A Backpack With Wheels?

I wouldn't have thought a backpack with wheels would actually work for backpacking, but when I saw the web site for the "Wheelpacker"(TM), I was impressed. You wear a frame that attaches you to a wheeled pack. It can even go over logs and rocks. It started me thinking about what other backpacking innovations are just waiting to be marketed. Here are a few of the things I came up with. Steal these ideas, please.Inflatable Frame BackpackWith frame-less backpacks we often put folded sleeping pads in the *4 day Masai Mara itinerary from Nairobi* pack for cushioning against our backs and some support for the load. Why not just have the part of the pack that rests against the user's back inflate. With the same technology used for lightweight self-inflating sleeping bag pads, it would only add about six ounces. The backpack could then double as a foot-bag/pad for sleeping.Taking this idea further, I imagine a self-inflating backpack that folds out into a sleeping pad. The backpack "frame" would be the pad, in a "U" shape for some rigidity in the pack. Self-inflating sleeping bag pads are as light as 14 ounces now, and frame less packs 12 ounces, so the combination could probably be made to weigh just 20 ounces.Wax Paper Food BagsPut backpacking food in wax-paper packaging instead of plastic. The packages then double as emergency fire-starters, since wax paper will usually burn even when wet.Pillow/WaterbagWhen I need to carry more water I use the plastic bladders from boxed wine. They are light, strong, and I inflate the bag with air to use as a pillow too. To market a dual-purpose water container/pillow, it just needs a soft removable covering of some sort.Jacket BackpackWhy not a frame-less backpack with a jacket that is a part of the pack? It can be folded out of the way, and the pack would have normal shoulder straps. When wearing the jacket, though, it would stabilize the pack, keep you warmer, and make it easy to push through heavy brush, because it wouldn't catch on things as easily. It is something like wearing a large jacket over a backpack, but with the weight-savings and stability that come from combining them. It could be called a "Jacket Pack-it."Backpacking GamePrint a chess/checkers board on a jacket or backpack, and you have a carry-along game that weighs nothing extra. Great for spending hours in the tent waiting out the rain. If you don't carry the pieces, stones or pine cones could work as checkers.



Backpacking gear ideas and innovations keep popping into my head as I write this. Most are based on the idea of "dual purpose" items. They may work, some may not, but it is an entertaining dose of inspiration from a backpack with wheels.