

# Kids' KOrner

## God Is Architect In Untamed Wyoming

People who live in Wyoming have a wholesome respect for weather.

In the current National Geographic, Thomas J. Abercrombie writes of frosty morning cattle roundups, demon avalanches — and the story of a Basque sheepherder who nearly died in an October blizzard.

"It was the dogs that saved me," recalled 50-year-old Sebastian Legarretachevarria.

The herder was breaking camp on Crooks Mountain, bringing in 1,700 sheep, when the storm hit. "Everything went white," he said. "I couldn't find my way back to my wagon. It was the only time in my life I ever got lost."

Legarretachevarria spent two days stumbling about in the drifts before breaking through an icy creek up to his waist. Unable to move his legs, he crawled under the shelter of a pine tree.

"For three more days I stayed under that tree, half crazy with cold," he said. "I dreamed about thick steaks and mushroom sauce. Finally, I prayed to God to take me to him."

The sheriff's rescue team found him 15 miles from his wagon, severely injured by frostbite.

Tears welled in Legarretachevarria's eyes as he hugged Pinto, one of two dogs that were with the herder when the disaster struck. "They stayed with me," he told Abercrombie. "We huddled together to keep warm. I wouldn't sell these dogs for a million bucks."

Wyoming, whose main highway has been closed by snow in

every month but July and August, is the nation's least populous state. Residents number fewer than half a million. The largest city, capital Cheyenne, is home to 50,000.

"God is still architect here. His cathedral mountains and awesome, endless prairies dwarf all human refinements," Abercrombie writes.

Another October blizzard found Abercrombie on horseback, helping Greg and Barbara Gardner, managers of De Ranch, gather in a herd of Angus and white-faced Hereford cattle from their 6,500-foot-high summer pasture.

Abercrombie peeled two cows of his side of the hill, then pulled up to scan the blinding whiteness. Top hand Charlie Needham found a cow Abercrombie had missed, hidden in the brush, camouflaged by an inch of snow on her back.

"I can hardly see 50 feet," Abercrombie writes. "I scrape hoarfrost off my mustache and rub my hands together. My feet feel frozen to the stirrups. With a crunch of hoofs and the creak of leather, Charlie reins up beside me and spans the snow off his chaps.

"Smell that perfume?" he smiles. "Is there anything sweeter than fresh snow on the sage!" Abercrombie was amazed that Needham was actually enjoying this.

"People say that living in Wyoming gives them a sense of freedom," he writes. "In my winter journey around this untamed state I saw them earn it. Anyone worried that the American character is becoming too homogenized can take heart: The frontier spirit



"I keep reminding myself not to take this scene for granted," said Al Ridgway, who lives near the Wyoming's National Elk Refuge near Grand Teton. Besides the glorious mountain scenery, the state offers some of the greatest skiing in the world.

is alive and well."

The name Wyoming comes from a Delaware Indian word, first given to Pennsylvania's Wyoming Valley. It means "big river flats," and it suits this state, which straddles the Continental Divide with a series of dry basin floors.

"Here, where the sky is half a man's world, you can take true measure of yourself and have the time to do so," Abercrombie writes.

Wyoming was nicknamed the Equality State for its progressive treatment of women. Most notably, in 1869 the Wyoming Territorial Legislature became the first governing body in the world to

grant women the right to vote and to hold public office.

Wyoming now leads the country in coal production. Half of its tax revenue flows from more than 13,000 oil and gas wells. Natural-gas wellheads and pipeline stations dot the sagebrush in the state's center. People have hit gas just drilling water wells. Some can light a blue flame at their kitchen faucet.

A boom-and-bust history has peppered Wyoming with abandoned settlements. On a two-lane highway heading toward the Nebraska border, a sign welcomes passers-through to Lost Springs, population nine.

Most of the state's 5 million annual visitors head for the north-west corner to Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks and to Jackson Hole.

"Ringed by mountains, the Western-chic town of Jackson sits on the southern edge of the valley called Jackson Hole," Abercrombie writes. On a busy summer day, 60,000 tourists pack its boutiques, restaurants, art galleries and ski shops.

Skiers cause the town's winter gridlock. At the top of Rendezvous Mountain, some 400 inches of snowfall makes for good powder on the longest vertical run in the United States, 4,139 feet.



Wyoming sheep rancher Bob Britain applies disposable diapers to his roommates at his flock's winter range near Muddy Creek. During an eight-day drive to reach the range, 20 ewes died while lambing, forcing Britain to shelter the orphans in his trailer. "They stank," he says of the diapers, "but not as bad as a baby's."

## Become An Entomologist

FLEMINGTON, N.J. — Are you fascinated by creepy-crawly things? Do you like watching bugs? Can you hold an insect in your hand without flinching or screaming?

If so, you may have the makings of an entomologist. An entomologist is a person who studies insects.

Why would anyone want to study insects? The answer is really quite simple: because it's fun and it's important.

Insects are amazing animals for many reasons. There are more kinds of insects (animals with six legs) than all the rest of the plants and animals in the world put together. There are as many as 30 million different kinds! The smallest insects are so small that you must use a magnifying glass to see them. They have many of the same kind of body organs we have: a heart, brain, muscles, and some have thousands of eyes. They live nearly everywhere—woods, deserts, and mountaintops. Insects can be pests because they infect us with diseases and eat our food. Because there are so many kinds of insects that do so many different things, there are many different kinds of entomologists. There are entomologists called taxonomists who name insects and study where they live, and those who learn how insects behave,

how they grow, and what diseases they have. Medical entomologists study how insects carry diseases that affect people and animals. Other entomologists study how to protect our homes, crops and food from hungry insects, or learn how insects can be controlled in ways that do not hurt the environment. Still others study bees and how they pollinate crops to provide us with food and honey.

What do you have to do to become an entomologist? For some people, nothing. Many people collect insects as a hobby. If you want to make your living as

an entomologist, however, you need to learn a lot about biology, chemistry, and math in grade school, high school and college. That seems like a lot, but that will give you the best chance to study and learn about those amazing, six-legged animals we call insects.

Help-A-Saurus is an educational program for parents provided by Rutgers Cooperative Extension. For more information about Help-A-Saurus, contact Nancy R. Spinner, Extension Home Economist of Hunterdon County, 4 Gauntt Place, Flemington, NJ 08822; (908) 788-1342.

Clue

This nutrient is important for a healthy body. Beef is a good source of this nutrient. Use the code breaker to crack the mystery message.

x	x	o	o	o		x	x	x	o	
	o					x	x		o	o
x	o	x	x	x			o	x		
		o	x	x			x	x	x	x
x	x	x	o	o			x	x	x	x
x	o					x	o	o	x	x
		x				o	o		x	o
o	o	o	x	x			o	o		
o	o	o	x	x			o			
x	o		o			x	x	x	x	o
		x	o	o		x	x	x	o	

x	A	B	x	C	x	D	x	E	x	F	x	G	H	x	I	x
x	J	x	K	x	L	x	M	x	N	o	o	P	o	Q	o	R
o	S	o	T	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	o	X	o	Y	o	Z