

THE GOLD NUGGET

July 2016

Obituary

William E. Sagstetter Jr

Age 71

We noted that William E. Sagstetter Jr., speaker and co-author of several books, including the Cliff Dwellings Speak and the Mining Camps Speak, has passed away. Bill and his wife and co-author, Beth Sagstetter, have spoken to our Club on several occasions and put on some incredible good programs concerning both of the previously mentioned books that they co-authored. Bill was also a patent holder and there are more than 40 patents that have his name on them. The patents are both domestic and foreign and dealt with mostly various medical devices. He and his wife loved to visit the wild places in Colorado and around the country. The Club is saddened to hear of this loss.

The Prez Sez by Jim Long



Happy and safe prospecting to all....! The water is now too high to access most of our favorite locations. If you choose to go, then exercise due caution..!!! A good alternative is to buy gold bags from your Club Store until the water goes down. The Club has been fairly busy so far this year, and part of that was the GPAA Gold Show in June. We assisted the Foothills Chapter of the GPAA with all the setup and tear down activities as well as operating a booth and helping the GPAA staff many positions to ensure that the show went off well, which it did. I had the opportunity to talk to Brandon Johnson and Kevin Hoaglund again; they are such great guys and do so much to champion small scale mining. And I got the chance to catch up with some friends around the country that I haven't seen in quite a while as well as meet some new folks to add to that list.

I didn't really see a lot of new products at the Show this year, pretty well the same sort of stuff that we are all fairly familiar with. Still all in all, it was a pretty good time and we talked to a lot of folks and singed a few of them up as well. I did speak with the PLP folks and with some of the folks with the Western Slope chapter of the GPAA out of Olathe, Colorado. I think the Olathe GPAA Chapter is the oldest organized chapter in Colorado and they have managed to survive for quite a while. They were concerned with some BLM meetings being hosted by the BLM and touted as being community meetings to discuss the BLM's latest Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the western slope. In short, they took no public comments and told everyone what was going to happen. In short, they are promoting road closures, land grabs and shutting off local farmers and ranchers from water sources. This has to do with the new definition of waterways which was intended to deliberately block access to water and allow only certain uses of it. Of course, nearly all of this stuff is far beyond their statutory powers, yet they are of the opinion that they can get away with it until they get to Court. This process is basic threaten and bluff, threaten and bluff, and force you to spend all your money to defend yourself while they use taxpayer dollars and government lawyers until you can't fight anymore and just give up. Same old story, nothing new here. They were hoping to get PLP to listen and PLP did in fact listen. And of course, Senator Tipton, who professes to be a supporter of mining interests, has been way too quiet on these issues when we need him to be vocal. Kind of surprising because I personally know some of the people close to him and that is not what they tell me he is like. So we will see. The guys over there are attending a number of meetings scheduled for June and July.

One of the things I have long noted about the GPAA is that they really don't support their local chapters like you would want them to. They give them little support in the way of merchandise to sell or auction and it is tough to get a GPAA official out to help you get going. If the local chapter doesn't have good ideas on fund raising, they are apt to go under. And every chapter needs good leadership and that is hard to find. The ones that opt to step up are often the only ones that are willing to do so. And people can get burned out after a while of being the only ones willing to show up and get things done. It is like that everywhere. Nearly every club or organization has the same issues, some more than others, but that is the way of things. That is why there were eight GPAA Chapters in Colorado only two years ago and now there are only three. It has been an issue from times of old and will be an issue in the future. A lot of the GPAA model was built by its founder, George 'Buzzard' Massie. And that model worked really well until about 2000 or 2001. Since then, there have been signs that the organization needs to make some change to its business model. Some say that they are doing no more than 'mining the miners'. That is not the image they want to have. They have a different audience to play to today than they did 20 or 25 years ago. I know that this subject has been brought up to Brandon Johnson, Tom Massie and others, and they are thinking about it. That is a good sign. Modern prospecting is beginning to change. There is a lot less access and the average person trying to get into prospecting is going to find that nothing is like it was back in the day or even like it was 20 years ago. The future is getting murkier as time passes. And I don't really have a good enough crystal ball to figure it out myself.



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Anyway, that is the view from here and I wish you all Good Luck in your search...!. And until we meet again, keep your sunny sides up and may the bottoms of your pans turn bright with that treasured 'Yaller Gold

You may contact me at 303-452-6087 or at jnslong945@msn.com!

The V.P. Corner by "Joe Fortunato"



I hope that a lot of our members took the opportunity to attend the GPAA Gold Show in June. I gave myself the day off on Saturday the 18th (ha! ha!) to attend the show. I pretty much made an entire day of it. The gold show doesn't come to town every year so why not make the most of it. There is a lot to see, hear, and learn during the course of a day spent there. I started the day by meeting several friends from the club for breakfast and a lot of conversation about gold prospecting thrown in for good measure. Then it was off to the Adams County Fairgrounds and the fun gets started. As soon as I arrived I ran into a friend that I had not seen in months, we did some serious catching up on things (it was a great start to the show). He has a gold claim in Summit County, and we made some preliminary plans for a trip or two to his claim in the coming weeks. I spent some time checking out all the various vendors' booths with all of the tools that no self-respecting miner would be caught without!!! That was fun but the main reason for me being at this show this year was for the seminars. There were three speakers that I wanted to hear, Brandon Niece, Bill Southern, and Kevin Hoagland. If you are really into gold prospecting, guys like these are a treasure trove of information. We can pick up tips and tricks from these guys in an hour that could take us months or years to learn on our own through trial and error. I have been chasing gold for nearly fourteen years and I have learned and I am still learning from some great mentors. If you ever get the opportunity to hear what one of these people has to say, do yourself a big favor and don't talk much ...just listen !!! I would trade a full day in the field for an hour listening to one of my mentors, that is how valuable their knowledge and experience is to me !!! Until next time, may all your adventures be Golden!!! Any questions or comments, you can call or text me @ 303-263-7204. Joe Fortunato.

From the Treasurer/Secretary Ledger by Wayne Schomaker



The July Meeting will feature a nine nugget give away totaling 10.3 grams of gold with the largest nugget being a beauty of 2.6 grams. We sell tickets each month for the regular gold nugget drawing which features 9 spectacular gold nuggets as well. There are usually a good number of door prizes as well that could include anything under the sun but is usually mining related. Remember, your chances of winning a nugget are better than the Colorado lottery, so, support your Club and buy lots of tickets. Be sure and consider buying raffle tickets for the "Special Nugget" raffle which features a beautiful 14.4 gram Australian nugget which was a metal detector find.

Planned GPR Meeting Programs:

May 18 This month, we will show Part 1 of a video entitled "Ghosts of the West – The end of the Bonanza Trail". This video is about Lost Mines, Abandoned Digs and Ghost Towns, some of which was filmed in Colorado by a Colorado Company called Knight Sky Pictures. This will be an interesting look back into the old west and the search for gold.

July 20 We will feature Part 2 of "Gold Rush – The discovery of America".

Aug 17 We will feature Part 3 of "Gold Rush – The discovery of America".

Sept 21 We will feature Part 4 of "Gold Rush – The discovery of America".

Oct 19 We will feature Part 5 of "Gold Rush – The discovery of America".

Where is 'Prospector Pete', the GPR Gold Miner?

On June 4, "Pete" attended the Clay County Mine Prospecting Outing in Blackhawk. The gold was fine to chunky and a number of folks had gold in their concentrates before they went home. The weather was gorgeous and Pete really enjoyed the day. Then, on June 18, 19, Pete took in the GPAA Gold Show at the Adams County Fairgrounds where he met Brandon Johnson and Kevin Hoaglund and saw all the vendors and the GPR booth as well. It was a great show.





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Board Meeting Minutes From June 2016

X	James Long	X	Joe Shubert	X	Joe Fortunato	X	John Johnson
X	Mike Hurtado	X	Joe Johnston	X	Chris Kafka		Brandon Luchtenburg
X	Wayne Schomaker	X	Bobby Manning	X	Andy Doll		Gary Hawley

Quorum present? Yes

Call to Order: By Pres. Long at 6:02 pm

Reading and Approval of Minutes: Yes Corrections: none.

Approved as read/corrected: Yes

Treasurer's Report: Questions: none Approved: Yes.

Correspondence: 3 phone calls, 10 e-mails, 6 mailings

Webmaster: Total Hits 145148 Hits for last 2 month 290.

Committee Reports: None at this time.

Unfinished business: None at this time

New Business: None at this time.

Planned Outings for 2016:

- June 18,19 GPAA Gold Show, at Adams County FG, set up on Sat. the 17th, see sign-up sheet.
- July 9,10 Panning Demo, Georgetown Loop RR, 8:30a
- Aug 6 Beginners Panning/sluicing Class, 9a, Youngfield
- Aug 13 Tour, Cresson Mine, Victor, 10a, (not for sure yet)
- Aug 20 Prospecting Outing, Nederland.

From the Board:

- Pres. Long discussed the Blackhawk Outing which went well with 27 members participating. Also discussed the Aurora Water Festival panning demo where we had over 1000 kids panning for gold. Discussed the upcoming GPAA Gold Show and that all was looking well for a good show. Water is very high for now in all the creeks and rivers at lower elevations.
- B. Manning noted that Lafayette Park was closed on Clear Creek for some unknown reason. BM M. Hurtado showed some novelty license plates with the GPR verbiage on them. We will offer them in the Store and see what happens.
- BM J. Johnston arrived late to meeting and asked for library materials to be returned.
- BM B. Luchtenburg was unable to attend tonight.

Announcements: Next Board Meeting July 20, 2016 at 6:00pm. Next General Meeting July 20, 2016 at 7:00pm

Tonight's general meeting program: We will be showing a video from Mill Creek Productions titled "Gold Rush – The Discovery of America", Part 1, which will run 45 minutes.

Adjournment: Meeting stands adjourned at 6:47 pm.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Alaska just wasn't through with its gold rushes! Yet another rush was to occur in 1902. Do you know what area in Alaska hosted this one?

2016 GPR Board of Directors Members

President

James Long

Vice President

Joe Fortunato

Secretary/Treasurer

Wayne Schomaker

2 Year Board Members

Joe Johnston (2013)

Joe Shubert (2011)

1 Year Board Members

Chris Kafka

Andy Doll

Brandon Luchtenburg

John Johnson

Bobby Manning

Mike Hurtado

Past President

Gary Hawley



General Meeting Minutes From June 2016

1. Meeting was opened at 7:03 pm by **Pres. Long** with the Pledge of Allegiance.
2. **Pres. Long** then announced the evening program which will be a video presentation by Mill Creek Productions titled “Gold Rush – The Discovery of America”, Part 1, which will run 45 minutes.
3. **Pres. Long** gave the Metals Report with gold at \$1291.50 an ounce, silver at \$17.50, platinum at \$974.00 and palladium at \$531.00. **Web hits** for last month were 290.
4. **Treasurer Wayne Schomaker** reports that the Club remains in the black. Report is available for review for anyone who wishes to see it. Also, be sure to buy tickets for the ‘Special Nugget’ drawing. This is a new and shiny piece of gold that weighs in at 14.4 grams from Australia. Also, be sure to buy tickets for tonight’s 9 nuggets drawing, the largest being 2.8 grams.
5. **Dan and Becki McConnell** who oversee the Membership Table reported that we had 80 members in attendance. There were also 5 guests present. The meeting attendance was 85.
6. **Pres. Long** read the ‘Question of the Month’, which was “**Gold’s elemental symbol ‘Au’ comes from the Latin word ‘aarum’ which meanswhat..??**”
7. **Pres. Long** advised that there was time to enter items at the break for the ‘**Finds of the Month**’ table and that the monthly winners from tonight will need to be saved for the Finds of the Year competition in November, 2016. The Board has approved a new category called ‘Mineral’. Please, only 1 item per person per category. A reminder, gold submissions need to be weighed, please.
8. **George Sullivan** gave the ‘Cache – Clue #1. So put on your thinking caps and let’s get out there and find it.
9. **Pres. Long** advised that there were lots of stuff in the **Club Store** for sale. We have bags of sand containing gold for members to buy as well as lots of other stuff. Members were encouraged to support the Club by buying Store products. We continue to look for a volunteer to take over the Store. We thank **Mike Hurtado** for helping out at the Store.
10. **Pres. Long** informed the membership of the 2016 Outings report. The Aurora Water Festival went well with more than 1000 kids getting to pan for gold. We also conducted the prospecting outing near Blackhawk and had 27 members digging for gold. There was some pretty good gold found and one third of the attendance was newer members, so we had the opportunity to do a lot of teaching while we were there. The Outing Schedule has the GPAA Gold Show coming up on June 18 and 19. There is a sign up list for those wanting to help out. On July 9, 10, we will be at the Georgetown Loop RR helping the tourists to pan for gold. I will be conducting another Beginners Panning/sluicing Class on August 6 at 9a at Youngfield on Clear Creek. We are trying to get together 30 people for a tour of the Cresson Mine in Victor, Colorado for August 13. On August 20, we will be in Nederland for a day of prospecting for gold. A reminder that the creeks and rivers at lower elevations are running extremely high and we ask that you exercise extreme caution if you go out. It may be wise to just buy some gold bags from the Club Store.
11. **Pres. Long** also informed the membership that there are handouts at the front desk podium for members to peruse during the break. Members are reminded to check out the Finds of the Month and vote accordingly as well as answer the Question of the Month during the break. Members were reminded to return items checked out of the Library in a timely manner. There was nothing further from the floor.
12. **Pres. Long** announced the break at 8:15 pm. Meeting was called back to order at 8:35 pm.
13. **Pres. Long** announced that the winners of the ‘Question of the Month’. The answer was “**Shining Dawn...**” There were 20 winners received their extra drawing ticket for the gold drawing.
14. **Pres. Long** announced the winners for the ‘Finds of the Month’. Those were:
 - a. **Best Coin** – **Jim Long** with a 1949 Nickle he found while metal detecting in Northglenn.
 - b. **Best Artifact** – **Fred Hurd** with an old railroad spike he found near the old Lowry AFB.
 - c. **Best Jewelry** – **Jim Long** with a silver crucifix he found while metal detecting in Northglenn.
 - d. **Best Mineral** – **Rich Beasley** with a large quartz crystal he found in Nevada while metal detecting.
 - e. **Most Raw Gold** – **Tom Peebles** with gold that he found at Arapahoe Bar.
 - f. **Largest Raw Gold** – **Dale Herbertson** with a chunk of gold ore he found in the London Mine in Alma.



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15. **Pres. Long** concluded the evening with drawings for the numerous door prizes donated by the **GPR, Bert Cutshall, Wayne Schomaker, Kevin Singel and Pres. Long**, followed by drawings for the 9 gold nuggets. A reminder that holders of drawing tickets for the regular gold drawings 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 shall be considered to have been donated back to the Club. Those assisting in the drawings were **Chuck Cown** and **Wayne Schomaker**.
16. **Pres. Long** reminds the members that sometimes during the meetings, The President's time is overwhelmingly taken up by the many who wish to speak to him and he apologizes if anyone ever feels like he is unavailable. It is not his intent to be inaccessible and he encourages anyone with questions to contact him by e-mail or phone outside the meetings at any time. His e-mail and phone number are on the web site.
17. **Pres. Long** thanked **Chris and Joe Kafka** and all those who contributed to the Refreshment Table. Any member is encouraged to chip in and add to the spread each month. Don't forget the 'tip jar' also, which helps to defray costs. 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.
18. The scheduled **Program for July** will be Part 2 of a video titled "Gold Rush – The Discovery of America", a film by Mill Creek Productions.
19. Until next time, remember to prospect safely, live long and be grateful for that golden bounty from the stars, that gleaming magical miracle, called 'gold'!
20. The Meeting was adjourned at 8:59 pm.

Finds of the Month

The June winners and categories are as follows:

- **Best Artifact** – Winner is **Fred Hurd** with a railroad spike he found near the old Lowry AFB.
- **Best Coin** – Winner is **Jim Long** with a 1949 Nickle he found while m/detecting in Northglenn.
- **Best Jewelry** – Winner is **Jim Long** with a silver crucifix he found while m/detecting in Northglenn.
- **Best Mineral** – Winner is **Rich Beasley** with a large quartz crystal he found in Nevada.
- **Most Raw Gold** – Winner is **Tom Peeples** with gold he found at Arapahoe Bar.
- **Largest Raw Gold** – Winner is **Dale Herbertson** with a chunk of gold ore from the London Mine in Alma.



Be sure and bring your treasures and finds in to share with the rest of the Club. We would all like to know what everyone else is finding out there so don't be bashful. Winners each month will have their name published in the Newsletter. There are six (6) categories to choose from when entering. Monthly winners will need to save their finds to bring back to the November meeting to compete for the Find of the Year. Thanks to all those who also submitted additional finds that were not judged to be winners.

GPAA Gold Show Great Success

On June 18 and 19, the GPAA Gold Show was held at the Adams County Fairgrounds. This is the second year that the local Foothills Chapter of the GPAA (whose membership is about 60% GPR) co-hosted the big show. Though the weather was in the mid to high 90's each day and Sunday was also Father's Day, there was a tremendous turnout on Saturday and a respectable turnout on Sunday. The GPR also had a booth and we managed to sign up more than a dozen new members and sold quite a bit of Club merchandise as well. We had nearly 20 members of GPR who showed up early Friday and helped to set up the show and stayed after the show to help the GPAA tear the show down. The GPAA staff has learned that they can depend on the Colorado team to do a good job in assisting and our members also assisted in security, ticket taking and operating the visitor's panning area as well as running all kinds of gopher errands. We saw quite a few of our members who managed to stop by and take in the show for a little bit and a lot of friends from around the State who managed to make it as well. The Foothills Chapter also did quite well at the Show. The GPR wants to thank all of the members who pitched in to volunteer their time to help make this show a huge success. These events



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simply cannot happen without people who step up to help get it done and the Club truly appreciates each and every one of you. So, thank you **Andy Doll, Mike Hurtado, Brandon and Neal and Linda Luchtenburg, Steve Miller, Jack Meineke, Jim Peterson, Steve Overton, Steve Barritt, Frank Zahn, Dan and Becki McConnell, George Sullivan, Todd Fidler, Paul Murch, Kris Kafka, Nick Duttie, Mike Stevens, Fred Ennis, George and Pam Schmitt.** We also had some of our members representing the Foothills Chapter of the GPAA and we want to thank **Tina Fleming, John Johnson, Bobby Manning, and Joe Johnston** as well. If I missed someone, please accept my apology as there was a lot going on and I could easily have missed someone. Well done, folks!!!(Photos by JJ)



Prospecting/Mining Notes:

(mostly from the Denver Post, Internet and other wire services)

6-4-16 Dempsey to Head Mining Association: Stan Dempsey Jr. will leave the Colorado Petroleum Association which he has headed for the past 17 years, to take over as president of the Colorado Mining Association (CMA) from Stuart Sanderson, who is leaving after 22 years at the helm. The CMA, started in 1876, represents more than 900 members who have a hand in the mining of coal, gold, molybdenum, sodium bicarbonate, gypsum, limestone, uranium and other metals and minerals.

6-23-16 Coal Collapse Proves Devastating for Colorado: The coal collapse is hitting home in rural Oak Creek, Colorado this week after a bankrupt industry giant missed a tax payment, catapulting a community into turmoil. Oak Creek joins Somerset/Paonia in Delta County as the next in line whose economy has dropped through the basement. Peabody Energy's failure to pay a \$1.2 million June installment spells disaster for the community school district, tax base, fire department and other entities. Many Peabody coal retirees are facing disaster and loss of income as well. This collapse rivals the same problems with the West Elk Mine in Somerset and the problems for Delta County are now a reality for a portion Routt County as it is for Craig in Moffat County involving Arch Coal. *We all need to keep in mind that coal mining is mining just like gold and silver mining. And we know that the Department of Interior has mining in the cross hairs, and it is just a matter of time before they really put the screws to us as well....jj).*

7-1-16 Gold Rally Saves Colorado Stocks: The Brexit vote in Great Britain sent investors scurrying for safe havens, including mining shares, a rush that saved an index of Colorado stocks from another underperforming quarter. Vista Gold, a gold developer based in Littleton, saw its shares triple in price, making it the state's top performing stock in the second quarter.

7-1-16 Newmont is Selling its Indonesia Assets for \$1.3 Billion: Colorado based Newmont Mining Corp., the largest US bullion producer, agreed to sell its Indonesia copper and gold assets for \$1.3 billion as Indonesia pushes to build smelters rather than export their raw materials. For Newmont, the deal will reduce its independence on copper, narrow its geographic dependence to the Americas, Africa and Australia, lower debt levels and provide funding for projects.

Mining Concerns from Around the Country

(In my attempt to keep our members aware of what is happening involving mining from around the country, I will run this little section each month and see how it goes. I am apt to put a little passion and some direct finger pointing in my reporting, for which I will offer no apology to anyone who may feel offended. I support responsible mining and responsible miners, period. It is what it is, and it is my opinion, and that is that, like it or not .jj)

California: **People vs Rinehart** – The ICMJ says that a ruling last March in Oregon, *Bohmker vs State of Oregon*, in US District Court, Judge Mark Clark ruled that Oregon could prohibit many forms of motorized instream mining because



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miners could still mine by hand methods and there is no language in the 1872 Mining Act that requires mining to be profitable. Therefore, ICMJ and PLP are not holding out a lot of hope for a positive outcome now in the California Rinehart case. However, the MMAC and the PLP have joined together once again, and the plan is to get more and more of the original mining districts up and running again. They have already restarted a number of them in Oregon, California and Washington and have found the original bylaws for more than 190 of the old Districts from the 1800's. With the proposed legislation that PLP has introduced in Washington D.C., there is hope that if successful, these mining districts will be able to have the authority to override some of these difficulties for miners. *(I personally do not own a claim in Colorado but if I did, I would be busy reorganizing whatever old district I was in. And for the life of me, I cannot understand why some of the folks here in Colorado are not getting on this. There is no question that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure....jj)*

Colorado: BLM in Western Colorado Holding Public Meetings – The BLM in western Colorado has been holding public meetings since early June in cities such as Delta, Montrose and Telluride and plan to host other meetings again in July in Grand Junction, Delta and Montrose. The reason for the meetings is to inform the public of their Proposed Resource Plan (PRN) or the region. Gold miners attending the meetings are reporting that the PRN cites closures of roads and access points to certain areas and redefining local water sources designating some of them as Resource Waterways. Such a designation will result in any user having to obtain permits from the BLM and the Army Corps of Engineers to use any of the water in those rivers and streams. The permit process will undoubtedly be so cumbersome as to prevent anyone probably getting one. Senator Tipton has now come on board with the mining and ranching community and is considering proposing legislation that will block the BLM land grab. The western slope miners have contacted PLP and the American Mining Council who have shown interest in the situation. The western slope miners are asking that all miners go to the BLM web site, blm.gov/uncompahdre/prp and send them comments under the listing telling them that we are opposed to their unconstitutional and illegal land grab.

The West: AEMA Joins Sage Grouse Lawsuit – The sage grouse battle continues as the American Exploration and Mining Association (AEMA) joined a long list of plaintiffs who are revolting against the federal governments recently announced plan for the Sage Grouse. The government intends to set aside millions of acres of land in seven western states which will not only block mining interests, but will block access to several thousand ranchers and farmers. AEMA is being represented by the Mountains States Legal Foundation. AEMA cites numerous violations of the National Environmental Policy where in the federal government failed to take public comments after amending the Plan after public comments had been first taken. The House has included language in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) that would prohibit the BLM and the USFS from spending any funds on Sage grouse conservation plans for a period of ten years. The Senate has yet to consider their version of the NDAA as yet. *(The EPA, BLM and the USFS have used the tactic for years of 'finding' some obscure bird, animal or fish to declare endangered to get their way in blocking access to public, and in some cases, private lands...JJ)*

Plenty of Gold at the Blackhawk Prospecting Outing

On June 4, the Club held a prospecting outing near Blackhawk on the private Clay County Mine claim. Nearly 30 members were able to make it up for the day. This claim is usually pretty dry but we had a little water in the creek and used it for test panning. Everybody had a good time digging and we had an opportunity to show some of the



newer members how to read the terrain and the local geology to better determine the better places to dig and why they would be better digging. I think that that opened a few eyes and it shows why some places are better than others. After lunch, we managed to dam up the creek to make a big enough hole to run a high banker and member **Steve Overton** set up his and we ran everyone's material that wanted to run it and gave them their concentrates to pan out later at home. We really appreciate Steve doing that and **Steve Barritt** assisted in getting everything done. Pres. Long took a few photos of all the fun.





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Silver Too, is Where You Find it From Military Tales best Left Untold. Ditzler. c2004

That is, if you can find it at all. 'All that is not gold can glitter' will apply as well to finding silver. This story relates to how a salted silver strike develops quickly into a real silver rush, and just as rapidly declines. Training tactics are not germane to this narrative. Suffice to say, we were in the field. I was platoon sergeant of the Headquarters Company, a "Pioneer and Ammunition" platoon. That is a quaint name meaning "Battalion Labor Force". We worked at construction, destruction and obstruction. In general, we did whatever required picks, shovels, explosives, and sweat. Pioneer Platoons were filled with the outcasts of a unit. My platoon had about thirty such misfits and why I was there, I can't guess. I called them misfits but that was not really true. Actually, they were a great bunch of young men. Most of the problems stemmed from acute attention deficit. Control was best maintained by keeping them active, not necessarily productive, but active. Anytime we could come up with a good joke on the officer's contingent, we worked together as one. Once, we were ordered to dig an officers latrine and erect a four hole frame to be seated on. A six foot high surround of olive drab canvas, called a latrine fly, would provide needed privacy. This latrine task we industriously did. The frame, though strong enough, was designed by us to collapse to the rear when several were seated thereon. Work of the booby trapped latrine got around and men gathered atop the hill watching as confounded and embarrassed officers provided great entertainment. Another time, we were to use plywood with holes as a latrine top. This also, we dutifully did. But somehow, the holes were cut so far back that even a seven foot person would have difficulty using the device. Again, the latrine was in full view of the company. Officers trying to use the facility will testify that doing a fob while sitting with your legs straight out is a near impossibility. Soon, I was called to account for overseeing construction of that useless latrine. I pointed out that we were in a tactical situation. Everyone was to keep a low profile by using by using slit trenches. Separate of course, but equal. Since we are not likely to find any silver in those latrines, I will move to the point of the story. At present, we were to bivouac near Point Sal where early gold miners had worked several gold mines. A few officers, self-appointed mining experts, spoke of how overlooked gold would wash out of the tailings and there was a small stream at the base of one of the mines. Further, they told of miners so intent on gold, they often overlooked other metals. Often, silver would be discovered in the gold mine tailings. I happened to have a one pound container of "Woods metal" in my car from a civilian job I had done. Woods metal has a low boiling point and is often used as a component in overhead sprinkler heads. Heat from a fire melts a woods metal strip and the sprinkler activates. The material is also used as a 'melting spoon' joke sold in novelty stores. A germ of an idea began to form. I knew nothing of raw silver nuggets and had never seen any, but neither had anyone else around me. Wood's metal, though crystalline, was somewhat malleable and seemed close enough to be mistaken for silver. When melted and poured into water, the results looked like sure enough nuggets of silver. All I had to do was covertly salt the area I wanted discovered. Prior to moving to the bivouac site, I had let it be known that my spare time would be spent prospecting. Others were eager to join in and so it was that soon after setting up our site, prospecting became a higher priority than the military agenda. Panning gear included mess kits, skillets, helmets and even pots, just about anything that would hold water as none of us had a real gold pan. And most of us didn't really know how to properly pan anyway. In spite of all this, two troops stumbled onto the salted gravel bar. They rushed back to camp excitedly showing their 'nuggets'. Bad move on their part, as fast word spread, men took off for the gravel bar in a frenzy of unabashed claim jumping. I fear cases of unauthorized absences from duty stations were even involved, not only by enlisted men, but by officers as well. Come evening, the gravel bar and all adjacent to it looked as if hogs had been rooting out potatoes. Oddly enough when no more silver was found, the 'prospectors' continued to scour that one spot. None of them thought to look any further up or down stream. The few of us with 'inside information' were as excited as the rest. Inside, we were breaking up with mirth. Then an odd thing happened. I had salted less than one pound of the woods metal nuggets, yet they had recovered more than one pound. A sick feeling came over me and now I was one of those standing in the dirty water passionately panning for real silver. I came away with some too. White brittle silver that even as ignorant as I was, could easily be recognized as pyrites. What a bummer...!! So, a one day silver rush was over. Wood's metal and pyrite did not pass muster as silver and we all went back to a more peaceful military life and spent the rest of our time practicing the ancient art of combat readiness.

(At Camp Cooke, I did later find gold where a cliff juts out into the ocean near Point Sal. An abandoned gold mine was near the cliff top and my search began below the mine where some twenty feet up the cliff, I found a one inch vein of bluish colored hard clay. Using a screwdriver, I remove a pork and beans can full of that clay containing small bright metallic nuggets. Back at camp, still armed only with ignorance, I washed away the clay and when treated, there was a heaping spoonful of nuggets left. Reluctantly, I admitted to myself that this too was merely pyrites. I decided to talk to those who had worked the local mines. They told me I indeed had pyrites, and that the gold from the mine had been very

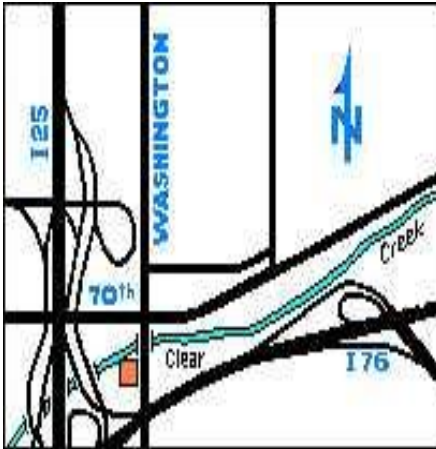


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fine and was found in the blue clay that I had discarded. The gold was recovered using mercury. So, yes, I did find gold but never laid eyes on it. This valuable knowledge was to do me no good as I was soon on my way to Korea. And panning for gold in a war zone in Korea is another story for another time....Don Ditzler)

(Don Ditzler is a Lifetime member of the GPR and currently makes his home in Savoy, Illinois. Don is 90 now and his prospecting days are waning, but he was to become an accomplished prospector in his day. And those stories are also for another day. JJ)

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Contact the GPR President

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Coming Announcements and Special Events for Aug 2016

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SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5 Newsletter Advert/Article Copy Deadline	6 Beginners Panning/Sluicing Class
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 GPR Club Meeting	18	19	20 Nederland Prospecting Outing
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	WMMI Farmers Market every Monday and Wednesday in Aug		