

Miller

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Mounds of pounds: Someone mentioned a new buzz phrase making the rounds of the sequestered the other day, "the quarantine 15."

It's similar to the infamous "freshman 15" of college dorm food, packaged and drive-through dining and midnight study-session binge-snacking, avoidupois-elevating diet that packs on the surplus pounds during the first year of college.

Confession time: Jigsaw puzzles, marathons reading and TV watching sessions that can develop a chronic nibble-fetish during self-quarantine are no substitute for daily gym workouts, wilderness hiking and fishing trips.

Although walking Harry the hound, setting up the garden and working in the yard provide some toning time.

On the upside of the dilemma, gloving and masking up to go to the

grocery store can provide a real disincentive for stocking up on carbs and sugars.

On the downside, there are signs in the windows of our favorite local family Mexican and Asian restaurants that phone orders are available for takeout.

This is what is referred to as the balance of nature.

A viral flop: I figured that a good stay-home project would be trying to grow a corona of my own in the form of a beard.

It was an epic fail; five days of scrawny, gray fuzz.

With the added disincentive that it was an itchy irritation under a mask.

Thought for the week: The fish that you are trying to catch doesn't care how important or insignificant you are. — Henry. Although late President Herbert Hoover said it best: "All men are equal before fish."

Contact Henry Miller via email at HenryMillerSJ@gmail.com

RESTAURANT INSPECTIONS: LA HACIENDA REAL

Editor's note: With state-wide restrictions on in-person restaurant dining, Statesman Journal restaurant inspection reports will be limited due to procedure changes at the county level.

Marion County Environmental Health is not currently conducting routine in-person inspections of restaurants. In-person inspections are currently reserved for situations such as complaints regarding immediate health risks. Environmental health staff is calling all licensed facilities and documenting their phone consultations for food safety and social distancing measures, the department said.

Polk County Environmental Health is contacting restaurants to give them the option of an in-person inspection or phone consultation. Phone consultations do not take the place of a formal inspection. In-person inspections will be rescheduled.

ABOUT RESTAURANT INSPECTIONS

This is a snapshot of the inspections conducted by the Marion and Polk County health departments.

Twice annually, licensed restaurants receive unannounced inspections that focus on food temperatures, food preparation practices, worker hygiene, dish-washing and sanitizing, and equipment and facility cleanliness.

Violations: Restaurant scores are based on a 100-point scale. Priority violations deduct 5 points, and priority foundation violations deduct 3 points. Violations recorded on consecutive inspections result in point deductions being doubled.

Scoring: Scores of 70 or higher are considered compliant. Restaurants scoring below 70 must be re-inspected within 30 days or face closure or other administrative action. Restaurants display a placard by the entrance to indicate whether they have passed their last inspection.

POLK COUNTY

Semi-annual restaurant inspections from April 13 to 20.

Garibaldi Mexican Restaurant

Location: 1111 Edgewater St. NW, Salem
Date: April 16
Score: 100
No priority violations

Jersey Mike's

Location: 555 Edgewater St. NW, Salem
Date: April 16
Score: 100
No priority violations

La Hacienda Real

Location: 475 Taggart Drive NW, Salem
Date: April 15
Score: 100
No priority violations

tions

Muchas Gracias Mexican Food

Location: 365 E Ellen Ave., Dallas
Date: April 20
Score: 100
No priority violations

Subway

Location: 1554 Edgewater St. NW, Salem
Date: April 13
Score: 100
No priority violations

Urban Grange Coffee and Bakery Company

Location: 1594 Edgewater St. NW #180, Salem
Date: April 13
Score: 97
Priority violations
■ Unnecessary poisonous or toxic materials are on the premises, specifically: WD-40 is stored beside tea boxes in the front service area where food is served. **Point deduction: 3.**

Mountains

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The hike felt longer than the 4.6 miles we'd actually traveled. Thick clouds of mosquitoes provided company during dinner, and we were happy to watch the first day of our journey disappear into starlight.

Day 2: Whoa ... (Slide Lake to Strawberry Lake)

After a long first day, Robyn and I decided to spend our only full day in the wilderness focusing on relaxation.

We set out from camp early, and after a mere 2.7 miles came across a sight that turns even the most eloquent speakers into monosyllabic cavemen (or cavelladies).

"Whoa ...," I said. "Un-Huh," said my wife.

Strawberry Lake shimmers wide and blue, surrounded on both sides by rugged mountain peaks and glassy rivers that roll into the 36-acre body of water. On the western shoreline, we found a

camping spot alongside a creek overlooking the lake.

I spent the morning fly-fishing. The stocked lake offers brook trout (which I caught) and rainbow trout (not so much), while Robyn spent the morning reading and napping in a wildflower meadow along the shoreline.

Now we're talking. As the afternoon heated up, we left our campsite and day-hiked into the most scenic area of the wilderness.

Forty-foot Strawberry Falls trail, frothing and foaming in the sunlight. Just beyond, a half-mile spur brought us to yet another "whoa ..." worthy destination.

Wrapped in silver cliffs and filled with turquoise water, Little Strawberry Lake is even more spectacular than its larger brother. An afternoon spent swimming in its frozen water and warming up in the sunshine was about as close to pure relaxation as it gets.

In the evening, after a dinner of pasta and pesto, a soft summer rain swept across the mountains,



Strawberry Falls in the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness. ZACH URNESS/STATESMAN JOURNAL

leaving behind the smell of fresh pine and a rainbow stretching above the lake.

I've been blessed with some good days during my years of Oregon exploration, but that second day in the Strawberry Mountain Wilderness is one that'll stick.

Day 3: The sprint home (Strawberry Lake to High Lake Trailhead)

All good things must end, of course, and we woke up ready for the journey home.

The final day was most difficult in terms of physical exertion, as the trail back to our car required climbing 2,080 feet up the mountain pass below Strawberry Mountain.

We encountered more snow near the 8,300-foot saddle, and, painful though it was, passed up the opportunity to climb to the summit of 9,038-foot namesake of the wilderness. (A trail climbs 900 feet in one mile to the summit).

Instead, we followed the trail and an old road out of the official wilderness to Road 1640, which connects to High Lake Trailhead.

As we reached the truck and prepared to leave, I couldn't help wishing we had one more day.

A night spent camping at Little Strawberry Lake, and enough time to ascend Strawberry Mountain, would have made an outstanding trip just about perfect.

But regret is a pointless emotion in a place this beautiful. And so we drove downhill to the desert below — where the temperature was, indeed, around 100 degrees — and began the sprint back to Salem, the craggy peaks of the Strawberry Mountains drifting away in the rear-view mirror.

Note: Since the writing of this story, the area near Strawberry Mountain has been impacted by wild-fire, but it's overall impact on the region is limited.

Zach's itinerary

Day 1: High Lake Trailhead to Slide Lake, 4.6 miles, difficult
Day 2: Slide Lake to

Strawberry Lake, 3.4*, easy

Day 3: Strawberry Lake to Road 1640/High Lake Trailhead, 6.5, difficult

Total: 14.5 miles, 3,129 feet of climb

* Day 2 also included a three-mile day-hike to Little Strawberry Lake

Strawberry Mountain Wilderness

General location: Between John Day and Prairie City in Eastern Oregon's Malheur National Forest

Size: 68,700 acres

Created: Originally designated by the Wilderness Act of 1964, doubled in size by the Oregon Wilderness Act in 1984.

Trails: There are around 125 miles of trails in the wilderness, the most popular of which is the Strawberry Lake Basin via Strawberry Campground

Difficulty: Easy to strenuous

Small car access: All trailheads require driving on dirt roads but are fine for low-clearance passenger cars.

Campsites: Strawberry Campground, the trailhead for Strawberry Lake, offers 10 campsites, running water and bathrooms

Most popular trip: The majority of people who visit the wilderness take day-hikes or short backpacking trips from Strawberry Campground into the Strawberry Lake Basin.

Maps/information: Prairie City Ranger District, 327 SW Front St., (541) 820-3800, or Blue Mountain Ranger District, 431 Patterson Bridge

Road., John Day, (541) 575-3000

Access: The two best trailheads are High Lake Trailhead (most easily accessed from John Day) and Strawberry Campground (accessed via Prairie City).

Directions

High Lake Trailhead (GPS: N44 16.616 W118 41.945): From John Day follow Highway 375 south 10 miles. Turn left on Road 65 at a sign for Wiki-up Campground and continue 13.6 miles. Turn left on Road 16 toward Logan Valley for 2.5 miles and turn left onto gravel Road 1640 and follow it 10 miles to its end. (You'll pass a trailhead just before reaching High Lake Trailhead. If you're doing the full backpacking loop, this is where you'll eventually come out).

Strawberry Campground (GPS: N44 19.158 W118 40.437): From Prairie City off Highway 26, turn right onto Main Street and follow it to Bridge Street. Follow the pointers for Strawberry Campground south onto Strawberry Road for 10 miles to its end at the campground.

Zach Urness has been an outdoors reporter, photographer and videographer in Oregon for 12 years. To support his work, subscribe to the Statesman Journal.

Urness is the author of "Best Hikes with Kids: Oregon" and "Hiking Southern Oregon." He can be reached at zurness@statesmanjournal.com or (503) 399-6801. Find him on Twitter at @ZachsORoutdoors.



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