

Winding Trails: by Al Hobart

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Illinois Valley News,

Winter or Summer Travel

If there’s anything worth comparing with a forest trail winding off into summer-drenched hills it would have to be the snow-covered forest roads of winter leading mysteriously away into those same mountains and canyons.

Such a comparison would of course have to be in terms of the joy derived from traveling these roads and trails in the two opposite seasons. Hiking along a mountain trail in the summertime, under a blue sky and with restful forest green and splashes of the floral colors of summer all around is an unforgettable experience. And following the narrow smooth white ribbon of a forest road snaking its way off somewhere among the great conifers and up into the snow-disguised hills is, in its way, fully as satisfying.

In the summer you take to the trail with

scant clothing and light hiking shoes, with a small backpack containing lunch, water, camera, field glasses, etc. In the winter the clothes you wear on your adventure will be decided by the weather conditions you’re heading into; and the pair of warm boots you wear will depend on whether you’re to travel on snowshoes or skis.

Contents of your pack will be much the same, unless the distance to be traveled and exact conditions are doubtful, in which case a light warm sleepingbag should be included by all means and maybe an extra garment or two. There’s nothing very terrifying about sleeping under a tree in the snow if you get caught out, providing you have your snug little nest along with you.

Another important item to include among your gear is a nylon tarp. I never venture out into the wintry hills without one; wrapped around your you-filled sleepingbag it makes your little weather-pounded cocoon real cozy.

But for a few miles of pleasure travel on the snow, investigating one of the many inviting roads that meander away up yonder somewhere, of course you don’t need to take

any emergency equipment; just strap on your snowshoes or skis and head for the hills to see what you can see. And what you see and feel when you’re back there away from everything and everybody, just prowling around in a strange-looking winter wonderland, will do something to you that will make you want to repeat the wonderful experience again and again.

Shuffling along on snowshoes through a snow-plastered wilderness can be a lot of fun; but a faster, easier and more thrilling way to negotiate the deep snow is on touring skis. On these light skis, with the bottoms coated with suitable wax, you can walk upgrade without back-slipping, yet glide easily and smoothly downhill. And even going uphill you glide a short distance each step, making your progress faster than would be the case with snowshoes or even walking on bare ground. It’s an exhilarating way to travel over the snow.

But first you have to have snow, and the winters seem to be getting so cock-eyed you never know what to expect (those darned reds are probably doing something to the weather). I’m writing this in the middle of January,

a howling warm rain and wind storm is in progress, the hills are almost bare of the snow that was up there and the river is swollen with melted snow and pouring rain.

I did manage to get in a 6-mile ski tour up the new Dunn Creek road before the timid new weather decided to withdraw. The new snow was almost too shallow but I had a good fun-run in spite of the occasional contact I made with rock on the thin spots.

It’s annoying to come skimming blithely down a gentle slope and have a ski crunch onto a thinly-veiled rock. The sudden deceleration not only tends to toss you into the canyon but the rough rocks scour off your wax and score the ski bottoms. By the time I got back home it was necessary to sandpaper the bottoms of my skis and apply a new base coat before I could even do a proper job of rewaxing.

Such are the hazards we have to put up with when, hopefully, cometh the winter. If winter does finally decide to come and stay awhile I’ll rejoice mightily at whatever such trifling hazards I may have to endure—just so there’s enough good cold snow to get me up off the ground.



Illinois Valley Wellness Resources

Food & Friends Menu

FRIDAY – FEB. 9
WAIKIKI CHICKEN
W/ RICE

MONDAY – FEB. 12
MEATLOAF W/ GRAVY

WEDNESDAY- FEB. 14
VALENTINE'S SPECIAL
CHICKEN PENNE
PASTA

Call 541-955-8839
to volunteer or if you
need meals.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

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Travel care
Based on a recent AARP survey, seniors are twice as likely to travel this year than last with a strong urge to just get away from it all.
About half plan to travel within the U.S., mostly to Florida and California and the other half to the Caribbean and Europe.
Most of us have some type of chronic disease and we need to plan ahead as we think about leaving home. With a little planning and preparation we can have safe and enjoyable trips.
CDC recommends that if you have a chronic illness and are planning an international trip, visit a travel medicine specialist at least 4–6 weeks before you leave to talk about what you should do to prepare. Some chronic illnesses and some medicines, such as steroids, can weaken the immune system. Make sure you take enough of a supply to last your whole trip, plus a little extra in case of delays. If you are going to be gone a long time. Pack all your medicines and medical supplies in your carry-on luggage. You don’t want to be stuck without them!
Medicines should be in their original prescription bottles, and you should also include copies of your original prescriptions. Note that medicines should be taken according to the time since the last dose, not the local time of day. Don’t plan on being able to buy your medicines at your destination. The travel medicine specialist may prescribe trip-specific medicines, such as drugs to prevent malaria or altitude sickness or to treat travelers’ diarrhea.
Make sure you have a plan to get care overseas, in case you need it. It’s also a good idea to carry a card with information about your condition, including any drug or food allergies, written in the local language.

ALZHEIMER’S SUPPORT GROUP
Last Thursday of the month 2-3:30 PM at
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MEDICAL EQUIPMENT
I.V. Lions loans out medical equip for those that need it: W/C, walkers, canes, portable toilets, shower stools & more.
Call 541-592-4262

SENIOR EXPO
Mark your calendar now for the Senior Expo to be held Saturday, March 10 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the I.V. Senior Center, 520 E. River St.
Come hear presentations, visit booths, partipate in health screenings/demos and eat a

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
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I. V. Wellness Resources



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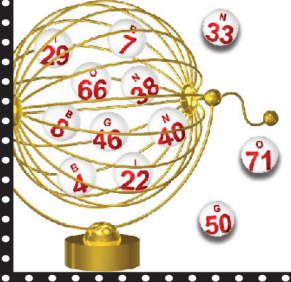
TUES - FRI 9:30 AM - 5:30 PM
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