

Winding Trails: by Al Hobart

Thursday, March 7, 1968
Illinois Valley News

Snow Travel

The winters in our little world are becoming so unpredictable that all through the so-called winter months we find ourselves constantly vibrating between two compelling urges: should we mend the old snowshoes and polish up the skis, or had we better sharpen up the shovel and hoe and start working up the backyard plot?

Winter is nearly two-thirds gone, the wet patches of snow up there on the mountainside are getting smaller and smaller; and, what with the combination of melting snow, the falling warm rain and my tears of frustration, the Valley streams are all rapidly rising.

As if winter had already departed, on the 7th of February I found the first small colony of bright little goldstars blooming on the sunny point down by the river, and shortly thereafter the earliest grouse-flowers and spring beauties made their questioning pre-season appearance.

Of course these welcome indications of a fading winter and early spring gladden the hearts of everyone—everybody, that is, but the ones composing the fast-growing minority who look forward to a few months

of winter sports.

Those able-bodied citizens who haven't been bitten by the W.S. bug or learned the rudiments of operating the simple but necessary snow-navigating equipment just don't realize what they're missing. To know the joy of traveling easily over deep snow where otherwise you would flounder hopelessly you have to strap on a pair of snowshoes or skis. Or, if the terrain is not too rough and your financial status is agreeable, you might invest in one of the many brands of wee snowmobiles that have become a raging epidemic in the last winter or two.

The snowshoe is the simplest, most practical means of transportation in real rough forested and mountainous country, and, of course, the slowest. These webbed vehicles provide the safest way to travel indangerously rough snow country, and they're by far the easiest to learn to operate.

The little snowmobiles are not only practically useful but provide a lot of enjoyment to individuals and groups who like to skitter about over the snow in suitable play country, and without having to expend a great deal of energy. The real danger with these little doodle bugs is that the motors WILL conk out occasionally, and they WILL run out of fuel. More than

one tragedy has resulted from going too far afield in severely cold weather and without companion vehicles to insure rescue in case of trouble.

Skiing, without doubt is the best all-purpose way of getting over the snow, whether of general necessity or just for the fun of it. With skis you can go where snowmobiles can't, and you can almost go where snowshoes are required. They are an almost perfect compromise of all other means of snow travel, and they give far more enjoyment to many more people than all others combined. Even when conditions are bad for all methods of snow travel, with the proper wax you can still enjoy the snow on skis. With wet snow, and even in the dark, you can go right on with your ski fun.

Last Saturday night, as an example, our Nordic club put on its 2nd "moonlight" ski tour of the season, and the snow was "klistery" wet. Our tour began on Dead Indian Summit and took us along the divide over the Buck Prairie trail and down the long slope to Howard Prairie road.

And, as on the previous tour, that old moon stayed out of sight during the whole trip behind a dense cloud cover. We made the whole 8-mile tour in near total darkness, and more than once some real sleuthing was required to ferret out the proper course.

But even under such conditions, in fact because of such unusual conditions, riding those speeding tour skis over the snow adds up to a whole heap of wholesome fun, especially in the company of a group of 8 or 10 laughing, babbling companions of both sexes.

And then that warm cheerful cabin at the end of the run, with all that hot chili, coffee, and home-baked cake—nummy-nummy!

Granted, it's wonderful to have some springtime in the middle of winter. But a spot of winter does add a bit of unique variety to the seasonal merry-go-round that a great many of us are ready and eager to latch onto when it comes whirling around.



Al Hobart on Crazy Ridge.

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Do you have 5 feelings like this?

- Deep Sadness or emptiness
- Apathy(indifference)
- Agitation or restlessness
- Sleep disturbances
- Weight & Appetite disturbances
- Fatigue (tired)
- Lack of Concentration
- Morbid thoughts
- Feelings of excessive Guilt or Worthlessness

Support groups with caring Group leaders

Don't despair - there is help for you at the
Depression and Anxiety Recovery Program

The program will be held in the Fellowship hall at 265 Old Stage Road South in Cave Junction
Every Monday beginning March 12 at 6:00 p.m.

There is Hope - You are not alone!

For more info call Kathy 541-291-7016



Join **IVCanDO** for our
Annual Meeting

WHERE: THE LORNA BYRNE
MIDDLE SCHOOL CAFETERIA

WHEN: MARCH 21ST 6PM-8PM

We will elect the Board of Directors, vote on bylaws updates, learn about robust programs, hear about the IV's 20/20 strategic plan, award outstanding community members, and celebrate retiring Executive Director, Menno Kraai. Free refreshments will be served.

To become a member or renew, so as to have eligibility to vote for the Board of Directors at the meeting, or to apply to run for the board, you must fill out an application by 3pm on Wednesday, March 14. To receive the form, contact IVCANDO by email to renerauch@ivcdo.org, by phone, 592-4440, or in person at the IV Visitor's Center, 201 Caves Highway Cave Junction. Membership is limited to people fifteen years and older who are IV residents, business owners, property owners, or employees working within the Illinois Valley.

