

# Winding Trails: by Al Hobart

Thursday, October 13, 1966

## Illinois Valley News Grayback

Sometimes when you feel the urge to go upstairs and look over this beautiful western world from the vantage point of a high mountain top, the tall, beckoning peaks of the Cascades on the eastern horizon are out of reach for some reason – probably the inability of one or more members of the crew to answer the call – then it's time to start looking over your local mountain pool that you've been holding in reserve, and select a likely candidate for the occasion.

Big Grayback has been at the head of my emergency list for a long time. An easy mountain to climb, that is, involving no climbing gear, its summit is one of the few in the Siskiyou reaching over 7,000 ft. above sea level. It's one of the more surprising peaks I've been on. Its summit instead of being more or less solid is a massive mound of great loose rocks jumbled in a rough pile, as though some giant in eons past had playfully heaped them together.

Discovery of a new trail was another reason for my sudden decision to climb to Grayback's rocky top. On a recent trip to Bigelow Lakes, by way of the Pepper Camp route, I discovered that the Grayback Road

had since my last trip into this area been extended to an intersection with the Bigelow Lakes road a short distance above Pepper Camp. On my way back I turned down this new section of Grayback Road to see where it went, not suspecting at the time it was merely a continuation of the main road up from the Valley.

For a mile or so down the road a beautiful recently worked-on trail zig-zagged off up the steep slope leading to the top of the high divide connecting Mt. Elijah and Grayback. A couple of days later I was back and clambering up my newfound trail.

This was my third trip into this fascinating area within a week's time. The first time was mostly a hiking trip, a jaunt of 10 miles down from the Lakes to Oregon Caves and back to determine what a couple of flowers were, seen in the vicinity of Oregon Caves, that had been given such a fascinating description I couldn't resist investigating (they turned out to be old friends in unfamiliar verbal clothing).

To my surprise, the season being so well advanced, I found the Bigelow Lakes vicinity a multi-colored wildflower garden. Having no time to prowl the area I returned the following day with a flower-happy companion and we gave the place a thorough botanizing. As a result three new species were added to my list of Siskiyou wildplants.

My prize of the day was False Bugbane, an attractive and odd-ball member of the buttercup family that we found growing in a damp place down the new stretch of Gray back Road. Its fuzzy-looking flower appears to be made up of numerous narrow white petals, which turn out to be a dense cluster of long, recurving stamens, the flower being petal-less. If you'd like to look up this very rare plant (of our area) in your wildplant manual, its egg-head name is *Trautvetteria carolinensis*.

It was just a short distance below the bugbane location that we spotted the new trail. It seemed to wink with a big smile and crook an imperative forefinger in my direction. A couple of days later I toiled my way up its very steep and crooked three miles to the top of the ridge, then another 3 or 4 miles along the divide's undulating backbone and on to the top of Grayback. Of course I went up the peak the hard way, the bee-line route that took me through a wicked stretch of manzanita—a beautiful shrub to look at but, en masse, a holy terror to paw your way through, especially up a steep slope. Coming down I took a more leisurely, longer but more skin reserving route.

Only one incident on the climb upset my serene mental equilibrium, to the point where I wanted to commit mayhem –like wringing a long, hairy neck. Just before I began the last

steep climb the trail came out of the woods into a long narrow flower-studded mountain meadow. To make the picture complete a deer sauntered out into the upper end of the meadow. A pretty long shot for my little second-string camera, but I took one anyway. Sneaking up carefully a little closer I took another. The deer walked into the woods, and presently came into view again. I got a couple more shots, a little closer each time. Finally, when I was about 100 ft. away the dope looked up and saw me—and just stood there, flapping its tail. I walked up to about 50 ft. and took another picture. Then I noticed a couple of cows lazily batting their gums under a nearby tree. I believe that idiot of a deer thought it was just another cow, and darned if it was going to run if the others didn't! I could have saved a fifth of a roll of film if I'd just walked up to the deer in the first place, posed it and done its portrait. I felt like throwing my camera in its smirking face.

Some of these days, that cow-minded mobile pot roast will pull that little trick too often, when the sneaker-upper will be a gun-toting poacher instead of a trail-wandering camera nut, and find herself heading for the stew pot.

She just stood there, not more than a rod away, looking like she was about to give me the raspberry as I stumped grumpily by and continued my climb up the side of Grayback.

### ROGUE VALLEY



### Food & Friends Menu

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by calling 541-592-4888 or you can visit [www.healthycenter.org](http://www.healthycenter.org).

To find out about more local resources or services you can contact your local ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Connection) at 1-855-673-2372 or visit [www.ADRCoOregon.org](http://www.ADRCoOregon.org).

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### Preventing a fall:

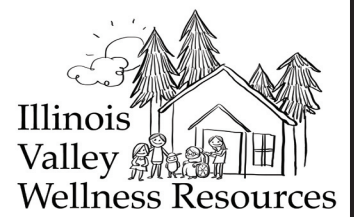
Falling or tripping hurts. Sometimes falls cause serious injury. The potential for a fall, serious and minor, is something seniors should have in mind.

Tripping over a pet happens quite often. Pets seek our company and try to attract our attention, especially if they want something from us. Trying to walk faster than usual or walking with a mental preoccupation can make us less wary. If one has a pet and is trying to move quickly with their mind on something other than walking safely, the potential for tripping over your pet increases.

The same is true for that carpet or rug which seems to always catch your foot. Clearing the spaces you walk thoroughly of potential hazards, anything which might cause you to trip, is a good idea. Light-headedness, feeling dizzy, for example, when one gets up from sitting or lying down can easily predispose someone for a fall. This is especially true when getting up from bed a night. Even if you only experience this once in a while, it is a good idea to wait after you stand up before walking. If you experience this dizziness often or if it ever causes you to doubt your ability to walk until it passes, having something sturdy to hold on to right where you get up is a good idea. How about those slippery porch steps or that rickety step ladder or those sticks in the yard? There are many things which can predispose you to trip and fall. A safety survey and potential hazard clearance of your surroundings is in your best interest.

To receive a low cost home safety evaluation you can contact Pat Jenkins, RN, MSN, vice president of I.V. Wellness Resources at 541-415-0465. Pat can also help you with setting up medications, doctor appointments and the hiring of caregivers.

(You can contact I.V. Wellness Resources at [www.ivwellnessresources@gmail.com](mailto:www.ivwellnessresources@gmail.com).)



### Senior Bulletin

### HOME SAFETY EVALUATIONS

Call Pat Jenkins, RN, MSN with I.V. Wellness Resources for a low cost evaluation at 541-415-0465.

### SENIOR COMPANION Program

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