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inviting African Americans
to the Great Outdoors

PICKUP & GO!

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Pickup & GO! is published by experienced camper/travelers, with you specifically in mind. Our Great American Outdoor Odyssey has carried us around the country, to a myriad of inviting places!

The Continental United States is one of the most breathtaking, mystical places on Earth.

We saw it all for the price of many tanks of gasoline, some camping equipment and an occasional motel room.

Why dream of a great adventure when you could be having one? Let *Pickup & GO!* show you how!

America — Go see it!

How much of this country have you seen?

More than 700 million acres of American land, from the gleaming Atlantic to the Pacific, belong to you. Brilliant, beautiful land filled with awesome, mysterious treasures, direct from the creator. From Florida's wild, mystic Everglades to awesome Cadillac Mountain, towering above the Atlantic on Maine's shores; from the rainforests of Washington state to the supernatural beauty of the Grand Canyon in Arizona; from the bubbling caverns of Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming where you can see the earth still being formed; to the ethereal shapes and colors of South Dakota's vast Badlands, this country is liberally endowed with luscious sights that stir powerful emotions.

Burned out from the hectic pace of life in the cities? If you really want to get away from it all, America's famous public landmarks in the national and state parks and forests provide an affordable alternative for adventure, recreation and spiritual revitalization. Whether you seek the excitement of breathtaking views that make your heart pound, or you crave the solitary serenity of nature, these places stir your heart with sheer joy.

In the late 19th century, American leaders of foresight saw the need to preserve these fantastic places for the enjoyment of succeeding generations. But hurry, or you may never

see them! Lawmakers in Washington are greedily eyeing these priceless places for development. They are campaigning to slash public acreage and cut off access to vast stretches of wild land. The Senate is considering bills to transfer millions of acres of public lands to state and commercial jurisdiction. A similar land grab attempt has been defeated in the House.

Please see On The Road, Page 6.

At press time, the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Yosemite National Park and all the national park and forest lands were closed, casualties of a self-serving budget debate and the shutdown of the federal government. Ironically, this happened as we were preparing our first issue encouraging you to get to know these natural wonders. It illustrates that you cannot afford to assume that they'll be there for you forever.

Most of us have paid no attention to the management of our land. Now is a critical time to start!



PICKUP & GO!

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Audrey
Wright
Peterman

Publisher's Eye!

People who love nature get a special joy from life. No matter where you are, nature puts on a splendid display before your eyes.

In a time-honored Jamaican custom, when I was born, my grandparents buried my umbilical cord under a young breadfruit tree. I don't know where the tradition began, but it seems like a great way to acknowledge the connection of people to the land. It must have worked for me, because I still get pleasure from the explosion of life right outside my door. That means I can never be bored, because there's always something to hold my attention, whether it's a beautiful stand of trees, a bird or a butterfly, the color of the sky or the shape of a cloud. Unfortunately, many of us pay little attention to the living world around us. It's just a backdrop to thoughts about the job, responsibilities, bills, or getting from place to place.

I've lived in America for almost 20 years and delighted in exploring places along the East Coast, from Florida to New York. I still hadn't seen anything more beautiful than Jamaica, and since everyone puts such stock in going to the

There are places in this country that exceed your wildest imagination!

Caribbean, I felt just a little supercilious about the natural beauty of my homeland.

But that was before I saw what this country really looks like! If you've only seen a small portion, you have no idea! There are places in this country that exceed your wildest imagination!

Incredible experiences are out there waiting for you! Mother Nature has outdone herself on this continent, and all her treasures are yours to enjoy — for free!

Environment — It's time to join 'The Big Cleanup'

Traditionally, environmentalists have been viewed as a bunch of glassy-eyed, sandal-wearing, tree-hugging eccentrics with too much time and money on their hands. To be sure, people of color looked upon them as escapists from the gritty and unpleasant political issues of the urban centers where most of us live. While grains of truth could be found in both stereotypes, people of color have been tardy in recognizing the inextricable link between quality of life and environment. Worse, we now discover that air and water pollution,

pesticide and other chemical exposures wield a disproportionate impact on our communities.

Today, 70 percent of all Americans call themselves environmentalists. I don't know what the percentage is among people of color, but I doubt it is that high. It needs to be, and more. There is a direct connection between our health and happiness. Please see *Environment*, Page 6.



Charles
Fulwood

Travels give lie to 'growing racial divide'

Who would believe there are places in America where you can drive for days and never see an African American or other minority? When we traveled around the country this fall, across 40 states and through countless cities, we realized we had a lot of misconceptions. The America we see on TV is only a narrow view of reality. Not only is the country more varied and vividly beautiful, but there is far more diversity in the character of states, and the people are much more generous-spirited than the media portrays.

As Americans, we get a lot of our ideas about the country from TV. We know not to believe everything we see, but still, we accept many things at face value. Imagine our surprise to find there are still wide areas of this country where blacks are not only a minority, but virtual-

The America we see on TV is only a narrow view of reality.

ly a foreign species. The white population seldom sees minorities, if their startled looks when we appeared was any indication. But if anything, they were friendlier, as a group, than many of the people we've met closer to home.

Which is why I'm skeptical about the "growing racial divide" we've been hearing so much about.

TV reports that originate in metropolitan media centers spotlight the violence, hate and racial tensions that breed in the cities. We are led to believe that reflects the entire country.

But since the turn of the century, people in America have historically been drawn to the cities, leaving the middle of the country sparsely populated and largely homogenous. And that may be as great a com-

mentary on the "racial divide" as anything.

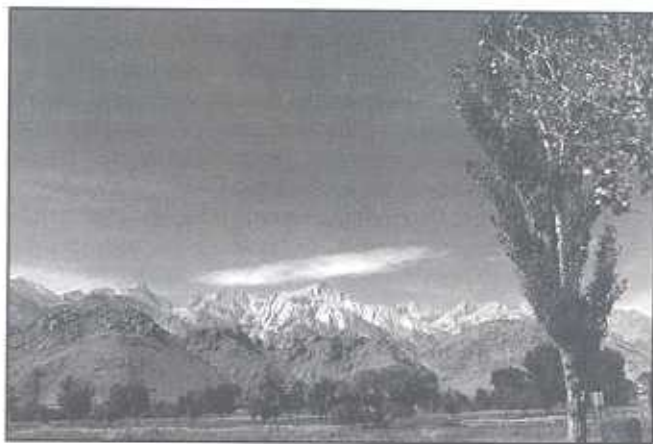
The intolerance we experience vicariously through the media each day, could very well dissuade Americans, especially minorities, from venturing into areas with which we are not familiar, and which don't have a noticeable minority population.

So we miss the opportunity to interact in the vast areas of the country that have considerably less stress than we experience in the cities.

Is there really a "growing racial divide" in America? We didn't see any evidence.

In remote towns well off the beaten path, in camp sites deep in the forests, miles from anywhere, nearly all the people we met were white. We never once felt any hostility, or that they were anything but happy to see us and swap travelling stories. Maybe race is not a big item when you're sitting in a forest that's been there hundreds of years before you, and will be there long after you're gone. Or when you're caught up in awe before a view so vivid, it makes you think God's paintbrush must still be wet.

As African Americans, if Frank and I had bought the media line that says whites are reflexively hostile to blacks, we would have been too worried about our personal safety to go out and see the country for our-



Mount Whitney, in Lone Pine, CA. At 14,495 feet, it dominates the vista of Sequoia National Park.

selves. Fear of militiamen target-practicing in the forests could have kept us paralyzed at home, going around and around the same track. Instead, we turned off the TV, went out and had the most exciting experiences of our lives. Now, we feel more uplifted, more hopeful, more attuned to this fascinating country than ever before.

The Grand Canyon has been described as "a great mountain lying down." Perhaps if more of us leave overcrowded cities, go out to see the country, meet new people and have new experiences, we can bridge that "divide" and begin to see that we have a lot more in common as human beings than we have differences!



South Dakota's legendary Badlands — a vast panorama of unearthly shapes.

Maine means loads of lobster



Our first night in Maine we pulled into Freeport just before dusk, having covered a leisurely 350 miles from New York. We didn't feel like looking for a campground, so ever cost-conscious, we pulled into a Super 8 Motel. I was shocked when the clerk quoted me \$79 for a room.

I wasn't cool. "At Super 8?" I exclaimed. "We're only looking for a room as an alternative to camping!"

"Well, how about if I give you one for \$59?" she offered, smiling.

Resources

Frommers National Park Guide, by Michael Frome, gives you an overview of all the national parks.

Trailer Life Campground/RV Park & Services Directory will tell you what's close to you wherever you are in the country. It's a great idea to start with a weekend trip close to home.

They're available at local bookstores.

I mentioned that she was the most outgoing person we'd met since we hit the state, whereupon she smiled and said, "People here are — how shall I say this — reserved! But if you show them you're interested and want to talk, they'll talk you to death."

It turns out that Freeport is an "outlet" town where Land's End has its corporate headquarters, and they were having a blow-out sale that week, so a lot more people were in town than usual. There are also outlets for Van Heusen, Reebok, Mikasa, Donna Karan, Burberrys, Benneton, Nautica and Ralph Lauren, among others.

We didn't meet anyone who "talked us to death," but everyone we ran into was pleasant. I do believe that if you're the outsider, it helps if you're the first to smile and say hello.



Frank and Audrey Peterman with James Raines and Dale at Bob's Chowder House.

We spotted James Raines the evening we drove into Bar Harbor, cooking lobsters at Bob's Chowder House. We couldn't help noticing him, since he was the first and only black person we had seen in almost two days. Unfortunately, we didn't run into him again until the morning we were leaving town. At 11:30 a.m. he was outside raising flags above the restaurant. We made a quick U-turn to chat with him and he greeted us with delight.

"Any relation to Tim Raines in the major leagues?" Frank asked.

Please see Lobster, Page 5.

Acadia only part of Maine's beauty

Part of the excitement of traveling by road is the anticipation over what amazing sight might greet you around the next corner. Even places that are separated by only a few miles have a totally different character, and can make you feel you've entered a different world.

Driving up the East Coast from Florida, destination Acadia National Park in Maine, we felt we'd crossed a foreign border the first time we saw a "Watch for Moose in Road" sign. The thought of seeing a moose or any other large wild animal excited us, and the sudden realization that black folk had disappeared from the highway confirmed that we had passed some transition point.

We passed through a host of sleepy, picturesque towns and villages that made us appreciate Maine's laid-back reputation as one of the more sparsely populated states. "The prettiest village in Maine," boasts a sign in Wiscasset, where a police-woman directed traffic at the major intersection. We didn't see one traffic light in town.

Just outside of Bucksport, we had a delightfully panoramic view of mountains, river and water, as serene as if we'd driven into a painting. Bar Harbor, the last town before Acadia, had a quaint, old-world feel that invited us to explore. But we were impatient for

Please see Acadia, Page 8.

Camping is freedom

Blackwoods and Seawall are two public campgrounds within Acadia, and for \$14 per night, you get a secluded tent site, central bathrooms, a picnic table and firepit. Our site was big enough to hold our tent, pull in our Ford truck and have enough space left over for another truck!

To make reservations in Acadia for camp sites, call (207) 288-3274, or write Acadia National Park, PO Box 177, Bar Harbor, ME 04609.

Wild Shots



*Blacktail deer:
Ozette Campground, Olympic
National Park, Washington state.
80-200 mm Nikor zoom lens.
1/30 sec. at 5.6, Kodak 100.*

The great American outdoors offers endless photographic opportunities. From snow-capped mountains to white-capped seas; from the iridescent beauty of butterflies to the power of the giant grizzly bear, it's all there for the taking. Each month in this column, we will share with you photographs we take in the wild. We will describe what we did, where and how we did it.

It was important to capture the deer in a pose that revealed her identifying black tail. I wanted the photo to convey a feeling of intimate contact with a friend in the wild.

The picture was taken late in the evening in Ozette at Olympic National Park in Washington. The light was fading rapidly. Over the next half-hour, I worked my way closer to her. Each time she looked away, I crept a few feet closer. The moment she looked my way I froze. When I was about 15 feet away, she seemed to accept my presence, and the result is the portrait above.

The mountain goats presented a multitude of problems — location, lighting, "competition" and time. Many of the most photogenic scenes are in the most difficult, downright

dangerous places. Driving down the steep, winding mountain from Mt. Rushmore, we rounded a blind curve and ran into a crowd of people and vehicles partially blocking the narrow road. The cause of the commotion was a trio of mountain goats feeding near the edge of the road. They looked a like a family — a billy, a nanny and a kid. A dozen or more people covered the road, stopping traffic in both directions as they converged on the trio for photos.

Despite the admonitions of park rangers, and warning signs about the unpredictability of wild animals, people insisted on getting much too close. He kept himself between the crowd and his family. I clearly detected some annoyance on his part.

Our location added to my apprehensions, since the best vantage point was from the middle of a sharp curve

These photos of the blacktail deer and the mountain goat presented dramatically different shooting challenges.

in the road. There were fewer than 100 feet of visibility either way. The light was fading and I was jostling both for position and to save life and limb. I took the best shot I could under the circumstances.



*Mountain goat.
Mount Rushmore National
Monument, South Dakota.
80-200 mm Nikor zoom lens.
1/125 sec. at 2.8., Kodak 100.*



Continued from Page 4.

"My uncle," he smiled. "Why don't you guys come on in and I'll cook you up a couple of lobsters?"

Well, it was 11:30 in the morning, but how often do you get invited to eat fresh-caught lobster by a brother who is a master in the art of preparing them?

I winced when he threw two pound-and-a-half lobsters into the steaming cauldron, which he told us was "just the right combination" of fresh water and cooking water from the day before. "They didn't feel a thing!" he laughed.

The restaurant is really casual and laid back. Dale, an exuberant host/waiter, kept us laughing at his stories. We ate two big lobsters, corn, coleslaw and rolls and met some great people. Total price: \$17.

We asked James how come he lived in Maine, and he told us he had originally come from Miami with his girlfriend. They'd had a gorgeous son and decided to stay put.

"What do you in winter?" I was curious. "You see that great big stove there?" I looked at the huge contraption he was pointing at. "In winter, my butt doesn't get too far from it!"

Fresh lobster is so abundant in Maine that it shows up on the menu at McDonalds! In Ellesworth, we found we could get a lobster salad sandwich for \$3.49. You can also get an entire lobster dinner with trimmings for \$7.99!

We were surprised to see stands of vegetables and firewood for sale by the roadsides, with not a soul in sight! The first time we pulled up to one, we looked all around thinking, "This is too weird. Somebody must be somewhere looking at us!" But there wasn't! We picked out fresh tomatoes and cucumbers, put our 25 cents each in the jar and left.

Can you imagine that happening in New York, Los Angeles or Miami?

On the road: Show your children

Continued from Page 1.

If you haven't seen these fabulous places which draw millions of people annually, go do it soon! Take the children. Expose them to nature's living classroom. Show them the America that truly belongs to them. The best way to learn what your country has to offer is to see it for yourself. When you know what there is to preserve, you have a



This lighthouse is in Strawberry Hill, CA, on Pacific Highway 101.

greater stake in preserving it.

If we stay silent while others destroy our birthright, what will we say to our grandchildren? It's time to *Pickup & GO!*

Environment: America belongs to everyone

Continued from Page 2.

and the answers to the questions of whether we are breathing clean air or diesel fumes, drinking clean water or polluted water, and living in places with or without green parks, trees and blue sky.

Communities of color bear the toxic blight of industrialization and chemical agriculture in this country, and for the sake of our children, we must throw our weight into efforts for The Big Cleanup.

But it creates a false dichotomy to imagine that people of color — even those who live in urban areas — should care only about our cities and not about the wild places, forests and national parks now under threat by the same Congress, with its stealth attacks on environment protection, that is also trying to demolish economic and social programs.

Many of us who live on the coasts rarely visit the great public

parks and national forests of the interior, and whether the reasons are lack of money or wariness about venturing into unfamiliar territory (if you know what I mean), they are certainly rational. But by staying away, we and our children are missing out. For Native Americans, Latinos, African Americans, and all the rest of us, natural beauty is deep in our spirituality and our art. Go back and visit the forests, the lakes, the wilds and pristine areas and you will hear the murmur of nature at its undisturbed best.

Like all citizens, we own the natural heritage of this country, in spirit and in letter. If Congress sells it to the highest bidder, we lose a birthright. This is one issue that all Americans have a vested interest in, no matter where we live or who we are.

Fulwood is communications director of the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Let us hear from you

Pickup & GO! invites you to send us letters about your camping/traveling experiences around this great country. We value your comments and would like to share them with our readers, on a space-available basis.

Please send comments, criticisms, suggestions and experiences to: Earthwise Productions, Inc., 2001 N.W. 112 Ave., Plantation Acres, FL 33323.

Camping primer: Do research first

Read everything you can get your hands on about camping.

Order as many camping catalogs as you can handle. They are tremendous sources of information. You can learn a great deal about material, equipment and supplies from them. Order a small, inexpensive item such as a camping knife or light, and just watch the catalogs pour in.

Check the ads in your local newspaper carefully. Advertisers tell you a lot about what their products do, which helps educate you about the product.

Subscribe to at least two outdoor, nature, environmental or camping magazines. When they arrive, scan through them immediately. Even if you don't read any articles at first, you'll be mentally recording the articles you're interested in, so you can go back and read them at a convenient time.



Television is here to stay. Use it. Review the TV guides for programs on camping and the outdoors.

Rent a video on the outdoors and camping. Watch it with the family over a weekend.



Begin researching photographic equipment. When you go, you will want to take pictures. Get your camera early enough to be thoroughly familiar with it before you start your trip. You need a basic 35mm single-lens reflex camera with a 35-70 mm zoom lens. How much you pay for it and how sophisticated it is depends on the extent of your interest in photography. A basic camera will do the job for most pictures you'll want to take.

Begin to talk about your plans frequently with family, friends, co-workers or anyone who will listen. In this way, it becomes real to you and you will be drawn to completing your trip almost effortlessly.

Tenting: Here's what you need to get started

Camping allows you to enjoy the outdoors at whatever price you choose to pay and in whatever style you prefer - from luxurious land-yacht RVs with the noisy generators, TV dishes and vibrating beds, to tents with a bucket and shovel for nature's call, and a campfire for food and warmth.

If camping in a tent is the experience for you, here's what you must start with:

- Tent
- Sleeping bag
- Cooking equipment
- Footwear
- Lighting

Winter is a good time to do research. Beginners shouldn't start in snow! Our next few issues will feature what you need to know, how to determine quality and how to make good consumer decisions.

There are seven rules to purchasing camping equipment and supplies: Read! Read! Read! Shop! Shop! Shop! Purchase with a guarantee or warranty only!

First, determine how many people will use your tent. What are their needs for space and privacy? Do not buy a tent from any supplier who will not put it up and let you and your party see how it "fits" before you buy. Have everyone who is going to sleep

in the tent lie down inside it.

Here's my checklist for safety and quality:

- Is it made of ripstop nylon?
- Is it two-piece construction, ie., a canopy and a water-proof fly?
- Is it freestanding?
- Is it flame resistant?
- Is it breathable?
- Is it rated "three season"?

Ripstop nylon helps control the extent of rips and tears. It won't prevent such mishaps, but it makes them more manageable. Two-piece nylon construction makes your tent strong and light. Lighter makes it more "camper friendly."

Freestanding means exactly what it says. It stays upright with its own frame. It's simple, easy and quickly set up. However, I always stake our tent down.

Flame resistant is self-explanatory. Each night we produce about a pint of water vapor. This vapor condenses into liquid. A tent that "breathes" allows the vapor to escape. Trust me, you need this feature.

Three season simply means that the tent will do well in any weather short of heavy snow.

Beginners should use a specialty outdoor merchandiser. These stores will have personnel who actually

go camping. Most are patient and knowledgeable.

I have gotten some tremendous bargains from mail-order camping outfitters, but I do not recommend them for buying a tent. Remember you must test before you buy. If you're lucky enough to live near such an outfitter, by all means check them out.

Virtually every major retail chain has an outdoor and camping department. Forget it! Your sales person may have never slept outside four concrete walls in his or her life.

How much should you pay? A high-quality two or three-person tent that will give many years of pleasure can be purchased for \$300 to \$500. Do not be impressed by "starter specials". Yes, you can get a perfectly good tent for \$200, even \$100. They will be much heavier and less durable.

We purchased a two-person Sierra Design tent that weighs a little more than 5 pounds and folds down to 61/2" x 21". It has two overhead zip-out mesh panels for warm nights and watching stars. I can carry our "home" anywhere, on my back pack.

Purchase a good tent and it will outlast the land-yacht RV by years, and be more enjoyable and a lot less expensive than resort hotels.

Earthwise Productions, Inc.

2001 N.W. 112 Ave., Plantation Acres, FL 33323

Please send the next 12 issues of *Pickup & GO!*

Enclosed is my check or money order for \$25.00, made payable to Earthwise Productions, Inc.

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Acadia has recreational activities for everyone

Continued from Page 4.

Acadia, to see the historic natural beauty of the coastline and lose ourselves in the quiet of 40,000 acres of old-growth forest.

Driving into the park from Route 3, off U.S. 1, sandwiched between the brilliant blue sea and the looming mountains, we caught a gripping view around every corner. A panorama of colorful lobster traps bobbing in the water, fearless gulls fishing just beyond the tidepools, deep green forest and bald rock-faced mountains gave us one dilemma — we couldn't decide where to explore first.

Acadia is known as a get-away choice of the wealthy, or a favorite haunt of artists and writers. Early fall, after the summer crowds have gone, may be the ideal time to visit. Although there must have been thousands of people visiting while we

were there in September, we never had any feeling of congestion, since there is an abundance of scenic overlooks and inviting places to pull off the road and wander around. In fact, we seldom saw more than two or three couples enjoying any one spot.


Spread out across the Schoodic Peninsula and Mount Desert Island, the park offers recreational opportunities for everyone, from the most energetic and daring to the most laid-back visitor. Hikers take off to the mountains on overnight trips; we met cyclists hurtling down the mountain, seemingly without regard for life and limb; others contenting themselves with meandering, ranger-guided walks; children swimming, bicycling, playing games and enjoying the freedom that comes only from being outdoors. A ferry from Bar Harbour takes day-trips out to see

seals basking on the rocks.

Approaching dusk, we drove to the top of Cadillac Mountain, the highest point on the eastern Atlantic coast, to meet other photography enthusiasts for a "sunset shoot". We felt like we were driving above the clouds. The spectacular display of the sun reflecting off a dozen offshore islands before disappearing into the sea is a sight we won't soon forget.

In our campsite at Blackwoods in the park, we built a huge fire with wood donated by our neighbors. As we sat at our picnic table drinking wine, alternately staring into the dancing flames and marvelling at being able to see a million stars in the brilliantly clear sky, enjoying the aroma of campfire smoke, we couldn't escape the feeling that we had stepped back into another time.

Sure, there had been times when we spent a lot more on travel and accommodations. But never had we felt such deep satisfaction, or such a profound sense of being in the presence of God.

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