



A panorama of Mount Washington as seen from East Saddle to Bob Thumb with Mount Jefferson on the horizon in April 2021. WILLIAM SULLIVAN/FOR THE REGISTER-GUARD

Hike

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Since then, I had begun to wonder if it might in fact be easier to reach that pass in winter. Snow would cover up the boulders and brush that had made Bob so hard to approach.

Lured by this logic, I set out last April with an experienced snowshoer (Scott Hovis), a blizzard-proof tent and survival gear on a three-day expedition, The Quest for Bob.

A complicated legal rationale

At this point I should pause to explain why this peak has no official name. Even its famous neighbor has had name troubles. Originally known to pioneers as Squawtit Butte, Mount Washington won its current handle as part of a promotional scheme to turn the Cascades into a Presidential Range like the one in New Hampshire. After Mount Adams and Mount Jefferson,

enthusiasm for this idea flagged, so Bob never became Mount McKinley.

Instead, in 1964, Bob became part of the Mount Washington Wilderness. That congressional act stipulates that Wilderness should remain largely free of the marks of man. The Forest Service now issues limited permits for some day hikes and all overnight trips at Mount Washington in summer in order to prevent damage from overuse. Whenever a new trail is built, an old one must be demolished to make sure the Wilderness stays wild.

Similarly, no new names are allowed on features within an official Wilderness. Names are a mark of man and should not clutter the blank spots on the map.

I agree with this policy. Still, it has caused me some difficulty as a guidebook author. How am I supposed to describe a hike to a destination with no name?

When I added a hike to a nameless but very scenic lake in the crater of Broken Tip, I was careful to stress that the pool had no name. Hikers in the Bend area now routinely call it “No Name Lake.” But the Oregon Board of Geographic Names will never condone that title, both because of the Wilderness rule and because I’m pretty sure Oregon already has a No Name Lake. I think we also have a Nameless Lake and a dozen Lost Lakes, so those suggestions won’t get much traction either.

The case for Bob is even weaker. And no, my wife and I didn’t pick the name in honor of her sister’s dog, or a radio station, or even Bumstead, the ski patroller. We have no rational excuse for our choice.

Friends have snickered at my obsession with Bob, an overlooked crag. But I am here to tell you that Bob is one of the most spectacular winter destinations in Oregon.

Bob stands 6 miles from the Ray Benson Sno-Park, a huge and popular winter recreation center at Santiam Pass. Admittedly, the trek to Bob is not for the unprepared. The last 4 miles are trailless, gaining 1,800 feet of elevation. That’s a long way through the snow in one day, so my snowshoeing colleague and I carried our packs in two-thirds of the way and set up a base camp at a nameless lake at the foot of Mount Washington.

The lake where we camped has a great view, but it really has no name, and it’s not even always a lake. It’s a circular meadow that fills with water during the snowmelt of May and June. When covered with winter snow, it’s hard to tell if there’s a lake underneath or not.

Because this sometimes-lake is in an old wildfire burn area, it would be less fun to visit in summer. In winter the fallen, charred logs are covered with snow and the standing snags cast shadows that look like barcodes. Unlike live trees, snags do not hamper snowshoers by blocking views and pitting the terrain with tree wells.

Still, the landscape here is so confusingly repetitive that you will probably need a GPS app on your phone to find your way to the lake. If you go, the location is 44.3578 -122.838.

Obituaries

Marsha L. Polzel

SILVERTON - Born to Roy and Velda Joyce in Thousand Oaks, Ca, she spent most of her early years growing up as one of 6 siblings, near Port Hueneme. They spent their time camping and enjoying time outdoors doing family activities. She Graduated from Thousand Oaks HS and spent some time in Ventura before settling into Oakview to raise her family. She was a stay-at-home mom, to her two boys, while her husband was away in the oil fields. When the boys were teens they decided as a family to move to Oregon, trying out several locations before finally settling into Silverton Or. She later divorced but continued to be an active part of her son’s lives, as well as her grandchildren’s lives. She met her partner Terry whom she enjoyed spending time together and watching football with him.

She is survived by her sisters Annie and Becky. Her kids Eric and Brian. Grandkids Patrick, Drake, and Isabelle, as well as 3 great grandkids.

Arrangement’s by Unger funeral Chapel

Mary Winford McCarty

SILVERTON -

On Wednesday, January 26, 2022, Mary passed away peacefully at the age of 81. She was preceded in death by her husband Elmer Ray McCarty, survived by her children Tina Stadel, & Ray McCarty as well as many grandchildren, and numerous great – grandchildren. Mary was a loving, and caring woman that loved her family very much.

A graveside service will be held at Valley View Cemetery on Thursday, February 3, 2022 at 2:00 pm.

Arrangements made by Unger Funeral Chapel

Frankie B. Roberts

SILVERTON - Dec. 2, 1933 – Dec. 18, 2021

Frankie B. Roberts was born in Topeka, Kansas on December 2, 1933. He worked at Brackett Stripping, Industrial Chrome, Boat Factory, last worked at Neilsen Metal in Salem, Oregon. He was a professional horseshoe pitcher & received many awards.

Frankie is survived by his wife Betty Roberts of 53 years, David Roberts of Lawrence, Kansas, Lee Ann Roberts of Albuquerque, New Mexico, Karlene Allan of Lawrence, Kansas, Tina Smith of Deltona, Florida, Nancy King of Lawrence, Kansas. Siblings; Kay Roscoe of Lebanon, Oregon, Don Roberts of Topeka, Kansas, Bob Roberts of Napa, Idaho, & Jim Roberts of Tecumseh, Kansas.

Frankie is preceded in death by his parents Frank & Vella Roberts. Dixie Bradhurst, Herb Roberts & two step-sons Ellis & tom Bryant with numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren, nieces, & nephews.

OBITUARY POLICY

Obituaries are published seven days a week in the Statesman Journal. Death notices are included at no charge; a fee applies to obituaries that include additional information and/or photos. Obituaries also appear online at www.StatesmanJournal.com

To place an obituary, please go to our website www.StatesmanJournal.com/obituaries before 1 p.m. Monday through Friday. Obituaries submitted and approved during business hours will publish when requested.

Miller

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vegetables,” which would replace the loss of the production of meat.

There are exceptions, though.

“After an animal dies of natural causes, such as old age, IP13 would not prohibit someone in Oregon from processing their body into meat, leather, or fur for use or consumption,” again quoting the FAQ section.

Picture it.

“What are you guys doing?”

“Keeping an eye on old Bessie over there by the barn. She’s looking a might poorly.”

“Yea. I thought I heard her cough.”

One wag on an anti-IP13 web posting summed it up this way: “Talk about aged beef.”

Another exception is the importation into Oregon of “meat, leather, or fur” from out of state.

Along with lines of refrigerated semis coming into the Beaver State, one can envision mega-mall meat palaces springing up in Vancouver, Wash., and at Hilt, Calif., home of the first non-state-run liquor store south of the border.

A non-starter for me is that under the provisions of IP 13, activities such as fishing, hunting and trapping would be criminalized.

Don’t cast a line if you can’t do the time.

Needless to say, organizations such as the Oregon Farm Bureau and the Oregon Hunters Association are vehemently opposed to the initiative.

All of the organizations do have one thing in common, from the Farm Bureau and OHA to Yes on IP 13, a “click to donate” button on their web sites.

In one sense, IP13 is what’s referred to as mobilizing information, or to overuse the already threadbare expression, it fires up the base.

And it swells the coffers as well as inflaming the passions of those on both sides.

As I said in the introduction, there’s a faint whiff of the ersatz pants-on-poodles Society for Indecency to Naked Animals in the current ballot efforts.

But in searching for information about the lark, there was a story about a woman who wanted to donate \$4,000 to SINA to put clothes on critters.

So stay tuned.

After camping a night on the snow — staying warm in thick down sleeping bags atop inflatable backpacking mattresses — we set out with lighter packs on the second day of our quest, snowshoeing straight toward Bob.

As we approached, I could tell that Bob originally was part of the Mount Washington stratovolcano. The tilted lava layer that caps Bob must once have been a flow on the larger mountain, before erosion stripped Mount Washington to a stump with its old lava pug as a spire. An orange layer of welded cinders on Bob matches an orange stripe on Mount Washington’s east cliff. The steeper exposure there has eroded out a couple of interesting rock arches.

The last part of the climb to Bob should only be attempted when avalanche danger is nil. It was, but we still chose a route amid alpine Christmas trees, assuming that avalanches had not mowed through those areas in recent years.

No need for labels

Two ravens circled Bob, eyeing us at each circuit, croaking like strangled crows.

Wind blew plumes of smoke-like snow from ridge-top cornices — dangerous, overhanging curls of ice that looked like frozen waves about to crash.

Near the pass, ladybugs crawled through the grainy snow. Ladybugs? We counted 20. Apparently these tiny beetles huddle together under mountain rocks to survive the winter and crawl out when the sun shines.

Finally we crested the pass between Bob and Mount Washington only to discover that it is a false pass. We had merely reached the lip of an old cirque. An Ice Age glacier must have scoured out this bowl, about the size of a baseball diamond, amputating Bob from the volcano.

Beyond the cirque another steep climb brought us to the actual pass, with a 200-foot sheer drop ahead. To the left, Bob’s orange wall rose to a tilted snowcap, as jaunty as a white beret. To the right, the powdered sugar of rime frost clung to the 1,000-foot cliff of Mount Washington’s summit. To the north and south our view stretched from Mount Jefferson to the Three Sisters.

Icy winds whipped about us at that vertiginous pass. But when we retreated down to the hollow of the secret cirque, we were able to spread out our lunch in a sunny calm.

Protected on either side by cathedrals of stone, I decided that my Quest for Bob had been wrong from the start. The greatest treasures of Wilderness should not be labeled.

Such places need no names.

William Sullivan is the author of 22 books, including “The Ship in the Woods” and the updated “100 Hikes” series for Oregon. Learn more at oregonhiking.com.



E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area Pond north of Corvallis is scheduled to be stocked the week of Feb. 7-11. A parking permit, which must be purchased in advanced, is required. HENRY MILLER / SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN JOURNAL

ELSEWHERE

Trout stocking next week (Feb. 7-11): Walling Pond, 16th and McGilchrist in Salem (1,400 keeper-size); Timber Linn Lake (900 keepers) and Waverly Lake (900 keepers) both in Albany; E.E. Wilson Wildlife Area Pond north of Corvallis (1,000 keepers; parking permit required); Alton Baker Canoe Canal in Eugene (1,000 keepers); Junction City Pond south of Junction City (1,200 keepers).

Online halibut meeting: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife will hold an online meeting at 6 p.m. Feb. 8 to talk about and take angler ideas for 2022 all-depth halibut fishing seasons offshore between Cape Falcon and Humbug Mountain. Information and links to the meeting are online at ODFW to hold Public Meeting Feb 8: Central Oregon Coast Recreational Spring All-Depth Halibut Season

Thought for the week: “Life is like a merry-go-round. They both have horses.” – line from the “Bob Newhart Show”

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