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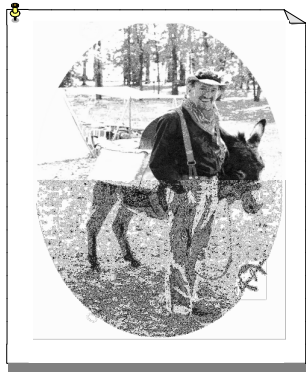
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**Please have all items for  
the news letter to me by  
the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month**



# WILLAMETTE VALLEY MINERS

OCTOBER 2008

President's Report

## Next Meeting

Oct. 17 2008  
7:00 pm

### *President's Report*

*As the seasons changes another Club meeting passes. Many thanks to the members and guests for attending and for participating in the issues that come up. It's also that time of year for election of next years Club officers. Why not step up and do your part to be involved more. The Club is only as good as each one of us participates and contributes.*

*A scientific study in the Grants Pass area at a swimming pool site will be done to determine the amount and size of mercury that will pass through a dredge and trommel. Joe and Claudia are going to be involved with this study and the results will be used in legal cases. It's terrific that these two are willing to use their expertise for this important and useful study. WVM elected to donate \$350.00 to help with their expenses for this study. (There are many ways to be involved in keeping our mining rights for now and in the future.)*

*Outings: Miners Meadows outing and potluck was sparsely attended. Not a whole lot of people, but good food (and plenty) and great Fall weather. Trevor did well finding gold, again. I guess youthful energy and persistence pays off.*

*Beverly Beach (just north of Newport) is Oct. 3-5 with Wes Jeffers herding the group along to (about 10 am in the parking area) GOLD on the beach.*

*Metal Detecting at Wallace Marine Park in West Salem is Nov. 1 with Gary Schrader (about 10 am). Lots of good pointers!*

*Upcoming "Events" planning meeting is Oct 19. at Jeff Farrands house (at 10 am). It would be nice to have some new/fresh ideas for the Club outings for next year.*

*Members report of gold (or lack of) finds on our claims: Old Farts claim had "slim pickins". Dads Creek claim got worked over kind of hard and a lot of garbage was left laying around. Oops! Was it some of us or others? Be sure to clean up (yours or not).*

*Louie Frick,  
president WVM*

### *Also in this Issue:*

- Coming outings and events
- Victory in California over anti-dredging regulations!
- Club member checks out "sleeper creek" SW of Roseburg
- While on the subjects of Rattle Snakes...
- "Trip to the Surprise Mine" a gold mining story with "Eating Crow" & a rattlesnake culinary twist
- WDHF has hearing on dredging regulations in Washington State
- Mining Movie Review: Mother Lode
- New Pocket Gold Deposit found near Cave Junction, OR

*Next Issue: Ways to Mine More Gold with less gasoline*

## Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2008

Jeff Farrand Secretary

President Louie Frick of the Willamette Valley Miners, called to order the September 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 38 members and 3 guests.

Louie Frick asked the new members and guest to stand and introduce themselves and the members greeted them.

The news letter for the month of August was not sent out. We do apologize for any inconvenience. There was a death in the Editor of the newsletters family. The newsletter was put into the Willamette Valley Miner's web site.

The meeting minutes from August were approved as read. The Treasurers report was also approved. The current membership count is approximately 235.

For those members who wish to have a Federal Public Servant questionnaire , you can get it from the clubs web site.

There is a new mining store opening in Harrisburg called the Black Cat Mining.

Officer's elections are coming up and the club needs nominations to fill all the seats. Please step forward and support the club, It takes the members to keep the club operational.

There will be an Event Committee meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup> at Jeff Farrand's house in order to plan the 2009 outings and events. This is membership participation. If you wish to attend, it is a potluck. All members should of received a card in the mail, if you need directions please call 503-931-6804. Please RSVP. If you can't make it and have any ideas, please call Jeff or another Officer with those ideas.

The library is available at the club meetings to check out books. If you have any books or tapes to

included, please give them to Howard. If you have any books checked out, please return to allow others to use.

The metal detecting outing in November will be on the 1st at Wallace Marine Park. We will meet at the playground at 10:00 AM.

Joe Greene and Claudia Wise is starting their studies on how mercury acts while dredging. There was a motion for \$350.00 dollars to help Joe and Claudia with personal cost that are not covered by their funding. Donations to help out with these causes can be contributed to the People for Public Lands. These donations are tax deductible.

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

## Outings, coming events

### **Events Planning Meeting for 2009 , Sunday Oct 19th**

This will be held at Member Jeffand's Home, for directions contact Jeff @ 503-371-3652

All members are invited to participate in person or by proxy. What outing did we like? Did some need to be longer, scheduled differently, Are their ideas that you have or would want to lead? Do we need some event such the **Yellow bottom Gold Toss**? This would be organized by a member who would donate a nice hand full of nuggets and at a cue toss them into one of the pools at Quartville. Then all participating members with diving masks on would jump in unison in search of the yellow on the bottom. It would be something like the Oklahoma Land Rush but with out horses. Later we'd dredge it up to be sure that no nugget would be left behind...

Do we need a special meeting or time at one of the meetings early next spring for Members to organize their own arrangements? In other words, match up people with equipment with those who don't, novices with old hands, people with an economical vehicle with those that have gas money but the wrong kind of wheels etc. etc.

We need your feed back.

### **Metal Detecting Outing, Saturday Nov 1st**

We will meet at Wallace Marine Park 10:00 am at the play grounds by the soccer fields.

Contact Gary Schrader 503-859-3132

### **Christmas Party**

December 6th @ 12:00 pm. To be held at the fire station on Cordon Road in Salem.

## **Victory in California over anti-dredging regulations!**

I am very pleased to report that we have won another very important victory in preserving the rights of small-scale gold prospectors! Here is a final summary by our head lobbyist, Pete Conaty:

[http://www.goldgold.com/legal/anti-dredging\\_rider\\_update.pdf](http://www.goldgold.com/legal/anti-dredging_rider_update.pdf)

As many of you know, this was just one more attempted cowardly

sneak attack by our adversaries (there have been several during the past few years). Imagine trying to hide language to eliminate

suction dredging in California in the annual budget bill!

As we stepped up our lobbying pressure, our adversaries then modified the language to eliminate or reduce some of our most important suction dredge seasons, calling this a "compromise" (from their sneak attack to eliminate suction dredging altogether).

Then, as we stepped up our lobbying efforts even further, our Republican friends in the legislature were able to get the language completely eliminated.

Just as importantly, while we cannot find it listed in the budget as a line item, the Department of Fish & Game (DFG) is acknowledging that the \$1 million was approved to pay for an update of the California Environmental Impact Report (EIR) which supports our suction dredge regulations. With the EIR update finally beginning, I suspect there is a reasonable chance that the Court will reject any motions by our adversaries

to intervene -- and therefore allow the administrative process to resolve any real issues that might be related to suction dredging. This is a good thing!

I want to personally thank everyone who contributed to our efforts by sending in your messages as we requested. I also want to thank all of you who sent in financial contributions to help us pay the costs. For the first time ever, we have actually ended up with enough money in our fund to pay all the costs at the time we have won a battle. Always before, I have had to request help from you for months after we have won a battle! As raising the money to pay our experts is one of the most stressful parts I have to play, I want to thank all you guys (and gals) for all your wonderful support!

None of this is to say the war is over. We will now be fighting every step of the way through the administrative process. Still, since that whole administrative process is designed by law to impose the least-restrictive regulations, to resolve real problems, based upon the best available science, I predict that we will come out alright in the end. But I'm certain that we will have to hold a firm line every step of the way.

So please stay with us!

Meanwhile, we are in the clear again, and we should all be able to start our planning for next year's dredging season!

We should all just pause for just a moment and give ourselves another well-deserved pat on the back. Thanks a lot for being

there. You guys make it a personal honor for me to play my part

in all of this. Without you, it certainly would not be a winning game!

Dave Mack

- **Club member checks out “sleeper creek” SW of Roseburg**

*Editor’s Note: We have had articles in recent newsletters on the subject of sleeper creeks. In the July issue we repeated a “tip” from an older visitor to my booth at the Roseburg gold show last May. To refresh the readers memory it says in part:\*

**A Possible Sleeper Creek: someone should check it**

**out:** At the Roseburg Gold Show an older guy with a cane asked me if I knew that there was gold on 12 Mile Creek near Camas Valley on the Coquille River. This is south and west of Roseburg on Highway 42 (Coos Bay-Winston Highway).

*One of our readers “R.....” sent the following E mail recently.*

“I’m replying about the issue of sleeper creeks. I went out to 12 mile creek out of Camas Valley south west of Roseburg to do some panning found some gold did not have a lot of time to really work the area over. Also there was a lot of rattle snakes up there so if you go be careful of those. I’m going to go back up this winter to check it out better and I’ll let you know what else I find.”

*Editor’s further comments: Again this is an example of the advantages of our club membership. The sharing of information, finding mining partners, gaining technical advice goes on at every meeting.*

## **While on the subject of rattlesnakes**

*By Tom Bohmker*

This is not the first time we have seen areas of gold potential being guarded by those sneaky buzz tailed little devils. However our informant of the above story “R...” knows that this time of year (the fall) they disappear for their long sleep. The reality is that although rattlesnakes are certainly fear inspiring they are far less dangerous than their reputations. At least 40 million Americans live and work in rattlesnake country. Some 8 thousand bites are reported each year including bites from non poisonous snakes. Perhaps those that are bitten and have serious reactions number in the hundreds of cases each year with a less than 10 (some reports cite only 1-3) each year actually dying of the effect. Actually more, some 15-30 individuals each year expire from bee stings.

It is prudent though to watch your step and be on the watch when in “rattler country”. Rattlesnakes seem to avoid living in the coast range, the Cascades and Willamette Valley (with occasional sightings at certain locations). However in eastern Oregon they are found and the Klamath Mountains in South Western Oregon. Any where

south of Roseburg prudently assume you are in rattle snake territory.

Being related to some tough old high plains cowboys and ranchers who took the time to kill every rattler they saw I followed that example for a while. After dispatching a few snakes over a period of 10 years, now I only applied the death sentence when they were really in the way such as hanging around the camp or the narrow trail to the diggings. The easiest way to kill them is use a .22 pistol or rifle loaded with bird shot. Where guns are prohibited or frowned against a shovel, machete, or forked stick is safe and fast.

**Rattle collection:** Once I visited a large ranch in central South Dakota which consisted of about 25 square miles. One question asked of the old rancher (after finding out if he had ever panned gold anywhere on the ranch) was how he was able to keep all the 80 odd miles of fence up. In his answer of riding horseback hundreds of thousands of miles from the 1920’s to the 1970’s checking the fence line on a daily basis he mentioned that accomplishing this chore he had “killed more than a few rattlesnakes”. Later he showed me a wide mouth 1 gallon jar  $\frac{3}{4}$  full of rattlesnake rattles collected during the patrolling of the fence line! *This was not the place to live if you really disliked snakes.* The same old rancher claimed to have previously filled up 2 other gallon jugs with buzz tail rattles and sold them to “some dumb city slicker from New York who paid me \$50.00!” which was a month’s wages for a cowboy back then.

## **“Trip to the Surprise Mine” a Gold Mining Story with “Eating Crow” & a Rattlesnake Culinary Twist;**

*By Tom Bohmker*

I took my sons Josh, Tim and their friend Tyler when in their early teens to the “Surprise Mine” a gold dredging claim in the Josephine Creek area near Grants Pass. They were already experienced dredges but had never been to this particular claim I had worked hard a decade and a half previously. They had heard many mining stories about this place:

- There was a long, difficult pack in and out up a very steep hill with loose talus slopes.
- It was isolated with more bear sign around than human visitors, their mother didn’t like the place and would not hike in there anymore.
- The gold was very streaky requiring sometimes 20 to 40 test holes 2-3 feet deep to bed rock before a pay streak was found. Most of these test holes showed no color at all.
- However when gold was found it was usually laying on the bed rock or packed into crevices and was very rich with heavy flakes with  $\frac{1}{2}$  to 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  dwt nuggets not uncommon.
- Some of the best areas seemed to be where the 1’ to 3’ and at times larger sized boulders were really stacked hard together in piles that actually choked the narrow creek...really hard to work.

- It was common knowledge there were a lot of rattle snakes around this claim. This news had made me quite cautious and yet had only run across three in five summers of work years before. Not withstanding the claim holder once had killed 10 in a week right around his camp along the creek! He could have killed more but ran out of shotgun shells!

My sons were excited going to this diggings and armed themselves with a .22 rifle with bird shot and machetes. We all reviewed the gun safety rules and they were very responsible. Of course using 22 bird shot is relatively safe: in the worst case scenario such as shooting yourself in the foot it hurts like heck but I am told the little shot is easy dug out of skin with a sharp pocket knife...My instructions were clear: only buzz tails that were in a position to threaten us were to be killed and "if you kill it you eat it!". Other wise: "live and let live".

We packed in OK and my older son Josh spotted a section of creek that featured a series of shallow small pot holes and no boulders. He really liked the looks of it and was sure there would be some easy gold. I tried to discourage him as 15 years or so before I had dredged every one of the pot holes in this stretch of exposed bedrock out and found zip... nada...skunked....nothing: except in one non descript pot hole one foot across and 6 inches deep. Like the other pot holes there was just some wash sand, a few round rock the size of your fist but this one featured a spattering of nice gold flakes in the bottom and one nugget the size of a kernel of sweet corn. The creek descended quite quickly here and I knew that in flood times the water flowed through here 3 or 4 feet deeper than in summer and very fast. It was a classic wash out spot and just this one pot hole spot had "accidentally" trapped some gold. Despite my technical lecture Josh really wanted to try to dredge this spot so I compromised. Up stream 300 feet was a spot my friend Vern had discovered accidentally on the wrong side of a turn where the creek was cutting into the roots of an ancient cedar tree and found some nuggets some 14 years before. I would go up to that spot and prospect out a spot, move some boulders and be ready to dredge my spot. I figured Josh and crew would get "skunked" and soon bring the dredge up to my area. Within 45 minutes he appeared at my digs. "you're right Dad, those pot holes just have wash sand in them". After waiting for me to smile with the "I told you young tenderfoot to listen to me the old miner" look he added: "Except for this one smaller pot hole that I found this in the bottom of it" and slowly (for maximum theatrical effect) pulled out of his pocket a bottle with a rattling nugget in it. Holding it in the sunlight for a while admiring the yellow gleam I knew I was in the process of "eating crow" or "humble pie" for trying to be so smart. This nugget Josh and crew had found was a little smaller than the one I had found in the pot holes years before but it quickly made the yellow fever buzz in my head. Suddenly we were scampering over the big rocks, wading down the slow sections of the creek around a few bends and rapids to the discovery location. The dredge nozzle was in a pot hole... obviously the spot he just found the gold... After some intensive staring at the spot and remembering from so long ago I was certain it was the same other wise unobtrusive little pot hole a little closer to the inside of a sharp bend in other wise smooth, flat bedrock that had yielded the gold from so long before. For some reason when the high water recedes down after heavy flow some gold manages to slip into this pot hole

and consistently no gold into any of the others. Josh and crew insisted after find such "easy gold" they had to dredge them all out. *At least I was partially correct... the rest of the pot holes contained no gold.*

Eventually we worked my spot on the wrong side of the turn and found enough gold to give everyone a DWT or two. Walking back on the narrow trail with heavy brush on one side and a cliff on the other we spotted a rattle snake guarding the middle of the trail. He was in no hurry to take a trip elsewhere so the boys declared him collateral damage and we fried the buzz tail for dinner. We fried the critter on a pan with a little butter with salt and pepper. They keep declaring themselves great white hunters as everyone savored the ½ ounce to 1 ounce of the bony meat that was their share. Suddenly the place with the bad nick name of "Rattle snake Junction" and yet in 5 summers had only shown 3 snakes was suddenly living up to its potential. The second day the boys shot 2 more along the trail. **Note:** It would be a struggle to ever find enough rattlers to live on. The flavor? While old time miners were used to very mediocre diets of beans and flap jacks with an occasional rabbit or venison seemed to claim that "rattle meat" tasted like chicken: many modern widely exposed palates claim the musty flavor or this little serpent is reminiscent of alligator. My sons identified the flavor not unlike their Grandfather Jim Bohmker's family favorite of barbecued Teriyaki style chicken.

**Cooking Rattlesnake:** The internet has a number recipes usually requiring ingredients not found the old wooden grub box we normally bring along. One had a great recipe for a chili that would have done justice to most any type of edible meat added. However the list called for 2 pounds of rattlesnake meat: Do you have any idea of how many common sized rattle snakes it would take?

Chef Scott Anselm (faculty of Culinary Arts, Linn Benton Community College, Albany, OR) suggested adding onions, chives, garlic and white wine to the frying in olive oil. The white wine he says helps take away the "fishy" flavor. None of the above except for onions are normally in my cook box out gold mining or rock hounding when on occasion we end up with such a hunter's delight. One wonders, would cheap beer have the same effect as the white wine? My gold miner and gem cutter friend Greg offers this advice:

#### **Greg King's Buzz Tail Fry Recipe**

- *Be certain that the rattler is dead!* It is best to carefully cut off the head and venom glands and bury them. Then try to slit the belly skin, peel off the skin and get the guts out. Fillet off the meat (often there is not much and sometime ones eats a lot of bones).
- Use Bisquick wetted with water to coat the meat.
- Add to the frying pan with salt, pepper. Alternate method is use the U shape of the fillet to wrap around a stick and braise on open fire or coals.
- Add garlic, onions, or any else handy that might stir fry. Sometime in moist areas near the creek "Miners Lettuce" growing wild can be found and added. This plant is about the size and shape of clover and is succulent and tasty to eat raw. It is found in early spring into summer and with its high vitamin C

content was used by the gold rush miners to prevent Scurvy.

- Add a little oil (**Note:** this is olive oil, cooking oil, not 30w motor oil) or bacon grease. The rattle snake meat does provide some grease from the fat.
- Fry for 5 to 10 minutes on edge of fire (medium heat) and enjoy this experience not on the menu in NY city.

## **WDHF has hearing on dredging regulations in Washington State**

This is a letter from Tom Kitchar of the Waldo Mining District in Southern Oregon about a hearing in Olympia, WA at the Dept of Natural Resources that affects placer gold mining in Washington State. It is too late with the mailing of our newsletter for us to attend but we have other opportunities to support our brethren miners.

*WDFW has scheduled the hearing for the re-write of the Gold and Fish Pamphlet, October 3rd in the afternoon. It is recommended that you arrive no later than 2:00 PM to sign in.*

*This is what we have worked so hard for the past 8-9 years.*

*Public comment will be after the Habitat Division of WDFW is finished with their presentation and answering questions from the Commissioners. Each member of the public will get 2-3 minutes for testimony. You don't have to testify, however. Numbers count too!*

**Editor's Comments:** The regulations since 1980 or so have been very stifling and in many cases have curtailed small time mining in Washington State. I well remember the first Gold and Fish book that came in 1980 that effectively made me give up on a new placer claim I just found late the previous fall in the Slate Creek district in the northern Washington Cascades. Two days before the ominous fall rains (and soon snow ) began I found a crevice just packed with large gold flakes. Other crevices starting from the bank and heading out in the middle seemed promising too. It was October and I decided to pack out and come back the next summer...A mistake I should have stayed until the river froze solid. I have never been able to even pan there since!

## **Movie Reviews;**

From time to time we review movies that deal with mining and gold. Of course we all need to kick back once in a while and from some of these flicks you can learn more about mining and catch glimpses of mining history and mankind's long struggle with gold fever.

### **Mother Lode (1982)**

The McGee brothers--Silas and Ian ([Charlton Heston](#) in a dual role)--are Scottish miners with a gold fortune hidden in British Columbia. Two bush pilots (Nick Mancuso, [Ricky Zantolas](#)) and a girl ([Kim Basinger](#)) travel to the

province to seek the gold. The film is also known as [Search for the Mother Lode](#). ~

**Title:** Mother Lode

**Running Time:** 101 Minutes

A suspenseful movie taking place in the beautiful far north. Charlton Heston plays an obsessed gold-digger that goes berserk after years of hard work in the gold mines. In contrast to the gorgeous environment a lot of scenes take place in the dark and deep tunnels of the mine. Some violent actions do not make this movie appropriate for kids. Adults will go buy a ticket to Alaska and start digging for gold, but be aware of the man in the mountain.

*- rolfusa' review from on line*

**Tom's review:** The underground scenes are expertly filmed with authentic old mining underground equipment far exceeding the normal Hollywood rendition of underground activities. Having served my time with a pick and shovel at the bottom of a mine shaft I was so taken with the scenes that after a while this old miner could "smell" the unique odors of a working underground mine. The suspense movie made me remember the wet, clammy, musty, sulfur rock, explosive residue, the BO from your fellow miners and the lube oil from the air drill smell....in other words like a car wreck on a rainy night.

I understand that most of the population doesn't respond this way but that *smell* always meant for me adventure and the chance of finding some hidden gold. In quick contrast the movie seen changes from deep dark doom and gloom to gorgeous bright mountain scenery yet with a hidden presence of danger and mystery. There are exciting bush pilot scenes, believable representation of strange personalities effected by severe gold fever, suction gold dredging, the strong lure of gold, and even a little romance. I rate this one five star.

## **New Pocket Gold Discovery Near Cave Junction, OR**

By Tom Bohmker

**Editor's Note:** *Southern Oregon is famous for it's Pocket gold deposits which are on or near surface enrichments of lode gold. Many of these finds were quickly worked out and few ever developed into any kind of conventional lode mine with sizable tonnages of ore and ore processing mills. Most pocket deposits were shallow holes worked with hand tools, a little dynamite and the gold separated from the gangue(country rock) in mortar and pestle. Details of Pocket mining prospecting and case by case discussion can be found in the book The Elusive Pocket Gold of SW Oregon available from Cascade Mountains Gold.*

Some months ago I received some E Mails from a mining acquaintance who reported on a rich recent pocket find in the Hungry Hill Area. A trace on the surface was followed down and quantities of gold were recovered. A recent photo sent to me shows the digging at 4



feet down and a large mass high grade some 4 inches across. Another photo shows approximately 20 or 30 ounces of gold that had just been crushed out of the host rock. Initially reports claimed 20 lbs of gold had been recovered total from this pit. A recent photo shows the excavation nearly 8 feet deep and the yield is said now to be much more. If these figures are accurate this could be one of the largest pockets in recent decades.

Geology of Pocket Deposits in the Hungry Hill Area. This area is on the contact of Meta-volcanic rocks such as greenstone and certain meta-sedimentary rock units with the large serpentine belt that stretches N by NE from the Oregon /California border to an area near Canyonville, OR. Most of the gold deposits are in the rock units bordering the serpentine. There are a few larger quartz veins exposed on the surface for fractions of a mile and have been worked hundreds of feet deep. However many pocket deposits are in broken up tiny veinlets of quartz which may only be followed down a few feet before pinching out and losing value. Others may show little quartz but contain gold values in shear zones of localized faulting. Where such gold bearing lodes are on the surface there can be additional concentration of gold values by eroding away of the lighter ingredients of the host rock or from the formation of laterite type soils. The pocket belt is especially strong from the head waters of Canyon Creek just a couple miles west of Cave Junction. From here the belt heads N by NE to Hungry Hill then the Pocket Knoll and across the Illinois River to the drainages of Briggs Creek. The creeks and gulches that drain this area are famous for rich placer gold deposits. **Note:** The WVM claims on Lower Briggs Creek is also in this drainage. Interestingly only a few of these lode deposits ever developed into large underground mines as the Peck Mine and the Eureka Mine on Soldier Creek a tributary of Briggs Creek. Most of these diggings were shallow surface pits quickly worked out and abandoned. On hill sides such as Hungry Hill the slopes still show the out lines of hundreds of shallow pits. The old timers did not find them all! *Above article intended for the August 08 issue of the WVM newsletter that was not sent out.*

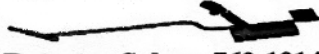
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**Wet Suit** "Farmer John" style, **Brand new**, never worn. Medium Sized, fits 5'4" to 5'9", 130 to 170 lbs. Includes weight belt...\$150 or offer, 541-926-8153,

**Suction Nozzle for Sale**

Recently I organized my mining storage and found a used but little worn Keene 2 1/2 suction nozzle. This is great for working shallow water, connects to 1 1/2" fire hose. \$49.00

Tom at 503-606-9895

**Wet Suits For Sale**

3 large wet suits 2 1/4 & 1 1/8 , 503-897-2737

*Willamette Valley*

PO Box 13044  
Salem OR 97309-1044

**We Meet at 7:00 pm at  
Marion County Fire Hall  
300 Cordon Rd NE  
Salem OR**

