

Winding Trails: by Al Hobart

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Illinois Valley News

Skiing Bigelow Lakes

Two weeks of continuous sunny warm spring weather had me fooled into thinking our ski frolicking days were numbered for this season, except possibly in the high Cascades. But even in our lower Siskiyou there is still fun to be had on the freewheeling runners, as Bill and I found out just yesterday when we made a ski trip into Bigelow Lakes basin.

Last week we did an 18-mile x-c trip into the fabulous Mountain Lakes Wild Area, southeast of Lake of the Woods, Bill, Bob Huff, and I. Our destination was Harriette Lake, whose area is several acres in extent, a jewel of a lake nestled high in a setting of some

of the grandest scenery in the Cascades, bounded on the east and south; by steep rocky mountains which, with the lovely lake at their feet, possess a wild beauty that can not be conveyed by mere description.

Between Lake Como, which lay on our route, and Harriette Lake we had a high steep ridge to go over, the very sight of which caused me to quake in my ski boots. To a pair of experts like Bill and Bob such hair raising obstacles are taken in stride. But to a hopeful tyro who has scarcely outgrown his skiing pinfeathers, situations are occasionally encountered that, to him, appear downright hazardous, if not suicidal. This was one of them. By careful traversing and side-stepping I worked my way up in their wake, trying to absorb Bill's words of encouragement

and instruction, but feeling like a lamb being led to the slaughter. Looking down that steep hard slope from my precarious spot high on its side, I stated shamelessly that on the return trip I'd remove my skis and go back down on my heels.

But I had reckoned without my coach. With Bill's careful guidance I even skied down the even scarier east slope onto Harriette Lake, after which we re-waxed and hit the long, enjoyable back trail. This route is to be an important x-c ski trail, one of the many being established by Bill for the benefit of the growing number of x-c enthusiasts who are eager to see more of the unbelievably wonderful winter scenery that can only be enjoyed by cross-country ski touring.

I didn't know about the impending Bigelow

Lakes ski trip till early yesterday morning, when a stationwagon-load of Pruitts – Bill, Claudette, Bill's dad, and little Billie – came jeeping up the lane to put an end to my breakfast-table reading, and incidentally, to rescue me from a day of boring homework. Bill, with his sensitive ski-trail nose ever sniffing at the high scenic back country, had been wanting to investigate the beautiful Bigelow Lakes Basin for some time, and of course he knew just where to find an eager companion for the trip. The twin lakes, separated by a low ridge, lie just under Lake Mt. on the north and the high ridge dominated by Mt. Elijah to the east, with Oregon Caves a few miles south.

With the two jeeps we all drove to the foot of the winding Caves road. There

we separated, Bill and I driving on up to the Caves, where our tour was to begin, the others going off on a bottle-hunting trip of their own.

Bill and I clambered to the top of the ridge above Oregon Caves, walking over patchy snow part of the way. On the high ridge the snow pack was solid and up to 10 ft. deep. We skied for about 4 miles, to the high rim above Upper Bigelow Lake, having followed the top of the ridge all the way, the trail being impossible to follow. With short traverses and much side-stepping we went down over the snow-covered rocky bluffs to just above the lake, when Bill took off like a bird and went sailing down the steep incline, dodging trees along the way, and out onto the lake. I rested on my laurels, enjoying the winter

scene, content to wait till Bill's inspection was over. This was my fourth visit to this super-scenic spot, but the first winter visit.

The return ski run along the high, undulating ridge, keeping safely back from the sharply-corniced rim above the basin, was an experience of long-to-be-remembered thrills.

When we reached the foot of the climbing Caves road we were happy to find the rest of the family there ahead of us. We were informed, with more than a hint of sarcasm, that they'd been waiting for us about 2 1/2 hours.

One never knows about these wild canuricans who clamp on their winged wooden shoes and go striding off into the wintry forests and mountains.

ROGUE VALLEY



COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

Food & Friends Menu

FRIDAY – APRIL 22
BBQ Smokehouse Pork Chop

MONDAY – APRIL 25
Country Fried Steak

WEDNESDAY – APRIL 27
Pork Patty w/ Gravy

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for the Food & Friends, Meals on Wheels Program or in need of meals call 541-955-8839.

SENIOR CORNER

Sponsored by Rogue Valley Council of Governments

Taking Care of You: Powerful Tools for Caregiving

is an educational program designed to help family caregivers (no professional caregivers please). This program will help you take care of yourself while caring for an older relative or friend. You will benefit from this class whether you are helping a parent, spouse, friend, someone

who lives at home, in a nursing home or across the country. This class will give you, the family caregiver tools to address the following:

-Help you reduce stress

-Communicate effectively with family members, medical professionals and paid help

-Take care of yourself

-Reduce guilt, anger

and depression

-Help you relax

-Make tough decisions

-Set goals and problem-solve

Please note that this class will not focus on the disease process.

The next class will start May 3 and will run six consecutive Tuesdays (May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and June 7) from 1:30 - 4 p.m. at Lovejoy Hospice, 939

S.E. 8th St., Grants Pass. To register call Sandy Divine at 541-471-3853.

This class is sponsored by Rogue Valley Council of Governments.

To find local resources and services please call Oregon's Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) at 1-855-673-2372 or visit www.ADRCofoOregon.org.

Sponsored by I.V. Wellness Resources

As a service to our neighbors, Illinois Valley Wellness Resources will be publishing weekly articles in this Senior Corner. We would like to start with how to get wellness services from your health care provider at little or no cost to you. Medicare provides for a yearly wellness visit. This is not a physical examination. It is a way to assess your wellness needs and help you stay on track for a more healthy life. Having your home

care provider attend these appointments with you could improve your care. Medicare recipients can make a "welcome to Medicare" appointment within the first 12 months of enrolling in Medicare Part B. Once a year thereafter a wellness visit is available to them. There is no co-pay for this service. Be sure to specify a wellness appointment. If you would like a full preventive medical assessment which includes a full physical

exam, Medicare does not cover this. You might have to pay the total cost yourself. If you have secondary insurance coverage, that insurance may cover all or part of it. You must check with your insurance provider. Not being able to have regular "check-ups" covered by Medicare lowers the standard of care delivered. This lowering of medical care standards will be discussed in various ways in future articles.



Illinois Valley Wellness Resources

Senior Classifieds

Help Wanted: Caregiver needed, \$14 an hour, hours & days are negotiable. Includes medical, dental, vision & vacation pay. References, background check along with DHS provider # required Call 541-415-0016. 4.27

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If you are a senior and want to place a **FREE AD** for a living or health care need call Laura at 541-592-2541 or email laura@illinois-valley-news.com.





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