, the Lakes Croo seems more preoccupied with the possibility of having more cats than mice and is busy organizing a lottery to see who can guess closest to the day of Paca's (which by the way is sanscrit for "kitty") meiosis. The winner gets a bunch of cats. It's either that or the Yokahama Oriental Food Palace in Gorham, Mr. D. added, with a grin.

So far, Lakes has seen mountain execs, Boy Scout Troop 283, practicing Buddhists and visiting croo, and the feeling is that, sure, its crazy, but anything else would be too tame. Where else can you get launched by high winds and for what reason? A garbage load. A summerlong sysiphysian myth? Panning 180 pieces of pig for morning chow. Baking 10 loaves at a shot - packing bombs - purpling sunsets - snorkeling in the Lake - badminton on the rocks - good craziness above treeline. At 5,000+ feet, the turmoil of the west subsides and a kind of zen embraces Lakes of the Clouds. After serving dinner to 90 and powering dishes through, sitting on the rocks at sunset overlooking Bretton Woods, penny whistle music drifting in the breeze, bring it all back, the realization that you inhabit a very unique

and awesome place entitling you to friendships and sights that few people ever have or see. The wind is a constant reminder that nothing is static or unchanging. The sun cruises slowly through the sky to the horizon. Another day beginning somewhere else. It's night's turn to shine. Lemme see now...sunset's at 8:38...Uh Oh - a bullcook should be setting up OTC now, not spacing on the sky...

Next week "How to give good back rubs" or "Why we requed an extra case of Kaola"..

by Kevin Kerin

GRUNT & STRAIN HAULING CO.

get a LOAD off

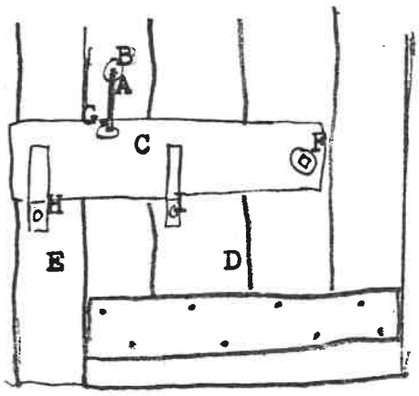
"LATCHSTRING ALWAYS OUT"

"Latchstring Always Out": how often have we of the Appalachian Mountain Club heard this quaint expression from days gone by? How often have we ourselves used it, to let our friends and guests know that they are always welcome? Often enough to make the saying synonymous with "Mountain Hospitality" itself; often enough that Stroker threatens to loop a latchstring around my neck the next time he hears me say it.

But even with our intimate familiarity with the saying, many of us don't even know what a latchstring is! Well, my friends, back in the days before Kwiksets and Grand Masters, before 0464's and packhouse combos, when Joe Dodge was wet behind the ears and Dave Warren was a rookie at Mizpah, a latchstring was an integral part of your door hardware. There'd be a bolt on the inside of part of your door that you could pull up, to open the door, or let down, to close the door. To open or close the door from the inside was a simple affair, as the bolt was exposed on the interior, but to pull up the bolt, or latch, from the outside required a short cord - a latchstring - attached to the bolt and passed through a hole in the door. If the latchstring were drawn in, the door could not be opened from the outside, and was effectively locked; if the latchstring were let out, it signalled to a passer-by that he or she was welcome to enter, sit by the fire, exchange local gossip, and quaff a flagon of rat.

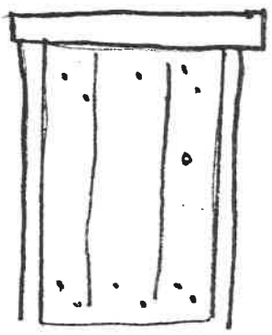
So, while the latchstring has, in most spots in the White Mountains, gone the way of the Edsel and the coffee urn, the spirit remains, and will remain for as long as hut croos maintain their nearly century-old tradition of mountain hospitality to backcountry travellers.

Peter Crane

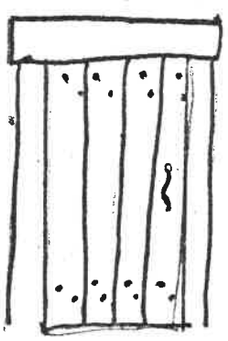


THE LATCHSTRING SYNDROME
(artist's misconception)
A-Latchstring
B-Hole in door
C-Bolt(Latch)
D-Door
E-Door frame
F-Pivot Pin for bolt
G-Hole in Latch
H,I-Support Brackets for Bolt

(left, interior view; below, left and right, exterior views)



LatchstringIn:
Beat It!



Latchstring Out:
Welcome,and Come I

NOXIOUS ODORS

-Tales in the wind from Tucker-man Ravine...

Since Joe and I discovered that we have nine years of experience between us working in the center of Sargent's Purchase, we felt it only fair to pass on a few of the things we have managed to learn in those nine years. First and foremost, and the subject of this article:

HOW TO PACK LIGHT

Putting our few remaining brain cells together we came up with the following suggestions:

Most obviously, quit and find another job. Regardless of where you go the pay is better, your back feels better, and there isn't the problem of tying on a load with a packrope that is too long or too short - like some other things.

Barring a resignation, there are a number of other things that can be done to lighten a load - foolproof, economical, and easily implemented.

In no particular order:

Empty all tin cans into baggies; break eggs, discard shells, cardboard liners, and boxes. Put the eggs in a plastic bag. Take tomatoes out of cellos; peel labels from things that have to stay in cans; snip the fat off the bacon; peel oranges and remove seeds; raise your own chickens; use feathers from your chickens to stuff pillowcases; use chickensnit for some purpose at the discretion of the hutmaster, like mattress stuffing.

Serve local materials - rock tripe, lichens, moss, and compost. All very plentiful, all very nutritious.

Bribe helicopter pilots, or better, for $50,000 you can buy your own snow tractor. Visit your hut early, say in February, and bring up all that you need then.

Raise sheep, clip the wool, and make all of your own blankets <u>in situ</u>.

Fast. Often.

Cut napkins in quarters and hide them under the salt. Peel two-ply toilet paper apart. Cut holes in all cardboard boxes to improve airflow. Use tape, not twine to bind boxes. Use smaller guage packrope, or even magnets.

Get others to carry your garbage out. In fact, speak with Larry about ordering a load of merit badges available from the hutmaster for boy scouts and camp groups for such things as carrying out the wet goat.

Replace packboard hardware with lighter guage aluminum/magnesium alloy. Hollow out all lumber. Weave a corset. Leave wide gaps in the weaving.

Buy a llama. Don Hunger ha tw

Shake insertions out of magazines before you bring them up. Better, read magazines at the pac house. Read mail in the packhous Move into the packhouse.

Memorize your counts.

Limit the amount of your perso al gear - highly recommended for places like Zealand and Galehead where space in the croo room is a a premium. Suggest you wear only what you have on and leave the rest in the packhouse. Or better yet, plant bamboo and weave yourself a grass skirt in two weeks growing time.

Buy stamps at the postoffice. Write letters at the postoffice.

Eliminate OTC; if they can't bring their own snacks, too bad. If you must sell OTC, take the wrappers off of candybars, Tuck bars, etc. Never make change - never accept anything smaller tha a dollar bill.

Drink light beer, or brew your own.

Don't read books. Bum cigarett s (nice hyphen job).

Use communal toiletries. Each croo should have only one toothbrush, comb, brush, razor. In fact, don't shave. Make shampoo from pan drippings and ash from the burnt crumbs on the toaster.

Check lettuce and cabbage for secretly lodged rocks, gravel, a sand. Come to think of it, don' pack lettuce. Grow your own, or dye toilet paper green, or use hobblebushes.

Debone pork chops. Take the casings off sausage. Shake the ice out of frozen vegetables and discard the containers.

Don't req floor oil. Spill things like soup and gravy. Slather it around.

Cut the wrappers off bandaids. Drain the mercury from the t rm meter.

Cut an inch off of each wooden match in a box. Use slotted spoons for everything. Air dry everything - to hell with dishtowels. Use a clean grass skirt instead of an apron. Use sphagnum moss sponges. Put salt and pepper in the same container - se arated by a cardboard divide . Put spices in baggies; drain ke chup from glass bottles, as wit other condiments. Use plastic bags.

Salt the fish and hang it to dry on top of your packboard. T the containers. Clip stems fro teabags - let them float, and pluck out with your fingers; Co apples.

Lastly, take only what you ne req only what you need, and mak do with less.

Bill Kelley

At Dawn

Tomorrow at dawn when I rise
To cross the streets of Chamonix
I'll picture your restless eyes
And the mountains we once climbed.
If it's still too soon
I'll savor some time
At a sidwalk cafe', alone
As the sun begins to climb
The stone walls of your home.
As I walk down to visit you
I'll stop and pick some blue
Violets to decorate your room
Beside the laurels in springtime
That blossom on your tomb.

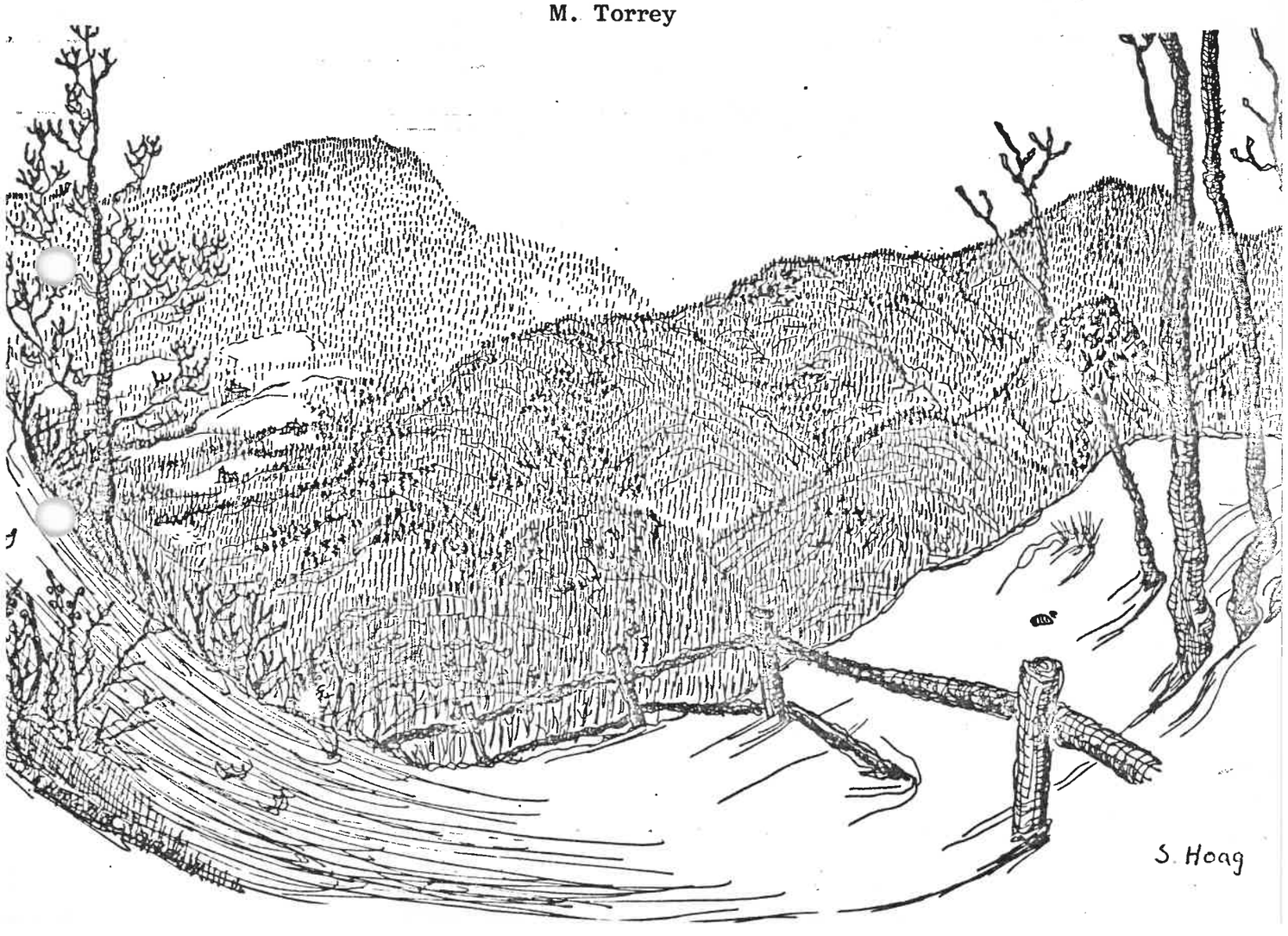
J. Dunn

Skipper of Stones

I was a skipper of stones on mountain lakes.
Rocks of bulk, square and heavy
Skipped once, satisfied.
Exercising my erosive tool,
I aimed to fill it in,
Wanting the torrent a trickle.

I am a skipper of stones on still lakes.
Eleven times I kiss the water.
ONE long leap to begin,
Then shorter and shorter, machine gun at the end,
  it sinks.
  i skip
To the far shore,
Build the overhanging cliff,
Dive deep when done.
  i haul
The square heavy stones aside.
I aim to fill it in no more.
I aim shore to shore.

M. Torrey



ZOOL DRUEL

So, you've got a lot of leftover tomatoes, cheese, carrots, and lettuce? You requed too much salad stuff, and you've got to serve that awful turkey (hamburger) dive bomb again.

Tired of the one pots and meatloaf? Why not try burritos a' la Zealand made from all leftovers and extras fit to serve?

Here's how it goes: (serves 36)

Tortillas shells

6 cups stone ground cornmeal
9 cups water
1 cup (half pound) margarine
9 cups whole wheat flour (add more if necessary)
2 tablespoons salt

1) Bring water to a boil in sauce pan. Add half the margarine. Then stir in cornmeal quickly. Immediately lower heat, cover pan and cook over very low heat for 5 minutes making sure not to burn. Then stir in remaining margarine and set aside to cool.

2) Mix flour and salt. Stir into cooled cornmeal and knead and form into 36 balls (approximately 2" in diameter).

3) Then rollout your dough balls all you doughboys, make them as thin as possible. You should end up with a 10" circle stuck to your dough board. To prevent this, roll them half way, then flip it, sprinkling it with cornmeal.

4) Cook on ungreased griddle for 1½ minutes, until you get little brown spots on the tortilla.

These can be made a day or more in advance. Just heat them up again and they are ready to use.

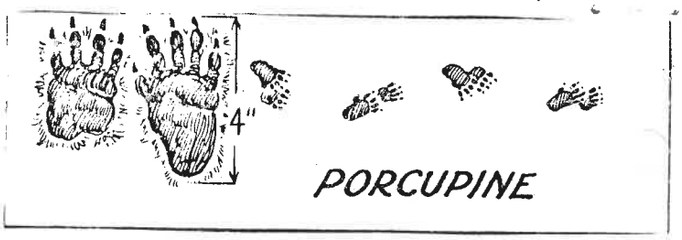
5) Then stuff them (takes about 5-10 minutes for 36).

Use anything, but here are some suggestions:

sour cream and/or yogurt
hamburg/turkey burger
finely chopped roast, stew beef, turkey, ham, etc.
cheese, lots of cheese, and more cheese
lettuce, tomatoes, grated carrots, peppers, browned onions, celery, etc.
anything else you have too much of except peanut butter.

Advice - they are better with hot meat in them.

ENJOY! From the Zool Croo



GIVE YOUR CULTURE A HEADSTART

Reported by an unidentified MIT Biology Major.

Yogurt making made easy. By using powered milk, you start with none of the anti yogurt enzymes and all of the milk type stuff it needs.

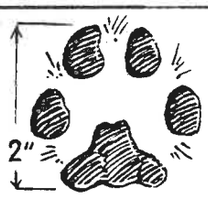
2 cups powdered milk
4 cups water
about ¼ cup yogurt starter (Columbo)

Mix up the milk real good and stir in the starter. Put oven on warm and leave overnight. No boiling, no temperature nonsense.

Mizpah Crew

ANNOUNCMENT

Mary Palmer, former AMC employee is now working on her MS on reproductive biology - on plants that is! She would like to know when the first False Hellebore (Indian Poke) also known as Veratrum viride flowers. It's not flowering this year in Virginia and she needs some samples. Let Walter know at Pinkham. Thanks.



BOBCAT

A bobcat ran parallel to the trail,
Crossed, changed speeds,
Paused in a skuffle of confusion
And left fur in its wake
Rose, my dog, with nose to ground,
Making her snow snuffing sound,
Her only thought to follow:
What if it waited at the end?
Surely they are not friends,
Though enthusiasm for snow they share
And an equal passion for tracking hare.
And what if I chanced upon it
Huddled over prey?
Would I go on, unimpressed,
Or blessed by the sight of the fleeting cat
Whose gait I know like a walking companion
And whose woods I share
(For that matter, so does the hare)
I follow paths already taken.
When snowfalls erase the slate
I have fresh marks to make.
Even the wary bobcat
Understands that.

M.T.

CLASSIFIEDS

Dear Dave - If you're night flying through Zealand Notch, you may want to make a quick landing. Have we got a prop for you! But be careful, Dave, you wouldn't want to wake us.....

MAKIN MASSAGE & THE COLE CUT. By appointment only. Call KEM 574 Unit 2. Prices negotiable. @ Madison Girls Inc., Randolph, NH.

"With or Without?"

staff

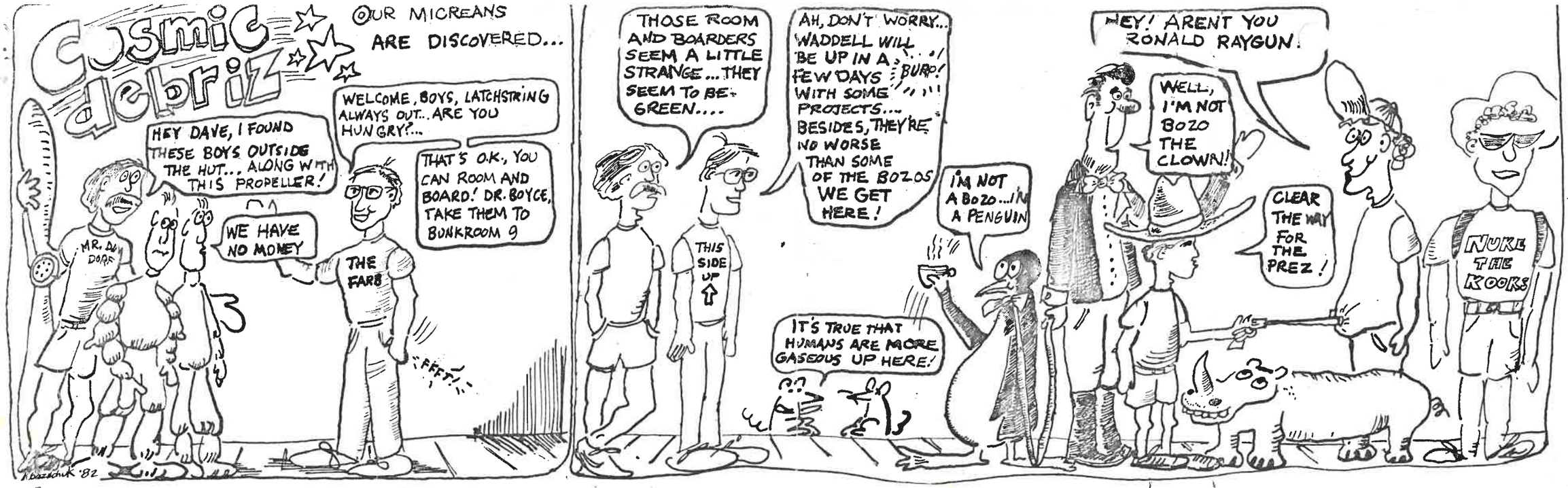
Nancy Bazilchuk - Art Director
Yvonne Jenkins - Typing
Mike Torrey - Editor

A PACK TRIP

"I hate to be the grim reaper, but I also hate to be grimly reaped."
Anon.

Imagine yourself firmly secured in your pack straps, 80-100 pounds of wares balanced on your shoulders, and you have just begun your trip up the Old Bridle Path. You pass the rusted hulk of the State's giant, retired incinerator on your left, a crumbling face of granite on your right, the foot of the cliff washed out into fans of gravel. The State has used this homegrown resource in the past to pave its roads. Vegetation and spider webs brush and tickle your face as you travel the packer's cutoff. The path ascends at a moderate grade, and at .7 miles, it turns right at Corner Rock. The flat section that follows allows you to fantasize about a level, carefree jaunt to the summit, and as you near the end of the 125 yards, you dare think "Oh, this isn't so hard." Suddenly the trail turns sharply left and again begins to climb. You've passed Fool's Corner, and you sheepishly understand where the name came from. Stepping around small boulders, you notice to your right a figure coming into focus. The weathered, squashed features of an Indian are clearly etched into a large boulder. Indian Head Rock. As you plod along, your muscles becoming accustomed to the strain, you notice a medium boulder with a vein of quartz rock that is shaped like a whale. Whale Rock. A mouth, a spout and even the dorsal fin are clearly discernable, not to mention a whale's tail to rival Moby Dick's. The trail begins to climb more steeply for 75 yards, and then levels off at a trench presumably carved by donkey hooves. It is Dean's Ravine, named after AMC Executive Director Tom Deans. It was here that Tom took his only crump, unintentional as it was (he dumped his load) on his 2½hour, 180 pound trip some twenty years ago. After your third crump, you pick your way through the Devil's Rock Garden, also known as Hutmen's Highway, and finally arrive at Halfway Turn. In quick succession, you pass Sugar Cube Rock, the Knife Edge, and you grunt and strain into the maw of Scissors Rock, where two flat boulders come together in a V. Whale-without-a-Tail is negotiated, and you take the traditional three baby steps up Tippy-Toe Rock. Just above Tippy-Toe, the old trail is brushed in at Trigger Corner, reputedly the nail in the coffin for the donkeys that used to pack the trail. An ass named Trigger is buried somewhere below, and shortly after his demise the use of donkeys was abandoned. The Bitches, bare rock that when slippery gave rise to their name, stretch from just above Trigger Corner to the Dugout, probably the best crump rock in the mountains. If you were smart, you hid a beer, or some lemonade in the krummholz on the way down. After a short rest, you bypass the Power Step, made possible by erosive avoidance of its strength sapping powers by the more modern hut people and their hiking public friends. Then you pass through a deep groove cut between low bushes that can really swelter on a hot day, and approach Pulpit Rock, the name's origin left to speculation. It's a large, smooth rolling ledge with a crack running the length of it, and it tops off the latest pitch and drops you into stunted spruce and an often mucky stretch of trail. Your muscles get a short breather, and then it's climbing again, over ledge and boulder, gravel and dirt to the base of the first Agony. Half way up Agony 1, the White Rocks branch right to an overlook of Walker Ravine, and the Red Rocks take the straight line. It's the Red today, and you scramble and slip, using your hands and leaning into the cliff to a welcome crump at the top. The four iron bars at the crest of the White Rocks once supported a ladder used by the donkeys to conquer this most difficult section. The second Agony has two pitches and a short 10 yard flat stretch between them, but by now you can taste the cold beer on your throat and feel the absence of pain on your shoulders and you plunge relentlessly on, passing the Bus Stop and emerging at a clearing that affords a spectacular view of Cannon Cliffs and the mountains to the west. The third Agony is quickly history, and you top off at a dirt section surrounded by grey, toppled fur waves with RUA signs tacked to them. You scan the woods for illegal campers and pick up the pace. You're on the Afterbirth, and you think you can smell the bread baking and hear the chatter of guests. You pass The Illegal Campsite, pitted and stamped by blatant misuse over the years, and it's minutes until you are easing your board down on the back steps of Greenleaf and feeling the satisfaction of a completed task. Wait, this packtrip isn't over yet. There's that cold beer, and a happy saunter out to Hutmen's Lookout for a well-deserved respite. The Old Bridle Path is history once again.

MT



(stay tuned)

Rolling hills.