

Winding Trails: by Al Hobart

Thursday, May 4, 1967
Illinois Valley News

Al's Cabin

The interior of my old cabin has a notable, but dubious, distinction: no other in the world is exactly like it. This holds true for all other cabins, of course, but for this particular one it has special significance.

The old log-pile's entry into existence was due to a fluke in the first place. Fate gave a mighty puff and blew my young companion and me off our intended course, and here we landed. Finding ourselves deposited in a mining country, and being imaginative and naive youth, we immediately conceived the attractive notion of making our fortunes by mining gold and chromium.

So we staked our claim, where both of the metals mentioned are to be found, dug a shallow notch in the hillside and erected therein the above ground cave that has been my home ever since.

Like the gold we sought, our dreams of monetary fortune just didn't pan out. Crowd loving Johnny was soon drawn back into the milling herd, where he ventured too far and was eventually caught up in the swirl of matrimony, and was thus lost to the ranks of irresponsible bachelordom.

What we failed to realize when we first decided to become mining moguls was that although we no doubt had a million dollars' worth

of gold underfoot, two million dollars' worth of equipment would be needed to place the gold at our feet in the form of bullion. That placed us, hypothetically, a million dollars in debt before we got started, and a mathematical problem that was just too complicated for a couple of young high school dropouts.

To Johnny, a born gambler, especially where the odds appear attractive and shapely, the chains of matrimony seemed preferable. To me—well, through ensuing years I have clung with stubborn tenacity to the old dream and to the old cabin, although the hope of fabulous enrichment has been long abandoned. In the process I have grown old and embittered—well, old any-way—and am seldom seen away from home—except out on the ski slopes, up in the high mountains, along the forest trails, exploring hidden caverns with my spelunking friends, visiting in the homes of my several adopted families (usually with my feet under their food-laden tables), and otherwise moping about griping about the sorry state of the world and crabbing because my income can never quite lay hold of the coattails of my outgo.

But to get back to my original theme, what makes my cabin's interior so different is the bizarre disposition of its contents, made necessary by the fact that the place would be over-crowded with one-third the amount of its present contents. The original single room (the place was intended to become the garage as our projected grandiose building program

progressed) is stuffed to the bulging point with the accumulation of more than three decades.

My shelves are all overflowing; every foot of wall space is jealously occupied by some indispensable object. There is no longer a hiding place under my 3-ft high bunk for any shame-faced possession necessarily displaced when a new arrival is shoe-horned into the room. The cross-members overhead are cluttered with skis, ski poles, saws, and other bric-a-brac.

My propane gas range is half-hidden by the packsacks, cases; photographic equipment stacked around it, and can be approached only at one corner. In the kitchen corner the massive iron wood range that I inherited from the folks is reasonably accessible, with the huge woodbox at one end and the kitchen table and cupboard at the other.

The round, mobile dining table, weighted down and half covered with 75 lb. of my wildplant library, is readily maneuverable for the few feet between the cookstove, where I eat, and the reading corner wherein are closely grouped the half-buried desk, the wood heater, another groaning cupboard, a big grub box, and the old—oops!—the new easychair.

The little board step-down bedroom, that was added to the cabin's downhill side when Mom lived with me for a while, is a marvel of condensed householdery. The presence of the double bed is revealed by a few inches of one leg and a caster, if you look between the rungs of the chair backed up

against the trunk that occupies a third of the south wall.

Access to this little bedchamber-storeroom is by means of a man-size door that was cut through the cabin's log wall, thus weakening that corner to the extent that it squats a couple of inches lower than the rest of the cabin. In spite of the drape-covered door's generous size, however, because of a string of clothes hanging on clotheshangers suspended from an old electric wire that runs along a logbeam at right angles and in front of the door, I have to go through the opening crabwise.

In another year or so, if the present acquisitive trend continues, I'll need a compass and trail marker's to find my way around in my own house.

The old cabin is packed beyond capacity with 36 years gatherings, none of which I could bear to part with, but no-one else would have; the rough old walls, ceiling, floor, shelves, etc., are impossible to keep clean, and I live in an atmosphere loaded with common dust and fine ashes that fly from the heater every time I throw in a chunk. Whenever I sweep I merely shift the fine dust from the floor to the shelves, beams and other high places, and when these become too unsightly I sweep them off and let the dust settle back onto the floor.

All in all it's a heck of a mess—but it's one of my very choicest spots on earth.

ROGUE VALLEY



Food & Friends Menu

FRIDAY – MAY 12

HOMESTYLE PORK PATTY
W/ GRAVY

MONDAY – MAY 15

LEMON HERB CHICKEN
WEDNESDAY - MAY 17

SLOPPY JOE

FOOD & FRIENDS

looking for back-up drivers for Meals on Wheels, mileage reimbursement available. Must pass background check. ***Call***
541-955-8839 to volunteer or if you need meals.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

Call I.V. Wellness Resources @ 541-592-9781

I.V. Wellness Resources is looking for program feedback

I.V. Wellness Resources is in the process of trying to start two new programs in the Illinois Valley.

The first program is an online mobile grocery market that would deliver food to your house. The prices would be less than our local grocery store with organic farm options. We would try to find volunteers to fax orders if a resident does not have internet. Before this important resource can come to the Valley we need to find out if enough residents are interested in receiving this service. If you are interested in using an online mobile grocery market please call Laura at I.V. Wellness Resources and to tell her you would be interested at 541-592-9781. If you call and get a recording please just leave your name, area you live

and if you are interested in this service.

The second program is called "Caring Caller." This would be a volunteer program that would include friendly phone calls to check on isolated seniors or the disabled in the Valley. The volunteers would be screened with a background check and matched to another senior or disabled resident with similar interests. The purpose of this program would be to improve the wellbeing of homebound or isolated seniors and the disabled. Please call I.V. Wellness Resources if you are interested in participating in the Caring Caller program at 541-592-9781.

You can also contact I.V. Wellness Resources at www.ivwellnessresources@gmail.com and please like our Facebook Page @facebook.com/ivwellnessresources.

SENIOR BULLETIN

FREE ADS

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

HOME SAFETY EVALUATIONS

If you are in need of a home safety evaluation with a registered nurse please call I.V. Wellness Resources for an appointment. We have flexible hours to meet your needs. Call 541-592-9781.

SEEKING RENTER

looking for a renter in home, 1 bedrm, access to kitchen & utilities, \$300/month or reduced rate for caretaking, 10 miles outside of CJ 541-597-2750.

CHAIR FITNESS

Classes FREE at Healthy U, Monday and Wednesdays from 2 - 2:45 p.m. 535 E. River St., Cave Junction Call 541-592-4888 or visit www.healthyucenter.org.



WANTED

If you are a senior or disabled resident of the Illinois Valley and need help finding resources to keep you healthy and happy in your home
Caregivers – Handyman
Yard work – Firewood
Housekeepers –
Please call
I. V. Wellness Resources



541-592-9781

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* cost to average County homeowner is less than \$1 per month

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11th Annual FREE Frog Farm Skillshare

Saturday, May 20, 2017 Free classes 10AM-6PM
at the Frog Farm 9044 Takilma Road, Cave Junction, OR

10AM Bio-Char Demo; Processing a Chicken (meat); Vitality Exercises

11AM Build a Winesap Mushroom Bed; Organic Fruit Tree Protection: Make Biodynamic Tree Paste

LUNCH \$5-10: Chili & Polenta (veggie or meat) Noon Music Jam

1:30PM Korean Natural Farming Techniques; Nature Awareness Games; Cannabis Oil Demo; Bicycle Repair

3PM Natural Building Demo (Cob); Self-Initiated PTSD Reflex Integration Exercises

4:30PM Herb Walk; We're Knot Playing Around (Knot Tying)

6PM DINNER \$10-15: (Veggie or meat) 7PM Whirlwind Play: Wildcraft

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