

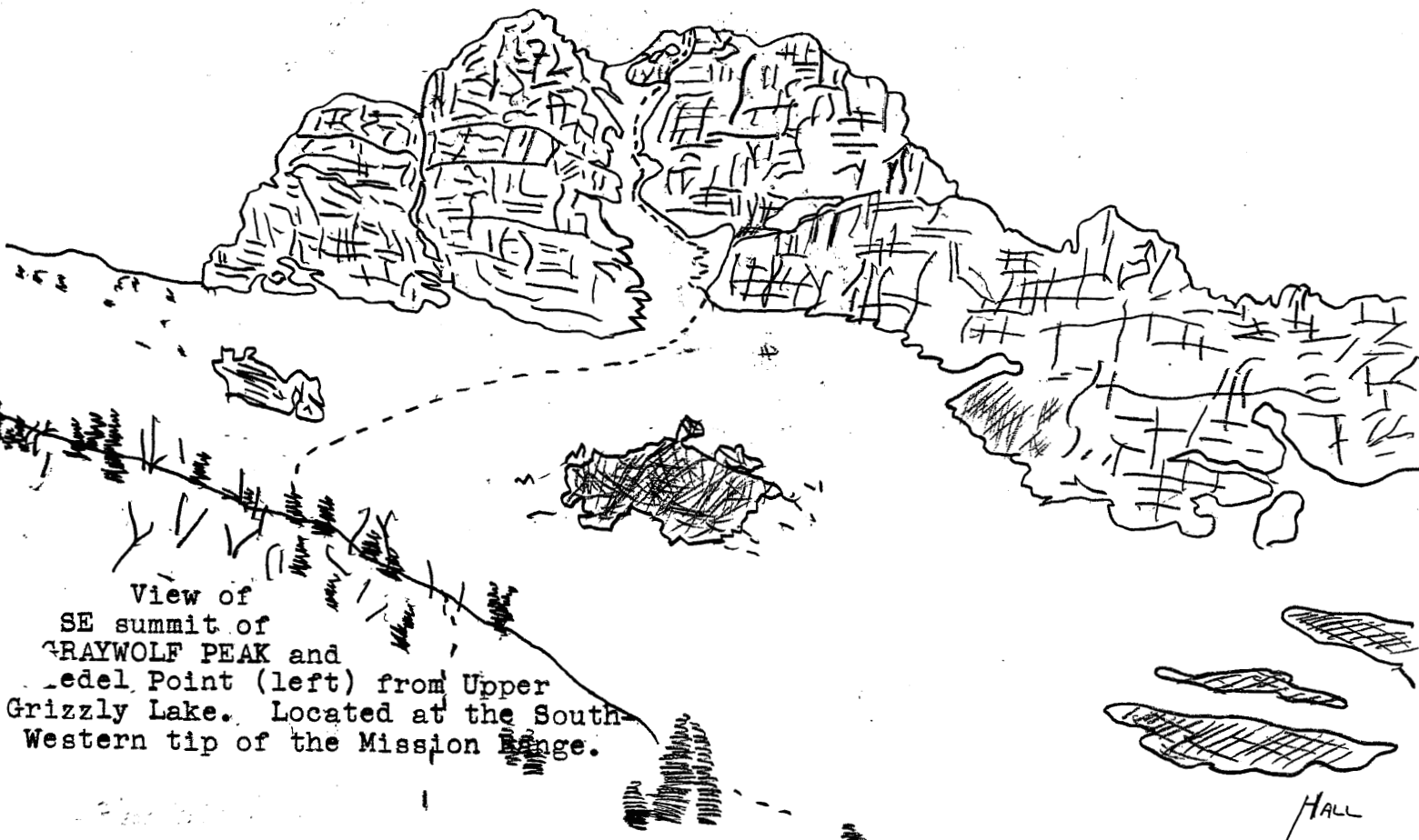
Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS

NOVEMBER 1963
Vol. III No. 2

Climb the mountains and get their
good tidings.
Nature's peace will flow into you
as sunshine flows into trees.
The winds will blow their own freshness
into you, and the storms their energy,
While cares will drop off like autumn
leaves.

-John Muir



View of
SE summit of
GRAYWOLF PEAK and
Medel Point (left) from Upper
Grizzly Lake. Located at the South-
Western tip of the Mission Range.

HALL

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 Mountaineers of Western Montana

NEXT MEETING: November 12, Tuesday, 7:30 PM in the Geology Bldg.
 at MSU. Slides will be shown on the USFS ascent of Granite Peak
 last August which four of our group went on. ELECTION OF OFFICERS.
 Also there will be an Equipment Display at meeting. Refreshments
 will be served, but we would also like for everyone to donate to
 this fund at the meeting, as otherwise it will become too much of
 an expense for our treasury.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Lolo-Mormon Peak ski touring trail has been nearly completed by
 two work parties this fall. The lower section (that which was
 giving ski-touring parties problem) was cleared and brushed out to
 a width of 10-20 ft, such that it now can be skied without too much
 difficulty. Also the upper portion (that which needed no brushing
 and clearing of downfall, except for a small portion) was blazed
 and flagged all the way into the saddle overlooking Carlton Lake.

If you have any holes in those parkas and etc., how about covering
 them with our club 'Patches' as they are cheap (65¢) and we need
 the money.

At least three members of the Missoula Mountain Rescue Unit will
 be attending the Mountain Rescue Council's meeting in Seattle,
 Nov. 9&10.

We have a few of Kanzler's Mission Range Maps left, and I know of
 a few people who haven't as yet wall papered their dens with them,
 so how about helping us liquidate our stock.

If you are wanting to know how you can find your way into Graywolf
 Peak (feature story), there are route descriptions and two maps in
 the February '62 issue of the 'MOUNTAIN EAR'. We also have some
 extra copies of these approach maps which we are willing to sell
 for 10¢ apiece.

Guess what? Some of you haven't paid your dues or subscriptions
 yet. Actually we're not greedy, but just broke.

GREYWOLF PEAK by Shirley Braxton

June 9, 1963

The alarm jangled at three AM which awakened us for what we hoped would be a full day of hiking and climbing. Unfortunately the weather was definitely against us. It was raining when we woke up but as optimistic mountaineers are, we hoped for clear weather later in the day. We left the house at 4:15 AM and an hour and ten minutes later we parked the car near the beginning of the Greywolf trail - still raining.

Anticipating getting a little wet??? off we went (5:30). This trail is in pretty good shape though it was much steeper than I had remembered it. Sam left me on every steep pitch as I was content to lag behind and maintain my comfortable 'rest step'. However after my missing a very well marked switchback and becoming quite entangled with dripping brush - Sam decided not to get too far ahead.

Around 7:00 AM we stopped for hot honeyed tea - carried in a thermos - we were quite wet by this time but not too uncomfortable as long as we were moving. I made the bright statement that at least it wasn't snowing - Big Joke - a half hour up the trail and it was doing just that. We reached the ridge at 7:30 AM - two hours after leaving the car - and continued up the ridge until 8:00 AM. Visibility was limited to a radius of about 50' - we could not see the mountain, lake, or anything.

Since neither Sam or I knew the route and since our feet were sloshing around in our wet socks, we decided it best to turn around. To have gained so much altitude and yet to be so early in the day was indeed a disappointment. We had trouble finding our foot prints made earlier. There were a few touchy times locating the trail - mainly in the more open areas where the game doesn't cooperate with our trail signs. On a whole though, the tree blazes and yellow surveyors' tape was sufficient, however I wouldn't want to find my way out in the dark. The trail by this time was quite interesting and we had much fun glissading down the mud - which proves my statement that this trail is steep??!

We reached the car at 9:30 AM - a little over an hour from the time we turned back. Yes we were thoroughly soaked, and we decided here and now that it would be a good idea to carry a complete change of clothes on every trip in the car. Just as we were leaving, Gardner Miller with a car load of eager? hikers, drove up. One look at us and they changed their minds. We hopped into 'Old Blue' and joined them in brunch.

* * * *

As you know very well, weather conditions can change a relatively easy non-technical climb into a tricky, treacherous climb. Pat Leonard, Sam and myself experienced the latter on our climb of June 23, '63. For the statistical information - we left the car at 5:30 AM - reached the ridge at 7:00 AM - S. East summit at 11:30 AM - N. West summit at 1:10 PM. - left N. West summit at 2:00 PM - reached S. East summit at 3:15 PM - car at 8:45 PM.

Now to fill in the little incidents that make a trip and its memories enjoyable. As I stated above, weather is an important factor. When we left the car the weather was ideal for hiking - cool in the early morning and bright and clear. Our hopes of making the summit were high. I kept urging Sam to take pictures on the way in but being a typical mountaineer he didn't want to take the time to do so. This was most unfortunate as we had a beautiful view of the country and distant peaks going in - fog

rain and snow on the way out. We noticed the fog rising from the valley while we were on the summit (SE). It wasn't long before the entire summit block was encased in it. The immediate visibility was okay but we could no longer see any of the distant peaks. Then it began raining - not too hard - just enough to wet the lichen on the rocks and make a nice slippery climb over to the NW summit. Needless to say we were roped at this point - after we left the couloir.

We did a most foolish thing by climbing up the snow couloir unroped. Conditions were anything but ideal - two to three inches of fresh snow on a hard ice base. It was very difficult to kick steps so we resorted to cutting steps. Pat was the only one with crampons. The many times Sam and I have packed crampons and not used them - we had decided to leave them home. We had no idea this couloir was so steep - it looked relatively flat from below. We had a little excitement as we were leaving the couloir. Sam in the lead turned to talk to us and in doing so his foot hold gave way and he started slidding down. He immediately went into an arrest position but new snow piled under him and prevented his ice axe from biting into the ice. He slid approx. 50' before landing on some rocks. He was quite shaken and complained of his lower back hurting - not enough tho, to prevent his making the summit. Needless to say we roped down the couloir.

In dry conditions the rock scramble from SE to NW would have been much fun. As it was for us, we had to be most cautious on the slippery rock and spent many minutes belaying each other. The rock was quite rotten so constant care had to be taken for falling rock. We had two close calls - once when a rock came whizzing over Sam and my heads and again when I put both hands around a rather large boulder only to have it come loose in my hands. (Lose more climbers this way!!)

* * * *

TRIO

by T.S. Choate

REACHING

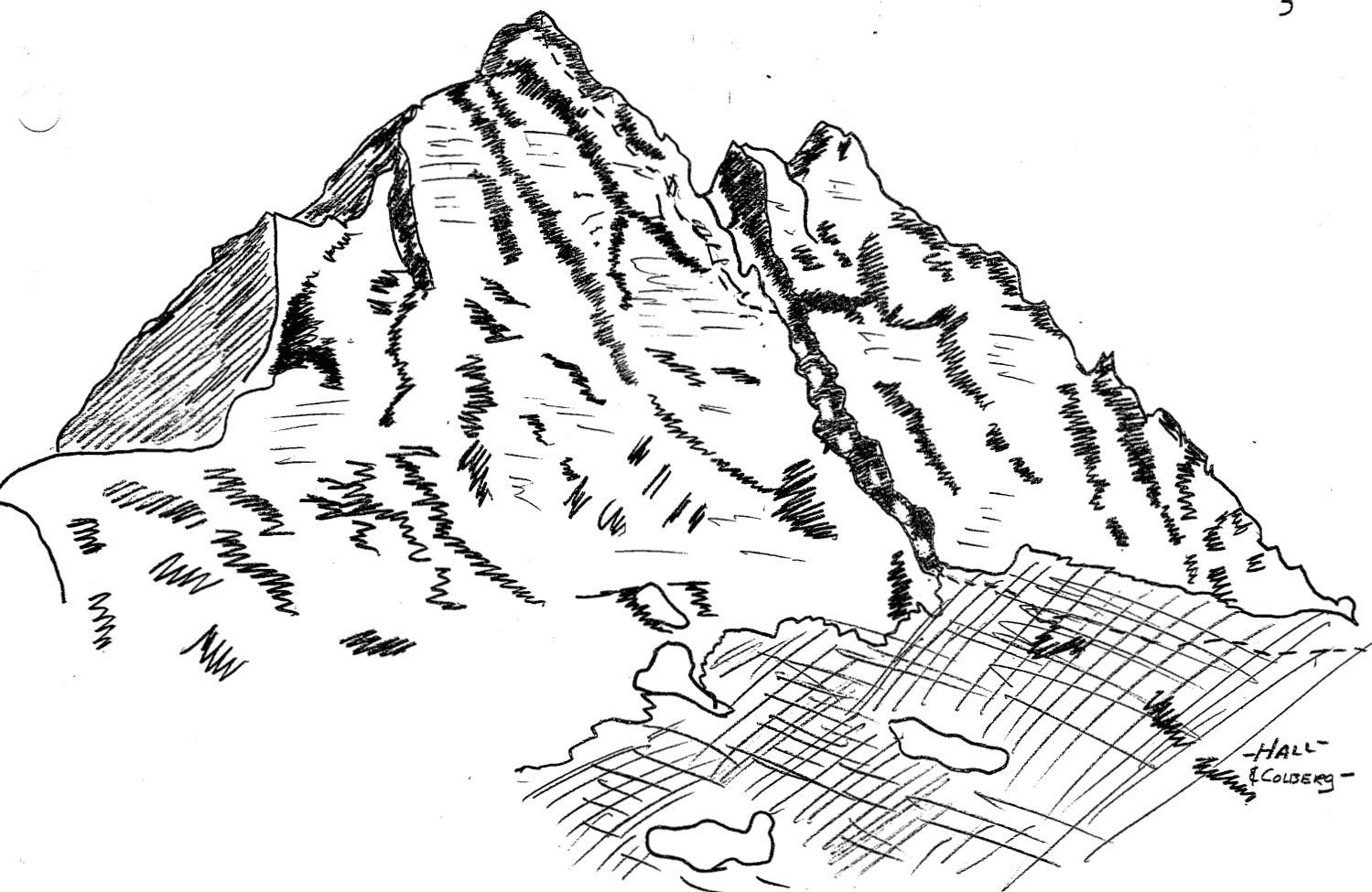
On a mountain top at great height
Where few men have ever trod
The richness of the morning light
Makes me climb and reach for God.

DISCOVERING

What makes me leave the world of man
And climb as high as I possibly can?
Because its a pleasure to depart from style
And discover the forces that preceded life..

LEARNING

Does man have the right
To display his own might
Against the mountains of God?
He should have the sense
To learn from lifes' events
The value of undisturbed soñ.



NORTH TRAPPER 'SOUTH COULOIR ROUTE'---

Involves one short class 4 pitch. Carry ice axe and rope.
Little rock fall danger in couloir except where noted.

Approach is via Trapper Creek Trail to confluence of the N. and S. forks; here cross to south side of creek on log and follow South Trapper Creek to Cirque Creek. Climb on west side of Cirque Creek rather steeply over slabs and boulder fields, staying within a few hundred yards of the creek to the lip of Trapper Peak cirque. From here, swing west and north along base of cliffs on many boulder fields until the south couloir; a diagonal snow-filled chute, is reached. This is a south-facing couloir so it is unlikely that crampons would be needed here during a summer ascent. Rope up. Climb up couloir about 300-400 feet to the headwall which blocks the couloir about 2/3 of the way up. A crack (class 3) leads to the top of this headwall, but loose rock makes this route uncomfortable. A safer route lies to the left of this crack and is mastered by a short class 4 pitch (15 feet). From the top of the headwall keep southwest of couloir but parallel to it until the east-west ridge of N. Trapper Peak is reached. The ridge is followed westward (class 2) and can be done unroped. Because of the loose, low-angle rock, it is advisable to stay close together or climb one at a time. The summit block has a few interesting, exposed class 3 pitches. Summit is marked by a cairn, however the most western nob appears to be slightly higher.

Total time-----18 hrs.

Sam and Shirley Braxton
Pete Hall

Roped time (ascent)-----2-2½ hrs.

FIRST ASCENT OF THE NORTH FACE OF GRANITE PEAK

by Don Gordon, Seattle

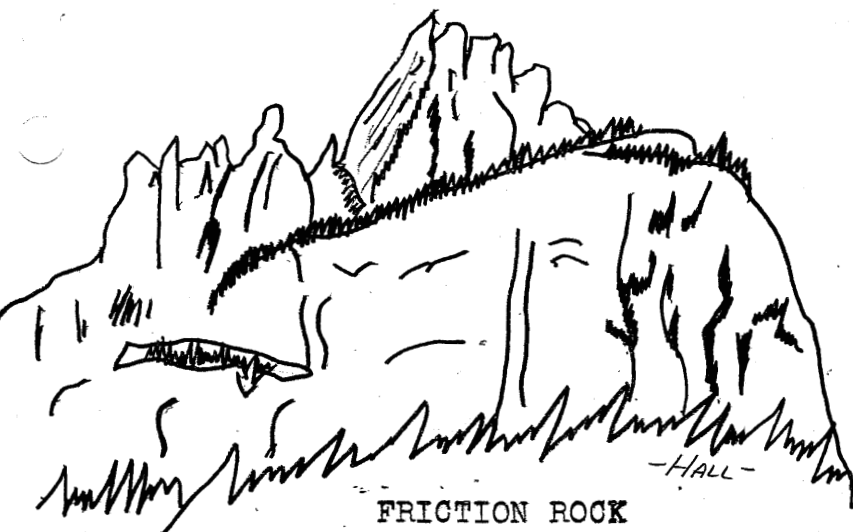
I felt there would be no harm in at least taking a look at the start of it. Furthermore with the rope and pitons, I could belay myself with relative safety. Some of the roughest climbs on rock ever done have been accomplished solo by self belaying techniques such as Walter Bonatti's tremendous achievement on the west face of Petit Dru or his five day 'Wall of Hell' climb in the French Alps. Also if I got stuck, I could rappell off or use the line for hauling purposes. Of course of self belaying I would double the line. The Granite Wall was what I would call moderately difficult with some good route finding. There was some Class II-IV. Although I called the climb class IV, it certainly was a weak class four or a maximum class three. I could see where if one wasn't careful in his route finding he could get into real difficulties. You really have to look around and size the situation up carefully. I still think that the final rock bit is 700-800' and not a thousand as somebody said, for the Granite-Tempest col is 11,400'. This leaves 1359' to the summit.

But the rock climbing is exposed and fairly long, not like Castle Rock which is much shorter. You don't have the short-sheerness of Castle Rock, but instead the long-draining exposure of an alpine face. The Sabre route is called class five because of the necessity for piton protection. A couple of the muscle-up or balance places on the Granite face are nearly as bad as anything on the Sabre, but with the advantage of being short, quick pitches with usually good intermediate places to stand. (Ed. Note: This account is taken from one of his letters to the Braxtons and is being compared to a climb they did together.) For the average competent, experienced, mountaineer who is not overboard on extreme technical climbing, the Granite face is a serious undertaking. It is isolated, fairly long, exposed to some danger from falling rocks and ice, and requires competent climbing ability on class three and four. It is definitely advisable to carry a smattering of pitons in case one gets off the route or gets in some kind of trouble. They may be necessary also for anchoring belays. Concerning the face, one must remember it is a technical climb - a difficult ascent - not a 5th or 6th class climb but still a respectable and demanding ascent.....

.....Actually I am not a solo climber per se. I have done some solo climbing and am familiar with its demands and techniques. I don't stamp my approval on climbing alone - nor do I condemn it. I leave it up to the conscience of the individual concerned. There are many factors to consider such as weather, terrain, equipment, experience, physical condition, preparation, and technical difficulty, not to mention the availability of help....

* * * * *

What makes some men cling
To perilous places on vertical faces?
The obvious thing:
The ground so far below
That they don't dare let go!



FRICTION ROCK

We've discovered a new rock climbing practice area. As many of the pitches are climbed using only your imagination- we have named this area 'Friction Rock'. It is located between the North and Middle forks of Bear Creek, approx. five miles in on the Bear Ck. Trail just west of Victor Montana. The trail is a good one and provides a most pleasant hike. The last couple of hundred of yds. to the rock is the only part that is off the trail. At the

fork there is a cabin (trapper's) and also a helispot landing. There is an abundance of friction and class six climbing on the lower slopes, very fine beginners pitches, and a vast amount of technical climbing which can be found on upper slopes and pinnacles.

* * * *

OUT OF AN OLD RUCKSACK - A FEW WINTER MOUNTAINEERING TIPS

Snowshoeing - By taking the lower 12" of an old ski pole including the basket and by attaching it to your ice axe near the glide ring stop, you will find that you now have that third leg you have always wanted when you tried to snowshoe across a steep snow slope.

Snowshoeing 2 mi. an hr. uphill without pack, or one mi. an hr. with a 40# pack is fast if conditions are GOOD. If POOR, 1½-2 hours might be needed for only one mile.

Fishnet underwear increases warmth by trapping considerable air and doesn't get soggy as quickly as other types, but is still felt by some to be inferior to 'WOOL'.

The Ome Daiher snorkel is a useful device. It can be made from a wool sock with the toe cut out and an elastic head harness attached to keep it over the nose and mouth. The exhaled air warms the snorkel, which in turn warms the inhaled air, cutting down the loss of body heat. The open end of the snorkel is to facilitate shaking frost or ice out in sub-zero weather. This is better than breathing into the sleeping bag, since the moist breath will dampen the bag, lessening its insulating value.

Sleep cold? Next time try placing that zipper underneath you, sleeping on your side, and by drawing your feet and knees up. By also drawing the sleeping bag up you will increase the thickness of the bag. **Ground cold?** Instead of wearing that sweater, place it under yourself 'inside' the sleeping bag. It will do more good that way than if you were wearing it. You don't like to camp in the winter because of the cold hard ground and air mattresses, although they are soft, don't keep you warm. Try placing a ¾ length piece of Ensolite on top of the air mattress, you might even go so far as gluing it to the air mattress. You then will have a 'soft' sleep, and also a 'warm' one.

In order to increase the efficiency of your Primus, Svea, or Optimus, just take about 2' of 18" heavy duty aluminum foil, and by folding it in forth lengthwise, you will have a good wind screen. Not only will it keep the wind from blowing away you heat, but it will reflect most of it directly upwards towards your pot.

Ever have trouble priming your stove? If you don't like the ineffective idea of warming it in your sleeping bag overnite then here are a few other ideas. The best which I have yet found is to place a few small pieces of Trioxane Fuel Bar in the small cup at base of burner. It burns with quite an intense heat and leaves no residue which can't be brushed out. Fuel Bars can be obtained from Holubar. 10¢ for a box of three. Why carry alcohol to prime your stove? By just placing a small piece of neoprene tubing or an eye dropper in cook kit, you will then have some way of transferring your stove fuel to the small cup at base of burner. Candles or firestarters wrapped in aluminum foil, so that they can be reused, have been found to work also.

If you can't figure out why your Primus won't generate maximum heat and you have cleaned and recleaned the hole, maybe it's because you have set it directly on the snow or ice. It won't work efficiently until you get it off the snow or insulate the tank from the cold. One way of overcoming this is to take a corner of your ensolite sleeping pad and by taking a spare lid, set your stove on this. The lid protects the ensolite or tent floor from the 'hot' tank.

It never hurts to keep a few spare matches tucked away in your cooking set and will save you some time of having to find those pair of wet pants you threw somewhere.

If you are still burning your fingers on the hot pots, why don't you break down and buy yourself a pot gripper. They're cheap and they really work.

If you haven't figured out a good way to get those pots cleaned during the winter with a shortage of water and you don't care for scouring pads that contain soap and take off the aluminum oxide coating on the pots then try one of these: Scotchbrite (sic) nylon scouring pads does neither of the above but does do a fair job of getting out all that old food. There are also several types of sponges with an abrasive on one side for scouring. They are also nice to use to clean up that spilt dinner, sponge up the water from a leaky tent or tracted in snow which has melted. It does however tend to mold when kept in a plastic bag for any length of time.

* * * *

HELP!

We are always looking for more information of almost any kind pertaining to mountaineering which would be of interest to us here, so that we will have information that we can publish in the Mountain Ear. Everyone can contribute something, all it takes is a little desire and an even smaller amount of time at the typewriter.
THANKS - Ed.

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