

Get gassed and cure what ails you

Montana radon mines promise to cure your aches and pains

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Got aches and pains that won't go away? Then maybe you need is a good ol' fashioned visit to a uranium mine and a dose of radon gas.

And an excellent place to find such a uranium mine is south of Helena, Mont., just off I-15 in pint-sized Boulder, home of the Castoria Inn, now a B&B, but once the home of one Dr. Fletcher, inventor of Fletcher's Castroia. If you're not at least 60, then you probably don't remember what this stuff was. I don't. I have heard rumors that it tasted very bad.

But back to the subject of radon mines. They're a big deal in these parts. Folks with aches and pains come from far and wide to step inside and feel better. They pay a few bucks, and then disappear into a tunnel into the side of a mountain where they sit on a bench or maybe dip their feet in troughs of freezing cold radon-charged mineral water. And if all goes well, in a week or so, they feel like a million bucks. Some folks swear this happens.

The Radon mines gained popularity in the 1950s after an arthritic California woman visited a Boulder uranium mine and found relief. She spread the word, and pretty soon Life Magazine showed up. And you can figure what happened after that.

Folks still come. They spend an hour at a time in a mine, up to three times a day. Some even bring a sick pet.



The biggest ailment is arthritis.

Nobody knows what happens to cause relief,

but some researchers say it could be because radon gas stimulates the pituitary gland to produce health-giving hormones and natural steroids.

Radon gas is a colorless, tasteless, inert element formed by the aging or disintegration of radium.

In any case, talk to the health-seekers hanging around in these mines and they'll fire off one miracle story after another.

I decided to take off my shoes and soak my aching feet for awhile. The water temp was in the 20s, so I can't honestly say I felt any improvement in my condition. The only visible difference I noticed was the color of my toes turning from flesh-colored to blue.

The woman next to me was soaking her feet, too. I asked her if she really believed that she benefited from coming here.

"I do," she insisted, and she said it just wasn't in her head.

"One couple brought their dog," she explained. "When it first came, it could hardly walk. After a week or so, when it left the mine it would be chasing squirrels.

"A dog doesn't get better because of positive thinking."

For more information contact the Merry Widow Health Mine, P.O. Box 129, Basin, MT 59631, 1-877-225-3220. RVers can stay in the nice RV park.

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