

Charge That Cell!

The Scenario: While on an early winter camping trip you get caught in a snowstorm, which you handily survive (see *Volume 22*, “*MakeShift: Snowbound*”). But when you finally hike out and return to your car, you discover that from the drop in temperature and your extended stay, your car battery is completely dead. What’s worse, even though you had a solid signal when you first arrived in the area, your cellphone battery is now also dead from the cold. But you recall seeing a house just off the trail when you first hiked in, so you head over there to check it out.

At the house you try ringing the doorbell, but it makes no sound and you get no response to your knocking. You find a key under the mat, however, and you let yourself in. You notice that the room is still warm from the gas-powered wall heater. Clearly, whoever was here must’ve just left after realizing the electricity was out — no doubt another casualty of the recent storm. So you rummage around and find a toolbox with a good assortment of tools including one full propane torch, some lamp wire, and a kerosene lamp — but no batteries of any kind, anywhere. You know that if you can just figure out a way to recharge your cellphone, you can call for help to get your car going again. But can you?

What You’ve Got: In addition to everything mentioned above, you have all your camping stuff: tent, sleeping bag, camp stove, matches, and your Swiss Army knife or Leatherman tool. (Alas, your flashlight batteries are shot, too.) But will all that be enough to fire up that magic communicator in your pocket? You tell us. Good luck!

Send a detailed description of your MakeShift solution with sketches and/or photos to makeshift@makezine.com by Aug. 26, 2011. If duplicate solutions are submitted, the winner will be determined by the quality of the explanation and presentation. The most plausible and most creative solutions will each win a MAKE T-shirt and a MAKE Pocket Ref. Think positive and include your shirt size and contact information with your solution. Good luck! For readers’ solutions to previous MakeShift challenges, visit makezine.com/makeshift.

Lee David Zlotoff is a writer/producer/director among whose numerous credits is creator of *MacGyver*. He is also president of Custom Image Concepts (customimageconcepts.com).

Photography by Jen Siska