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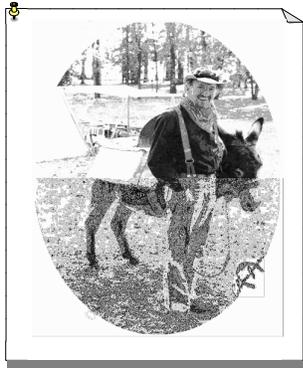
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**Please have all items for
the news letter to me by
the 25th of the month**



WILLAMETTE VALLEY MINERS

June 2008

President's Report

Next Meeting

June 19th 2008
7:00 pm

President's Report

Our May meeting had quite a few new members to enjoy the evening with the other members at the meeting.

Some of the governmental issues of the closing of public roads and the length of camping stays (14 days) were discussed. These and other issues need to be brought up again and again to our Representatives. Mainly the fact that these lands that the Forest Service and the other agencies are regulating and/or closing are Public Lands.

The Club's new storage trailer has been purchased and it seems to be a very nice one. Gary S. says it tows real well (he "tested" it out). The small damage area on the front corner doesn't look like it will be too hard to repair. Steve L. said he would help me on the repair work. One item to note is - there is no spare tire - so we need to address this at the next meeting.

Over the Memorial Weekend, Howard C. and Steve L. went down to the Dad's Creek claims to replace a couple of the club claim signs for us. I bet that's not all they went down there for; I hope they find some of that "yellow stuff in their gold pans." As I write this, I hope Vincent Creek outing or WVM 1 outing were successful for any members able to attend and that the weather cooperated. We are sure due for some changes with this weather so far this year.

Paul Messersmith's presentation on how to find and file for a claim was another interesting and informative one. Way to go Paul - we're all learning a lot!

Events coming soon are:

June 20-23 Miners Meadows Outing with potluck -- games-- prizes-- fun-- GOLD??

also that weekend Oregon Prospecting Supplies (Rita from Sweet Home) and

Fine Recovery (Louie from Jefferson) will be having their yearly mining equipment

demo at Quartzville mile post 20
July 4-7 Dad's Creek Outing

See You There!

Louie Frick, President WVM

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Club Outings/Events



Meeting Minutes

May 15, 2008

Jeff Farrand Secretary

President Louie Frick of the Willamette Valley Miners, called to order the May 2008 General meeting at the regularly scheduled time of 7:00 PM. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month at the Marion County Fire Station, 300 Cordon Road NE, in Salem, Oregon. In attendance were 51 members and 1 guest.

The members greeted the new members and guest in attendance and asked them to introduce themselves.

The April meeting minutes were approved as read by Jeff Farrand. The Treasurers Report given by Marshall Phares was also approved.

Paul Messersmith informed the club that government affairs have been somewhat quiet except for road accessibility in regards to the Forest Service.

The next meeting is on June 19TH. Outings coming up are Miner's meadow from June 20TH to the 23RD (contact Howard Conner, 503-299-0262) and Dad's Creek in July from the 4TH to the 6TH (contact Gary Wolf, 503 364-3879). Miner's Meadow will have games like a GPS hunt, Metal detector hunt and a rubber duck race down the river. There is also a potluck. Miner's Meadow is reserved for our members and is a fenced area with an outhouse. Please inform Howard if you are going, so he has an idea on the amount of prizes. Dad's Creek has plenty of places to camp and plenty of creek to search for gold.

Paul did a fine job again on the LR2000 presentation. His next presentation will be in July. Howard Conner will do a presentation on GPS's and other technology in the June meeting.

Gary and Trudy Schrader have found a used trailer to replace our worn out safety hazard. The trailer looks great except one blemish which the club hopes there is a member who could make the patch. There was a motion to purchase the trailer and the motion was approved.

Thank you to Howard Conner for volunteering to install the new signs at Dad's Creek.

Jim Washburn was the lucky winner of the 2 ½" combo unit.

The meeting was adjourned and handed over to the Raffle table.

Miners Meadow: Picnic, Mining, Events, June 20-27 on Quartzville Creek (25 miles e. of Sweet Home)

"For a good time - call Howard. June is coming up fast and with it Miners Rendezvous at Miners Meadow, June 20-23. Great camping, great games, great prizes, great food and a great time to be had by all - awaits me and you!! Once again, the Ducky Race down Quartzville Creek, a GPS mega-prize quest and Metal Detector Treasure hunt will test your luck and skill. Let's break all past records and fill Miners Meadow to overflowing. Remember, the club pays for the Meadow and the meat.....so bring your potluck item and let's meet in the Meadow." This is a great opportunity to learn how to operate and cleanup a dredge or high banker. Various club members will have their machines set up on Quartzville Creek to share expertise with other club members. Contact Howard Conner 503-299-0262

Dad's Creek Outing: July 4th-6th, camping, dredging, high banking, panning. (a few miles west of Glendale, exit 80 on I5)

Dads Creek is a small tributary of Cow Creek that is generally shallow to bedrock and yields colors, flakes and even small nuggets. There was great excitement here in the late 1970's when these miner acquaintances of mine found a "sleeper" hole below that one water fall. It was some 20' deep of packed gravel and yielded 28 ounces of ½ dwt to 2 dwt. Nuggets for a total take approaching 200 ounces! Contact Gary Wolf 503-364-3879

Walker Creek Outing: July 19-20th, dredging, panning & sluicing.

This area is reached by driving east of I5 (Exit 174) on Row River Road for 15 miles then 10 miles on Sharps Creek Road. The Bohemia mining area has produced the biggest nuggets in the Oregon Cascades with finds in recent years of 1 to 1 ½ oz. Contact Don Hammer, 541-740-0375

Myrtle Creek Outing; August 2nd & 3rd, contact Don Hammer 541-740-0375

Clackamas County Fair: August 11th-17th, We need some volunteers to handle our booth and demonstrate gold panning! Contact Wes Jeffers 503-266-5270

Sunstone Hunting in Eastern Oregon: Aug. 29-Sep. 1st, With the proper guidance and direction these semi precious stones can be dug out...lots of excitement Contact: Don & Diane Smith.

Beverly Beach, Sept 19-21st, It is easy to find small colors of gold on this very pretty hidden little beach that also yields nice fossils (like the shell oil sign, just not that big) Contact: Wes Jeffers 503-266-5270.

Coming gold events this season

1. **Bohemia Gold Days**, Cottage Grove, OR July 17 to 20th, includes a breakfast up on the mountain at the Bohemia

Mining District, gold panning, parades, entertainment, and such in downtown Cottage Grove.

2. **North West Miner's Rally**, Oroville, WA August 15-17th. Features seminars, open dredging/panning on 7 miles of Similkameen River.

Going with the Flow

by Tom Bohmker

STOP COMPLAINING: JUST REVISE YOUR PLANS AND PUT THE LOW ELEVATION SNOW AND HIGH WATER LEVELS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE. Certainly you have heard it here in the newsletters and at the club meetings that several club sponsored events had to cancelled or postponed due to snow blockage on the roads or unusually high streams levels. Does that mean we have to stay home from prospecting until mid summer? No. While it is true that unseasonably high water levels may render a particular spot not dredgable it opens up opportunity in other places. You have to learn to go with Flow, that is the water Flow...sometimes you can fight but often it is best to take advantage of new opportunity.

An Example of **Going with the Flow by just dealing with the fast current.** For a decade and a half my close friends (let's call them Moe and Joe as they request I don't use their names) were most successful dredging on the upper Sacramento River between Shasta Lake and Dunsmire, right along 15. For several seasons in a row they would slowly dredge their way the channel following pay streaks through the boulder bars and shallow rapid sections. When the pay in a certain area would give out they would pack their dredge and move sometimes miles up or down the river to another claim. They were quite successful year after year. Normally they worked a 3 ½ month season and average recoveries were in the 80 to 150 oz of gold each season. Then there was that one season the water levels were quite low and they went down stream and tried a huge pool (where there was enough water to float their Big 8" Dalke dredge). It took 5 weeks of dredging and re-dredging the tailings to keep them from sliding back into the huge hole which was over 100 wide at the top to finally reach a very small area of hard pack in big boulders on bedrock 30' down. They cleaned up 18 oz. in a couple days and called it quits for the season...the next hole up stream was even larger and deeper and they felt they wouldn't have time before the end of the season to finish it. They still talk about this "bummer year" which most people would not complain about for gold recovery. However things did balance out as the next couple of normal weather seasons Moe and Joe did really well. Then at the end of one summer one summer found them about half way up a fast section of rapids that was giving out nice nuggets weighing 1 to 5 dwt each almost every day. The winter could not pass fast enough. However that winter had extra deep snow levels and a very late spring. When dredge season started in mid May they were all set up at the river but it was several feet higher and much too fast a current to dredge out in the middle where the pay streak was

Dealing with the fast, deep current: Moe and Joe started by dredging the banks where the water was shallow and slower. The trouble was is that there wasn't much gold on the sides of the boulder bars and in many places the canyon was narrow leaving no room. In two weeks they accumulated very little gold with their 8" dredge and were very discouraged. Yet the river flow was still too high to wade in the current more than 5' or so from the bank. Yet some 30 feet out they could see that big boulder that was just up stream from where they had left off the pay streak the fall before. Finally in desperation they dredged a whole to bed rock next to the bank and then dredged a trench towards the middle where the boulder marked the pay streak. It

was very tough going with the dredge staying next to the bank and they played out addition suction hose as needed. They found a little flood gold: colors and .5mm flakes in this overburden and some 1-2mm flakes on bedrock totally something like 1 dwt a day (1 dwt = 1/20th oz). This is nothing close to what it takes to run such an operation. Since the bedrock moved up and down they had to try different paths through the guts on bedrock. It was important to stay away from the shallower spots (high bedrock) as the diver need "protection" in the trench from the fast current. What would take a day or two of normal work in regular summer flows now took a week of very exhausting effort. Finally they got out in the middle and on schedule the bottom 1 to 2 feet of alluvium was that red pack color material: **Paydirt!** The gold started flowing in now. I was shown a 9 dwt and 13 dwt nugget and the champ of the nugget trap just under and down stream from the boulder was a large nugget with some white quartz that weighed over **an ounce**. There were scores of smaller nuggets 1 dwt to 3 dwt in size. It was some time later when I made it down to join Moe and Joe. They were above the rapids and the water flow was reduced but still extremely difficult to work in.

Conditions on the bottom in fast water: Even though the water levels were down and current was significantly reduced dredging required special procedures. The 8" dredge was still tied up on the shore and we commuted to the working face by crawling down a dredged out trench some 25' out to where the paystreak lay. Bedrock was generally 6 or 7 feet below the water surface and the gravel was deposited within about 2 to 3 feet of the surface. In our work we hugged the up stream side of the trench with the water just howling by over head leaving a constant stream of sand and small gravel particles peppering us and quickly recovering exposed bedrock. One guy would work the nozzle and the other would pack the moveable cobblestones a few yards down stream to our tailings pile of oversize. The current was slower here but especially when the heavy rock was released the water really bucked you around and the trick was to hunch down to offer less frontal area to the current to save energy. They way we ducked behind the wall of the trench never poking our head "over the top" reminded me of WWI trench Warfare. Moe had hooked up a very nice water heater for our wet suits but then it is just one more line to tangle up. I found I could get by with 70 lbs. of diving weights but still double what I normally use in current. I knew a dredger on the Klamath that followed a crevice across the river in a fast section that ended up stretch a 1200 foot rope from the next out side bend down the center of the river to the crevice. By tying off the rope on a torso harness he made and somehow slipping on 140 lbs of lead (this isn't fun at all) he could walk along the exposed bed rock to the area he was dredging. While this works it is dangerous and makes for lots of additional hassles in keeping the right length of rope. Also, since the Klamath has lots of rafting and Jet boat traffic there is the potential of having your safety tie line dragged around (with you on the end of the whip so to speak). Moe and Joe's method worked OK and gave the diver more maneuverability. Inadvertently I discovered the limitations of this method. We uncovered a smaller boulder wedged in place next to a knob of bed rock. In trying to work the boulder loose I moved around with an iron bar and tried to position the bar to lever it out using the knob of bed rock which stuck up 18" or so off the normal bed rock level. The 24" round boulder was firmly attached in place and didn't budge. Perhaps there was lots of gold underneath I am thinking so I straightened up to put more weight into the lever. **Big Mistake:** On a bullet strafed battle field you'd probably meet your maker sticking head and shoulders above the trench and into the enemy fire power. Here of course it was not necessary fatal but the current was certainly the enemy. Suddenly the current grabbed me and flipped me numerous head over heels backwards with weight belt and all. The view out the face mask was similar to the camera shot out of cockpit of a spinning soon to crash air plane: flashes of sky, deep green of water, tailing boulders up close over and over again as I tumbled over the stacks of tailing cobblestones and boulders. It only lasted 2 or 3 seconds but it was quite a thrashing and eventually the surface worker Joe pulled me to shore and quieter water with my air hose. I was breathless, banged up, embarrassed but OK. They had

done this before. I was careful not to do it again. Was it worth it? In this stretch it was lower grade than the rapids just below and we still cleaned up as little as 9 dwt a day, usually 13 -19 dwt a day.

OK, sometimes you can successfully fight the fast water...but some times you can't ...then what?

Circumventing the Current: Move to a tributary Creek. This sounds simple enough but can be very effective. Especially at the lower elevations many small gold bearing tributaries dry up or at least have minimal water flow in summer. These little creeks or gulches may workable in late spring, high water years when your favorite spot may be unreachable or just too fast to work. Once when working an underground pocket mine in the drier lower foothills of California we noticed over a period of years that in our erratic periods of activity at the mine during winter or summer the creek just did not seem flow, it was always dry. Locals said that the current drought had just dried it up for years and only flowed for a few days after heavy winter rains with the run off. Finally one winter it really rained and flooded and suddenly the creek overflowed its little banks for a bit and settled down for a decent water flow until summer...for the first time we could dredge it and found some nice nuggets! There was a lot of clay which discouraged use of dry washers during the late summer time.

There are numerous gulches or tributary creeks that feed into the well known rich gold bearing creeks in Southern Oregon and elsewhere that just don't get worked much today. Often by dredging season they are down to just a trickle of water, not enough to dredge or even high bank. You can be sure that many of these normally nearly dry watercourses are flowing very strong right now. Often in the summer I have noticed these places identified by the tailing and rock stacks left by the old timers and I wonder aloud "where did they get the water to work these places". Of course they may have dug long ditches to distant all year flowing streams and by gravity and numerous trestles delivered water to an otherwise dry hillside or gulch. However, much of the time the old timers were out there in Jan and Feb when the heavy rains or snow melt occurred and the local gulch bubbled forth with water.

An example of choosing the spot because of water flow: One place comes to mind, I leased some good claims near Josephine Creek for years. We dredged right up to the forks of this small tributary but there was not enough water in late summer to continue on either fork. I came back once in late spring and there was plenty of water in either fork. The left fork had more of the nugget gold, and larger brassy colored gold but it was spread out under big boulders. This fork follow the Serpentine/greenstone contact and had many pocket diggings on it providing source for the gold. However the right fork showed lots of small flakes that were a different color: the matrix was often rusty black and decomposed. We had found this gold down stream all mixed with the brassy gold. I was interested in finding out the lode source on this fork but the water was muddy, we couldn't see under water well so we retreated back downstream below the forks and found the pools had settled out the muddy water and we could dredge. Just a couple of years ago I contacted a miner who found a very narrow steep gulch a mile up the right hand fork who followed it up over 1,000 feet in elevation to a flat. The source of gold was very close identified by the very rough texture of the flakes. It was not from a vein but dissipated in large zone in a meta-sediment rock. There was no water except right after the deep snows (elevation above 4,000') started to melt. So this determined miner would drive on a logging road as far as possible then snow shoe some miles in April some time to the little gully where there would be a trickle of water. He would have just a few weeks to work it and by May usually he'd be out of water. This year the season would be stretched out longer for weeks. When he started he averaged with his high banker some ½ oz a day. After some years when the gold price was down the grade slipped to ¼ oz a day and he sold the claims. He told me this was a mistake!

At another time we will discuss the strategy for mining during drought conditions: again by not fighting nature we can put it to our advantage.

Mining Video Review

By Tom Bohmker

Normally this time of year I don't watch a lot of TV...There is just so much outside activities that are so much fun to do as well as the summer outdoor work schedule. But last weekend, the 3 day memorial day one...I spent a lot of it as sick as a dog with some short term flu bug. Since I had a weekend trip to the mining show in Roseburg coming up the next weekend followed soon by a week of pocket gold mining in California...I needed to stay indoors and heal up fast. There was a huge box of business accounting to do (something enjoyed by me just a little less than dealing with claim jumpers) and yet *I made the day pass very fast thanks to the Videos I had checked out of the WVM library.* Our club library (which is brought to each meeting) has a wealth of information available free to members. Do you have a favorite mining oriented video that you would like to review or recommend? Let the EDITOR know.

Sierra Productions: Yuba River Dredging This is a 70minute long story of some experienced dredgers tackling the North Fork of the Yuba in CA with an 8" dredge. The spot doesn't look that great but near bedrock the red pack gravel is exposed and they pick up lots of flood gold. Much explanation of technique of balancing volume to good recovery is given including use of 4" dredge for crevicing and processing the rich gravel on bedrock. A lot of excellent very professional underwater photography is spent showing chipping and cleaning out nuggets out of the crevices. After viewing this video my son commented "it sure reminds me of how much fun dredging is...lets get planning for this summer".

Video T-21 Alaska Stories: This video was recorded from mostly public television by one of our members and contains at least 6 or 7 segments that covers wild life, lots of bear stories, history of seal traders from the Russian days in the 1700's, lots of windy cold scenery, a visit to Alaska Land in Fairbanks and the high light: a documentary of 4 guys who duplicated the 98 gold rush over Chilcoot Pass then rafted all the way down the Yukon stopping at Dawson and the few out posts along the way. It is a harrowing adventurous experience and helped me understand how hard it was just to reach the gold fields in those days.

Paradise Valley 2000: Paradise Valley is a mining camp in the far north of Alaska that takes visitors for a week at a time. It is located deep in the Brooks Range some 230 air miles north of Fairbanks and way beyond the end of the road. A gravel airstrip at the camp handles weekly air service into the Alaska typical wide flat valley covered with light timber and wild flowers with rugged very steep ice sculptured mountains in all directions. For hundreds of miles in any direction there is virtually *nothing* so it is easy to understand the proud accomplishment that the owner of this mine shows as gives the video tour around the spread out camp. The cabins are simple 12 x18' affairs with wooden bunks, a wood stove to dry your work clothes, gas burner to cook on and a chair. The most expensive ones (this costs 100 or \$200 a day) feature a shower with HOT WATER). A visitor used to opulent hotel life in Dubai (where \$5,000 a day on up is common) would be disappointed but the point is the Adventure of pretty much what it was like in the gold rush. The owners started digging here in the 1970's and now let visitors metal detect down the creeks. They use a dozer every so often to turn over the thawing gravel and mud and the detecting starts. Every week someone finds a ¼ or ½ oz. nugget and the owners flash pictures of a whopping 10 oz'er around. Most novices get small bits BB sized pieces a day scattered all over the gold bearing gravel with the occasional crevice on bedrock with an ounce or more of heavy gold. This video is done

very amateurishly (you'd want to fast forward through some sections) but makes us feel as if we have been there.

Mining Builds Character

Editors' note: US Senator Harry Reid recently published a memoir of his long political life. He seems to owe his personal determination to succeed in life to his growing up the small rough and tumble mining town of Searchlight in Southern Nevada. His home town in the 1940's and 50's was in a long period of economic decline yet his family survived economically. By the 1970's Senator Reid served as Lieutenant Governor of Nevada and presently as US Senate Majority Leader. His introduction to his story of hanging in despite difficult political struggles reads as follows:

Much attention is paid in public life to the importance of the collection of attributes that we call character. Somewhat less attention is devoted to consideration of where character is born. But I suppose you could say that Searchlight gives the lie to some of the prevailing theories. I am here as a witness to say that character, and values, come from places you wouldn't necessarily think to look. Because some of the men and women of greatest character that I will ever meet in my life came from this place of hard rocks and inhospitable soil.

Trace the footsteps back far enough in anyone's story and you'll find a pioneer. These are the pioneers in my story. Why they came here to Searchlight is rather easy to understand; why they stayed and persevered is maybe a little harder. Mining the earth is just about the hardest job under the sun, and when the returns begin to dwindle, the gold is less plentiful, the checks start to bounce—I guess it might seem to a hard-rock miner like my father that the earth itself is fighting back, exacting its revenge.

Senator Harry Reid , The Hard Fight

How not to sell your hard won gold

By Tom Bohmker

In the May issue of our newsletter we discussed ways to sell your gold. I just heard a story at the mining show in Roseburg on how not to sell your gold! I have had to substitute names for the individuals...they were embarrassed about it that much, and there is the possibility of inviting more trouble with the Federal Government. I personally know these people but heard the story from a very reliable mutual acquaintance.

It seemed like a good working partnership at the time: Mack, a veteran placer miner in Southern Oregon of considerable experience and fame would provide the equipment such as trammel, dozers, loaders and trucks. Jack had an unworked bench gold placer that had tested out quite well and had the necessary permits. The last partner Zack had the most important ingredient for a successful mining venture: Enough money to finance the whole shooting match. The three seemed to get along well enough and they trusted each other. By the end of the season they had struggled through the various problems, faulty pumps, broken hydraulic lines and busted transmissions not with standing finding and mining the pay streak. Finally it was gold selling time and they had dozens of pounds of gold to market. Of course they creamed off some the larger nuggets but the bulk was small flake gold. Since they had lots to sell it seemed best to try to unload it all at once, then they could split up the dollars they'd get accordingly. The trouble with such a plan is that only the largest buyers have the economic backing to fork out so much money all at once. The smelter would have worked OK but it takes longer (perhaps some weeks) and at least one of the partners didn't want the paper trail leading back to him for income taxes. Mack had seen this situation develop before and knew how to handle this little problem. He made some calls to a gold buyer he knew in Reno. His regular buyer made a reasonable offer for cash but Jack felt they could get a little better price elsewhere. It ended up that they all went to Reno together and eventually found a private buyer in a hotel room that wanted it all for a good price and would pay in cool green cash! It seemed like a good conclusion for a long hard season of mining and hard work...until they returned to Oregon and discovered that nearly all the \$80,000 greenbacks were counterfeit!

The only redeeming part of this story is that Mack and associates eventually recovered from this loss. Mining builds character and to be successful you learn how to cope with discouragements along the way.

Selling gold at the Hotel Room: The previous story brought to mind a gold selling experience I had some time ago. A friend showed me an add in the local paper advertising a gold buyer that was coming to town. They advertised "highest prices paid for gold jewelry, rings and dental gold" and advertised a set price per pennyweight (dwt). Of course 99% of the general population cannot relate dwt to troy ounce and properly figure the actual gold content of karat jewelry. Some places would just weight your gold and offer a very low price (sometimes half of content) and see if you'd take it. In this case I figured out from their add they were offering about 80-85% of actual gold content, not too bad a price for selling small quantities of gold scrap. I decided to sell some gold scrap, it was near the summer mining season and I needed to get a grub stake worked up to cover the start of the season. I carefully weighed my gold on my gold scale at home before calling the number in the paper and making an appointment. I arrived at the door of the hotel room and they would not open until I repeated my name and appointment time through the door. The door opened partially to a guy in a fancy looking suit who at 6'4" or so looked like a bouncer on Bourbon Street in New Orleans. I apparently passed the visual and walked to a table and chair where the buyer greeted me and beckoned me to the table. The buyer was a slight guy, early middle age with thinning slick backed hair and

...well the nicest way to say it...a greasy hand shake. The built like a linebacker greeter stayed back blocking the door and only exit. His feet were spread apart and his right hand was on his hip...he didn't look very friendly. I slowly took my small parcel and opened it showing some watch cases, various rings and some old gold teeth I had acquired. The buyer without talking examined each piece with his loop and sorted them on the table to Karat value. Presently he said something like "Yes, this is all good solid 14kt and 10 Kt jewelry, we'll be happy to buy it. Do you mind if I check these teeth?" He picked up a random tooth, brought over to the sink outside the enclosed toilet and tube bathroom. He was going to do a **needle test** to check the gold content of the old chompers.

(break from Story)

The Needle Test for check gold content of scrap gold jewelry. This consists of small brass needles (usually hinged together with a rivet) that have a small bit of known Karat value gold on the tip such as 10 kt or 14 kt. An unknown sample of gold such as a ring "It was my great aunt's wedding ring and for sure it must be 14 kt solid gold" is brushed against a special touch stone (usually black with a texture similar to the unglazed back of a tile) to leave a tiny streak of gold on the touch stone. Then a known streak is put beside it with the needles and a drop of powerful acid is put on both streaks. If the acid eats away and dissolves the unknown gold streak first...it is of lower karat level and vice versa. Also a tiny scratch can be placed on a sample of unknown quality in an out of the way place and a drop of acid put on it. If it bubbles forth green...likely the gold item is not solid but gold plated over a brass or copper core. Nitric acid is used for the low karat tests with a mild aquaregia solution used for 10 to 12 kt and a more concentrated aquaregia acid solution is used on the 14 to 18kt gold. It is very difficult to distinguish between gold alloys above 18 kt or 750 fine (75%) gold.

(Continuing on the selling gold in the hotel room story)

Concluding the gold sell: As the buyer tested the gold I sneaked a sideways look at the big bruiser guy by the door. He was much more relaxed now, convinced I was not a robber or someone trying to pawn off some fake costume jewelry. I now could see clearly the outline of a stub nose revolver holstered on his hip just under his jacket. Soon the old teeth tested out about 16kt and the gold was weighed. If his scale had not been exactly on with my previous weighting at home I am not sure I would have said anything! He was honest with the weight and offered a fair price. I accepted and the buyer walked over to a hotel room dresser, the big guy at the door straightened up with his hand again near his concealed hip holster...just in case I tried something funny. The drawer was pulled open revealing stacks of \$20.00 bills and several bank warped \$100.00 Franklin bundles...and a tiny .25 cal. Automatic...these guys were very professional even though it seemed I was doing business with the MOB. They were convinced I was an OK customer and not up to robbery or trying to sell them junk and gave me a business card to contact them for future business transactions. I looked at the card and with little surprise noted *they were based at a pawn shop in Reno, Nevada*. They were both all smiles now as I took the cash and left the room. Out the door on the way to the elevator a lady of substance clutching a handbag was walking in the opposite direction. She knocked at that same door and soon was admitted: the next customer. It was an interesting experience but since then I have found it more relaxing not to sell at the hotel!

Report from the Roseburg Gold Show: By Tom Bohmker

This was the first time I have attended a gold show in Roseburg and found the local clientele and the local club (Douglas County

Prospectors Association) sponsoring the event very friendly, easy going and enjoying the event. There is a lot of interest in gold mining there and many new families interested in doing something new and exciting. Oregon's Senior Mining Geologist and author Miles Mitchell shared my booth with impressive display of S. Oregon ores and mineral samples in a glass case. Several people were looking at his memoirs asking questions about if they had useful gold mining information on their area. Of course this book does and I would show them a picture of the author Miles Mitchell cleaning out a sluice box at the Heppler brother's hydraulic mine in 1937 near Tiller, OR up stream from Canyonville. Several of them asked whatever happened to Miles...It was a pleasure to bring Miles over from some other conversation and share his vast knowledge of mining. At 90 he is very actively engaged in mining projects including one with me and my sons at a pocket mine in CA later this June.

Billie Smith Interview; For you that don't know him or heard stories about this long time gold miner Billie Smith on Coffee Creek near Tiller east of Canyonville; He is a real character! He has been successful over the years in placer mining...sometimes with a dredge, usually with heavy equipment and trommels and lots of persistent hard work. He is quite opinionated on a number of subjects but when you have made the difficult big time level of gold mining pay off again and again...perhaps one is entitled to voice loudly his views (never get him started on politicians). I asked him what he thought were the keys to his successful mining over the years. I expected an answer such as "hard work, persistence, I live on the claims, good partners/help, understanding wife, a good claim and so on. His answer after just a moment was "The basic reason I have been successful is that from the start I had a big lock on the gate so that the forest service can't get in (only by appointment) and the @#%&* Environmentalist don't know what I am working on or up to." He also likes to kid people and joke and thus set me up for a joke!

Billie Smith sets me up! A polite soft spoken customer asked me during the mining show in Roseburg what the advantage is of the square type "Le Trap" gold pan. I started explaining to him when dip panning physics dictates the flat fan shape allows the escaping water to steadily slow down as it exits the pan while the same motion in a round pan often creates (in my opinion) a less desirable sideways flow of water somewhat parallel with riffle grooves near the riffles close to the edge. Not having water to demonstrate this I used a number of hand gestures to describe this. Then I continued that the greatest advantage of the Le Trap Pan was that the snuffer bottle was much more effective in washing out the minute particles of black sand from fine sized gold particles when this was done in the corner of the square Le Trap Pan than on the bottom of flat, round pan. Again I pantomimed the action and my customer who had been frowning deep in thought brightened up...It appeared he understood and believed my explanation.

About then we were interrupted by a booming voice in back of me and we both turned and stared at Billie Smith some 10 feet away who with a booming sarcastic voice was saying "***That little thing ain't worth crap...I tried one and it wouldn't pick up my gold!!!***" He paused long enough to see if he had drawn the attention of the show crowd. Yes at least 30 people had turned around most of them not fully hearing or understanding this "disturbance". He repeated his thought even louder and had stopped at this point most conversations in the area. I had to say something so I tried the approach of trying to calm the situation with something like "Now, actually these little snuffers do a good job of separating the gold from the black sand..." I stopped as he walked over said reiterating himself "I tell ye, that plastic &*\$# doesn't pull up my gold". With that in great showmanship style he flashed a bottle of gold from his pocket to the crowd. It was a baby food jar (a larger one at that) which was full of nuggets...mostly in the 1/4 oz. size! He walked around, working the crowd who Owed and Awed as he held up high his impressive "flash". All I could do was to smile and admit he had set me up!

Wanted: Your stories about mining , learning the ropes, that crazy mining trip to wherever and what you would like to see in our news letter. The Editor

Miners seeking Miners: everyone laughed at the meeting when I brought this subject up. How can we organize ourselves to bring together members for mining outings. By sharing rides and gas costs we can continue our mining efforts!

Next issue: What are sleeper creeks? When water levels are low:

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