

Author sends character to hide out on Metolius

Like so many Oregonians, author Kris Lockard has fond memories of her father taking the family to hike, fish, and camp in the Metolius Basin. She loves the place — and she's got an interesting way of expressing it:

"If I were to run away someplace, that's where I'd go."

Since she's not a fugitive on the run from a killer, she is staying at her home in the Willamette Valley — but she sent the protagonist of her newly released novel "Green Ridge" here.

"My heroine lives in Portland and is trying to think of some place she could go to hide from this really homicidal daughter," she explained.

The Metolius Basin in the shadow of Green Ridge was the place.

Lockard has a point to make in her story — beyond her primary mission to tell an exciting story and entertain readers.

Her protagonist is an older woman whose adult daughter is angling to get her hands on her assets, and is willing to go to murderous lengths to do it. The plot reflects a situation Lockard says is all too real, though "Green Ridge" amps up the stakes for the sake of the tale. People she knows have experienced that kind of pressure to liquidate to the benefit of children.

"I've seen this happen," she said. "Not to the extreme that's in my book. I just think that's so wrong. That's one of the messages of my book."

Another is that there's still plenty of life left in the last years.

"Once you think your life



Kris Lockard.

PHOTO PROVIDED

is over, don't give up on it — because you never know what's going to happen," she says.

Lockard is a photographer, and her own photograph of Three Fingers Jack taken from Green Ridge graces the cover of her book. She says she got a lot of help in the writing process, particularly from friends in law enforcement. In Sisters Country, Roger White, owner of the Camp Sherman Store, and Maret Pajutee, Sisters Ranger District ecologist, provided vital information. They are listed inside the front cover of the book.

"I could not have done that book without the help of those people in the front of the book," Lockard says.

Writing the novel was an all-in experience that took a full year, with the vital support of an understanding husband. Lockard says she's all through writing novels ... except for that idea for a sequel...

"Green Ridge" is available in Sisters at Paulina Springs Books, 252 W. Hood Ave.; 541-549-0866.

Choosing a good herbal supplement

By Dr. Kim Hapke, ND
Columnist

Recent DNA tests ordered by New York State's attorney general's office concluded four out of five herbal products selected for testing at stores such as Walgreens and Target contain none of the herbs listed on the jars. Instead they contained substances like powdered rice and house plants.

Because these products are not tested regularly by the FDA, unethical companies have been getting away with this type of behavior. One course of action would be to avoid the industry entirely. That would be a shame, both for ethical companies carefully crafting plant medicine, and for people who could benefit from it. Herbal medicine is easily accessible, affordable, and effective for many conditions.

For people who would still like to benefit from this medicine, a few guidelines can increase your chances of getting a well-made product.

- Avoid the latest trendy herb. Just read a great study on ginkgo? One of the tested products from Target was a ginkgo product that contained no ginkgo. If you have read an intriguing study, so have hundreds of thousands of others. They are now racing to the store to see if it works for them. The problem? Ginkgo is a slow-growing tree, the

world's supply doesn't rapidly increase when demand does. This means unethical suppliers will fill demand with whatever leaves they can find. Find a good supplier, or look for an unsung hero, i.e., a plentiful herb that can do similar things. In this case a possible substitute is rosemary.

Caution—These health claims are so commonly sought-after, any product claiming one of these benefits should cause you to be extra vigorous in following the other guidelines: weight loss, increased sexual performance, increased athletic performance, anti-aging and increased energy.

- Let your senses guide you: I like to use tinctures because one can easily taste the difference between the different herbs. A capsule can be broken open and the powder tasted — you should be able to taste garlic if it is one of the ingredients. Good herbal capsules will often taste strong and bitter — cheap fillers like powdered rice are bland and inoffensive. If buying dry herbs for tea, a larger-cut product will last longer and help you recognize it visually. Dry products should have a distinctive smell; even a mild green herb should have a green grassy smell. Lack of a smell may mean the product is old and less effective.

- Begin with what you know: We may not all be familiar with herbal

medicine, but we all are familiar with eating. Trying herbs or a new company for the first time? Start with something you recognize. Peppermint, garlic, rosemary and licorice are all common medicinal herbs. If a company's version of these taste strongly recognizable, the tinctures verging on overwhelming, the chances are better that they will be doing a good job with other herbs.

- Embrace a little disappointment: Ethical companies will sometimes run out of product, because there are limited supplies of certain herbs, especially if gathered in the wild (Mother Nature is not influenced by demands of the marketplace). This is why shopping for cheap herbs at large chains is a bad idea. They will try to fill demand continually and cheaply (really, we have to blame ourselves, it's what we wanted, right?). So will their suppliers — hence, house plants in your capsules. An ethical company can guide you to effective substitutes until they can restock the product you are looking for.

Many people live in this area to interact with nature for the benefits it brings to mind and body. Safely using medicinal plants is another way we can benefit from this interaction.

Kim Hapke, ND, is a naturopathic doctor practicing in Sisters.

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