

# WILLAMETTE VALLEY MINERS

May 2009

**Meeting**  
May 21, 2009  
7:00 pm

## Officers

### President

Paul Messersmith  
541-926-8153  
messersp@comcast.net

### Vice President

Eben Ray  
503-769-3284

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mlksphares@yahoo.com

### Treasurer

Lloyd Bridgmon  
503-749-1679  
lbridgmon@juno.com

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tjdq@countrycablevisi  
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Paul Messersmith  
541-926-8153

## Committees

### Claims

Howard Conner  
Gordon Davis  
Bob Howell  
Paul Messersmith

## Events & Outings

### Programs

Howard Conner

### Website

Don Hammer  
Trudy Schrader  
Diane Smith

## Newsletter Editor

Debi Farrand  
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[dfarrand@msn.com](mailto:dfarrand@msn.com)

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

## President's Report

The April meeting was again well attended – so well that we ran out of chairs and exceeded the capacity of the meeting room! I'll elaborate further in the "Two Pressing Issues" column later in the newsletter. Please, please take time to read these and be prepared to discuss them at the May meeting.

It was nice 'getting back in the saddle' for the April meeting. So far my strength is holding up and my team of doctors is working hard on my behalf. For all that I am extremely grateful and thankful.

The Rock and Gem show was again a great success with approximately 30+ new members and a number of renewals. Lloyd informs me that we are now over 250 family memberships!

I've created the "**Member's Corner**" in the newsletter to give you an opportunity to place comments, ask questions, make suggestions, or report on your recent activities. Simply call or email me and I'll write up your information for inclusion in the newsletter.

Thanks for your participation and support for our club and its activities.

Paul Messersmith  
President

## Outings and Events

**May 23, 24, 25** – Vincent Creek (Sour Dough Pete) or Dad's Creek (WVM#3 thru #6)

**June 6<sup>th</sup>** - 10am will be a workshop at Louie Fricks shop, (mining equipment demonstration), off I-5, take exit 242, head east 1 mile you will see a Louie's Welding sign - you're there. 541-327-1210. (For sale), odds & ends, parts is parts, used and abused, what have you pieces of mining equipment. Address is 1307 Talbot Rd., Jefferson.

**June 13<sup>th</sup>** - 10 am, Oregon Prospecting Supplies (Rita's - Sweet Home) and Fine Recovery (Louie's Welding) will have their annual mining equipment demo and metal detecting demo at Quartzville Creek (about mile post 22) .

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

## **Treasurer's Corner**

The Rickreall Rock and Gem show was very good for the club as far as kids buying gold. We sold about 360 bags, The school said they would not send out field trips as money was short. Many families made fund raisers and sent the buses anyway. I think there were 10 bus loads of kids that got to come. As far as new members for the club, we had 34 families. There were some that have renewed. Many others said they had to wait until they had a pay day, but really wanted to join. We all know what that is like.

I would like to thank all that helped set up and those that helped with the panning. We all had a good time with the folks that we got to talk to and help with the new experience of gold mining. Some people had wanted to do some panning for a long time but didn't know where to go or how to get started. Many new faces will be at the outings, as some said they can't wait for the next one. I think we are going to have lots of new members coming to the meeting. I did not see many new members that came for a panning lesson so please feel free to ask me, and we will meet on the creek somewhere.

Lloyd Bridgmon, Treasurer  
503-749-1679 ([lbridgmon@juno.com](mailto:lbridgmon@juno.com))

## **Meeting Minutes April 19, 2009**

The meeting was called to order this evening at 7:00 P.M. by our President Paul Messersmith. The minutes from the March club meeting were approved as they appeared in the April newsletter. The treasurer's report was given by Lloyd Bridgmon. The new members and guests attending our meeting this evening stood up and introduced themselves. Guests are always welcome at our monthly meeting. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month.

A plea was made for members to bring loaner equipment to the outings. Pans, sluices, & classifiers etc. The items should be well marked with the owner's name so that they get returned to the proper folks.

On May 2, a basic mining workshop & potluck will be held at Jim Perkey's home. The workshop will contain mining demonstrations about fine gold, black sand & its removal. The subject of retort will also be included. This should be of interest to new members

as well as any member who wishes to attend this gathering. Jim's address is available on the club's website for those who might need directions.

The annual outing at Beverly Beach took place on April 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>. Wes Jeffers was the man in charge of this gathering. About 22 people were there on Saturday. A good time was had by all & the weather was very cooperative the entire time.

The attendance at the Gold show was the best it has ever been in Salem. Lloyd announced that our quarter drop brought in \$128.00 for the club. At the show, Wes Jeffers had a small treasure chest on the table for the kids. If a child drew one of the specially marked coins out of the chest he or she was given a gold nugget by Wes. These nuggets were given by him from his own personal collection, a very nice gesture on his part. We thank all of the members who volunteered their time for this event.

April 17, 18 & 19<sup>th</sup> was the Rickreall Rock & Gem show. This was well attended & we thank all who gave of their time.

June 25<sup>th</sup> through the 28<sup>th</sup> will be the big outing for the club at Miner's Meadow. This is a very large campground with ample room for tents, trailers or motorhomes. We always have a good turnout for this group gathering. Please come and enjoy. There will be a great potluck, lots of music & games & just a wonderful time for club members to get together. Howard Connor is the contact member for this event.

Howard is in charge of the club's library. There are many books, videos, pamphlets that can be checked out for your enjoyment. Please remember to return any checked out items in a timely manner.

Tom Quintal reported on Government affairs. One item that was brought up was the fight between the Karuk tribe & the hobby gold miners in the Klamath Falls area. The California State Fish & Game commission has turned down the miner's petition to ban tribal dip netting at Ishi Pishi Falls where they have fished for thousands of years.

Remember the raffle's held at the end of each meeting. There are 4 different raffle's each month.

1 large item

Nugget draw

Table items (items brought by members)

50/50

Tickets are available for \$1.00 or 6 for \$5.00

## UPCOMING EVENTS

May 2 - Basic mining workshop at Jim Perkey's  
May 21 - Monthly meeting of the Willamette Valley Miners  
May 23-25 - Vincent Creek or Dad's Creek

There were 85 members and guests in attendance this evening.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Phares,  
Secretary

### Outings/Events

#### Gary's Raffle Corner:

#### Raffle tickets by mail – Big Raffle Item!

We are now selling raffle tickets for the new large item raffle. A land based 2" highbanker (powersluice)/dredge combo, complete with engine, pump (high pressure or trash type), dredge attachment, foot valve and hose, stiff highbanker hose attachment, 2" nozzle and hose, water line hoses and quick connects where appropriate – a complete system ready to setup and go! Pictures will be available at the monthly meetings.

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 winner will be notified by phone and/or mail if not present at the meeting when the drawing takes place. 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

Hopefully ticket sales will be strong enough to raffle it off during the height of the mining season. Thanks for your support.



## Member's Corner:

### Two Very Important Issues:

It would appear that miners throughout Oregon who have engaged in High Banking (Power Sluicing) during the past 30 plus years have been operating illegally according to the Oregon State Water Resources Board. In order to engage in that activity and you don't own the land you've been engaged in that activity, you were required to have a "water diversion permit." That is, in order for you to divert water from a stream and use it to wash your highbanked gravel, you are required to have a \$125 temporary water diversion permit. And that permit is for one location on one stream! More permits and fees are required if you move your pump and/or move to another stream.

Tom Quintal and a large number of miners throughout Oregon are engaged in extensive investigations into this matter but for now the Water Resources Board is sticking to their guns.

Finally, in addition to the \$125 permit fee, Senate Bill 740 is proposing an additional \$100 increase on top of the \$125. **WRITE OR CALL YOUR REPRESENTATIVES AND STRONGLY URGE THEM TO DEFETE THE BILL!**

The second issue facing us is the size of the meeting room at the Fire Hall. With membership at the 250 level we will not be able to accommodate the members – in fact, I feel strongly that a number of members are discouraged from coming because of lack of seating. Accordingly, I am asking that a concerted effort be put forth by past officers, club leaders, and any and all members to investigate finding a meeting place to meet our needs. Lloyd B. talked with the folks at Polk County Fairgrounds (Rickreall) and I have a call into the Linn County Fair Board to see what possibilities may be there. The long and short of it is – the club needs all interested folks to step up to the plate. I look forward to a lively discussion and hopeful resolution at the May meeting.

Paul Messersmith, President

**Continued from April issue...**

Besides making gold mining illegal, the federal government also sponsored scrap-drives for the war effort. Through an appeal to patriotic duty--commonly considered coercion, and sometimes resulting in outright theft--ore cars, rail, ore mills, and other idle equipment were carted off: the mining infrastructure of Grant County--and most of the rest of rural west--literally was dismantled and removed. (I have even been informed by geologists who worked for a time in Russia, that they saw old stamp mills that were originally from Colorado and Idaho that had been shipped to our allies during WWII as scrap, but were reassembled and put in production in Kamchatka and Siberia.)

The demise of the mining industry influenced something else: due to sagging ticket sales during the depression, the Sumpter Valley Railroad had discontinued passenger service in 1937, but continued a profitable cargo business. Shipments of cattle and lumber continued during the war, but without the gold ore from steady producers it enjoyed prior to 1942 (there were seven ore mills along its tracks), keeping the line open became unfeasible. Trains were kept running through World War II, but the SVRR made its last run in 1945.

A few placer and dredging operations picked up in the 1950s, but federal policies kept the value of gold artificially low through 1979. It simply was not economically feasible to mine gold at the regulated price - not to mention that hard rock mining is so capital intensive, and that opening a closed mine is more expensive than starting a new mine. Of course, the infrastructure and had been dismantled, and the labor force, industrial expertise and business relationships either had left the area or ceased to exist.

It is not a matter of personal opinion, or late speculation, that the end of Grant County's mining industry was due to these economically harmful, albeit perhaps well-intentioned, federal policies. In the 1957-58 Oregon Blue Book, the Secretary of State wrote: "Until some change is brought about [in federal policy] to give the gold miner a chance to make a profit, no improvement can be expected in gold production in the state." And in 1959, Oregon's Secretary of State wrote: "Gold accounted for the bulk of the state's mineral wealth for almost 90 years, but began a rapid decline in the period 1942 to 1945. Today, the value of gold produced annually is

less than \$100,000." (Gold production in 1941 had exceeded \$4 million.)

While the nature of mining is to extract a finite resource, the oft' given explanation that gold mining is a "boom and bust" phenomenon is oversimplified. And the knee-jerk assumption that the old-timers exhausted all the gold long ago is simply not accurate. Of course, other pressures have discouraged miners more recently, and the United States now imports most of its necessary minerals and metals from foreign sources. As present trends and public policies are applied today, it seems likely that other resource industries will follow suit, and history will repeat itself.

*Note: Grant County, in eastern Oregon, covers about 4,500 square miles (or slightly smaller than Connecticut). With a population now under 8,000, the major industries are timber and cattle ranching, with a quarter of the population employed by some level of government. About 70-percent of the land in grant County is controlled by the federal government--most of it in the National Forest. Grant County has continually experienced the highest unemployment rate in Oregon for nearly fifty years.*

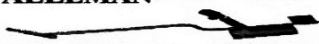
\* \* \*

*Addendum: Mining Investor  
Colorado Springs, Colorado  
Vol. XXX, No. 11, p. 367, May 11, 1903*

<b>Fine Recovery</b> Portable Mining Equipment	<b>Louie's Welding</b> 1307 Talbot Rd.S.E. Jefferson, Or. 97352
CUSTOM MANUFACTURING	Louie Frick Owner 541-327-1210
* e-mail: mining@teleport.com	
	

<b>Oregon</b> Prospecting Supplies & Rita's Relics	1045 Main Street Sweet Home, OR 97386
Dredges & Sluice Boxes: Dry Washers Power Sluices: Whites Metal Detectors: Keene Dealer: Gold Pans	
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 stores.ebay.com/Willamette-Valley-Rocks

Discounts for club members  
 1400 Candlelight Dr. #227 - Eugene, OR 97402

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 **METAL DETECTORS**  
 AUTHORIZED DEALER

**CLIFF WINSTON**  
 OWNER

Cliff's Discount Detectors  
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 Salem, OR 97301

503-581-3395 Ph  
 cliff4934@msn.com

## 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 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

#### **Mercury for Sale**

Dan @ 541-401-0922 (Sweet Home)

**"Keene" 5" dredge older model triple sluice, upgraded with 8hp Honda.** New T80 compressor, reserve tank and air hose. High volume pump. Swivel Nozzle, quick release fittings, complete. Great condition. \$2800. OBO. Contact member Brian @ 541-929-3825

#### **For Sale**

2 1/2 Gold Pro dredge – Power jet & suction nozzle, tube float - \$300.00

Home built High Banker 1.25 trash pump & 2 cycle motor, 2" fire & float hose \$75.00  
 2 – Sluice boxes 1 new \$35.00 & \$25.00  
 1 – hand operated spiral separating pan, near new \$15.00  
 Neoprene Chest waders L - \$35.00, Boots w/felt bottoms size 12 - \$30.00  
 3/4 ton chain come a long - \$10.00  
 Set of nested home made classifiers – 1/4 to 30 mesh (fits in 5 gal pail) - \$20.00  
 Misc pans, pry bars. Poop tube and other mining equipment – make offer on 1 or all.  
 8" rock saw - \$15.00 other rock polishing items  
 1994 25' Winny Warrior motor home, 44,000 miles, runs & looks great - \$12000.00  
 20' car hauler trailer, 2 axel w/elect brakes, (nice trailer) - \$800.00  
 6' Ford pickup box trailer w/canopy - \$150.00  
 Tow bar - \$25.00  
 Misc. shop tools  
 Lost Dutchman Membership - \$3500.00  
 Call Henry Horvath 541-917-1248 Albany

## Wanted

### **Gold Screw**

Dan @ 541-401-0922 (Sweet Home)

**Wet Suit** – Farmer John type – 6 mil. NEW – Medium size – fits 140 to 170 pounds – 5'4 – 5'9. Includes new weight belt. \$125 OBO.  
 Paul @ 541-926-8153

## **Old Prospecting Tip of the Week:**

#1, Tie a few feet of fishing line to some small lead weights and affix balloons to the line... set it loose down the river and watch where the weights settle - that's a good place to start your hunt for gold.

#2, If you brush your teeth with a "Sonicare" battery operated toothbrush.....save the (2) magnets that drive the brush head when you replace it. These are very small but Super strong magnets....you can easily separate them from the brush head with a sideways twist. Use your new magnets to remove black sands from your gold.

# 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

