



Southwest Washington Gold Prospectors News

Volume I Issue 6
September 2012

SW Washington Gold Prospectors

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August's Raffle Winners

Don Brenteson was the lucky winner of the nugget at the August meeting. The following is a list of winners of gem stones:

Dave Coffey — African Emeralds

Karen Vercoe — Peridots

Ron Tompkins — gold from Lewisville outing

Judith Skagen — [Editor: didn't catch what they were!]



Don Brenteson



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Win One of These Pans !

The September meeting will be the first at which one of the autographed GPAA gold pans will be raffled. Each of the pans have a distinct and hand painted design and each has been signed by Tom Massie. Be sure to buy plenty of tickets next month to support your club and obtain a chance to win one of these unique pans.



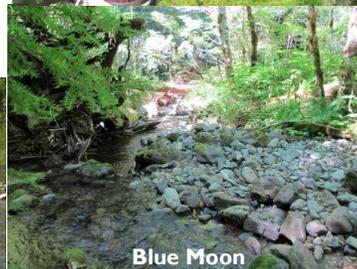
Outings Report

There were three outings one at the Blue Moon in late July, one at Daybreak Park on August 4th, and one at Copper Creek on August 18th. I was out of state for the first two so I don't know how it went and I haven't received any reports. I did receive quite a few photos, which are published on the web site and a few here.

Copper Creek was well-attended with perhaps better than 50 members registering. There were all types of equipment present: dredges, sluice boxes, suction devices, and so on. I believe everyone who tried found some color and a few small flakes.



Blue Moon



Blue Moon



Copper Creek



Copper Creek



Daybreak Park



Copper Creek



Copper Creek



Daybreak Park



Daybreak Park

The President's Adit - Opening Message



President Al Lewis

Hi everyone it was nice to see everyone at the last meeting. I just wanted to let you know that we lost one of our members on 8/28/12.

Her name is Gladys Templin. She will be missed dearly. My wife and I have known Her for at least 7 yrs.

I also wanted to thank the kitchen staff for all of the work that they do in the kitchen with all of the goodies that are brought to the meetings.

I also want to thank Steve Lewin, Randy Harper, Robert Gregory, Kameron & Rosalie Mitchell and all of my other officers for being at the Copper Creek outing. I also wanted thank all of the members of the club

for attending the outing. There were 50 to 55 members at the outing.

Thank you all for being at all of the outings that we have had so far. I am so proud of all of the members for going to the outings . There were more members from this club than there was at any other outings from my other club. This is absolutely awesome! KEEP IT UP!

There is another outing at the Blue Moon on Sep. 22nd & 23rd. Just to let everyone know that my wife and I will be at this outing. It is the first time that we have been able to go to the claim. It is going to be a fun time on Saturday, There will be a pot-

luck . We are looking forward to having a good time on the outing. Hopefully, there will be a lot of members at the outing. There will be another outing at Daybreak Park and one more at Lewisville Park .

I hope to see everyone at the next meeting where there will be a sign-up sheet for the Blue Moon, Daybreak Park, and Lewisville Park outings.

MAY THE BOTTOM OF YOUR PAN TURN GOLD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

SEE YA ALL AT THE MEETING ON SEPT 9TH AT 1:00 PM.

SINCERELY THE PRESIDENT
AL LEWIS

Condolences

I have the sad responsibility to inform our members of the passing on August 28th of one of our founding members. We will greatly miss Gladys Templin, a wonderful woman and friend. We extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to her family and closest friends, especially to Donald Wedding, another club member. I have very little additional information at press time. Please come to the September 9th meeting where more information may be available.



The Tailings Pile — Other Notes of Interest

- The Silent Auction began on August 12th. Be sure to check back and bid often to ensure you get the item you want.
- Check out BLM LR2000 for a list of claims. Go to <http://www.blm.gov/lr2000> and select "Run Reports" from the left-hand list. I didn't have too much success, but there is a lot of help on the website.
- Don't forget to bring your items to the swap table to either sell or trade. The "want ad" section in the newsletter will begin when ads are sent to the editor.
- Daniel and Steve Keesee (I call them the Helper Brothers because they are willing to help you at any time) continued dredging after the Copper Creek outing (on Steve Lewin's claim) and dredged up what appeared to be a diamond earring!

Promising Prospects — Outings & Events

Upcoming Meetings:

September 9, 2012
October 14, 2012
November 11, 2012
December 9, 2012
January 13, 2013
February 10, 2013
March 10, 2013
April 14, 2013

OUTINGS

- There is an outing planned at Al Lewis's Blue Moon claim September 22 and 23. You are welcome to go to the claim on Friday to set up your camp before prospecting begins on Saturday around 8:00 in the morning. See Al for directions, a map, or GPS coordinates. A potluck dinner is planned for Saturday evening so bring your favorite dish.

[Check the website for the latest info on outings!]

[www.swwgoldprospectors.org]



Outings Coordinator
Steve Lewin

Rich Placer Deposits — Educational Articles



PERFECTING YOUR Gold PANNING TECHNIQUE!

A continued series on
Prospecting by Myron

The problem I have in writing articles about Prospecting is that most prospectors believe, what they are doing in the field is perfected! Not so, we all can learn and grow. I find that to be true each day, there is always something new!

I started my learning process back in the 50's from some of the old timers. I learned quickly that you had to add several sources of knowledge to round out a completed view of any prospecting avenue. Many of the old timers blew a lot of smoke and rarely shared anything of value. So, getting down to the basics, Gold panning. To be able to Pan you must first find out whether your material is straight out of the ground or if it came out of a sluice, dredge or high banker. This knowledge will give you an idea on how free the gold is. Do not overload your pan, (this is another way you can lose gold); when you bring water into the pan to start mixing your material, the water (after mixing) should be fairly clear of the muddy look! (It is always easier to pan material that has had some concentrated effort applied to it. (that is because the freeing process has already begun). Once you feel you have freed the gold start taking it to the bottom of the pan. Make sure the bottom of the pan is always on a slant towards the riffles. Shake it back and forth, working the heavies to the bottom, I even bang the pan against the palm of my free hand. (I pan one handed). As you work the material down, keep your panning smooth so you don't disrupt the heavies that are already on the bottom with black sand. (The black sand is iron; it exists on the entire west coast.) Then carefully select the larger rocks and throw them away (unless they are yellow!) You must keep a careful eye out for other valuables or unusual material such as silver, platinum or specially marked gem stones. If you can't identify it, keep the sample and mark the location just in case the material is valuable.

The next article will be on reading the river and ancient river beds.

Gem Trails - By Kameron Mitchell

So you now are getting the hang of panning and are finding some gold. What about all the other rocks you are throwing out? Or maybe you are getting bored because you are finding so little gold. Well, there are tons of material that might just prove to be interesting and fun in those gravels you are throwing out! But how do you know?

I would suggest purchasing one or both of the "Gem Trails of Washington" and "Gem Trails of Oregon" books by Gar-

ret Romaine. I have both purchased at Powell's Books for \$14.95. (Because I was there. Mea culpa!)

[You should check with D & K Detectors at 503-761-1521 to see if they have a copy and you'll get a discounted price for being a member of our club. They really support us well and we should try to support them whenever we can.]

These books will give you a detailed listing of what gems can be found and where

(Gem Trails—Continued)

to find them. You could also go to your local rock hounding (lapidary) store to find samples of rocks you like, then look for them wherever you prospect. For example, I like looking for nickel nuggets when dredging/prospecting the Illinois River in southern Oregon. I also like looking for agates and petrified wood. Unfortunately, my emphasis has been in finding gold so I've overlooked many of the latter.

I found a wealth of information in these well-organized books. The bibliography will help you find much more detailed information from which the author has gleaned his data. There is also a listing of web resources. Remember, as with gold prospecting, mineral and gem collecting are highly regulated activities. Be sure you understand the rules. Check with the BLM and National Forest Service for the latest regulations. The Washington Fish & Gold book is required when you are collecting in or near Washington waterways.

Essential to a successful outing is getting organized. The author recommends taking plenty of plastic freezer bags for the rocks you collect. Place each type of rock in a separate bag. When you get back to camp, annotate on a card the date, locale (GPS coordinates if you have them), and what you found there. If you've gone to a few locations, this will help you keep track of your finds. It will make it easier to find the location when you want to return there, too. Be sure to have all the equipment you need. Before you go, have a list ready to check off and have good maps. Be sure you have the required permits before you head out. He lists some basic rules for collecting and provides some helpful hints for a successful hunt.

Mr. Romaine provided a two page section on polishing the gems you find. It will help you get started if you are so inclined to polish up your finds.

The bulk of the books, and the main reason for my buying them, is the excellent listing of 78 locations (WA) and 100 locations (OR) of where gems are found. Included are good maps and directions to the locations. He states what you can expect to find and other information about each location. If you are even remotely interested in collecting gems in our area, I highly recommend these books.

Concentrates — Meeting Minutes Highlights

Business Meeting 8/12/12 (unofficial minutes)

Claims/Raffle Chair Lewin cautioned members to stay within the confines of where the club has set the outing to avoid trespassing on private property and risk being arrested. Parking for the outing at Copper Creek this Saturday is limited. Persons participating in this outing were reminded not to go beyond the waterfall. There are some reports that claims supposedly held by GPAA as shown in the new mining guide are apparently no longer held by GPAA.

Safety officers Bill Ray and Randy Harper reminded members to keep hydrated. You can get sunburned even when dredging. A first aid kit was donated to the club, but be sure to have available what you need personally.

Librarian Ernie Stinson stated the club has donated informational material which is available to members in good standing.

Sunshine Lady Betsy Shepherd reported she has one get-well card to go out, which was signed

by the officers.

Website - tests to search for our website were successful.

Newsletter - when submitting photos taken at an event, please include some notes, especially the names of people in the photos.

Equipment chair Robert Gregory reported the club metal detector is available to be checked out, but he is still working on creating the sign-out sheet.

The proposed bylaws were discussed. Based on input from the membership, a motion was made and seconded to add to the duties of the Safety Official the language "record and track any and all medical-related incidents occurring at events." Motion passed. Also, a motion was made and seconded to restrict the second elected officer who signed checks to one "not related to the Treasurer." Motion passed. Motion made and seconded to adopt the bylaws as amended. Motion passed.

Secretary Pat Locnikar described the application process to seek IRS 501(c)(3) status.

President Lewis thanked all the members who performed maintenance work at the Blue Moon claim during the outing in July.

Education chair Hastings reminded members that he has a questionnaire available to be filled out for educational sessions desired.

New Business

A motion was passed to recite the Pledge of Allegiance before regular meetings. An American and a Washington state flag will be donated.

A motion to purchase a three foot by six foot banner on heavy vinyl containing the club logo from Sign Pro costing \$160.00 was passed.

A motion was passed to check into costs of getting shirts, hats, etc. with the club logo on them.

Education

About 24 miles of the Quartzville River in Oregon are set aside for recreational prospecting, with best results to be found on the south side of the river if you can get across. Chair Hastings also stated he is willing to teach basic panning or other subjects the members want.

Announcements

There is private property surrounding Daybreak Park, so be sure you are within the park boundaries when prospecting.

Maintenance work at the Blue Moon outing in July was described.

When prospecting in southern Oregon and someone tells you it's their claim, you have the right to ask to see their claim papers, plus the corners of the claim should be marked.

The September meeting will be abridged to allow for demonstrations in the parking lot following the meeting.

The Panning Gourmet

Tin Foil Stew

By Rosalie Mitchell

Ingredients

6 ounces blade roast, trimmed and cut into 1/2 inch cubes or 1/4 lb hamburger in small pieces
 1 potato, cubed
 2 carrots, sliced
 1 onion, chopped
 1 clove crushed garlic
 Salt & pepper to taste
 1 tablespoon butter
 1 tablespoon water
 1 Roll of tin foil

Serves 1

Multiply ingredients & packets by the number in your group.

Directions

On a large sheet of tin foil layer beef, potato cubes, carrots, onion, and garlic. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, top with butter and a tablespoon of water. Roll edges of tin foil together and seal tightly. Place another layer of foil around this for added protection. Place packets on campfire coals and turn over every 5-10 minutes. It should be ready to eat in about 20 - 30 minutes. You can eat it right out of the foil or empty it into a dish. I like to make individual packets for everyone. Each packet is about 3" wide x 6" long x 1-1/2" tall.

[Check www.swgoldprospectors.org for more recipes!]

Black Diamonds & Gold — By Kameron Mitchell

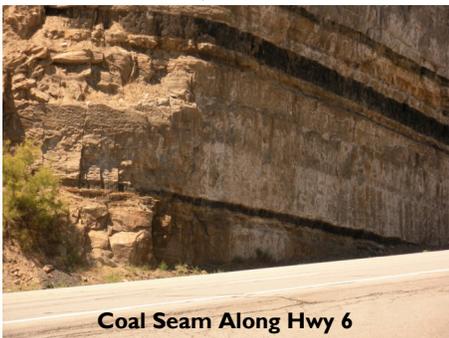
My wife and I were on our way to spend some time with family in Colorado this summer and I was hoping to do a little prospecting while there, as well. We broke up the long twenty-one hour drive from Vancouver, WA with a stop in Midvale, UT (near Salt Lake City). We took off the next morning and headed down Highway 6. This scenic drive though the Uinta National Forest brought us to a Rest Area called Tie Fork, which, thankfully, was very strategically situated for us. The theme of this rest area was steam locomotives.



Tie Fork Rest Area

There was a pseudo-roundhouse display and informative placards describing numerous activities available in the area. I picked up some Chamber of Commerce brochures and other information inside the most nicely appointed rest area lobby I have ever seen. What caught my eye was information on the Mining and Historical Museum in Helper, UT, which just happened to be a few mile down our route. We decided to make a quick, 10-minute stop to see what they had.

Just a couple of miles before Helper, we drove through a cut they made in the hillside for the road and saw what I thought was just the coolest thing: coal seams with one about 15 inches thick. At the museum we discovered that this southeast section of Utah produced many millions of tons of bituminous coal, much of which was made into coke, which was used in the production of steel.



Coal Seam Along Hwy 6

We arrived in the little town of Helper and made our way down Main Street to the museum. On our way we passed a huge, black statue of a coal miner. A couple doors farther on we saw another statue in bronze.

We walked into the museum and were greeted by Stephanie Fitzsimons who really enjoyed talking about her town. She was very accommodating and

a joy to talk to. She told us of an effort to restore the old buildings of the



town and a real effort to design newer buildings with the authentic architecture of the early 1900s period. Some of the historical buildings were torn down and many of the wooden structures were lost to fire before beginning this effort. It is still a work in progress but it was nice to see the results achieved to this point. One tragic loss, of many that could be counted, was the 25 train round house. Fortunately, pictures do remain.

We regrettably didn't have enough time to peruse the hotel/museum. Many interesting items were promised there as well as vintage rooms, etc.



Helper Hotel Museum

An interesting tidbit is that the town was originally named Prattville after Teacum Pratt who settled the region. He was failing at farming and readily sold a portion of his homestead to railroad officials. Soon the town grew as it provided the necessary helper engines to assist the coal and passenger trains up over the very steep grades. Due to this, it was renamed to Helper, probably the only town in America named after a piece of train equipment!

These early railroad and coal company towns were literally owned by the companies: the homes, stores, land, everything. The workers were paid in scrip which was only usable in the company stores. I will always remember the Tennessee Ernie Ford song that went something like this: "Sixteen tons and what do you get? Another day older and deeper in debt. Saint Peter don't you call me 'cause I can't go. I owe my soul to the company store." It was truly this way for many years.

Once the towns were established, they needed to populate them. The call went out to Europe and thousands of families came to try to earn a living. Many were fleeing famine and oppression. These townspeople were Greek, Irish, Japanese, Italian,

Yugoslavian, Scottish, and many more. It was said that you could hear 27 different languages being spoken if you walked down Helper's Main Street in the early 20th century.

The mines were very dangerous. Some of the greatest mining disasters occurred in this area due to explosions caused by coal dust and deadly gasses. And the work was hard. For many years it was manual with pick and shovel and, of course, some well-placed explosives. Some seams of coal were so shallow that the miners had to work on their knees. This was also before the children labor laws were in effect and many families had their children working in the mines with them as their pay was based on tonnage of coal extracted.

When the mines played out, the companies didn't just move their people to a new location, but many times they moved the entire town! That is, lock, stock, and homes! There are still a few remaining ghost towns, but it is amazing how few buildings remain.

Stories of the coal industry and the railroads make for very interesting reading. A couple of books you might look into are *Rails Around Helper* and *Coal Camps of Eastern Utah* published by Arcadia Publishing. These small picture books contain hundreds of images from archived photos of the past 125 years. They contain reliable, well-researched documentation to go along with them.

Our 10 minute stop to pick up information of the area turned into 90 minutes, and it was well worth it. I recommend a stop to everyone.

We continued our trip on into Colorado down I-70 and then highway 24 through the picturesque country of the White River, San Isabel, and Pike National Forests. We passed through historic mining towns such as Leadville. We wished we had more time to explore, but our families were waiting. We'll just have to put those explorations off until we retire, which come to think of it, will be in 2013! We can't wait!

One of the planned events at our "mini-reunion" was a couple a day trips to the nearby GPAA claim on the Arkansas River to pan for gold for anyone interested in learning how. I could hardly believe it, but everyone wanted to learn how to pan. With the number of people wanting to go, I decided to go to an easily accessible public area near the claim. I had purchased enough pans, snuffer bottles, and vials for almost everyone to use/have. I was nearly run ragged teaching everyone how to classify and pan all the material, but what fun! Over the course of a couple of days, everyone had the opportunity to find some gold. The gold we found was fine with some very small flakes thrown in for excitement. We had a gold draw and each family "won" a well-earned vial with gold they found and other prizes.

Our gold prospecting mini-outing was the hit activity of the reunion. Very closely followed by the "concert" at the Hartsel Bar performed by the Jacob Austin Band, a band made up of some of our Texas relatives. Awesome!

Southwest Washington Gold Prospectors

Meets 2nd Sunday every month at 1:00 pm
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Join us !

All interested parties are invited to attend one of our monthly meetings. There will be opportunities to learn about prospecting laws, methods, and equipment as well as some hands-on practice. Soon there will also be outings to enjoy the pleasures of prospecting for gold. Become a member of one of the newest chapters of the Gold Prospectors Association of America. There are no membership fees and GPAA membership is not required to join in the fun.



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