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### Committees

#### Claims

Howard Conner  
Gordon Davis  
Bob Howell  
Paul Messersmith

## Events & Outings

### Programs

Howard Conner

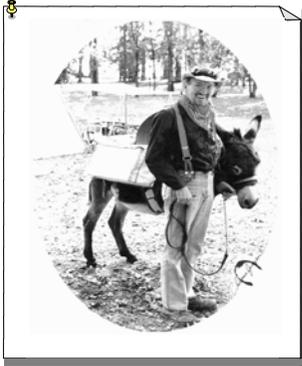
### Website

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Trudy Schrader  
Diane Smith

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Debi Farrand  
503-371-3652  
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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

February 2009

## Meeting

February 19, 2009  
7:00 pm

## President's Report

The January meeting was attended by 50 members and guests. A number of topics were presented followed by meaningful and thoughtful discussion. Thanks to all of you for your involvement and participation in this timely and important process. I believe it's important that the first couple of meetings of the new year be dedicated to the operational business of the Club. Feedback from a number of members indicated to me that this is time well spent. I feel that this effort will serve us well as we move into the "mining and outdoor activities" season.

We all agree that in order for an organization to become and remain successful, substantial effort is required. I would encourage all of our members to get involved. With that in mind, the Rickreall Rock and Gem show requires a considerable volunteer effort. Signups for that show will be distributed at both the February and March meetings. For those of you who have worked that show, it seems there is never enough help, especially Friday when all the kiddies come flocking in to try their luck at panning. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Upcoming Events:

Feb. 21<sup>st</sup> – Geo Cash @ Silver Falls State Park – Boyd & Kathy Puckett 503-769-7285

March 27-29 – GPAA Gold Show – Salem – State Fairgrounds Exhibition Building

Paul Messersmith  
President

## Treasurer's Corner

**Membership Notice:** Please be reminded that your 2009 dues are due by the end of March if you wish to continue to get the newsletter and have legal use of the club claims. As of January 1<sup>st</sup>, you are asked to have the enlarged membership card in the window of your vehicle if you are on one of the club's claims. The dash card is available for \$1.00 in addition to your annual membership dues. Dues are still \$20.00 plus \$1.00 for the dash card. If you do not plan to go to any of the claims then \$20.00 is all you owe. Finally, please notify me when you renew your membership if you have had any changes in address, email, phone, etc. Thank you. You can renew your membership at the meetings or mail it to: Willamette Valley Miners P.O. Box 13044 Salem, OR 97309-1044.

Lloyd Bridgmon  
Treasurer

**If you have changed your email/phone number or address please let us know by sending a note to the club mail box.**

Meeting Minutes  
January 15, 2009

The meeting was called to order by President Paul Messersmith. The minutes from our meeting held on November 20, 2008 were approved as printed in the December newsletter.

The treasurer's report was presented by Lloyd Bridgmom. The motion to approve the financial report was accepted unanimously.

Paul announced that our Christmas party held December 6, 2008 was a success. A good time was had by all who joined in the festivities.

Paul also announced that he'll have a meeting agenda printed up for each of our meetings for members and guests to follow.

Old Business:

Plans are in the works to outfit the new trailer. The new trailer is to be moved from its present location at Louie's in Jefferson to Jim Perkey's home in Salem. The old trailer will be moved from Skip (Gordon) Davis' home in Dallas to Jim's place. Our organization needs totes to safely store and transport some of the contents of the trailer whenever it travels. Paul offered totes for the club – as many as may be needed. Ellen Compton is to be given the old club trailer.

Name tags and signup sheets are now available at the door upon entering the meeting. Please fill out a name tag prior to the beginning of the meeting.

Paul continues working on the "outings guide" to be used as promotional material at the shows and to provide new members with more specific information on outings, etc.

New business:

Our new newsletter editor is Debi Farrand. Library duties are to be handled by Howard Connor. Raffle duties have been taken over by Gary Schrader.

It was also decided by members present at this meeting that a form is to be made for any reimbursements that club members may incur in their duties for the club.

The Linn County Miners' Club gold concentrate bags are available for sale for \$5.00 while supplies last. Our club's concentrate bags are now available for sale for \$2.00.

Paul began a dialog regarding the acquisition of non-motorized mining equipment for use by club members at selected outings. The discussion continues.

Government affairs were addressed by Tom Quintal. There is much going on in both California and Oregon but nothing definitive at this time.

Members with ideas for programs or workshops are encouraged to contact any of the officers with their ideas.

Newsletters from the various mining clubs around the state will be accumulated and made available in the library. Ours will be sent to all the other clubs as well.

Club members were encouraged to contact Debi or Paul with information for the newsletter. A phone call is all that's needed, Debi and/or Paul will do the rest! Remember that club members (including businesses) can advertise items for sale or list special announcements free of charge.

It was also mentioned that the Statesman Journal would post our club meetings at no charge. This is to be looked into for the club.

Tracy Barry from KGW television in Portland expressed an interest in doing a story on panning and gold prospecting. This will require some further conversation as to where and when this would take place.

This coming Saturday, January 17, is the club outing to the Rice Museum. For those who would like to attend and also carpool, plans are to meet at Harbor Freight on Portland Road in Salem at 11:45 A.M. This has always been a good outing with so many interesting things to see. The museum is located in Hillsboro, Oregon.

Coming Events:

February 21 – Geo Cache outing  
March 27, 28, and 29 – GPAA show in Salem.  
April 4, 5 – Beverly Beach Outing

A collection was taken up for Wes Jeffers whose home was gutted by fire recently in Canby, Oregon.

In attendance tonight: 49 members and 4 guests.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Phares,  
Secretary

## Outings/Events

### GPAA Gold Show & Rickreall Rock and Gem Show

The Gold Prospectors Association of America (GPAA) Gold Show usually occurs near the end of March and is held in the exhibit hall at the Oregon State fairgrounds in Salem. It provides our members and the general public with an opportunity to see the latest and greatest equipment and techniques to support and enhance our search for the shiny yellow stuff. The show runs Friday through Sunday. Our club always offers to help with the setup for the show on Friday morning and we usually have a good number of volunteers for this. We, therefore, are given booth space free of charge for assisting in the setup.

Our Club maintains a booth which allows us to promote the club with the hope of gaining new members and encouraging more folks to become involved in gold prospecting. We obviously rely on members to volunteer a few hours each day to assist in the operation of the booth, i.e., sign up new members, hand out our club flier and other promotional material, feed the “quarter drop” and generally chat with passersby. Those members that volunteer to assist in the booth are usually provided with a vendor pass to access the show at no charge.

More details and sign-up sheets are available during the regular club meetings prior to this and the Rock and Gem Show.

The Rickreall Rock and Gem Show is usually held around the middle of April. The club’s roll there is somewhat different than the Gold Show. Although we do sell memberships and promote prospecting, Friday of the show has a little bit different twist.

Setup for the show occurs late Thursday afternoon followed by a ‘free’ spaghetti dinner and potluck – great food! Our club sets up four (4) large panning tubs in preparation for the hundreds of upper elementary students from the surrounding area schools that ‘mob’ the show from mid-Friday morning to mid-afternoon. They purchase our “play dirt” and members assist them in panning out the gold flakes and placing them in small plastic zip-lock bags or small vials. Things can get a bit hairy at times but the thrill of seeing the kids find their gold and carry it away is “priceless!”

This show requires a considerable volunteer effort by club members to create a positive experience for the elementary children and their parents. The “panning assistants” need to rotate in and out of the panning area to provide relief from the “chaos.” On a similar note, the equipment for this show and other activities is housed in the Club’s trailer stored and maintained at a volunteer member’s home. Please be prepared to assist in any way you can to continue the success of this activity.

### **GEOCACHING OUTING**

Do you want to learn to use your GPS? Then don’t forget the geocaching outing on Saturday, 2-21-09 at Silver Falls State Park. Everyone will meet at the main entrance to Silver Fall State Park at 9:00 a.m. Bring your GPS and warm clothing. This is an outdoor outing, so dress for the weather. There will be a short GPS orientation first in the parking lot and then everyone will be given coordinates for nearby geocaches. There will be a contest to see who can find all of the geocaches first. This is an outing designed to teach new GPS users how to use their GPS device and introduce members to geocaching. If you don’t have a GPS, but want to participate, come along. We will have a few extra units for new users to borrow. Each person does not need to have their own GPS. You can share a GPS with a friend. Plan on attending this outing for a fun and educational experience.

For questions regarding this outing, you may contact Boyd or Kathy Puckett at 503-769-7285. If you need directions to Silver Falls State Park or are unsure of where to meet, contact us. We’ll see you there!

### **Gary’s Raffle Corner:**

#### **Raffle tickets by mail!**

For those club members who live a considerable distance and for those who have difficulty making meetings, you can now purchase Big Raffle Item tickets by mail. The current Big Raffle Item currently includes a 4’ sluice, gold catcher gold pan, classifier and a few other goodies. The winner will be notified by phone and/or mail if not present at the meeting for the drawing. Tickets are \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. Send your ticket request and check to:

Gary Schrader  
P.O. Box 504  
Lyons, OR 97358  
Phone: 503-859-3132

Congratulations to Jerry Garner and Jeff Sawyer for winning the nuggets at the January meeting. And thanks to the person who donated the second nugget for the nugget draw. Please accept my apology for not getting that member's name.

### **Member's Corner:**

Lloyd B., Marshall P., Lance L., Rick S., John C., and Paul M. traveled to Quartzville Creek on January 23<sup>rd</sup> to see how many gravel bars we could scare into giving up their gold. Rick and John are newbies and from their reaction, I think they're hooked! The road is clear, but watch out for slick spots on the shady areas of the road.

A belated thank you to Louie F. and Wes J. for their participation in the panning demonstration held on New Year's Eve in Salem. We'll get more details at the February meeting.

### **High Grading at the Jigs at the Reduction Works, 1968**

By Tom Bohmker Copyright 12-5-08

One summer during college my planned on job in continuation with the previous summer working in the heat treat department in a huge foundry suddenly fell through in May. The Machinist Union had called a strike. The alternate plan "B" for summer work was to try to develop a little placer mine, that is, a quicksilver ore (cinnabar) placer mine at Almaden near San Jose, CA. Some years earlier when I was 16, I had found a body of gravel that had built up over the decades behind an irrigation dam downstream from the outcrops and dumps of the largest producer of metallic mercury in North America. My plan included constructing a "mom and pop" small screen plant powered with a worn out lawn mower engine and an old WWII surplus fire pump for wash water into the sluice. The excavation digging of the gravel with accomplished with a pick and shovel, then hauling it by pickup truck to the little concentrator. The over size could be visually inspected for the bright red cinnabar ore that was picked out by hand and the hope was the sluice would concentrate the fine, heavy particles of ore. There were lots of technical points for this "greenhorn" miner to learn so often visits were made to a large commercial gravity concentration mill located a few miles away located at the site of the former reduction works of the Almaden Mine to gain advice and pointers from the helpful operators. Tobar's operation included drag lines and dozers that were digging through the rubble and "calcine"

tailings piles to wash the material through their placer plant. They recovered not only fine sized cinnabar dust to large lumps of cinnabar but also globs of metallic mercury that had escaped from the primitive brick batch furnaces used from the late 1840's to around World War I.

One day the owner /operator of the operation John Tobar was very excited that a long awaited shipment of used Denver Duplex Jigs had finally arrived on a barge from an Alaskan bucket line gold dredge and would be trucked down the next day to the mine. The jig is a hydro-mechanical device used in gravity concentration to separate the heavier (by specific gravity) minerals from the gangue (country rock). This battery of jigs could be described as a group of large steel containers shaped something like oversize milk jugs sitting up right on a structural steel frame.

A sluice like trough connected the top of each jig to the next one in a line. Screened placer material (say less than 1/2 inch or so) is washed down with water in the trough into the first jib and then to each jig in sequence. A screen replaces the solid bottom of the trough when passing over the top of the jig allow undersize to fall down inside. Each bottom cover of the body of the jig is connected by a diaphragm (an accordion shaped piece of rubber pipe) to the vertical cylindrical sides of the body. A motor driven crankshaft and connecting rod moves the bottom cover up and down several times a second. Of course only the bottom is moving up and down as the sides and open top are all bolted firmly together with the frame. With every stroke of the bottom diaphragm a burst of water flows out the top into the trough. By adjusting the flow of water into the trough and the strokes per minute the lighter rocks are suspended in the upper portions of the jig and never sink to the bottom. Thus the lighter particles are flushed out the discharge side on the top trough of the jib. However the heavier black sands, sulfides such as pyrite or cinnabar, gold, and in this case metallic mercury, sinks to the bottom which is covered with a layer of steel shot for the concentrates to settle in. A pipe valve at the bottom allows the concentrates to be poured out into buckets for final clean up. This jig set up was purchased for 4 or 5 thousand dollars used from a gold dredge being scrapped out up in Alaska but would dramatically increase the recovery of values for Tobar's operation.

However when the loaded semi trailer finally arrived it was on a Friday and the equipment sat out side of the Tobar mine complex gate for a couple of days

before being unloaded. Only then did the jigs get examined and the discovery made that someone had craftily slit the thick rubber diaphragms. Sometime between leaving Alaska and being unloaded at Almaden some high grader had ruined the diaphragms looking for gold. This high grader had reached inside the 24" diameter jib through the hole he cut in the rubber diaphragm and scooped out what ever sand, pea sized gravel he could get inside. The shot had been removed from the top and the units flushed out with water through the valve in the bottom by the seller before they were removed from the dredge up north in their final cleanup.

John Tobar was very angry. "That @#%\$\*\* high grader probably only got \$5.00 worth of gold and ruined my machine!", he yelled at no one in particular. The replacement diaphragms had to be ordered out of Colorado and cost something like \$500 with freight and took weeks to arrive. Then the task of removing the old diaphragm was worse than any removal of a radiator hose off a water pump. They were rusted on, the bolts were corroded and the job was accomplished only with days of labor with hammers, chisels and cutting torches. However, there was a silver lining to the ordeal. The high grader had stolen what he could get out through the hole he cut but he had left lots behind. Especially in all the seams where the rubber diaphragm was sealed against the steel cylinder there was a layer of rust covered flakes of gold and black sand. There was an impressive amount of gold from each jig that had probably been caught there for decades. At the time gold was only \$40 an ounce and the 3 or 4 ounces Tobar panned out of the rusty stuff didn't pay for the new diaphragms at the time. Now Tobar's tune was a little different, " That @#%\$\*\* High Grader probably skimmed off a couple of pounds of gold and left me all the fixing work".

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## Classifieds

### Wild West Gold Sales

I Buy & Sell Gold nuggets and Fines no amount is too small. email: [wrtckenhaines@comcast.net](mailto:wrtckenhaines@comcast.net)  
Ph: 541-791-9986

### For Sale

#### Garrett Scorpion Gold Stinger Metal Detector

Good as new. Good for coin-relic and gold hunting  
\$325.00      Ph. 503-859-3132

#### Suction Nozzle

Recently I organized my mining storage and found a used but little worn Keene 2 ½ suction nozzle. This is great for working shallow water, connects to 1 ½" fire hose. \$49.00      Tom at 503-606-9895

#### Mercury for Sale

Dan @ 541-401-0922 (Sweet Home)

### Wanted

#### Gold Screw

Dan @ 541-401-0922 (Sweet Home)

# Willamette Valley Miners

PO Box 13044  
Salem OR 97309-1044

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

