

“There are serious consequences if you mess up.”

■ WANT A THRILL

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equipment). “The sport for the terminally stupid,” says paraglider Norm Young. But if you can keep your good sense, he says (and if you are not faint of heart), “the sport is lovely, allowing you to experience our world at its most beautiful.” Woodrat Mountain, near Ruch, is so world-class a site that “Ruch is to paragliding as Vail is to skiing,” Norm says. He cautions would-be pilots about two things: “Don’t be bold. There are no old bold pilots. And be careful of AIDS: Aviation Induced Divorce Syndrome. The sport is addictive!”

Spelunking. Shasta Lake caverns, limestone caves in the Marble Mountains, Pluto’s Cave on Mt. Shasta, Lava Beds National Monument—caving opportunities from the Applegate abound. At Lava Beds National Monument, a novice spelunker can take easy trails through caves with high ceilings and smooth floors, but those who prefer tougher stuff can enter caves

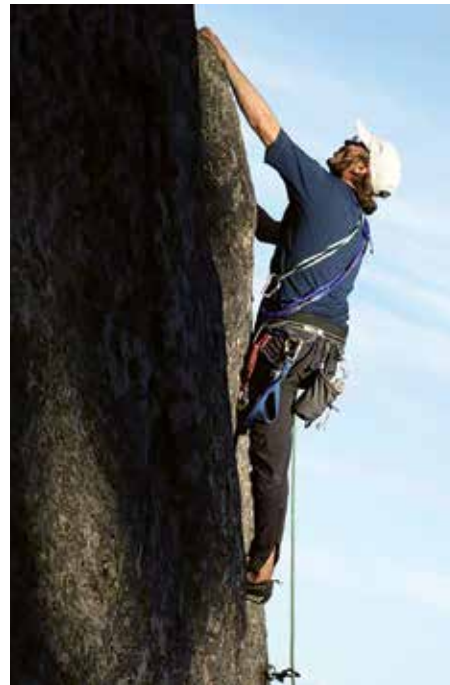
that demand crawling and complete safety gear.

White-water rafting. For the faint of heart or not—it all depends on the conditions, says Sue Orris, who has rafted in Nepal as well as in the Siskiyou. “You have to be so present and in the moment,” she says. “There are serious consequences if you mess up”—which is exactly why she loves rafting. Among the good white-water rivers accessible from the Applegate are the Illinois, the Klamath, the Scott in northern California, and Ikes Run on the Klamath River.

Hiking. Even the faint of heart can hike a trail, if it isn’t too steep or doesn’t have bears, but to hike off-trail ups the ante. “You have to trust your bearings,” says Louann Faist, a valiant hiker from Williams. She lists several dangers: missing a turn because the downhill return is faster than the uphill trudge, steepness, bushes that scratch sartorially unprepared legs and put the hiker off-bearings when he or she has to find a



Photo, top: Sue Orris rafting at Blossom Bar on the Wild and Scenic Rogue River (photo: Mary Korbolic). Photo, bottom: Ziplining on one of the five lines at Rogue Valley ZipLine Adventure near Gold Hill.



Darryl Rasmussen, manager of Northwest Outdoor Store, rock-climbing at Rabbit Ears by Union Creek.

way around them. Louann recommends Mungers Butte for the not-faint-of-heart.

Ziplining. A thrill, but maybe one for the faint of heart. The Rogue Valley ZipLine Adventure, near Gold Hill, has entertained children as young as eight and elders as old as 90. “It’s adventurous and fun,” says owner Lindsey Rice. The first of the five lines is “no fear, just fun.” The fifth line, a quarter-mile long and 300 feet high, provides fantastic views and a big thrill.

Bungee jumping. This not-for-the-faint-of-heart sport, developed by the Oxford University Dangerous Sports Club in the late 1970s, isn’t available in the Applegate. “The only place for bungee jumping in the Applegate is off bridges,” Darryl Rasmussen says, “and it’s illegal to jump off bridges in Oregon.” The one exception is the High Bridge over the Crooked River at Peter Skene Ogden State Scenic Viewpoint in central Oregon, where the free-fall is 250 feet into a beautiful 300-foot-deep canyon. Oregon Parks and Recreation first allowed bungee jumping there in 2015. The 2016 season opened in May and runs through mid-October.

Perhaps one of the members of that Dangerous Sports Club, renowned mountaineer Geoffrey Tabin, best expressed the attraction of these sports. “It’s not thrill seeking,” he says, “but a lifelong quest to maximize life’s

experiences while maintaining deep respect for the physical and human landscapes encountered along the way.”

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Note: If you saw the Courier article in April with a similar title, please know that we’ve been working with our title for months and are convinced it was leaked.

Where to find them

Bungee jumping. Central Oregon Bungee Adventures: 541-668-5867 or www.oregonbungee.com.

Hiking. Luke Ruediger’s book, *The Siskiyou Crest*, has a number of off-trail possibilities.

Paragliding. Contact the Rogue Valley Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association (www.rvhpa.org). Norm Young is president.

Rafting. Many outfits available in southern Oregon. Sue Orris’s is called Ferron’s Fun Trips: www.roguefuntrips.com, 800-404-2201.

Rock-climbing. The Northwest Outdoor Store in Medford has a number of books to help you get there. Visit <http://thenorthwestoutdoorstore.com> or call 541-245-4000.

Spelunking. Lava Beds National Monument: www.nps.gov/labeds.

Ziplining. Rogue Valley Zipline Adventure: info@rvzipline.com, 541-821-9476 or <https://rvzipline.com>.

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