

# South West Washington Gold Prospectors Newsletter

## March 2018



Everyone is welcome to our next board and general meetings on Sunday March 11th.

The board meeting will start at 12:45 and the general meeting will start at 2:00.



### Membership Committee

When signing in for attendance at the SWWGP meeting please be sure to verify name, address, and phone number. If you are a current GPAA/ LDMA member be sure to give us your membership number. Let Mark know if you are not receiving chapter emails.

Edna Nelson  
503-307-0852  
rockhound-  
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### PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

The gold and treasure show is almost upon us. A lot of hard work on the part of everyone has gone into making this show successful. Soon it will be time to have some fun, enjoy the show, and see the results of our hard work and joint chapter co-operation. Thanks to Mid-Valley and Portland. Great team work. See ya there!

Your President, Debbie

### GOLD SHOW PLANNING MEETING

Our next meeting has been changed to Sat. March 10<sup>th</sup> at noon at the grange. This should be our last meeting and we need to make sure everything is ready to go.

The gold show shirts are ordered and hopefully we will have them ready to hand out at this meeting.



<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	Mark Mattila	360-609-6813	chipper49@outlook.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	alelongsmailgmail.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	360-903-2054	griff11546@gmail.com
<b>State Director (WA)</b>	<b>(Appointed by GPAA)</b>		
	Steve Lewin	971-212-5996	goldpan123@yahoo.com
<b>Committees / Chairs</b>	<b>Appointed by chapter President</b>		
<b>Education</b>	Preston Griffin	360 903 2054	griff11546@gmail.com
<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
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	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
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	jeannegieg@gmail.com
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Assistant	Jeff Wooldridge	360-694-7557	harmonicajeff@msn.com
Assistant	Dennis Witcher	360-695-3215	ddWitcher@yahoo.com
Assistant	Dale Long	503-665-4717	alelongsmaill@gmail.com
Assistant	Prestin Griffin	360 903 2054	griff11546@gmail.com

## Education

The March education will be part 2 of reading a river.

If you have a topic or idea for future education or would even like to share your knowledge on a topic or piece of equipment please let Mark know.



## GOLD SHOW TICKETS

We still have a few gold show tickets left. Lets try to sell them all for this years show.

For every pre-sale ticket we sell we make \$2.50. All tickets and monies must be turned in no later that Fri, the 23<sup>rd</sup> during set up.

## DIVING

Interested in a diving safety class? Talk to safety officer Ron Koppi and let him know

# GRAND OPENING

Our chapter store is planning to be up and running at our next meeting. We are waiting for the supplies to arrive. We will have mining supplies and gold dirt bags at a good savings. You can also special order. Dennis Witcher will be in charge of the store.

## COOS BAY

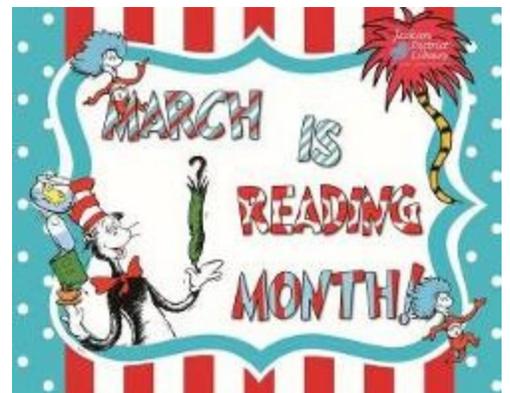
We need about 15 folks to sign up to help out the youth outreach folks at their annual event in Coos Bay on Sat. May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018. This is a Sat. only event. We will be teaching gold panning (Go figure) to young people. There will be approx.. 150-200 kids in attendance to learn all kinds of outdoor activities. There is dry camping available at no charge, and lunch will be provided on Sat. This is an activity that is near and dear to Randy Harpers heart so lets get signed up. Of course we can have more than 15 folks.

## T-SHIRTS

Don't forget to buy your chapter t-shirts. We have all colors and sizes, as well as jackets etc. Don't see what you want? Talk to Maurine Koppi for a special order.

## 12 AND UNDER DRAWING

Myron Hastings is donating a new Whites metal detector to a joint chapters drawing for the young folks in attendance at the gold show. This will be drawn on Sunday March 25<sup>th</sup> 2018. There is no charge to enter this drawing. Need not be present to win. If prize is not claimed within 30 days, it will revert back to the chapter. Must be able to read names and phone number. Parent's name must be on the ticket. Thanks Myron!



## Sam the Tenderfoot Prospector

There were many thousands of tenderfoot, greenhorn prospectors that came out west in the 1860s and 70s. Some came to make their fortunes, some came to flee other problems back east, and some just came for the adventure. Probably every one had a tale to tell, but one of these adventurous individuals was a young man named Sam Clemens, and this is his true story. In his early 20's, Sam had fulfilled his childhood dream of becoming a riverboat captain, and was making a very fine salary until the civil war broke out. In fact, when he was a riverboat captain, he boasted that he made more money than the Vice President of the USA. Unfortunately, Civil War military blockades ended the lucrative river trade along the Mississippi River, and the once wealthy Sam found himself out of a job. Good things seemed to pop up for Sam, and in the spring of 1861, Sam's older brother Orion was appointed by president Abe Lincoln as secretary to the Governor of the new Territory of Nevada. Sam decided to tag along as Orion's assistant. Luckily for us, Sam wrote letters to his family back east and kept notes of his adventure – he later wrote a book about his years living in the wild west.

It was quite an adventure in those days to come out west – the railroad did not yet reach across the continent. Sam packed his belongings and traveled for weeks in a stagecoach, hearing stories of bloodthirsty desperados, and seeing sights and meeting people he never would have previously imagined.

Among the first things Sam noticed on his arrival in Carson City were the beautiful horses and the amazing horsemanship of the local residents. Sam resolved to buy his first horse. A few days later, an auctioneer came flying through town on a powerful steed that caught everyone's eye – he called it a genuine Mexican Plug. Sam decided to bid and won the horse but later found out that he was only partly tamed and barely rideable. Sam said that for years that horse held the speed record in Carson City for a mile and three quarters, as he simply left out the three quarters and did only the mile – jumping over fences, poles, scattering small children and generally throwing up dust storms. Sam tried to loan the horse out, but folks told him that earthquakes were common enough on the west coast and they didn't want to ride one. The horse ate huge amounts of food and hay was very expensive. Sam realized he needed to get rid of the horse. After found he was unable to sell it because everyone knew his horse, he finally gave it away to a passing emigrant stranger who led the beast out of town.

Sam described the afternoon winds in northern Nevada, also known as the Washoe Zephyr, as a “soaring rift of dust, about the size of the United States set up edgewise” which contained “things strange to the upper air – things living and dead” soaring among the billowing clouds of dust. It sets up office about 2pm on most summer afternoons, and in those days of dirt streets, the town of Carson City basically disappeared in the dust for as long as the Zephyr was in business.

A very serious disadvantage of his job as Secretary to the secretary was the fact that there was no salary! Living out west was more expensive than back east, and without a job or source of income, Sam needed to find something to bring some money in. He worked various odd jobs, but nothing ever really “clicked”.

Sam read the local newspapers and was very interested in the reports of prospectors discovering fortunes all across Nevada on almost a daily basis. The headlines screamed of the riches of the Nevada mountains. It would be hard for any man to resist that type of excitement, and by and by, Sam was smitten with “the Fever”. Not knowing much of prospecting, Sam and a few acquaintances hooked up with an old sourdough prospector with years of experience. One of the booming areas of the state at that time was Humboldt county. The Sheba mine was pumping out millions of dollars worth of silver and new discoveries were being made regularly. They decided to begin their prospecting at Unionville, right in the middle of the Humboldt range. So Sam and his companions traveled by wagon across the 40 mile desert to seek the riches of the hills.

On their two week desert journey all they could do was dream of the potential wealth waiting for them at the end of the trail. So on their arrival, Sam stole away from his companions at his first convenient chance and began looking around, at first pretending only to “go out for a smoke”. After a short walk closely examining every stone at his feet, a sparkle in a minor drainage ravine caught his eye. It was golden! He picked up the flake and examined it closely. No doubt about that golden color! He looked back at the ravine and spotted another golden flake. Then another and another – within a half hour he had picked up a small handful of the golden treasure. He laughed to himself that he and his friends had come to prospect for lowly silver, when here in this little ravine was an abundance of Gold! What luck – he had spent just a bit more than an hour prospecting and he had already found his fortune. The wild newspaper stories seemed to him now to be too conservative! He spied around to be certain that no one was watching him, but the coast was clear. His mind drifted off to how he would be spending his new found wealth. After a time, he decided to return to his companions and share his exciting discovery. He beat around the bush a bit at first, but finally let his friends know that he had made an important discovery. He spread out his handful of glittering golden flakes before them and asked “what you think of that?” His greenhorn friends looked and beamed with excitement. But old Mr. Ballou, the long time prospector they had taken along to teach them about prospecting, was not so impressed. Why, what do I think of it? He said with disgust – its nothing but a lot of nasty mica rubbish that isn't worth 10 cents an acre. Sam was crushed! His sparkling “gold” flakes were nothing but mica. It was there and then that Sam learned that gold in its natural state did not glitter and sparkle, and that mica did.

In time, Sam and his friends did find a couple of mineralized quartz veins. They drilled and dug short shafts and adits to prospect them, but none revealed any particular abundance of wealth, and Sam learned that mining was tough work! He liked prospecting, but Sam determined that hand drilling, blasting and shoveling the rock – the life of the miner – was not for him. In time, he and his friends concluded that their chances of a rich discovery were small and Sam returned to the Carson City area.

In spite of his lack of prospecting success at Humboldt, Sam was still very much taken up with the riches of Nevada mining and invested his savings and even some of his sister's money, hoping to strike it rich in mining stocks. The gold and silver boomtown of Aurora in the Esmerelda mining District was yielding great riches at that time and Sam decided to go to Aurora to check up on some of his investments. Some of the mining companies were shady at best, with one company collecting assessments from its investors to put in a 300 foot exploration adit into a small hill only 25 feet wide (the mine directors were living off the assessments and had no intention to complete the work). Sam felt that if he checked things out in person, he could find which companies were the best ones to invest his money with.

Sam found out his investments in Esmerelda were worthless and not long after he arrived, his bankroll had run out. He was again looking to find money for the source of his next meal. In desperation, he decided to go to work in one of the local quartz mills for \$10 per week plus room and board. If Sam didn't like the hard work of mining, he found that the crushing, washing and smelting of the silver mill was even worse! Sam wrote that if only Adam could have gone out of the Garden of Eden directly into a quartz mill, then he would have realized the full impact of his punishment! Those mills often recovered only about two thirds of the metal in the ores, and it was common to screen and then re-treat the ores. Sam said that perhaps the worst duty at the mill was the shoveling and screening of dry dusty tailings in the hot Nevada sun. After a week, he could no longer stand it, and Sam went into the foreman's office and requested a raise. The foreman said that Sam was being paid a fair wage, but asked what he wanted. Sam told him that he'd like to ask for more, but \$400,000 per week seemed like a reasonable amount. He was promptly fired and ordered off the property!

While Sam was in the Esmerelda District, he teamed up with Calvin Higbie, an experienced prospector. Calvin, Sam and other friends staked a number of claims in the area, and were optimistic that they would soon make a big strike. In those days, before the 1872 mining law was enacted, the normal lode claim gave the owner rights to that vein only. If other veins had their apex on that claim, someone else could claim that other vein. The Wide West, one of the larger mines in town, suddenly started producing rich ore, but of a character different than the normal ore which they had produced in the past. The rich ore was worth more than a dollar a pound! Sam's partner Calvin Higbie, was very familiar with the ores produced in all the mines of that area. After studying the new ore, Higbie decided the new ore must be coming from a different vein. One night Higbie sneaked into the mine and confirmed it – the new rich ore was coming from another vein. They took some measurements and determined it was a blind lead (vein that does not come to the surface) and open to claim! According to the local mining law, they had 10 days to do development work on the vein, file the paperwork and complete their claim. They publicly announced their find and there was nothing the big mining company could do. Sam and his partner were suddenly millionaires and became the toast of the town! People offered to give them things or make loans only on their word. A day later, Sam got an urgent message that an old friend was seriously ill, near death. Sam left at once, but left a message for Higbie about completing the development work on the vein, because he would not be there to help. What Sam didn't know was that his partner Higbie had also been suddenly been called away – and left a note for Sam asking him to complete the development work. By the time either had returned, it was too late to complete the work and the big company filed over their claim and taken possession of the rich "blind lead" that they had discovered.

After briefly being a millionaire and the toast of the town, Sam was really down on his luck. His mining investments had become worthless. He had lost his rich strike in Esmerelda, and his bankroll had run out. He was basically penniless, and didn't even have enough money to travel back to Carson City where his brother lived. He'd given up on finding work as a miner or mill operator. He had hit rock bottom, but things were about to change. Sam was an opinionated individual, and for some time he had been periodically writing humorous letters to the editor of the Territorial Enterprise Newspaper in Virginia City to let his voice be heard. Mr. Goodman, the editor, recognized the quality of his writing and contacted Sam to offer him a job at \$25 per week, and at that point Sam really needed it. So it was only after he was running out of choices, without money and without food, that he pursued other options to keep himself from begging or starving. It was a last choice - He wanted to be a prospector or a mining investor, and he never really intended to become a writer. He was still very hopeful for the mining claims he held at Esmerelda, hopeful that he could strike it rich there. It actually took him several weeks to decide to leave his Esmerelda claims behind, but Sam eventually accepted the job, and without any other means, he was forced to walk the 130 miles from Esmerelda to Virginia City on foot.

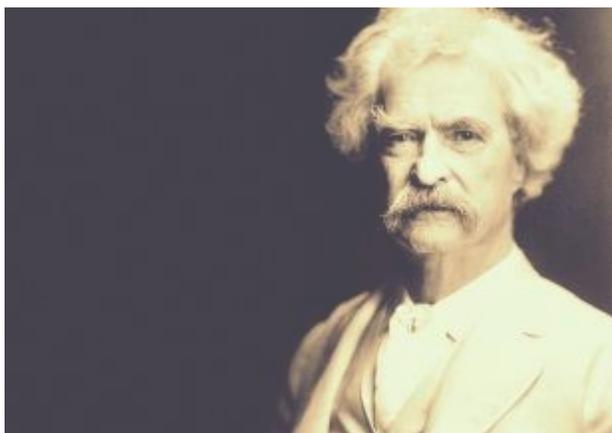
Sometimes fate has a way of working things out, and in the long run, becoming an author worked out quite well for Sam. It took some time, but he became very successful and even famous as an author, far better than he ever did as a prospector. In fact to this day, a good number of people still consider him the greatest author America has ever produced. In those days, it was popular for an author to write under a made up “pen name”. One of the best known writers for the Territorial Enterprise at that time was a guy who had chosen the humorous “pen” name of “Dan DeQuille”. Sam’s initial letters to the editor were written under the pen name of “Josh”, but Sam chose a new one when he went to work as an employee. So what pen name did Sam choose for himself? Well, I mentioned that Sam had been a riverboat captain on the Mississippi River before the civil war, a respected and well paying job. Remembering those happier days, he chose a pen name relating to the terms of riverboat operations. In those days, river pilots called out to mark the depth of the water in fathoms – it was important to avoid shallow water and sand bars where riverboats could run aground. The minimum safe water depth was 2 fathoms and when that depth was reached the pilot called out “MARK TWAIN”. Sam chose the pen name of Mark Twain, and now you know (so they say) the rest of the story. Sam greatly enjoyed his time at the Territorial Enterprise and often took the opportunity to visit the mines when he had a chance. Mine owners commonly gave him shares of stock to write articles about their mine, and Sam ended up with a trunk full of stock, far more than he had ever owned when he was an investor! His gift stocks were so valuable that sometimes he didn’t even bother to pick up his salary from the newspaper. Sam was very popular and soon became a leader among the reporters of the Territorial Enterprise. However, in time his strong opinions got him in trouble with the editor and Sam left to visit some friends who were prospecting for pocket gold in the mother lode country – even after working as an author he was still bitten by the gold fever. It was there that he wrote the nationally famous tale of the Jumping Frog of Calaveras County. The tale became famous across the country. Because of his widening fame as a writer, Sam became a traveling reporter and went to Hawaii, Europe and the middle east, writing humorous weekly accounts of the things he saw there. Although Sam ended up marrying and settling down in the eastern US, his experiences in the untamed western US gave him writing material for the rest of his life.

After Sam left Aurora, the Wide West vein that Sam and his friend “discovered” continued to produce rich ore for many years and has a recorded production of nearly \$600,000. In spite of its very remote location, Aurora survived as a town into the early 1920’s but no one has lived in the town since then. A revival occurred in the Esmerelda area in recent years, though the town of Aurora was not re-established. The old mines around the town however, were still producing significant gold and silver until just recently. Large amounts of low grade ores surrounding the old bonanza deposits were mined and heap leached in the 1980s and 1990s.

Unionville never became a ghost and a couple dozen folks still call it home. The waters of Buena Vista Creek still flow down the canyon and keep the little oasis of Unionville green and beautiful. Big cottonwood trees planted in the early days still cast their cool shade in the summer. Even though Sam’s “big discovery” there was only mica, there actually is a little bit of real placer gold around Unionville. A remote bed and breakfast hotel there still serves the adventurous traveler, including a few movie stars and celebrities who have stayed there. Although it has been more than 140 years since Sam prospected there, the Humboldt Range still produces millions of ounces of silver each year, as Couer Rochester operates its gigantic heap leach facility at Rochester, only a few miles south of where Sam and his friends prospected.

Courtesy of Nevada Ourback Gems

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**Mark Twain’s stories about his experiences prospecting in the west, including many more humorous tales of his adventures can be found in his book: ROUGHING IT**

**NO FOOLIN**

We are planning an outing on Sat March 31 at Daybreak Park. We will meet at 10 o'clock. Weather permitting. This will give you a chance to try any new mining equip you may have purchased at the gold show. Equipment to be used within State regulations.

	<b>Scheduled Events</b>
March 10	Gold and Treasure Show 12:00 at the Grange
March 11	March Board 12:45 and Chapter 2:00 meetings
March 23-24-25	Gold and Treasure Show Clark County Even Center Setup is on Friday March 23rd Show sponsors joint chapters contact Debbie Witcher 360-695-3215
March 31	Daybreak Park Outing 9:00
April 8	April Board 12:45 and Chapter 2:00 meetings
April 21	Prospecting outing (location TBD)
May 2	Coos Bay Children's Fair Coos Bay Oregon Teaching children to pan, campout, try the rivers Contact Randy Harper 503-849-5109, or Debbie Witcher 360-695-3215
May 13	May Board 12:45 and Chapter 2:00 meetings
May 26	Prospecting outing (location TBD)
June 10	June Board 12:45 and Chapter 2:00 meetings
June 23	Prospecting outing (location TBD)
July 21	Prospecting outing (location TBD)
August 4	Picnic (Lewisville Park)
August 25	Prospecting outing (location TBD)

## RAFFLES

We have had great feed back from you on our raffles. Both the regular raffle and the secret raffle. We have a really sweet secret raffle prize planned for this time, so come to the meeting and buy your tickets.

Remember tickets sales are part of what helps to support our Chapters expenses, Rent etc.

Jim Erickson is doing a fantastic job with the raffle!



## GOLD !!!

We have added a beautiful piece of gold to our 3 month raffle. However this will be drawn on Sat. March 24 at the gold show

The rest of our prizes will have tickets drawn on Sunday March 25<sup>th</sup> at the gold show. Your tickets are good for both drawings.

Winners need not be present to win, but we MUST be able to read your name and phone number on the tickets. Any prizes not claimed within 30 days ( by April 30<sup>th</sup> 2018) will revert back to the chapter.

## IN NEED OF TREASURER

Ken Didier resigned as treasurer at the Jan. Board meeting. We want to thank Ken for his service to the chapter as treasurer.

Mark is filling in as treasurer for the time being until we have a new volunteer. Mark as you know is not only the chapter secretary, but also newsletter editor, so it is important that we find a volunteer to fill this position. If you are interested or have any questions please talk to Debbie, Mark, or Patti Long who was a previous treasurer.

We will go over what is involved and expected with this position.

## GPAA KITS

We still have a couple of GPAA kits with membership, and remember if you are renewing your membership to be sure to let the GPAA know to credit our chapter with your membership.



# Natural Gold Indicators

Not all gold deposits out there have been found and mined. There are still places that contain gold that have never been worked, despite the fact that miners have been searching for gold for hundreds of years now. If you can find one of these undiscovered gold deposits you have a good chance that you have found something special, since you will have been the first person to mine it. To find one of these deposits, you need to be able to identify the natural indicators that will lead you to finding the gold.

## Learn the Geology of your Mining District

It is extremely important to learn about the geology of your particular mining district. All areas are different, and you need to understand what to look for in the specific area that you are searching for gold. There are certain things that are common to all gold districts, but understanding exactly where and how gold is found in the particular district that you are searching is extremely important.

## Productive Rock Types for the Area

When researching a mining district, good gold geology references will indicate the general rock types that area associated with the productive gold mines in the area. Pay attention to these most common rock types and always be looking for them when you are out prospecting. They can be an indicator of where gold will occur.

The general rock type alone is generally not a great indicator or where to search, since it is probably common once you are within a known gold district, but it is one of many things that are worth considering.

Probably just as important to identifying the country rocks associated with gold is being able to identify the host rocks that are generally not associated with gold. If your [research](#) has never indicated that gold occurs within a certain rock type, then you certainly don't want to spend a significant amount of time searching within that type of geology.

## Geological Contact Zones

Being able to identify geological contact points is very important (and often completely overlooked) by prospectors for finding areas that gold will occur. Simply put, this is an area where two different rock types come together. Your research will often indicate with rock types are going to be the most productive from a gold prospecting perspective, but the most important thing is that there is a contact. Often the rock types are irrelevant, as gold seems to occur in all different types. What is most important is that some type of contact occurred, which created pressure and often extremely high temperatures which caused fissures to form and gold to be pushed up to the surface.

An entire book could be written on the subject of contact points and gold formations. To keep it simple, I will just say that identifying these areas where different rock types came together are often extremely important.

The general trend of the geology within your district is very important. Look for contact points where different rock types come together at a 90 degree angle. These contacts resulted in high pressure and high temperature conditions that would commonly produce gold. You will find that many of these areas will have some [historic workings](#), there are still areas out there that are "textbook" contact zones that are very rich with gold that have never been mined.

## Gold Geology and Ground Color Changes

Color changes in the soil are another indicator of a contact point. Depending on how much bedrock is exposed in an area, you may or may not be able to easily identify contact points where different rock types come together, but you will be able to see where soil color changes. Since the soil is composed of the host rock, even a small change in soil color can be an excellent indicator of a contact zone.

Some color changes can be very readily apparent, while others can be quite subtle. You aren't looking for small areas with minor change here, you want to try and identify distinct lines of different soil types.

These contact zones may be generally short, but sometimes they will run in a generally straight line for many miles. You may also have success finding new gold bearing areas by locating productive mines and then noting a color change that extends off from the mine. There may be valuable gold deposits in a nearby drainage that are an extension of the same contact zone that occurs at a well-known mine just over the hill.

Remember to always study the different types of gold geology and you will soon learn that there are plenty of areas that have not yet been found.

## (Natural Gold Indicators Cont)

Miners and prospectors have found a lot of gold over the years, but they haven't even come close to finding in all. There are many rich gold deposits that have yet to be discovered.

### Iron Staining ~ Hematite ~ Magnetite ~ Black Sands

If you have done any amount of gold prospecting, you probably know that gold and iron have a very strong relationship. Gold is almost always associated with iron. When you pan for gold and find black sands among the fine gold that is generally comprised of hematite and magnetite. These are both types of iron oxide that are common to almost all gold bearing areas.

You will also find that most of the areas that you can [find gold nuggets with a metal detector](#) also have high iron content.

This is easily visible by the presence of very dark soils. They are often black or reddish in color, but they can even show purple, orange, yellow, and a variety of different colors. These dark or brightly colored soils can be an indicator of high iron content, as well as many other minerals associated with gold.

This is the reason that it is recommended that you use metal detectors specifically designed for detecting gold nuggets, since they are specifically designed to handle these highly mineralized, iron-rich environments.

### Quartz

Most people know about the common association of gold with quartz. Gold veins often form within quartz rock and it is certainly an indicator to look for. However, many prospectors give more attention to quartz than it really deserves.

Quartz is the second most abundant mineral on the Earth's surface, and it can be found in many locations that have very little or no gold. Thus, the presence of quartz by itself is a fairly poor indicator of the potential for gold.

While the presence of quartz alone is not a very good indicator of where gold can be found, there is no doubt that there are many gold districts where gold and quartz have a strong correlation.

I generally consider quartz to be a good indicator once I know that I am in a known gold bearing area, and I have identified that there is a relationship between gold and quartz in that particular area.

Let me explain that a bit more for clarification. There are some gold bearing areas where gold and quartz are commonly found together. Many times the gold nuggets that are found will have a very coarse texture and still have quartz attached to them down in the grooves of the nugget. This indicates that they were eroded directly from the quartz. In these areas, it is worthwhile to spend some time metal detecting around quartz outcroppings and scanning quartz pieces with your detector.

However, there are many areas that you can find gold nuggets that seem to have little to no association with quartz. There may be quartz present in the area simply because it is so common, but the gold doesn't run through the quartz itself, it is just there.

Research is yet again a good way to determine the value of quartz as an indicator in an area. Mining reports will often mention if gold veins occur in the quartz.

Another thing worth noting about the quartz is that the kind of quartz that gold is generally found in is not pure white. Most commonly it will show significant iron staining, and the quartz will have a dirty appearance with reddish/brown stains. Gold can be found in pure white quartz, but it is much rarer, and highly collectable.

## Similar Appearance to Nearby Gold Districts

One of the best ways to find new, undiscovered gold deposits is to study the geology of known gold districts and then explore the fringes of that known district. Identify areas that have a similar geological appearance.

We are not discussing any specific indicator here. This could be one or several natural indicators that are similar to a gold district with a known history of gold production. This is one of the best ways to find an area that nobody has ever prospected before, but it can take a lot of time and patience, and you will likely spend a lot of time searching before you stumble upon any gold.

## Bench Deposits

Bench deposits are locations near the current river channel that have been left “high and dry” as the river has eroded and moved over time. Some rivers are constantly moving and changing their path. Some rivers that are deeply entrenched in bedrock really don’t move much, but many rivers that have a wider, meandering path will change location frequently with each high water event. These changes may be as small as a few feet or sometimes they are hundreds of feet. When this happens, rich placer deposits can get “left behind” by the river, and remain in place away from the current river channel.

Bench deposits also occur as a river naturally erodes downward. In these cases, a layer of gold bearing gravel will often be found just a few feet above the current high water mark of the river.

The great thing about bench deposits is how often they are overlooked by other prospectors. It seems that most placer miners are focused on the water’s edge, and don’t take the time to look around and study the river. Even in areas that have been prospected hard over the years, and finding a nugget down near the water can be difficult, bench deposits are often left nearly untouched.

## Ancient River Channels

Somewhat similar to bench deposits, the presence of ancient river channels is something that many prospectors completely overlook, or don’t even know about. The exciting thing about locating ancient rivers is that they are sometime virtually unknown and may have never been searched with metal detectors.

So what is an ancient river?

Imagine for a moment that it we are in the Jurassic time period, approximately 200 million years ago. A rich gold bearing river is flowing; a river that has never been prospected and has been completely untouched by man. It has millions of ounces of gold within its gravel.

As the years go by, the Earth changes in dramatic ways. Tectonic plates come together and create the mountains that now exist across the western United States. Some areas that were once valley bottoms are now located high up on the side of a mountain.

Many people have a hard time grasping the concept of how much the Earth can change over millions of years, but it most certainly has. There are ancient rivers that were once full of water and rich with gold that are now found high above the existing water line. Of course they no longer contain water, but the ancient river channel (and gold) remains.

Identifying an ancient river channel is actually quite simple once you know what to look for. Think about how different a water worn rock looks compared to the average rock that you find on the side of a mountain. The smooth, polished look of gravel within a river channel really doesn’t chance much, even after millions of years.

If you notice round, river worn rocks and gravel away from a current waterway, ask yourself “How did it get there?” Again, studying old mining reports may provide some insight on where ancient river channels may be found. When in doubt, strap on your hiking boots and start exploring!

raregoldnuggets.com

## SIGN UP SHEETS

We have sign up sheets at the attendance/membership table for outings and events we are participating in. Also sign up sheets help us to gauge interest and participation in outing, events, and committees.

Committees are set up by the Chapter President based on interest and/or need.

The Vice President will preside over committees as deemed necessary or the chapter President will appoint a chairperson.

## 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 \$8.00 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 there 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.



## 2018 Picnic

The date for the picnic will be Aug. 4, 2018 at Lewisville Park in Battleground, WA. Dogwood shelter starting at 9am to dusk or sooner. This is during dredging season so we need to have some qualified people be in charge of the dredge. As always we can pan etc.



## Red Cross Recommendations for Your First Aid Kit

2 absorbent compress dressings 5x9	25 adhesive bandages assorted sizes
1 adhesive cloth tape 10 yards x 1 inch	5 antibiotic ointment packets
5 antiseptic wipe packets	2 packets of aspirin
1 blanket (space blanket)	1 breathing barrier with one way valve
1 instant cold compress	2 pair of non latex gloves
2 hydrocortisone ointment packets	Scissors
1 roller bandage 3 inches wide	1 roller bandage 4 inches wide
5 sterile gauze pads 3x3 inches	5 sterile gauze pads 4x4 inches
Oral thermometer (non mercury/non glass)	2 triangular bandages
Tweezers	First aid instruction booklet

Be ready



Everyone that signs in will receive a free ticket to a mystery raffle.



## A SPECIAL THANK YOU!!!!

A special thank you goes out to Norm and Betty Erickson who are purchasing a AKAU Alaska Lodge trip as a prize in the GPAA raffle. Ilani Casino choose not to sponsor the chapters this year and help provide 2 trips. 1 is to be drawn on Sat. the other on Sun. as raffle prizes. The joint chapters are providing Saturdays trip, and Norm and Betty Sundays. Having 2 trips to give away should increase tickets sales and as many of you are aware the sales go to the host chapters as part of there fund raising efforts to support their chapters. Again thanks to some awesome SWWGP chapter members Norm and Betty.

## PEOPLE AND PET FOOD COLLECTION

We will be collecting people and pet food again to benefit those in need in our community. All food will go to the local food banks. Chinook Winds will again sponsor this for the 4<sup>th</sup> year.

## INTERNATIONAL REPTILE RESCUE

This group will be at our show and will have among other reptiles Snout the alligator and the 100 lb. desert tortoise. This is one of the few opportunities to see these creatures as there facility is not open to the public. Tell everyone about this rare opportunity to view and learn about the reptiles



## 3 MONTH RAFFLE

We have our prizes for the 3 month raffle (now2). You can sell tickets to anyone, they do not have to be a chapter member or present to win. Winning tickets will be drawn at the GPAA gold Show on Sunday March 25<sup>th</sup>, and they will have 30 days to claim their prize or it will revert back to the Chapter.

Clearly Print Name and Phone number on ticket, we must be able to read it.

Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Her is a list of the prizes:

Rocker Box and starter kit donated by Norm and Betty Erickson

Metal Detector and kit from Whites Donated by Whites

Thule car top rack Donated by Vancouver Toyota and RV

Aluminum camp stools and soft side cooler filled with goodies Donate by Vancouver Toyota and RV

Spin it off donated by Dave Urik

Gold miners Belt buckle donated by Tom Fest

Gold nugget Doug Buckendahl

## Safety

February's safety topic will be on Safety Tips For Fording Streams & Rivers



## 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



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



### Generator for sale

New, never used

\$500.00  
Contact Mark Mattila  
360-609-6813  
chipper49@outlook.com



**Nugget Bucket**  
Used only a couple of times

\$40.00  
Contact Mark Mattila  
360-609-6813  
chipper49@outlook.com

## February 2018 SWWGP General Meeting Minutes

- ◇ Meeting was called to order at 2:24
- ◇ 8 guests were in attendance
- ◇ The secretary report was read, a motion was made and passed to accept
- ◇ The treasurers report was read, a motion was made and passed to accept
- ◇ Oregon Secretary of State, Oregon Department Of Justice, Washington Secretary of State, Washington gambling license and Federal 501C3 yearly filings are completed.
- ◇ A storage unit at the Ridgefield mini storage has been acquired. There will be 6 members with keys and the list will be posted in the next newsletter.
- ◇ There is a sign up sheet to help move materials to the storage unit.
- ◇ Richard requested help for the Albany show
- ◇ Tickets are available for the 3 month raffle
- ◇ We are looking at getting a 8.1 gram nugget to raffle on Saturday at the gold show
- ◇ Ron's safety report was on first aid contents
- ◇ An outing at Blue Bucket is being offered and there will be information at the March meeting
- ◇ Rick is looking to acquire a large fish pond for the gold show
- ◇ A motion was made and passed to have the Nome trip raffled on Saturday at the gold show unless a sponsor can donate 1 trip for each day.
- ◇ Myron is still working with Ilani casino to sponsor the Nome trips
- ◇ GPAA has requested us to facilitate a panning contest at the gold show. We will be doing further investigating on the possibility
- ◇ Gold show flyers are being prepared for printing
- ◇ The Vancouver chapter will provide parking passes for those Vancouver chapter members who will be working both Saturday and Sunday
- ◇ Tom reported out on mercury and the results of the mining meeting that was held in Olympia



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

Ron Farnsworth Scrap Metal  
Pickup

Topside Mining

Northwest Detector Sales  
503-936-1443

9 Cent Color Copies  
360-896-7220

Creekside Prospecting

Roaring Camp  
209 296-4100

Whites Metal Detectors  
1-800-547-6911

Armadillo Mining

Spin it Off

Chinook Winds Casino & Resort

Fossickers

Thrive Life

Quick Badge

Danas classic Flowers and  
Gifts

McCord's Vancouver Toyota

Danner Boots  
877-432-6637

Danas Classic Hair Supply

AKAU Lodge  
760-500-1329

Lost Adams  
541-340-0931

Packwood Prospecting and  
Mining Supply

American Mining Supply

Designs of all kinds  
360-892-5597

Nayhely's Place  
360-571-7088

The Gold Lab

Gold Getter

Wilson Brothers

Avon Products—Bug Guard  
971-212-5996

AAA Precious Metals  
503-253-8591

Sportsman's Warehouse  
360 604-8000

Oregon Treasure Trail Society

Pro Caliber

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.