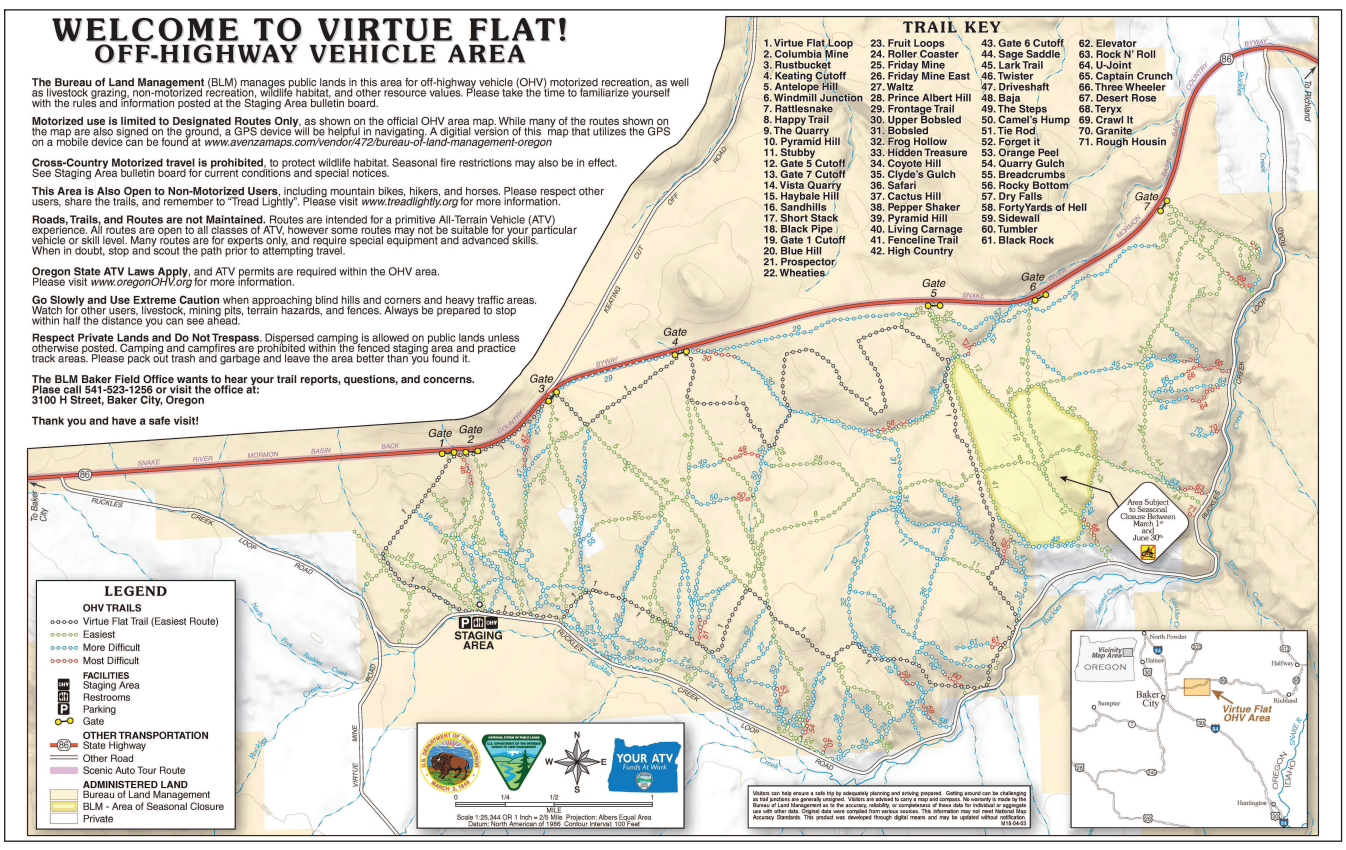

HIKING

Continued from Page 1B

I came across a few soft spots, mainly in sheltered depressions where the melting snow must have formed a temporary puddle.

But most everywhere else the ground was either the typical desert hardpan, or churned to a fine dust by the passage of rubber tires.

I was a trifle early for flowers.

I did find a few clumps of grass widows thrusting from the soil, their light green stalks fresh and conspicuous against the dull desert backdrop of dun and gray. But the pale pink blossoms were still some days from brightening the scene.

Much about the desert is similarly ephemeral. I like that — like knowing that what I see is so brief, and the more precious for it.

I like to hike in the bottom of the dry gulches, where water might flow only once a decade if a summer thundershower rages long enough and over just the right patch of ground. I like to imagine what this shortest lived of streams looks like, to wonder how curious the chuckle of water tumbling between stones must sound like in a place where the only reliable noise is the wind.

I like to see how different the color of the soil is on the cusp of spring — as dark as chocolate pudding on the north aspects where the sun never lies for long and the moisture lingers, but trending to tan and even white on the sun-drenched south slopes, where in winter the snow comes off first.

But amid so much of a temporary nature there are all around the great mountains, solid and permanent.

Virtue Flat lacks any major high points, but from any of the modest ridges you can see at least one peak or range — and sometimes a few at once.

(Despite its name, most of the area is decidedly not flat. The actual Virtue Flat is mainly south of Ruckles Creek Road.)

The Wallowas, across Keating Valley to the northeast, dominate the scenery, as they do from so much of the region.

Parts of the Elkhorns jut above the intervening hills to the west, most notably the distinctive pyramid of Elkhorn Peak, and to the southeast loom both Lookout Mountain, a singular snowy dome, and its twin-summited neighbor, Little Lookout.

On the eastern horizon the visible peaks are all in Idaho.

The main parking area for Virtue Flat is just north of Ruckles Creek Road near the western edge of the area (see map above).

Small section of area closed

A small section of the BLM's Virtue Flat Off-Highway Vehicle Area about 7 miles east of Baker City is closed to public entry as of March 1, and the closure will continue through June 30. The map above shows the closure area, which is on the east side of Virtue Flat.

The closure affects 250 acres of the 5,000-acre area, which is popular with ATV riders and mountain bikers, and is intended to protect natural resources. The closure affects all types of use, including hiking, horseback riding and travel by motor vehicles.

NUTRITION

Continued from Page 2B

Chuck in Albany, Oregon, writes: "I read your column in the Democrat-Herald and look forward to seeing it. I like reading recipes and frequently see unsalted butter as an ingredient. My wife says there's no difference between salted and unsalted. Can you clarify this for us?"

Dear Chuck, According to the butter experts at landolakes.com, the only difference between salted and unsalted butter is salt. Salted butter has 90 milligrams of sodium per tablespoon; unsalted butter has none. You can use both interchangeably in recipes but some recipes specify unsalted butter to better control the flavor of the final product. Unsalted butter also lets the natural taste of food come through, say some experts.

Marilyn writes: "I am having a smoothie every day to boost my protein intake for my aging years. There are so many different types of protein powder, I'd like to know what the best choice is for someone who is not vegetarian or vegan. I've just been using the one with the most protein but is there a quality I should consider? Thank you."

You're right, Marilyn. Protein is available from a variety of sources. And their quality differs as well. Whey protein from milk, for example, was once discarded as a useless byproduct of cheese production. It is now recognized as a rich and highly digestible source of essential amino acids (building blocks of muscle and other proteins in the body). Several studies have shown that whey protein — along with resistance exercise — can help prevent age-related muscle loss. That might be a good choice for you.

CONFLICTS

Continued from Page 2B

Taking coenzyme Q-10 can decrease:

• The effectiveness of warfarin

• Your blood pressure if you also take a calcium channel blocker, such as diltiazem (Cardizem, Dilacor XR, others)

Danshen can interact strongly with certain heart medications, including:

• Anticoagulants. Taking danshen significantly increases your risk of bleeding if you also take warfarin or another anticoagulant, such as clopidogrel (Plavix) or aspirin.

• Calcium channel blockers. Taking danshen increases your risk of low blood pressure if you also take diltiazem or another calcium channel blocker.

• Digoxin (Lanoxin). Taking danshen increases the effects of digoxin — which is used to treat a variety of heart conditions — and puts you at risk of irregular heartbeat (arrhythmia).

Evening primrose may increase your risk of bleeding if you also take an anticoagulant, such as aspirin, clopidogrel and warfarin.

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- Baker City Fire Dept.
- Haines Sell-Rite
- Idle Hour
- Salvation Army

114 Self-Help Group Meetings

AA MEETINGS
Wednesday Nights, 7-8:15pm. Fort Union Grange Hall, corner of McAlister & Gekeler Lanes. For more info, call 541-786-1222

AL-ANON Attitude of Gratitude. Wednesdays, 12:15-1:30pm. Faith Lutheran Church. 12th & Gekeler, La Grande. 541-786-2051

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS
Change Eating Habits
Friday 8:45 A.M.
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DO YOU HAVE..... HURTS, HABITS and/or HANG UPS?
12 Step Biblical Support
Harvest Church
3720 Birch St. Baker City
Thurs., 6:30 - 8:30 PM

OVEREATERS ANONYMOUS
Tues., Noon - 1 PM
Baker County Library
(Archive Room)
2400 Resort St
541-540-5326

AL-ANON
Concerned about someone else's drinking?
Saturday, 9 a.m.
Northeast OR
Compassion Center
1250 Hughes Ln.
Baker City
(509)420-0495

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS
Goin' Straight Group
Meetings:
Mon. - Tues.
Thurs. & Fri. ~ 8 PM
Episcopal Church
Basement
2177 1st Street
Baker City

114 Self-Help Group Meetings

AA HOTLINE
Questions: Call 541-624-5117
www.oregonaadistrict29.org

PARKINSON'S SUPPORT GROUP, open to those with Parkinson's/Caregiver's. Contact Judith Sather at 208-855-9199. **Group will resume the Third Monday in April 2020 at 4:30pm at GRH**

AL-ANON FAMILY GROUP
(support for family & friends of Alcoholics)
Tuesday evenings
Joseph Methodist Church
(basement on northside)
Joseph, OR
6-7pm. Contact 541-398-1398

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114 Self-Help Group Meetings

AL-ANON, Cove. Keep coming back. Mondays, 7-8pm. Calvary Baptist Church. 707 Main, Cove.

Someone's drinking a problem?
AL-ANON
Monday at Noon
Presbyterian Church
(Music Room, Upstairs)
1995 4th St.
(Use Washington Ave.)
541-523-5851
Baker City

Do You Have A Friend Or Family Member With A Drinking Problem?
ALANON is for ***YOU!***
Wed., 12:00 - 1:00 PM
(All are Welcomed)
Baker County Library
2400 Resort St.
More Info.: (509) 420-0010

WALLOWA COUNTY AA MEETINGS

Enterprise

MONDAYS
• Enterprise Group
7:00 pm
113.5 E Main St.

TUESDAYS
• Enterprise Group
12 - 1:00 pm
113.5 E Main St.
• Enterprise Group
7 - 8:00 pm
(Big Bk Study)
113.5 E Main St.

WEDNESDAYS
• Enterprise Group
7:00 pm
113.5 E Main St.

THURSDAYS
• Enterprise Group
12 - 1:00 pm
113.5 E Main St.
• All Saints (Mens Mtg)
7:00 pm
113.5 E Main St.
• Grapevine Meeting
301 S. Lake; 5:30 pm

FRIDAYS
• Enterprise Group
7:00 pm
113.5 E Main St.

SATURDAYS
• Enterprise Group
7:00 pm
113.5 E Main St.

City of Joseph

MONDAYS
• Grace and Dignity
(Womans Mtg)
Joseph United
Methodist Church; 6:00 pm
301 S. Lake St,
Corner 3rd & Lake/Side Stairs, Lake St

WEDNESDAYS
• Grace and Dignity
(Womans Mtg) 12 pm
301 S. Lake St.,
Church Basement

City of Wallowa

SUNDAYS
• Church of Christ
504 w. 2nd St.; 5:00 pm

SATURDAYS
• Church of Christ
504 w. 2nd St.; 12:00 pm

Questions call
AA Hotline:

114 Self-Help Group Meetings

UNION COUNTY AA MEETINGS LA GRANDE

MONDAYS
Primary Purpose Group
12 - 1:00pm
2620 Bearco Loop

TUESDAYS
Into Action Group
12 - 1:00 pm
Presbyterian Church
1308 Washington Ave.
(entry 6th & Spring St.)

Surrender Group
7 - 8:00 pm
2620 Bearco Loop

City of Elgin
Greater Elgin Group
7- 8 :00 pm
St. Mary's Catholic Church
93 S 12 St., Elgin

WEDNESDAYS
Primary Purpose Group
12 - 1:00 pm
2620 Bearco Loop

Surrender Group
7 - 8:00 pm
2620 Bearco Loop

Island City
Soul Sister's
5:30 p.m.
10801 Walton Rd.
Blue Springs Apartments
Community Room

Turning Point Group
7 - 8:15 pm
63161 Gekeler Lane
Fort Union Grange Hall
(Corner of McAllister & Gekeler)

THURSDAYS
Surrender Group
7 - 8:00 pm
2620 Bearco Loop

City of Cove
Cove Group
7 - 8:00 pm
Baptist Church
707 Main St.

FRIDAYS
Primary Purpose Group
12 - 1:00 pm
2620 Bearco Loop

A.A. Book Study
6:00 - 7:00 pm
2620 Bearco Loop

City of Elgin
Elgin Group
(Winter only)
6:00 PM
70564 Valley View Rd
(in shop)

SATURDAYS
Surrender Group
10 - 11:00 am
2620 Bearco Loop

Grande Ronde Valley Group
7 - 8:00 pm
Presbyterian Church
1308 Washington Ave.
(entry 6th & Spring St.)

SUNDAYS
Miracles Meeting
10 - 11:00 am
2620 Bearco Loop

Questions call
AA Hotline: 541-624-5117
www.oregonaadistrict29.org

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