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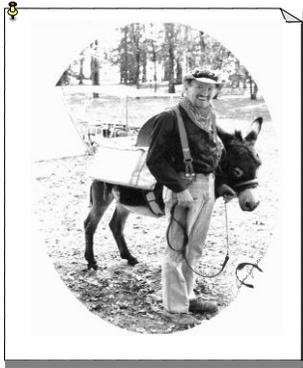
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Please have all items for the newsletter to me by the 25th of the month



WILLAMETTE VALLEY MINERS

February 2010

Meeting

February 18, 2009
7:00 pm

President's Report

Well we have a new year started with a very good turn out at our first meeting. The treasurer's report included that we now have about 325 members. That's a lot. And along with that we should be building our club information cache on all the good we do for our environment and our community! How do we do that you ask? What a great question. This is how: 1. **Report your claim usage to the club**, include dates and approximately how much material you moved, weigh the lead you removed and if possible how much mercury you removed. Then report if you did any cleanup or improvements and approximately how many hours. Also let us know if there are any needs at that claim. 2. Let us know of any events where you promoted prospecting or mining or helped out as a miner/pro prospector/WVM member. 3. Attend our functions at shows and outings to show your support. Together we can make a positive impression in this world.

You can report in person at the meetings and the group would love to hear about your adventure and any show and tell you have.

Now get out and find some Gold.

Eben Ray
President

Report claim usage to: Claims Committee
Club President
Club Vice president

Knock, Knock, Who's there?

As a club and a club member we need to start looking after our claims and who is using them. As a member you have the right to ask anyone you see using our claims for mineral removal to show ID to prove they are members. If you don't know them ask for Club ID. If you do not want to approach them write down their license number and vehicle description, time, date, and what you observed, "Take a photo", then report it to the club officers. There have been several reports from claim owners and other clubs that claim jumping is happening and very regular now. If we don't watch out for us who will?

As a club member you are required to display your active and up to date club card in the front window of your vehicle while on one of our claims. If you are approached and asked for club ID you are to display your ID for the individual and introduce your self. If you are to visit our Briggs creek claim contact TomQ for further info on contacting persons using the claim.

Special Note: Next Meeting - Special speaker who was at ground zero on 9-11. BE THERE. It really is going to be the February meeting. The editor apologizes for the mistake in last month's newsletter.

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 21, 2010

The Meeting was called to order this evening at 7:00 P.M. by our President Eben Ray. The minutes of our November meeting were accepted as read in the club's newsletter.

Lloyd Bridgmon, our Treasurer, reported that 22 renewal applications were turned in this evening along with 2-3 new membership applications. We have 325 members at this time. Lloyd gave us the balances in our savings account along with those of the club's checking account & our CD's. All in all 2009 was a pretty good year for the club. The annual audit of the club's holdings was recently held and attended by Lloyd Bridgmon, Louie Frick, Marshall Phares & Tom Quintal.

There was an outing held recently at the Rice Museum in Hillsboro. It's always a great experience to come face to face with the largest display of petrified wood in the world. Wonderful displays, a little something for everyone to enjoy. The staff is there to answer any questions a visitor might have. The club tries to have this outing every year so if you missed it this time around maybe you might be able to join us next year.

The Claims Committee got together & decided that most of our claims need a little work. Mainly, we need new signs for identification. Jim Perkey volunteered to make these markers for us. There was also some discussion regarding whether or not to sell the "Old Farts Dream" claim. This discussion will be continued next month.

There is an outing next month on the 20th of February. This will be geo-cache gathering. We will meet here in the park behind the fire station at 9 A.M. If you're not familiar with GPS settings etc. come at 9 & your questions will be addressed. The actual event begins at 10 A.M. This outing should be finished by noon.

The GPAA show is also coming up March 26,27,& 28 at Oregon State Fairgrounds. This is always fun with many interesting booths. Wes Jeffers is the contact person for this event. We need volunteers to help man our Club's booth. Please come & join us just to have fun & help our Club.

Tom Quintal reported on Government Affairs. We're going back to court to try for clarification of permits.

The question is whether we need a 404 permit or is it a 402? A 404 permit is an Army Corp. permit and a 402 permit is the State permit. This was filed in a timely manner so now we wait for the court's newest ruling.

Attending the meeting this evening were 48 members and 4 guests.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen S. Phares,
Secretary
Willamette Valley Miners Club

UPCOMING EVENTS:

February 20 Geo-cache outing
March 26-28 GPAA Show
April 3-4 Beverly Beach Outing
April 16-18 Rickreall Rock & Gem Show

Treasurer's Report

The year has gone by so fast it's hard to believe. I will say that it is time to renew our memberships and to look forward to the spring when all things are new. We have put an application in the newsletter for you, so it will be easier for a lot of you to get one. Please if you have a copier you can print one out and give it to a friend. With all the problems the miners are having it would be better if we all stick together. You can also get an application from the net on our web site www.wvminers.com. The dues are still the same.

I would like to thank all of you for joining last year as we had 319 of us in the club. I just wish in some way you could all come to the meetings so we would have more pull when it comes to the laws of our state. We need more help in all of the offices of the club.

We will need some help at the gold show the end of March and at Rickreall rock and gem show in April. The gold show is meeting people and telling them about our club and Rickreall is showing people how to pan, so if you want to learn please show up. And yes I am asking people to help. We have lots of things to do to get ready for both shows, so if you can do any of the things listed, please volunteer.

I look forward to serving you again this year, thank you. Lloyd

Outings/Events

The January outing to Rice NW Museum of Rocks and Minerals went quite well with about a dozen members attending. It's quite a fascinating place with rocks from the NW and around the world -- rocks in every color, many varied shapes and sizes, and values that get your attention. Also to see are petrified wood, jewelry stones, man made minerals, fossils, "space" rocks, a black light show and more.

If you've never been, it should be on your to-do list. The Club library has pamphlets about the museum for you to look at -- so plan a trip to Hillsboro and take a tour or, usually, in January, the Club schedules an outing there. It is a good way to start the New Year.

Thanks for attending. Louie and Joan

Gary's Raffle Corner:

Thanks to all who have bought tickets for the big raffle, we are getting closer but still have a ways to go, around \$400.00+. The table raffle has looked good the last two months, let's keep up the good work. It makes it more fun if there is a lot to choose from. The nuggets that Wes keeps throwing on the table help a lot too. Thanks Wes!

Member's Corner

Paul Messersmith

March 16, 1939 — Jan. 25, 2010

“Goodbyes are not forever, goodbyes are not the end. They simply mean we'll miss you until we meet again ...”

Paul Donald Messersmith, 70, died Monday at his home in Millersburg following a courageous fight against lung cancer.

Paul was born in Berwick, Pa., the son of Dorothy Gladys (Eyer) Messersmith and the late Paul Dawson Messersmith. He married the former Mary Susan Hileman on June 25, 1966, in Bloomsburg, Pa.

Paul graduated from Berwick High School in 1957 and spent the next four years working in a variety of jobs, mostly in the Rochester, N.Y., and Berwick, Pa., areas. Following the advice of a supervisor, he enrolled in college in 1961. He attended Bloomsburg State Teachers College (now Bloomsburg University), Bloomsburg, Pa.; and Marshall University, Huntington, W.Va., where he received his bachelor and master's degrees. He

taught geography at Concord College, Athens, W.Va., and Marshall University before moving his family to Oregon in 1970. He received his Oregon teaching certificate through OCE (now Western Oregon University) in 1973. He spent the next 25 years working in the education field, except for a one year span when he was self-employed. He was employed by Myrtle Point School District in Coos County, Sweet Home School District, Evergreen School District, Vancouver, Wash., Linn Benton ESD (now Linn Benton Lincoln ESD), and Corvallis School District from which he retired in 1998 as head of their district wide library automation system.

From the time he was a young boy Paul was a fisherman. He spent many happy hours fishing the rivers and lakes in Pennsylvania and Oregon. He and his friend, Ken especially enjoyed fishing and crabbing in the Alsea River and Bay.

Paul was an avid gardener and an excellent cook. Over a 25-year period he rescued three cats and adopted four others, all of whom became his buddies, keeping him company as he worked in his garden.

For the past several years he had a great time with recreational gold prospecting. He often said it was “a kick in the pants” and wished he'd discovered it 20 years earlier. He was active in the Willamette Valley Miners organization and served as its president at one time.

Paul was preceded in death by his father on Nov. 26, 1973; and brother-in-law Donald Martz on Aug. 1, 1994.

In addition to his wife and mother, he is survived by his daughter, Joan Marie Davis and husband James of Milwaukie; granddaughter Shyanna Marie Davis; great-grandson Carter Davis-Lockhart born Sept. 29, 2009, both of Madison, Miss.; sister Nancy Lee Martz and niece Melodee Yoder, both of Bloomsburg, Pa.; grand nephew Michael Yoder of Hatboro, Pa.; grandnieces Heather Vassallo of Breinigsville, Pa., and Allison Yoder of Annapolis, Md.; aunt Betty Berneski of Melbourne, Fla.; and uncle Carl Eyer of Berwick.

At Paul's request no services will be held. Burial will be in Elan Memorial Park, Bloomsburg, Pa., with a private family gathering to be held there in the spring.

In honor of Paul's love and compassion for animals, he asked that any donations in his memory be made to SafeHaven Humane Society, P. O. Box 2018, Albany, OR 97321.

AAsum-Dufour Funeral Home is handling arrangements. For those wishing, online condolences may be left at www.aasum-dufour.com

A book review, by Tom Bohmker, brings reminders of a “Beginners Luck” story in Hell’s Canyon on the Oregon/Idaho border.

Book review; **Massacred for gold: the Chinese in Hells Canyon** By R. Gregory Nokes Published by Oregon State University Press, 219 pages

This story, probably the most tragic and blackest event in Oregon gold mining has long been ignored and largely forgotten. Locally in and around Joseph, Oregon the account of Chinese gold miners robbed of their gold and mercilessly murdered has largely been hidden and until recently has been a cover up by both governmental authorities and many in the local populace. Overview of the story: on May 25, 1887 a gang of horse thieves and want to be outlaws led by a “respectable” local land owner, Bruce Evans, planned and carried out a massacre of Chinese miners peacefully making a living on a remote section of the Snake River in Hell’s Canyon at the mouth of Deadline Creek (now called Deep Creek) some 50 rugged miles east of Joseph, Oregon on the Oregon side of the Idaho border. The gang was greedy for the gold but the obvious vicious attack and mutilation of the bodies showed a form of “ethnic cleansing” or blatant racism. Many people in these times were concerned about these new immigrants taking jobs from the whites and there are records of other acts of violence against Chinese. However this act against ethnic Chinese is the worst known in United States History with approximately 34 miners losing their lives. Writes author Nokes, “Even though the killers were known, and one confessed, no one was ever convicted of the crime. A cover up followed and the crime was all but forgotten for the next 100 years, until a county clerk found hidden records in an unused safe (in 1995).”

Nokes believes that any cover up stems from two factors in Wallowa County. “The first was a desire to protect the reputations of the family of the accused killers. The second was that few cared about the murder of the Chinese. As the years went by, the cover up was continued by people...who sought to protect the reputation of Wallowa County, as well wanting to avoid embarrassing the killers’ decedents, some of whom still live in the county.” An attack was made from the hillsides down on the exposed gravel bar and all the miners present were killed. The killers were ransacking the camp for the gold and booty when another group of Chinese miners happened on the camp coming down river in a boat and this new group was also killed and robbed. Then the Evans gang traveled down river on a stolen boat to another Chinese miner’s camp where the debauchery continued to a total of approximately 34 victims. It is noted that the well armed crooks could have easily just robbed the defenseless miners with little chance of being reported or apprehended. The nearest town (Imhana) was a full day horse ride inland over very steep and rough mountains. The Chinese who had arrived the previous October by pulling a couple of supply boats up river from Lewiston, Idaho probably had no idea where law enforcement was located and how to get help. Unfortunately no one in authority cared very much even when news eventually spread of the massacre.

This does throw some light on the mining potential of this little visited corner of the state. Sometimes mining historians portray the Chinese miners as being very poor and working only claims not “worth working” by white miners. However, the first group of about a dozen hard working individuals worked through the windy cold winter in a crude rock shelter and by early spring had accumulated approximately 320 ounces of gold. One early historian who knew some of the bandits claims the total take as about 10 times this amount. Several of the bandits retired and lived in prosperity for the rest of their lives, allegedly on their ill gotten riches. The Chinese miners used pans, sluices, rocker boxes and in places and water flows permitting diverted seasonal streams to flow to bench deposits for hydraulic mining. Bear in mind this claim had been worked most seasons since the gold rush 20 years before and much of the “cream” had certainly been skimmed off by white miners but the persistence of the Chinese miners proved up a sizable poke. Much of the gold is flood gold coming

down the Snake River. Up stream for over 50 miles many sizable gold bearing streams such as the Powder River, Pine Creek, Eagle Creek and a host of smaller tributaries feed a lot of placer gold into the Snake. The gorge is deep, often over a mile to the waters edge and bench gravel deposits are found on certain slopes well above current river levels. On both the Idaho and Oregon side the smaller tributary creeks also carry gold from localized sources with the effect of finding smooth shaped gold particles (from along ways upstream) as well as rough shaped gold particles that hint of a nearby source. The enclosed story "**Beginner's Luck strikes twice in NE Oregon**" is situated very close to the site of the Chinese miners' demise. Note that the larger quartz piece was rough, indicative of nearby sources where as the nuggets were smooth but not shiny: bespeaks of bench gravel source that came a long ways.

Of course, portions of Hells Canyon along the Snake River have restrictions for mining today but many of the tributaries are available for mining today. Some float down the river and "snipe" gravel bars and exposed bedrock for flood gold. Some friends years ago rafted a 2 ½" dredge down to a remote section and dredged shallow bedrock. There was a lot of minus #40 mesh gold in a heap of black sand but in spots there were crevices with numerous little picker flakes and small nuggets.

It is worth reprinting the story originally from the April 2008 issue of Willamette Valley Miners Newsletter.

"Beginner's Luck" strikes twice in NE Oregon

"Some other guy here at the gold show told me you could tell me what this gold rock is worth" a large sturdy looking customer of mid 50 age requested of me at my Cascades Mountain Gold booth at the GPAA gold show in Salem. He pulled out an oval shaped quartz rock the size of a small egg with a fairly rough texture. Around ¾ of the perimeter of the river stone was a fairly interconnected line of 2 to 3mm bright gold flakes. It was what we call a "dredge rock" of the sort often picked up with metal detectors on the tailings piles of dredges and stocks of tailings from long ago hand placer operations. Sometime these are found visually in the gravel when using suction gold dredges. With a 10x lens I could see the gold was associated with a very thin band of black slate visible on the edges of the band of gold flakes. When I hefted the specimen I could

tell that it wasn't much heavier than an ordinary round rock the same size. "Someone else said the band of gold goes through the specimen" the customer said with wishful voice. "Not very likely", I would have to use the equipment back at the shop to determine the specific gravity and calculate the net gold content. My guess was 1-2 dwt (.5 to 1oz troy) thus a value of \$100 to \$200. He was not selling. His story was this: He knew very little about mining and was hunting elk along the Snake River Canyon in North East Oregon when he bent down to get a cool drink out of a little tributary creek last fall. The glitter on a rock in the creek under the water steered his attention from hunting game to the treasure hunting. He was not sure it was gold but later had it confirmed that it was "honest to god good looking gold" and someone encouraged him to return with a metal detector. He told me "Those detectors cost too much for a good one" but someone loaned him a Mine Lab model for a weekend. It was his first time with any detector and proceeded with basically no instructions. He told me he used most of Saturday trying to make it work. Finally he found some gold nearby on the hillside. By Sunday he had recovered 13 nuggets weighing on my scale a little over 8 dwt (4oz). They were smooth but not shiny, must have come from an old bench. *To think how many of us have looked for years and not found anything quite like this!*

Tom Bohmker is an author, mining historian, and publisher: reached at Cascade Mountains Gold (503)606-9895.



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 Paul @ 541-926-8153

Farmer John wet suit should fit anyone 5'8 to 6' with a men's size waist 31" and smaller. Comes with boots. \$125.00 Jeff @ 503-371-3652

Wanted

Gold Screw

Dan @ 541-401-0922 (Sweet Home)

Willamette Valley Miners

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PLEASE CLEARLY PRINT ALL INFORMATION

Name _____
Last First Middle Initial

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Please check: New Member Membership Renewal

Please accept my application for membership in the Willamette Valley Miners Club. I understand that the association is a non-profit organization of members with a common interest in small scale mining and Mineral prospecting. I have read and understand the agreement below.

**Annual Family membership dues - \$20.00.
Membership card for dash - \$1.00
Membership year begins in January**

As a member of the Willamette Valley Miners I hereby agree to abide by the rules and guidelines established by the club. I acknowledge that small scale prospecting may involve inherent dangers and I hereby release the Willamette Valley Miners Club, its officers, and claim holders from any and all actions, causes of actions, claims, damages, or injuries that may occur on any and all claims controlled by the Willamette Valley Miners Club, or other clubs who we share claims with. I further agree to hold the Willamette Valley Miners Club, its officers, and claim holders harmless from the results of any accident or incident that may occur while I am on said lands controlled by the Willamette Valley Miners Club or claims shared with others clubs

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

(Must be signed by spouse for family membership)

Amount enclosed _____

Please send application and remittance to:

Willamette Valley Miners
PO Box 13044
Salem Or. 97309

Willamette Valley Miners

PO Box 13044
Salem OR 97309-1044

**We Meet Third Thursday of
the month, 7:00 pm at
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