

# THE GOLD NUGGET

February 2013

## 2013 Membership Dues are Due Now...!!!

### The Prez Sez by Jim Long



When is gold not gold? Somebody recently gave me an article that addressed that very subject. It would seem that in today's market with the prices of rare earth minerals being what they are, mainly at record highs that a lot of people are buying them, especially gold, on the internet.

Now normally, you would expect that that wouldn't be too risky as gold should be just that, gold. But let's step back a little bit in time. It was not uncommon in the late 1800.s for enterprising prospectors to have bad luck with their claim. A lot of late comers to the area wherever a strike took place would file a claim and find it to be a bust. Many went looking elsewhere, some decided to work for the lucky ones who had struck it rich, some started a business in the new gold camp, and some resorted to thievery.

Some were not very nice people and they just robbed and even murdered other miners. But some were very sneaky indeed. They would 'salt' their mine with the intent to sell it to an unwary buyer for a very lucrative profit. One of the ways to do this was to load a shotgun shell with gold and fire it against the rock wall inside the mine. The gold 'shot' would adhere to the rock making it to appear as if the ore was very rich. One very ingenious incident involved hiring several miners to place some very real and rich ore vein into the mine wall to make it appear to be original. When the work was completed, the owner murdered his workers by faking accidents. When things cooled down, the owner sold the mine for a fortune and disappeared, probably to South America.

Anyway, today the scams are not quite so violent but often do involve some ingenious subterfuge. You might see some gold bars on the internet and it all looks pretty good and so you buy them. They seem to be the correct weight and the surface tests to be real gold, and the bars are stamped with seals, serial numbers and everything. Time goes by and you decide to sell them. This time, the new buyer scratches the surface or drills into the bar and encounters a non-gold material. Further investigation shows lead, nickel, or even worse, tungsten. You see, tungsten is the only element that is as closely dense as gold and it is pretty cheap, costing only about \$50 dollars a pound. So when you create an ingot by using a bar of tungsten and covering it in gold, it is hard to tell the difference. A 2 kilogram bar would cost about \$15,000.00 in materials to make and could then be sold for near \$110,000.00. It would stand up to surface scraping and even shallow drilling. Now most of the time, we are dealing with much smaller ingots or bars and it would be a lot easier to spot the fakes. You don't see it a lot but there are instances out there aplenty. Many are simply ingots or small bars that consist of materials such as encasing tungsten with a lead-antimony alloy, which is roughly as hard as gold. It would seem to weigh about right and would feel about right when someone handled it. Cover the alloy with genuine leaf gold to top it all off. It would look good, feel good, smell good, and even taste good.

Now, it wouldn't really fool anyone with real experience for too long because a good fingernail scratching could actually spill the beans on this simple fraud, but it can be done and it has in fact been done. You must simply be very cautious about internet purchases and only deal with dealers who are known and proven to be honest and have developed their reputation of being just that, reputable and honest dealers. Kind of scary when you think about it, huh!?

Well, that is about all I have from here for now. So until we meet again, keep your sunny sides up and may the bottoms of your pans turn bright with that 'Yaller Gold'!

You may contact me at 303-452-6087 or at [jnslong945@msn.com](mailto:jnslong945@msn.com)

Happy and safe prospecting to all!!!

### The V.P. Corner by Mike Hurtado

**Gold-bearing Telluride's** (As appearing in *The Gold Nugget*, September 1999 by Harvey S. Eastman) (Article from the past)

Gold-bearing tellurides loom large in the history of gold mining in Colorado. These mineral species are found in the San Juan Mountains, the La Plata Mountains, and at Cripple Creek. Other major localities in the United States include the huge gold fields of the Sierra Nevada foothills in California.

Gold-bearing telluride's are silvery to pyrite-yellow minerals, commonly striated, unlike gold which is a deeper yellow and rarely crystalline; and many of the lodes carrying gold-bearing telluride's were not discovered until the late 1800's. Placer gold was often found below the Cripple Creek Mine, but the lodes of the area were not recognized until the 1890's. Similar histories are common in other areas where gold-bearing tellurides were the major ore mineralogy. The miners of



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the 1860's would find gold placers below these vein deposits. However, the veins themselves were not recognized for what they were until some miner, perhaps cooking a meal on a camp fire surrounded by rocks, noticed gold appearing where a silvery, or pyrite-like mineral had been before.

This discovery led to a second gold rush to find these veins with a silvery to pyrite-like mineral, testing them with fire to determine if that mineral contained gold. Out of this rush came the mining camps of Cripple Creek and Telluride along with other mining camps in the San Juan region of Colorado. Of these, the mining camp of Cripple Creek is the most famous, producing nearly 20 million ounces of gold over a 70 year period from 1891 to 1961 (Smith, Raines, and Feitz, 1985). Additional gold was produced in the 1980's from heap leaching of low-grade gold-bearing mine tailings and 'waste' dumps.

A tip on finding telluride's: The mineral commonly has a greenish halo around it when weathered, due to oxidation of the telluride

Colorado Mining History will continue next month. Contact me at any time at 720-443-9545.

Thank you all. Mike (Klondike)

## From the Treasurer/Secretary Ledger By Linda Luchtenburg

It is now February and this month we will be giving away a total of 7.3 grams of gold with the largest being 1.9grams. We are still selling 'blue' tickets for the members only 'Special Large Alaskan Nugget Drawing', so be sure and bring a little extra money. A special 'Thank You' to Jim Long for donating items to the general drawing.

## February Meeting Program

The February meeting will feature a historical presentation on the history of South Park presented by speaker Christie Wright, a member of the South Park Historical Society and the South Park Mining Association. Christie is a descendent of settlers of South Park and her power point presentation will be very entertaining and informative. We hope to see you all there!

## Board Meeting Minutes From Jan 2013

X	James Long	X	Joe Shubert	X	Joe Fortunato		Don Luchtenburg
X	Mike Hurtado	X	Joe Johnston	X	Terry Weatherly	X	Janine Ballentine
X	Peg Brozek	X	Roger Biri	X	Andy Doll		

Quorum present? Yes

**Call to Order:** By JJ at 6:01 am

**Reading and Approval of Minutes:** Yes **Corrections:**

None **Approved as read/corrected:** Yes

**Treasurer's Report:** Questions: None  
Approved: yes

**Correspondence:** 10 phone calls, 9 e-mails, 2 mailings

**Committee Reports:** None due at this time.

MH to work on a new members prospecting package.

JB to work on Tour Committee w/JJ and MH.

TW and JJ to organize a metal detecting outing.

JJ to work on updating Board Manuals.

**Webmaster:** Total Hits 126873 Hits for last month 658.

**Unfinished business:** None.

**New business:** Discussed members w/o computers. We'll readdress this in February.

**Planned Outings for 2011:** As of this date, there are no planned official outings. The following dates are under review by the Board for planning purposes:

### QUESTION OF THE MONTH

What metal is alloyed with pure gold to make "Purple Gold"?

### 2013 GPR Board of Directors Members

#### **President**

James Long

#### **Vice President**

Mike Hurtado

#### **Secretary/Treasurer**

Linda Luchtenburg

#### **2 Year Board Members**

Joe Johnston (2010)

Joe Shubert (2011)

#### **1 Year Board Members**

Joe Fortunato

Terry Weatherly

Andy Doll

Don Luchtenburg

Roger Biri

Janine Ballentine



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- Tour
- 5-16 Aurora Panning Demo
- 5-18 Prospecting Outing at Clay County Mine
- 6-1 Tour
- 6-22 Prospecting Outing in Nederland
- 7-26,27,28 Prospecting Outing on Lake Creek, Leadville w/Illinois Gold Seekers
- 8-17 Club Picnic at Lions Park in Golden
- 8-24 Prospecting Outing at Clay County Mine
- 9-5,6,7 Highlands Ranch Panning Demo
- 9-14 Idaho Springs Panning Demo
- 9-28 Tour
- Additional dates are also under review for consideration.

**From the Board:** JJ noted that permission was granted to Jeff Birch of Montrose to cite a 1999 Gold Nugget description of Telluride by Professor Harvey Eastman in his new book as long as proper credit was cited. Joe Jo noted that WWATS is having their big meet in Arizona during the first week of Feb.. Discussion was held to bring back “Find of the Month” program which was approved by consensus. Joe F indicated that the current issue of the Mining Journal referenced his trip to Alaska last July. Andy noted that the Web domain bill was due and the Lornet bill was due. They will be paid.

**Announcements:** Next Board Meeting Feb. 20, 2013 at 6:00pm. Next General Meeting Feb. 20, 2013 at 7:00pm

**Tonight’s general meeting program:** An equipment sale/trade/swap will be held.

**Adjournment:** Meeting stands adjourned at 6:59pm.

## General Meeting Minutes From Jan 2013

- 1) Meeting was opened at 6:25pm by **Pres. Long** with the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 2) **Pres. Long** announced that tonight’s program will be a used/new equipment sale/trade/swap at the break.
- 3) **Pres. Long** gave the Metals Report with gold at \$1682.10 an ounce, silver at \$31.51, platinum at \$1689.40 and palladium at \$724.30.
- 4) Web hits for last month average, reflecting 658 hits for the last 30 days.
- 5) **Treasurer Linda Luchtenburg** reported that the Club remains in the black. Report is available for review for anyone who wishes to see it. Also, we are still selling tickets for the new ‘Members Only’ drawing for a large 14 gram nugget. And that 2013 membership dues are now due.
- 6) **Pam and George Schmitt** reported from the Membership Table that approx. 96 members were in attendance. There were 4 guests and 3 new members in attendance.
- 7) **Sue Clover** read the ‘Question of the Month’, which was ‘Who said in 1511, “Get gold, humanely if possible, but at all hazards, get gold”?’
- 8) **Pres. Long** presented a Certificate of Appreciation to **Louise Smyth** and **Bill Chapman** who operate **Golden Detectors** in Golden for all the work and energy they expend each and every day in the promotion of small scale mining and referring folks to this Club. They are truly great supporters of the Club and the membership is encouraged to patronize their business for all your local prospecting needs. They are good people!!
- 9) **John Johnson** presented the 2013 Cache Clue #1 to the membership in attendance.
- 10) **Pres. Long** informed the membership that we were in the process of planning the 2013 outings and that there would be plenty of activities announced in the coming months. We are going to try to plan at least 6 prospecting outings, 1 metal detecting outing, at least 4 tours, at least 3 panning demos, a club picnic, and 2Beginners ‘How To’ hands on classes in spring and fall. It is the intent of your Board of Directors to make these opportunities available to the membership. It is up to each of you to determine to attend all those that you can and we will try to accommodate the varied interests of the membership. Anyone with ideas or suggestions may contact any Board Member and let your wishes be known. We will be doing another 3 day outing on Lake Creek by Leadville this summer and we will be joined by 10 members of the Rock Island, Illinois, Gold Seekers who have



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expressed a desire to share an Outing with our Club. A short discussion took place reminding the membership that there were a number of local jurisdictions in the metropolitan area who were in the process of reviewing and/or revising their local prospecting rules/regulations/guidelines and everyone was cautioned to tread carefully and responsibly wherever you should be going. The Club is in the process of expanding the Club Store a little with some new innovative ideas and some new products. Folks were then encouraged to socialize and check out some of the stuff in the back of the room.

- 11) **Pres. Long** announced the break at 7:45pm. Meeting was called back to order at 8:35pm.
- 12) **Sue Clover** announced that there were 56 winners of the 'Question of the Month' and that the answer was 'King Ferdinand of Spain'. The winners received a free red ticket for the coming gold drawings.
- 13) The evening was concluded with drawings for door prizes followed by drawings numerous door prizes and for the gold nuggets. A reminder that holders of drawing tickets who did not win and want to redeem those tickets may present them at the end of the Meeting and they will be reimbursed at .01 cents on the dollar, or they can choose to donate the tickets back to the Club. Those assisting Pres. Long in the drawings were **Chuck Cown** and **Linda Luchtenburg**.
- 14) **Pres. Long** thanked **Kris Kafka** and all those who contributed to the Refreshment Table. Any member is encouraged to chip in and add to the spread each month. With the number of attendees skyrocketing recently, this really helps the folks who run the table and those who volunteer up front each month. The Club appreciates the efforts that each and every one of you to make the refreshment table enjoyable.
- 15) **Pres. Long** announced that the February Program will feature Christie Wright of Highlands Ranch who will present a power point presentation on the History of South Park. Mrs. Wright is a member of the South Park Historical Society as well as a member of the South Park Mining Association. She is a direct descendent of some of the colorful pioneers who settled South Park in the late 1800's. It should be a great presentation. We hope to see all of you there!
- 16) The Meeting was adjourned at 8:49pm.

## FEBRUARY BIRTHSTONE - AMETHYST

The gemstone Amethyst is the Birthstone for February. It is also the Zodiac stone for the constellation of Pisces. Amethyst is associated with spirituality, wisdom, sobriety, and security.

Amethyst is the purple variety of the mineral quartz and is a popular gemstone. Although it must always be purple to be amethyst, it can and does have a wide range of purple shades. Its color is unparalleled, and even other, more expensive purple gemstones are often compared to its color and beauty. If it were not for its widespread availability, amethyst would be very expensive.

The name "amethyst" comes from the Greek and means "not drunken." This was perhaps due to a belief that amethyst would ward off the effects of alcohol, but most likely the Greeks were referring to the almost wine-like color of some stones that they may have encountered.

Amethyst can occur as long prismatic crystals that have a six sided pyramid at either end or can form as druses that are crystalline crusts that only show the pointed terminations. As a mineral specimen, amethyst is popular for its color and nice crystal shapes that produce a handsome, purple, sparkling cluster.

However, amethyst is not the same everywhere. Different localities can produce a unique amethyst to that particular region or even to that particular mine. Experts can often identify the source mine that a particular amethyst came from. The key to this is the specimen's color, shape of crystal, inclusions, associations and character of formation.

The following is a list of many of the more noteworthy localities and some of the attributes that characterize the amethyst found there.

**Vera Cruz, Mexico** -- very pale, clear, prismatic crystals that are sometimes double terminated and has grown on a light colored host rock. Crystals are typically phantom, having a clear quartz interior and an amethyst exterior. Some are sceptered and phantom. **Guerrero, Mexico** -- dark, deep purple, prismatic crystals that radiate outward from a common attachment point. Often the crystals are phantom opposite of Vera Cruz amethyst having a purple interior with a clear or white quartz exterior. These are some of the most valuable amethysts in the world. **Minas Gerais and Rio Grande do Sul, Bahaia, Brazil** -- crystals form in drusy crusts that line the inside of sometimes large volcanic rock pockets or "vugs". Some of the vugs may have formed from trees that were engulfed in a lava (or ash) flow millions of





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years ago and have since withered away. Other vugs are just gas bubbles in the lava. Some vugs can be quite large. The crystals that form are usually light to medium in color and only colored at the tops of the crystals. Most clusters form with gray, white and blue agate and have a green exterior on the vugs. Calcite sometimes is associated and inclusions of cacoxenite are common. On occasion, even excellent crystals of gypsum have been found nestled inside these amethyst lined vugs. **Maraba, Brazil** -- large crystals with unattractive surfaces that are of a pale to medium color and often carved or cut into slices. The large "Maraba points" are nearly always polished to remove the rough and milky surface, revealing the beautiful purple amethyst inside. **Thunder Bay, Canada** -- a distinct red hematite inclusion just below the surface of the crystals is unique to this locality. Clusters are druzy crusts that line the fissures formed in ancient metamorphic rocks. **Uruguay** -- crystals are dark to medium and form in druzy crusts of small crystals that line the inside of volcanic vugs that have a gray or brown exterior. The crystals are *usually* colored throughout, unlike the Brazilian crystals, and form with a multicolored agate that often contains reds, yellows and oranges. Often amethyst-coated stalactites and other unusual formations occur inside these vugs. The intense color of these druzy crusts is exceptional. **Africa** -- crystals are usually large but not attractive. However, the interior color and clarity are excellent and polished slices and carvings as well as many gemstones are prized and admired. **Maine, USA** -- Dark druzy clusters that are not widely distributed today. **North Carolina, USA** -- Druzy clusters that have a bluish-violet tint. **Pennsylvania, USA** -- druzy clusters that filled fractures in metamorphic rocks. They are generally a brownish purple and patchy in color. **Colorado, USA** -- druzy clusters form crusts inside of fissures in sandstone, often on top of a crust of green fluorite. Crystals are dark but rather small. **Italy** -- both Vera Cruz like crystals, although not as well defined, and large parallel growth clusters with good evenly distributed color. **Germany** -- associated with colorful agates that form a druzy light-colored crust. **Ural Mountains, Russia** -- a very clear and dark variety that is cut for fine expensive gemstones, natural uncut clusters are rarely on the market.

Often, cut gems of amethyst are graded using the terms: Siberian, Uruguayan or Bahain to represent high medium and low grade respectively, regardless of the actual source. Because of the patchiness of the color distribution in the crystals, Amethyst is often cut as brilliant round cuts to maximize the color. Other cuts can be used when the color is better distributed.

The color purple is traditionally the color of royalty and amethyst has been used since the dawn of history to adorn the rich and powerful monarchs and rulers. Today, amethyst is a lovely and affordable gemstone that is fortunately available in a wide variety of cut and uncut stones that we can all possess and admire.

Prasiolite is the leek-green variety of quartz, rare in nature but used as a gemstone, sometimes (wrongly) called Green Amethyst.

## A Miner's Laugh

After living in the remote mountains all his life, an old prospector decided it was time to go visit the big city. In one of the stores, he picks up a mirror and looks into it.

Not ever having seen a mirror before, he remarked at the image staring back at him. "How 'bout that?" he exclaims, "Here's a picture of my Father." So he bought the mirror thinking it was a picture of his old dad, but on his way home he remembered that his wife had never liked his Father, so he decided it would be best to just hang it in the shed, which he did. Then, every morning

before leaving to go work in his mine, he would go to the shed and gaze at his father's picture.

His wife, had begun to get quite suspicious of his many trips to the shed. So, one day after her husband left for the mine, she went out to the shed to investigate further. She discovered the mirror.

As she looked into the glass, she fumed, "So that's the ugly old woman that he's been running around with!"

*Taken from the internet, author unknown*



## Newsworthy Notes:

2-8-13 (From the Western Museum of Mining & Industry)

Exhibit Opening & Lecture Event:

**THE GEOPOLITICS OF RARE EARTH MINERALS**

Thursday, February 14, 2013 **Western Museum of Mining & Industry**



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Exhibit Opening: 5:30 p.m. 225 North Gate Blvd.

Lecture: 7:00 p.m. Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Website: [www.wmmi.org](http://www.wmmi.org)

Contact: **Dave Futey**

Phone: 719.488.0880

Email: [museum.manager@wmmi.org](mailto:museum.manager@wmmi.org)

Geopolitics is the discipline that studies how geography influences international politics. Rare Earth Minerals (REM) are elements that are necessary in many 21<sup>st</sup> century technological applications such as lasers, satellites, microwaves, superconductors, batteries, missile guidance systems, computer screens, television screens, MRIs, computers, and smart phones. Obviously, the mining and supply of REMs is critical, and the geopolitical issue is this-China currently controls 97 percent of global Rare Earth Mineral production! This global market domination has allowed China to drive up the price of REMs, and they have begun to use this near monopoly as a geopolitical tool to leverage behavioral changes in countries with which it has disputes. During this same time period, United States (U.S.) military planners have begun to question the wisdom of relying on Chinese REMs to build weapons systems that are crucial to national security. Companies in the U.S. are developing new mining plans and working to reopen REM mining operations that had closed in the 1990's, but actual usable production of U.S. REMs is still several years away. With an exhibit opening and lecture starting at 5:30 p.m. on February 14, 2013, the Western Museum of Mining & Industry (WMMI), 225 North Gate Blvd., Colorado Springs, Colorado, will explore the critical issues that revolve around: The Geopolitics of Rare Earth Minerals\*. This event is free and open to the general public, but space is limited and reservations are required. Please RSVP to 719.488.0880 or email: [rsvp@wmmi.org](mailto:rsvp@wmmi.org).

\*In developing this exhibit, WMMI is grateful for the research, exhibition work, and direction of **Dr. Terrence W. Haverluk** (Terry). Terry is professor of Geopolitics in the Department of Economics and Geosciences at the United States Air Force Academy. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota and is the author of *Geopolitics from the Ground Up*. Terry's writing, lectures, and insightful outlook are infused by ecopolitics - a holistic approach to global relations that considers geographic fundamentals such as topography, climate, and natural resources and how these influence state behavior, power capabilities, economic development, and political processes. Terry will deliver the lecture on February 14.

## If I could go, Where I would go and Why

By Jim Long

**Owl Canyon:** Reached either before or after visiting the Red Feather Lakes locality that was previously described, the largest alabaster quarry in the United States is situated a mere 2 miles from U.S. 287. It is located in Owl Canyon, just 2 miles northeast of the old Owl Canyon Store (which is no longer operating and is now just a residence) on the highway to the right when traveling to Red Feather Lakes. This road junction is roughly 16 miles north of Ft. Collins on Hwy 287. Operated now by Pete Lien and Sons of Rapid City, S. Dakota, this deposit consists of beds of alabaster 3 to 4 feet thick and covered by the same amount of overburden. From a commercial standpoint, alabaster is one of Colorado's ornamental minerals best known to outsiders. Articles fashioned from it are shipped across the country and have been sold in foreign lands as well.



The choicest Colorado alabaster has pinkish veining and mottling, imminently suitable for making the lamps, light-houses, bookends, and ash trays that are so familiar in many tourist stores. The ease with which this compact variety of gypsum can be carved with a knife or on a lathe has led to its being widely used for amateur work and in small home shops. Rough pieces can be bought locally for just a few pennies a pound, and abundant specimens can be picked up elsewhere in Owl Canyon and vicinity.

(Excerpts taken from *Colorado Gem Trails* by Richard M. Pearl, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1953) (Photographs by Brandon Luchtenburg and Jim Long)

**Note:** Brandon and I personally visited this quarry in the fall of 2011 and were able to collect some outstanding specimens of gypsum, dolomite, limestone and calcite. Brandon recovered a museum quality specimen of uniquely fragile vertically clustered calcite crystals which he displayed to the Club last winter. We found that the original owners, the Pioneer Alabaster Company, had sold out to Pete Lien and Sons sometime after this information was published. We further noted that





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nearly all of the vicinity around Owl Canyon is now private property, so permission needs to be sought before you do any exploring at random. We found the employees and staff at the quarry to be very informative and helpful and did provide a tour of the general mine, to include limited collection of some field samples.

## Huge Australian Gold Nugget Found

**A WHOPPING 5.5kg gold nugget worth up to \$300,000 has been found in bush near Ballarat.**

The "incredibly rare" nugget was found 60cm underground by a prospector, who wishes to remain anonymous, on Wednesday. Ballarat Mining Exchange Gold Shop owner and dealer Cordell Kent said the prospector heard a faint noise on his detector and removed a dense pile of leaf mulch before he started digging. "He thought he had detected the bonnet of a car when he saw a glint of gold," Mr. Kent said. "He cleaned the top of it and the gold kept expanding and expanding ... he saw more and more gold ... he couldn't believe what he was seeing." The nugget is worth about \$282,000 in weight, but has an added premium because it is rare to find one over a kilogram, Mr. Kent said.

"I have been a prospector and dealer for two decades, and cannot remember the last time a nugget over 100 ounces (2.8kg) has been found locally. "It's extremely significant as a mineral specimen. We are 162 years into a gold rush and Ballarat is still producing nuggets - it's unheard of." The nugget was found with a state of the art metal detector called a Minelab GPX-5000, marketed as the best in the world, which Mr. Kent said made the find possible.

"There has been many prospectors that have walked past the exact place where the nugget was found and have missed it with an ordinary detector and did not have the technology to find it...that's why this guy found it. "This detector he used is the best there is, it goes deeper and further into the ground, better than others."

Mr. Kent said the find was unique with the nugget measuring at its longest 220mm, 140mm wide and 45mm at its deepest point. He said the find would increase the enthusiasm of existing and new prospectors to Ballarat and the central Victorian goldfields. Mr. Kent said the prospector's new fortune would be well spent. "He's a person that really deserves it.

"He rushed to tell his wife when he found it and she didn't believe him at first. He is going to pay off a lot of bills and pay off his house - it's a real life changer. "We've got 800 local prospectors on our records. I cannot remember the last time  
*(Taken from the Melbourne, Australia 'Herald Sun' as reported by Jessica Evans on January 18, 2013 and sent to us by past GPR member Lisa Berta)*



## A History of Gold Production in Colorado

by Dr. Bruce Geller (Transcribed by Paul Nagy)

(Article from the past)

Dr. Geller is the Director of the Geology Museum at the Colorado School of Mines. His PhD. dissertation was an acclaimed geological study of Front Range gold districts. His talk was originally presented at the Spring 2008 Gold Show at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.

An understanding of gold geochemistry begins with the relationship of elements to each other. Gold comes in solution, not in a molten state. In Colorado, pyrite or "fools' gold" is not for fools because most gold is contained within pyrite or related minerals. Gold tellurides are also economically important. Tellurides are usually tiny and do not look like gold. They often oxidize to a dark dull matte. Elsewhere, gold is more commonly found in the native element or "free" state.

In its history, Colorado has produced about 45 million ounces of gold. More than half of this has come from the Victor-Cripple Creek area. Most of the remainder is from the Colorado Mineral Belt which extends from the San Juan Mountains





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northeastward through the Central City and Boulder districts. Significant gold producers include Telluride-Mt. Sneffels with 6.8 million ounces and Central City-Idaho Springs with 6.2 million ounces.

The first known discovery of gold in Colorado was by officers from Fort Massachusetts in 1852. Later, William G. Russell made a discovery south of present day Franktown. The first documented discovery was panned by the Russell group in Clear Creek near its confluence with Ralston Creek. Dr. Geller points out that even in today's high-tech world, panning is still an important exploration technique.

The first commercial discovery was made by George Jackson in 1858-59 near Idaho Springs. This was closely followed by John Gregory's lode discovery below Central City, which helped trigger the "Pike's Peak" gold rush. By 1876, "Colorado" had attained statehood as "The Silver State" because by then the silver discoveries at Leadville had surpassed the value of earlier gold.

But in 1890 gold's star rose once more with silver's crash and the discovery of Cripple Creek by prospector "Crazy Bob" Womack. Winfield Scott Stratton is the best known and richest of the mining promoters of this era. The Gold Coin mine was discovered in a hotel excavation in Victor. In the Cresson Mine, a single vug (cavity) yielded 40,000 ounces of gold. Exploration interest also led to other discoveries such as Tom Walsh's Camp Bird Mine in the San Juans. In 1887, the largest gold nugget, "Tom's Baby," was found near Breckenridge. In 1972 it was "rediscovered" in a Denver bank vault. Some of it was missing.

Gold, like all commodities, is cyclical in value with interest in it rising and falling with the waves of economic time. There was resurgence in 1934 when, in the depths of depression, the government raised the price from \$20 to \$34 dollars per ounce. In 1972 gold was released to free market forces and soared for the rest of the decade. Today the only significant primary gold mine in Colorado is in the old Cripple Creek-Victor District, where modern mining and heap-leach technology currently produce about 325,000 ounces per year. Other minor gold is recovered from sand and gravel operations.

Will gold exploration and mining again boom in Colorado? Who can say. But if history is a view of the future, then it may come to pass!

Visit the Geology Museum at the Colorado School of Mines in Golden, Colorado, and see a breath-taking collection of gold and many other mineral

**2013 Membership Dues are Due Now...!!!**





## For Sale

Gold King 3" Hi-banker/dredge attachment with adjustable stand and 5 hp pump

- 125 feet of hose

Gold Buddy drywasher w/o blower motor

Gold Grabber Hi-banker

Schmidt Gold Trap "Bazooka" 4"-3" dredge

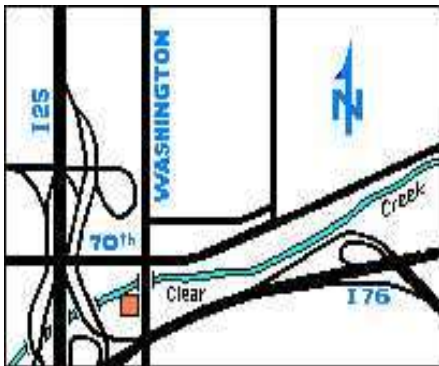
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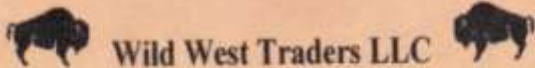
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For information to publish your "Ad" in The Gold Nugget, please contact the Editor. **COPY DEADLINE** is due to the editor by the 25th of the month for publication in the following months' issue of the Newsletter.

**Contact the GPR President**

*(Layout Design Subject To Additional Cost)*



**Coming Announcements and Special Events for Mar 2013**

(WMMI - Western Museum of Mining & Industry, 225 North Gate Blvd. Colorado Springs, CO 80921 ([www.wmmi.org](http://www.wmmi.org)))

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 Newsletter Advert/Article Conv Deadline	2
3	4	5	6	7	8 International Woman's Day	9
10 Daylight Savings Begins	11	12	13	14 WMMI - RARE EARTH MINERALS	15	16
17 St Patrick's Day	18	19	20 GPR Club Meeting Spring Begins	21	22	23
24/31 24-Palm Sunday 31-Easter	25 Passover	26	27	28	29 Good Friday	30