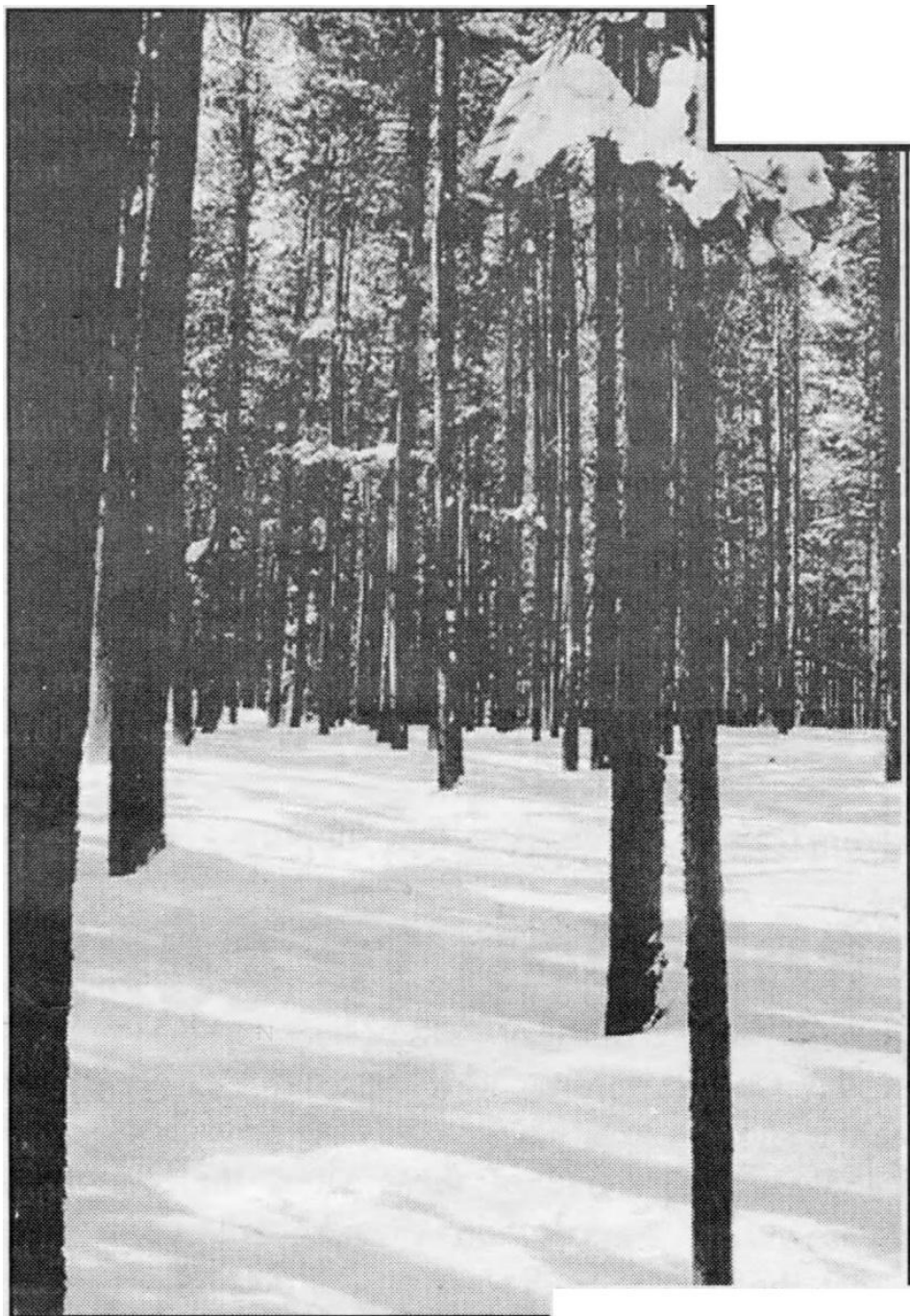


Slip of glove proves comical for snowshoe duo

Amanda Allard

March 6, 2000



Stemple Pass seen through the sheltered pines.

Photo by Amanda Allard

My shoes and socks were drenched, and the snow was making its way through my thin polar fleece gloves. Any hopes of physical comfort were now but a distant memory to me. You see, my boyfriend and I had gotten ourselves into a precarious situation.

Over President's Day weekend we decided to go snowshoeing at Stemple Pass. The area is renowned for its great cross-country ski trails (roughly 14 miles), however we decided to try a shot at the snowshoe conditions. We started off on the North Stemple Loop trail, but soon decided to veer off the beaten path. We staggered through the freshly fallen snow, ascending and descending the thickly forested slopes.

As we reached one of the summits, I noticed a beautiful meadow in the distance, so I suggested we try to hike there. We proceeded to slip and slide down the side of the mountain. The more we worked the further I felt from our awaited destination.

After making our descent, we ran into an old deserted mountain road. As we stumbled across the snow covered gravel we were forced to make a decision. Should we continue, or turn around and make our way back to the car? Unfortunately, we decided to go on. I told my boyfriend to go down the steep knoll first to check out the conditions. I was shocked to see him slide down the hill on his back, like an arctic seal. When he reached the bottom he got up and removed, at least, a pound of snow from his pants.

At that point, we decided we had made the wrong decision. So, I waited for him to climb back up the icy slope. For roughly 10 minutes, I watched him try to scuttle and scurry his way back up the hill. With each attempt made, he made it a little closer to the top. However, he would slowly slip backwards down the icy surface. He felt helpless and I felt useless. I kept thinking..."If only I had a rope". But I didn't, the best I could do was cheer him on during his strenuous attempts to climb back up the mount.

In one of his most impressive attempts, he finally made it close to the top. I reached out my hand to help pull him up. As he grasped my hand. I tried with all my might to pull him up. However, my loose and wet glove slowly slipped off my hand and I watched my boyfriend slide back down to his disastrous fate.

I do believe it was out of anger and frustration that he was finally able to dig his clamps into the ice and climb back up to me. Yet sadly, my glove still sat on the side of the hill. Although it was wet, I had hopes that it would keep my hand warm during the remainder of our journey. Being the brave soul that he is, he climbed half way down the mountain and back up to retrieve my sopping glove.

As we returned to the car we got a good laugh out of the situation. It was a beautiful day and our surroundings were breathtaking. Despite our inexperience, our day of snowshoeing turned out to be splendid and memorable.

Stemple Pass is an excellent destination for those who seek to escape the buzz (or more suitable, hum) of the city. Located between Helena and Lincoln it is roughly a 45 minute drive from Carroll's campus. To get there hop on Interstate 15 North. Keep your eyes peeled for Highway 279, and turn left. On your way to Stemple Pass you'll bypass the Great Divide Ski area and Canyon Creek. A sign on the right hand side of the road will inform you of the turn off to Stemple Pass. (Make sure that you have a

good vehicle if you decide to make a visit to this recreational area. The road is gravel and not well maintained.)

Happy trails to you!

The Ted K Archive

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The Prospector (Montanan student newspaper), Volume 83, No. 5, Ama's
Adventures Column. <mthspublic.newspapers.com>

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