

IN MY PACK

(SHIRT)

For a week in Alaska last summer, I lived in **Woolrich's Stillwater 3XDRIY** lightweight cotton long-sleeve—and it's been finding its way into my pack ever since. Normally, the words "cotton" and "Alaska" don't mix, but Woolrich treats this shirt with a water-resistant finish that beads up like the DWR on a rainshell. I was able to fly-fish in a drizzle for hours without getting wet underneath, and it held back a pounding rain long enough for me to pitch a tent. Since it's 100% cotton, you also get breathability, next-to-skin softness, and none of the stink that synthetic tops produce after a few days. In mosquito country or under a desert sun, those features are mighty welcome. **\$57, men's M-XXL, woolrich.com**

(GPS)

We highlight six of our testers' favorite new models this month on pages 82–83, and here's one more: **Garmin's Edge 705**. Designed for cyclists, the 705 is smaller than most outdoor units—the size of a deck of cards—but versatile enough for hiking and running. Available with heart-rate, cadence, and power accessories, it's a true multisport navigation and training tool. Watch your heart rate, speed, incline, and more on the customizable screens, then upload it all to your computer for charting and analysis. The 705 may be the only GPS you need for all of your activities, with these backpacking-related caveats: The rechargeable battery lasts only six hours, and while you can create waypoints and navigate, you cannot change map datums. **\$TK, TK Oz., garmin.com**

(COOKBOOK)

Actually, it's much more practical than that: **BACKPACKER's Backcountry Cooking Deck** is a set of 50 packable cards with simple yet delicious recipes for meals, appetizers, snacks, and desserts—anyone for apple cobbler? The 4"x5" cards include complete cooking instructions. **\$15, mountaineersbooks.org**

The Nature Deficit

HELP SEND A KID HIKING THIS YEAR. IT'S ONE INVESTMENT YOU CAN ALWAYS COUNT ON.

THERE ARE A THOUSAND REASONS to duct tape your wallet shut right now. After watching my 401(k) crater and my kids' college savings get spanked, I'm pinching pennies and counting the extra years to retirement—same as you, no doubt. But that's not going to stop me—as crazy as it seems—from writing a check to Big City Mountaineers this winter. Here's why you should do the same.

His name is Tim. That's not his real name, because Tim is hiding from his parents. When I hiked the Sierra for a week with him and four other teens from inner-city Los Angeles, he was coming from a foster home—with a restraining order against his dad and a pessimistic view of his own prospects in a world that had only shown him violence and disappointment. A week of mentoring by BCM volunteers didn't "cure" him, but it did change him, just a bit. Along with the other boys, Tim learned how to navigate off-trail in a wilderness he didn't know existed, and he saw a glimmer of a different world—mountains, adults who cared, possibilities. Such things are in short supply these days, yet Tim—for all of his anger and doubt—told me he dreamed of studying theater at UCLA. That's the reason to support an organization like Big City Mountaineers: Because it's during the worst times that teens like Tim need the most help—and reason to hope.

If that's not enough, think of your own sanity. Recession is like a 120-pound pack: crushing, demoralizing, all-consuming. To lighten the load, we could all use a good week in the woods. And that's exactly what Big City Mountaineers can provide through a unique fundraiser it conducts. The Summit for Someone program rewards donors with a guided climb of a classic North American peak and a pile of new gear worth more than \$1,000. There are TK climbs to choose from next summer (see summitforsomeone.org), and 85 percent of what you raise goes directly to getting kids on the trail.

And in the spirit of the times, we have our own incentive program. We'll buy plane tickets for the first 10 BACKPACKER readers who raise \$5,000 each. And I'll write my own check for—gulp—\$5,000 to match. My donation will cover trip costs for 10 kids and just maybe underwrite a transformative experience for the next Tim. The gift isn't painless, but it sure feels good.