

## I almost froze to death on Saturday

Written by Administrator

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Robert Kirby wrote this in the Salt Lake Tribune Oct. 2, 2001. Special thanks to the Tribune for allowing us to reprint them here.



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I almost froze to death on Saturday. Like most of my recent near death experiences, it began as a routine idea in Sonny's head. Sonny didn't come right out and say, "Hey, lets go have our toes amputated." Our wives wouldn't have gone along if he had. It was more like, "Lets go look at the fall colors."

On Friday, we dragged some ATVs to Marysvale and booked ourselves into a wonderful B&B. Moore's Old Pine Inn was easy to find. Look for the only building in town with a coat of paint more recent than the Hoover Administration.

Innkeepers Katie and Randy Moore are ex-patriate Wasatch Fronters, who several years ago chucked the 9-to-5 grind for the 24/7 labor of playing charming hosts to a bunch of nuts.

Marysvale annually attracts an army of ATV mounted loons. They come to wander (at various speeds) hundreds of miles of trails through the abandoned mining camps and breathtaking canyons of the Tushar Mountains.

We rode up Beaver Creek the first afternoon. Judging from the colors, we had hit the leaves just about right. There were pinks, yellows, reds and greens, all in hues and shades worthy of Tolkien.

We stopped and explored old cabins and deserted mine works, legacies of Utah's long fascination with minerals. We saw deer and hunters, although never in the same spot.

Depending entirely on Sonny's recollection and map reading skills, we climbed high into the Tushar Mountains for hours, eventually

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arriving at a point where we had to explain ourselves to Turkish border guards.

Anyway, it was long and rough, but beautiful. It was also high. From an overlook, we could see Marysvale, Japan, and several CIA spy satellites far below.

Overlook is an understatement. Anytime you can see people in their homes by looking directly down their chimneys is way more than just an overlook.

Things went bad on Saturday. For one thing, it rained. And for another thing, I forgot our rain ponchos (food, gloves, radio, flares, and cyanide pills) back at the inn.

Then the rain turned to snow, which sometimes happens when Sonny takes you looking for pretty leaves ABOVE the #&%@! timber line.

It was pleasant at first, gentle flakes drifting through the deep green of the woods. It was enough to move even a guy like me to poetry. Robert Frost at first, of course. But gradually with the cold, it was more Robert Service.

Eventually, we were reduced to wearing garbage bags, eating pine cones, and feeling our way down the mountain with the front tires of our machines.

About the time I lost all sight of the others (and all feeling in my feet), I finally had the first sensible thought of my own. Riding along in the gathering gloom, it occurred to me, "What if that rock over there was really a yeti?"

If discretion is the better part of valor, then bladder voiding panic has to be the better part of getting the hell out of Dodge. I am the only human being ever to break the sound barrier in four-wheel drive.

I made it back to Moore's Old Pine (Nuts) Inn well before the others (and certainly before any yeti). I was showered, calmed and conversant enough to defend my cowardice when they finally showed up.

Forget the fall colors. This is why a cynical Wasatch fronter falls in love with Marysvale:

Sitting on the porch at dawn (with all your toes), watching the passing traffic on U.S. 89 – two cars in twenty minutes, neither of which completely blotted out the sound of a dog barking 50 miles away in Sigurd.