

# South West Washington Gold Prospectors December 2017 Newsletter



## December Meetings

Everyone is welcome to our next board and general meetings on December 10th. The board meeting will start at 12:45 and the general meeting will start at 2:00.



## Membership Committee

When you are signing in for attendance at the SWWGP meeting please be sure to verify name spelling, correct address w/zip code, e-mail address and phone number. If you are a current GPAA/ LDMA member be sure to let us know and give us your GPAA/LDMA membership number.

Richard Pluff Jr.  
503-957-6884  
[magicdrag-on1956@hotmail.com](mailto:magicdrag-on1956@hotmail.com)

## Presidents Message

The holiday season is here and it is a wonderful time to spend with your family and friends. Along with that also comes the stress of the season as well as the fun. Be sure to enjoy the season with family and friends and take a little time to take care of yourselves.

Have a Happy Holiday Season and a Merry Christmas.

Your President, Debbie Witcher



## Outing Ideas

Is there something you would like to see our Chapter members Do? Want to take a field trip or outing you think might be of interest to other members? Let us know. Send Bill Birdwell a message. [obill15@comcast.net](mailto:obill15@comcast.net) You can even set up an impromptu last minute outing as Preston did. If you are going somewhere and would like some company this is a great way to include others. Let Mark know the date, time, and where and he will send out an e-mail. Let those who don't have email know so they can attend with you. For those few who were able to join Preston, they had a good time and even got a little gold. We need to have more of these weather permitting.

<b>Executive Board</b>	<b>(Elected)</b>		
President	Debbie Witcher	360-695-3215	ddWitcher@yahoo.com
Vice President	Jeff Wooldridge	360-694-7557	harmonicajeff@msn.com
Secretary	Mark Mattila	360-609-6813	chipper49@outlook.com
Treasurer	Ken Didier	360-567-7360	ky02kid@peoplepc.com
<b>Board of Directors</b>	<b>(Elected )</b>		
	Patti Long	503-320-3854	palong48@gmail.com
	Rick Beehler	360-601-6855	rickbeehler@ymail.com
	Bob Brown	360-576-0213	photogal01@comcast.net
	Jim Erickson	360-260-3225	aerickson@q.com
	Jeanne Gieg	360-673-3179	jeannegieg@gmail.com
	Daniel Keesee	360-269-2341	None
	Dale Long	503-665-4717	alelongsmaillmail.com
	Richard Pluff jr	503-957-6884	magicdragon1956@hotmail.com
	Preston Griffin	360 903 2054	griff11546@gmail.com
	Matt Barner	360-909-9424	Matthew.barner@gmail.com
	Tammy Binford	360-449-2714	kaycbear99@gmail.com
<b>Claims Chair</b>	<b>(Elected)</b>		
	Preston Griffin	3609032054	griff11546@gmail.com
<b>State Director (WA,OR)</b>	<b>(Appointed by GPAA)</b>		
<b>Committee Chairs</b>	<b>Appointed by chapter President</b>		
<b>Education</b>	<b>Volunteer needed</b>		
<b>Equipment Manager</b>	Randy Harper	503-849-5109	rh82065@hotmail.com
<b>Fundraising coordinator</b>	Debbie Witcher	360-695-3215	ddwitcher@yahoo.com
Assistant	Jim Erickson	360-260-3225	aerickson@q.com
<b>Hospitality</b>	Jeanne Gieg	360-673-3179	jeannegieg@gmail.com
Assistant	Maurine Koppi	360-254-9309	koppi@comcast.net
Assistant	Leigh Anne Chavez	503-531-2770	ohwell1956@yahoo.com
<b>Picnic, Holiday Dinner</b>	Jeanne Gieg	360-673-3179	jeannegieg@gmail.com
Assistant	Maurine Koppi	360-254-9309	koppi@comcast.net
<b>Librarian</b>	Dave konti	360-256-0892	user764554@aol.com
<b>Membership</b>	Edna Nelsom	503-307-0852	rockhoundstoo1966@yahoo.com
<b>Newsletter</b>	Mark Mattila	360-609-6813	chipper49@outlook.com
<b>Outing coordinator</b>	Bill Birdwell	360-263-1749	obill15@comcast.net
<b>Safety Officer</b>	Ron Koppi	360-254-9309	koppi@comcast.net
Assistant	Steve Keesee	360-269-2341	None
	Norm Erickson	503-801-1452	None
	Betty Erickson	503-801-1452	bettyerickson13@yahoo.com
<b>Sargent at Arms</b>	Daniel Keesee	360-269-2341	None
	Bob Brown	360-576-0213	photogal01@comcast.net
	Jeff Wooldridge	360-694-7557	harmonicajeff@msn.com
<b>Sunshine</b>	Anne Erickson	360-260-3225	aerickson@q.com
<b>T-Shirts</b>	Maurine Koppi	360-254-9309	koppi@comcast.net
<b>Webmaster</b>	Dennis Clevenger	360-281-6338	dennisc@pacifier.com
<b>Historian</b>	Jeff Wooldridge	360-694-7557	harmonicajeff@msn.com
<b>Gold Buyer</b>	Prestin Griffin	360 903 2054	griff11546@gmail.com
	Ken Didier	360-567-7360	ky02kid@peoplepc.com

Other committees will be formed as needed. Please let Debbie Witcher know if your name was missed or if you would like to serve.

<b>GPAA Points</b>	Bob Brown	360-576-0213	photogal01@comcast.net
<b>Name Tags</b>	Dave Conti	360-256-0892	user764554@aol.com
<b>Awards</b>	Debbie Witcher	360-695-3215	ddwitcher@yahoo.com
<b>Picnic and Holiday Dinner</b>	Jeanne Geig	360-673-3179	jeannegeig@gmail.com
Assistant	Maurine Koppi	360-254-9309	koppi@comcast.net
Assistant	Leigh Anne Chavez	503-531-2770	ohwell1956@yahoo.com
<b>Facebook</b>	Rick Beehler	360-601-6855	rickbeehler@ymail.com
Assistant	Richard Pluff jr	503-957-6884	magicdragon1956@hotmail.com
<b>Raffle</b>	Jim Erickson	3602603225	aerickson@q.com
Assistant	Jeff Wooldridge	360-694-7557	harmonicajeff@msn.com
Assistant	Dennis Witcher	360-695-3215	ddWitcher@yahoo.com
Assistant	Dale Long	503-665-4717	alelongsmail@gmail.com
Assistant	Prestin Griffin	360 903 2054	griff11546@gmail.com

## Education

Rick Beehler will be leading a class on panning for the December education.

In January we will be having a panning competition. Groups will consist of experts through green horns.

There will be a 1st 2nd and 3rd for each group where you will win a gold nugget.



Future educational presentations :

Identifying mercury  
How to dial in that metal detector

## HOLIDAY DINNER

BRING YOUR DISH(S) TO THE POT LUCK. The chapter will provide, the meat, beverages, and table ware. Jeanne has something special planned. Join your fellow chapter member for good food and fellowship.



## ARE YOU INTERESTED IN GOING TO NOME, AK?

The trip to the AKAU lodge is planned for July 20-27 2018.

The cost is 1,300 plus you need to arrange your air fare. The price includes meals, room, laundry is available, and transportation to and from the Nome airport, as well as some local activities. ATV'S are available to rent for personnel use. There is a lot to do and see or just enjoy the down time from your busy life and visit with others.

There is a min. age limit.

For more information contact Debbie 360-695-3215 with questions and to sign up. Space is limited. This is open to all chapter members, friends and family. Some of the Mid-valley folks will be joining us.

## GOLD SHOW PLANNING MEETING

Our next planning meeting will be Sat Jan. 6, 2018 ,12 noon at the grange. If you need vendor packets, or help with securing a vendor or Chapter sponsor please feel free to contact me.

Bring your ideas and help out with the planning of this event.

## PANNING CONTEST AND TRAINING

Rick Beehler is going to run a panning contest after the meeting while we clean up after the dinner, He will be teaching panning to those who want to learn and for those who do know how to pan or maybe a different way of panning.

You will have a month to practice as the contest will be held in Jan. 2018 after our meeting. We will have 2 categories. Novice, experienced, and we may add children as well.

Both novice and experienced will have 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place prizes. Come have fun and try your panning skills.



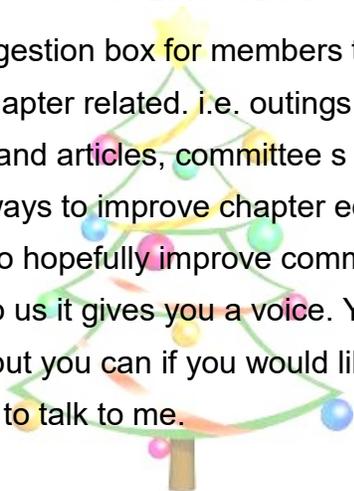
## OUTINGS

As announced in last months newsletter and at our meeting Bill Birdwell is our outings chair. Please help him out by suggesting outings and also think about volunteering to be the lead for an outing. It takes less than 1 hr of your time and is needed. You need to let us know what outings you would like to do. Please be pro active with this and make suggestions. We are very limited as to locations to go.

You can even set up an impromptu last minute outing as Preston did. If you are going somewhere and would like some company this is a great way to include others. Let Mark know the date, time, and where and he will send out an e-mail. Let those who don't have email know so they can attend with you. For those few who were able to join Preston, they had a good time and even got a little gold. We need to have more of these weather permitting.

### SUGGESTION BOX

I have created a suggestion box for members to give us ideas on any and all things Chapter related. i.e. outings and events, raffle prizes, newsletter items and articles, committees needed, things for the chapter to buy/sell, ways to improve chapter education, and much more. This is a way to hopefully improve communication, and for those to shy to talk to us it gives you a voice. You do not need to sign the suggestion but you can if you would like to. As always I am available if you need to talk to me.



### Club Name Tags

Any club members that would like a plastic name Tag made for them can place an order at the next meeting.

Cost is 7.00 for each tag that includes up to 2 lines of engraving.

Questions?

Contact David Conti

[user764554@aol.com](mailto:user764554@aol.com)

360-256-0892

### SUNSHINE

Please let Ann Erickson know of anyone who might be under the weather, in the hospital, or just need a feel good card. Remember to let us know of anyone with a new addition to their family as well.

[aerickson@q.com](mailto:aerickson@q.com)



### SWWGP MONTHLY MEETING

The Southwest Washington Gold Prospectors' meetings are the second Sunday of every month beginning at **2:00 pm** at: Minnehaha Grange Hall #164 4905 Northeast St Johns Road Vancouver, Washington

All interested parties are invited to attend the monthly meetings. There will be opportunities to learn about prospecting laws, methods and equipment as well as hands-on demonstrations and practice. There are also outings to enjoy the pleasures of gold prospecting and the great outdoors.

Become a member of the Southwest Washington Chapter of the Gold Prospectors' Association of America. GPAA membership is not required to be a member and SWWGP membership is FREE!

For information contact: Debbie Witcher – Chapter President,

[ddwitcher@yahoo.com](mailto:ddwitcher@yahoo.com) or 360-695-3215 or visit [www.swwgoldprospectors.org](http://www.swwgoldprospectors.org)

### Collection for Veterans

Don't forget that we are continuing to collect food, toiletries, warm clothes for veterans. Pet food for their animals. Please bring your donations. Boxes will be provided.

### Committee Members Needed

Just a reminder that we need additional committee members for the following:

Education  
Sargent at arms/safety

Please consider helping out.

All have Chairpersons but we do need a few more folks to help.

If you need information, want to know what is involved, time needed or to volunteer, Please contact Debbie Witcher 360-695-3215





### Buy Sell Trade

Have something to sell or give away? Looking for something to buy? This is a free service to our Chapter members. Please send an email to Mark Mattila with the information and pictures at [chipper49@outlook.com](mailto:chipper49@outlook.com)



Asking \$275.00 any question please text 971-244-3210 John Rehder or call Tammy Binford. 360-601-6855

## NOME ALASKA 2017

Our trip this year to the AKAU Lodge in Nome was the trip of a lifetime for not only myself, but also for many in our club. Some of us worked that ground till it gave up a smiling face in their pans. Others took their time to run those metal finding gadgets we call a metal detector, digging out of the ground each prospective object that gave us a beep or buzz to lure us under that surface layer of dirt. Dig and dig we were hungry to get down to the bottom of what was causing that buzzing sound. Some found yellow gold, some found that there had been a hunter shooting a .22 caliber rifle. One of the treasures that I was tempted to chase that buzzing sound was a nail that came from a mule shoe which had a longer head that gave it the same traction power as the studs in our tires do for us when driving on ice or snow.

One of our club members had taken on the position of being one of the Cooks at the Lodge and had the longest stay in the gold camp. Limited time off gave her the chance to experience what prospecting in Alaska was all about.

As one of the cooks, we owe Sharon a big THANKYOU for taking a part in keeping us all fed well and for keeping that hot coffee ready to warm us up.

Our President Debbie Witcher had her hands full with keeping everyone satisfied in going the directions we wanted to go for each activity that was available. We had The Trips off to the beach looking for the NOME Beach Glass, down to the Highbankers for gold, out fishing to catch salmon, the long drive to the Eskimo Village up north. Then the metal detector people had to be satisfied too. With Augie and Debbie working together they had their hands full trying to keep each facet of this trip addressed. Betty and Tony were constantly planning meals for the group and working in time to guide groups of us in different directions hoping to show us all that Alaska had to share. There was So much to see and so little time. But all of the time was well spent, still leaving a hunger to return for more.

Fishing was on the top of my list to experience and thanks to Augie's special recipe fish eggs, I was astounded to see fish biting within 20 seconds of my bait hitting to water. My roommate bragged about catching over 100 fish on one of his trips to the river.

Many of you may know that my trip was a much longer stay than most which gave me the chance to experience what Nome was really like. While there, I met a friendly world of people as like I have never seen in the lower 48 states. Everywhere you drive, ride or walk there was always a friendly wave hello.

While fishing there, I had the honor of helping a young lady catch her first salmon, helping her family all catch fish was a treasured experience.

*While on my extended stay, I was able to travel off to the beaches West of Nome and gathered a few buckets of what is called Ruby Sand. The garnets in the sand lay hand in hand with fine granules of GOLD. I took those buckets back to camp and processed it down to a higrade paydirt. In Paying Forward the benefit of my experience, I will offer 7 oz of that higrade paydirt to the best story about their experience gained from the 2017 trip to the AKAU Lodge. That story/tale can be no longer than 333 words. **It must be submitted to be in the January Newsletter before January 4<sup>th</sup> to qualify for a chance at the paydirt.** All Tales/Stories should be sent to [Mark chipper49@outlook.com](mailto:Markchipper49@outlook.com) and [rickbeehler@ymail.com](mailto:rickbeehler@ymail.com)*

There my chance to help in the program put together by Betty, Tony and the Mayor of Nome Richard Beneville to teach people from the cruise ship how to pan for gold. Seeing their faces glow when they saw the yellow in the bottom of their pans left as much a feeling as if I had just found a nugget myself. Adding to their smile was the postcards that we taped their gold to so they could take that little bit of Alaska back to Florida with them.

I must extend my gratitude to all of the people at the AKAU Lodge who worked hard at making my stay such a pleasurable experience and to Debbie Witcher and Randy Harper in their effort to make this trip come together for everyone who had the chance to be there.

The rewards of my trip were not measured in the gold in my pan or nuggets that talked to my metal detector. The true rewards were from all of what Nome had to offer in the memories of a time not soon to be forgotten. *Rockhound Rick*



**Ronda and Eli pulling his dredge in from the Bering Sea**



**Alaskan Handicraft**



**Musk Ox at 30 feet**



**Transportation while in Nome, it could get me anywhere I wanted to go. Loaded and headed to ship my packages South.**



**Helping load Eli's dredge out of the Bering Sea East of**



**Mayor Richard Beneville with Tony from AKAU, Giving the Cruise Ship people a chance to pan for Gold. Most**



**She asked HOW ARE YOU CATCHING SO MANY FISH, I gave her the chance to learn how and she caught a bigger fish than her husband! Thanks to Augie's**



**Yes,, MineLab helped me! It pays to have a good grip on the fish!**



**It took TEAMWORK to process that pile of dirt. There was enough gold**



**Good times. Mayor Richard Beneville giving congratulations for a father raising two good sons who Richard was happy to meet.**



**The Potters showed me some of the sites as soon as I got off the plane.**



**The love of these dogs will carry them far when they run in the 2018 Iditarod.**



**A Tale about the Cremation of Sam McGee.**



**Attentive listeners to Mayor Richard Benevilles rendition of the Tale of the Cremation of Sam McGee.**



**All listeners to the Tale of Poor old cold Sam McGee in Alaska.**



**The digging was much easier than when done in the 1800s. Notice that even the mules were replaced!**



**This was sometime around 3 AM, after it finally got dark. That fisherman speeding by kind of blurred my picture.**



**Those dark brown spots at 2 o'clock above the tall building are Musk Ox. At times they graze in the blue berries between that small shack and the AKAU Lodge.**



**The season to dredge can be short depending a lot of the weather. These are all dredges working all the hours they can to try to cover expenses.**



**Yes, the young Bull is marking his territory early, I don't think the Old Man of the herd is worried yet. This was taken from the porch outside of the AKAU Kitchen.**



**Fantastic photos are everywhere to be captured as a memory of that special moment in time.**



## November 2017 SWWGP General Meeting Minutes

-  Meeting called to order at 2:10
-  2 guests were in attendance
-  The secretary meeting minutes for Oct. were read. A motion to accept was made and passed
-  The treasurers report was read. A motion to accept was made and passed
-  A motion was made and passed to close election nominations
-  Myron announced that Whites will be attending the Gold and Treasure show
-  It was announced that Ann Erickson is the new lead for sunshine
-  A special raffle was held for veterans
-  Myron was contacted by a boy scout troop to see if we could help them earn a prospecting merit badge
-  Next Gold and Treasure show meeting will be at the Grange on 11/18 at 1:00
-  Richard agreed to help lead the effort for the Albany Gold Show but he needs another to help
-  Edna Nelson is the new membership lead
-  There is a sign up sheet for a visit to Whites
-  Ron Koppi is the new safety lead
-  Ron presented a safety presentation on vehicle issues and being lost in the woods
-  Education was presented by Preston on how to read a river
-  There are a few openings for next years trip to AKAU lodge
-  3 assistants were requested for the Christmas dinner
-  Election results:
  - President: Debbie Witcher
  - Secretary: Mark Mattila
  - Board: Matt Barner  
Tammy Binford  
Dale Long  
Patti Long

## CHAPTER STORE



We would like to restart the chapter store but we need someone to be in charge. It is not a lot of work and will be open only at meetings. Please contact Debbie for more info. There is a lack of available vendors that are close so this will fill a need.



Thanks to these companies for supporting our activities. Members may advertise free by submitting a business card.

Ron Farnsworth Scrap Metal  
Pickup

9 Cent Color Copies  
360-896-7220

Whites Metal Detectors

Chinook Winds Casino & Re-  
sort

Quick Badge

Danner Boots

Lost Adams

Designs of all kinds  
360-892-5597

Gold Getter

AAA Precious Metals  
503-253-8591

Pro Caliber

Oregon Treasure Trail Society

Topside Mining

Creekside Prospecting

Armadillo Mining

Fossickers

Danas classic Flowers and  
Gifts

Danas Classic Hair Supply

Packwood Prospecting and  
Mining Supply

Wilson Brothers

Sportsman's Warehouse

Nayhely's Place  
360-571-7088

Northwest Detector Sales  
503-936-1443

Roaring Camp

Spin it Off

Thrive Life

AKAU Lodge

American Mining Supply

The Gold Lab

Avon Products—Bug Guard

McCord's Vancouver Toyota

Please support these vendors as they support us with contributions and in many cases discounts. We will be doing interviews with many of them so we can get to know a little more about them.