

Paul Caccamo's Postcard

(From the Pacific Coast Trail)

Sunday, June 17: Greetings from Bishop, CA. I am again taking a nice day off here in town, enjoying all the fruits that civilization has to offer, mostly food. In fact, food has become an obsession for us hikers. Yesterday I sat on Kearsarge Pass at 12,000 feet with a group of friends and for all the beauty surrounding us, we went around to each person and fantasized about the food we would order for breakfast today. Mmmmm.....coffee....biscuits and gravy.....avocado and jack cheese omelet.....I could go on but you get the picture.

We are now deep into the High Sierra, having finally put the desert behind us for good. We have gone from worrying about where the next water will be and baking in the heat to a whole different list of concerns...snow and ice, freezing temperatures, mosquitoes, and the eternal battle of keeping the black bears from eating our food.

It is not possible for me to put into words the incredible beauty we are now experiencing on a daily basis. I have gone from taking one picture a day to forty.


But these pictures are only a pale representation of the incredible grandeur of these mountains. It is a very simple place of rock, ice, lakes and streams, trees and blue sky. It hardly seems real at times, it is like we are looking out at something from the Lord of the Rings; jagged 13 and 14000 ft. peaks stretching out as far as the eye can see, towering cumulus clouds which on several occasions have turned into incredibly violent thunderstorms dumping rain and hail and lightning all over the place only to clear up and be sunny a half hour later. There have been moments where it is overwhelming to all five senses, yes including taste, as we no longer have to treat our water we sometimes drink from a stream that has a flavor of sage and flowers to it.

I have traveled this section of trail before but the experience seems much deeper this time, perhaps because I have been immersed in the outdoors for almost two months now. Time has stretched itself out to the point that these two months seem like years. A very good new friend of

mine by the name of Fester (I don't know his real name) put it very well when he said that out in the wilderness the physical comforts of civilization are denied to us, but at the same time the mind is given the freedom to wander unburdened by the worries of daily life. Out here our only worries are food, water, sleep and physical well-being. It is an incredibly simple existence that I have come to cherish.


The next 400 miles will be through much the same territory as we make our way toward Lake Tahoe. More to come as Internet availability allows.

Best wishes to you all,
Paul C.



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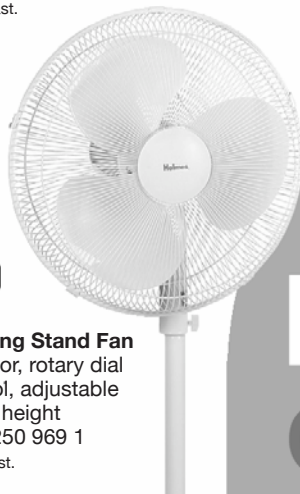
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