

THE GOLD NUGGET

August 2020

CONDOLENCES

Our condolences go out to member John McIntosh who recently lost his wife Carolyn to the Covid virus. John also had the virus but survived. Our sincere sympathies are extended to John and his family as they deal with this tragedy and we wish him well as he continues his own struggle back to good health.



The Meeting for August has been Cancelled!

I spoke to the Clements Center on July 29 and they are limiting the meetings to only 50 people and they must be masked and maintain 6' social distancing. Therefore, we are still unable to conduct meetings due to the size of our Club. As soon as the governor (*not my governor*) issues new directives, they will let me know.

The Club picnic for Aug. 15 has been cancelled due to the social distancing requirements established by the governor and the City of Lakewood.

The Prospecting Outings Scheduled for Black Hawk have also been cancelled. They are dependent upon Gilpin County opening up their restrictions. Again, I will notify the membership as soon as I can determine any change in their regulations!

Until then, please stay safe and pray for an early return to normalcy!! THIS YEAR HAS GONE TOTALLY NUTSO!!!

The Prez Sez by Jim Long



I will attempt to describe the current state of affairs as I know them. There is an 'up-tick' in Covid 19 in Colorado now and just when things looked like they were going to get back to normal, this so called 'up-tick' has thrown everything into a whirl again. Each county and each city are doing their own thing and though governor polis (I refuse to capitalize proper nouns that I disagree with) has issued various mandates, not all cities nor counties are following them. So, Lakewood continues to hold to its maximum of 50 people for gatherings with masking mandatory and social distancing mandatory. That means that our meetings continue to be on hold through August and maybe even later. Our Club picnic may also be cancelled. I am waiting to hear from Lakewood as I write this. I am waiting also to hear back from Gilpin County to see if we can go dig. Lots of stuff remains up in the air with no clear answers. But there is nothing prohibiting anyone from getting out in very small groups to go wash rocks or detect or whatever you want to do, so I encourage all to do just that.

In the meantime, gold has been on the rise and broke \$1800 in early July and has pretty well held there all month, reaching \$1850 around 22 July and jumping to \$1984.00 on July 31. Makes it a good time to sell and a not so good time to buy! There is some thought that the stimulus money paid out has driven some of the rise in gold as the US deficit has greatly increased as well as all the uncertainty over the antifa driven protesting and destruction of property going on.. I have heard of someone selling gold coins up north of Denver and that the coins are counterfeit, so beware should you be in the market for buying. I added a section about Fool's Gold and real gold in the newsletter so be sure to read up on that. The jury is out on whether that individual knew they were counterfeit when he bought them or not, but now he is trying to sell them. I don't really blame him for trying to get his money back if that is the case, but don't sell them to folks who don't know how to tell the difference, which represents about 90% plus of us.

While Forrest Fenn's treasure may have been found (*supposedly, it was found in Wyoming and not Colorado, which is where many of us thought it was*), a whole new treasure hunt has started up in Michigan. Be sure to read about that further in the newsletter as well. Maybe you will want to try your hand at this new one. For one, I love the idea of these big hunts. I remember when I was about 12 or so growing up in the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado. The local



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radio station, KSLV, teamed up with a local car dealership and a few other local businesses to host a treasure hunt in the Valley. Each Friday, they would air a clue on the radio and everybody would go out searching. My family would usually go out on Sunday afternoon after all the chores on the ranch had been done and we would put our heads together and search. When the treasure was found, we were within a couple of miles of zeroing in on it. We were pretty bummed when it was found. As I recall, a local man from Center, Colorado found it. He was married and had four or five kids and he was doing odd jobs around town trying to survive and his wife was real sick, I think with cancer or something pretty bad in those days. The sum value of the treasure was about \$2500.00 in cash, which was a lot of dough back in 1958. So at least it was found by somebody who really needed it. I don't really know why they didn't host any more of those hunts but I only remember it being the one big one. I have always been a fan of treasure hunts ever since. They provide an opportunity for regular folk to get out in the outdoors and to use their brain while having an adventure with the possibility of finding something of considerable value that could possibly change their life. Buried treasure stories abound in the Western US and Colorado certainly has our share of them as I have written about numerous times in the last number of years in this very newsletter. To think that they are easy to find is to say it is easy to climb Mt. Everest or swim across the Pacific Ocean. Nothing easy about it at all though...! A number of folk, including at least three from Colorado, died searching for the Fenn treasure. But the allure of riches untold and the adventure in the quest and the search is what drives people to try. Gold prospecting is really no different. Everyone dreams of the 'big strike' behind the next rock, or just beyond the next bend, or in the next out cropping or wherever your next adventure takes you. Maybe it will be you that makes the next big find, or maybe it will be me. But if we don't at least try, it will be neither of us, and that for sure is dead certain!!

Anyway.... that is the view from here and I wish you all Good Luck in your endeavors, no matter what they may be...! 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. Happy and safe prospecting to all!!!

The V.P. Corner by "Joe Fortunato"



Another Hello again fellow gold seekers. Time for another installment of the V.P. Corner. I must have been busier than I thought lately because the end of July got here rather fast. I started this month's article wondering what to write about, as I found myself short on time and subject matter. I did manage to get out for a day to do some detecting for gold with a fellow club member. It was nice to finally get out of town and just get away from my shop and the whole COVID19 routine. Bob and I met at the parking lot where I-70 starts into the mountains, We loaded his gear into the back of my truck and hit the road. The weather forecast for the day looked good with a high of 67 degrees, great for doing some digging and detecting. We were both wondering how we would hold up to the physical work after being isolated and not being very active for the past few months. We were both surprised and relieved that we were able to handle the physical effort and the altitude with no negative effects. Our plan for the day was to detect for gold on an old mine dump, then do some sluicing and panning on a nearby creek. We did not find any gold on the mine dump, but we must have been having a good time because we pretty much used up our sluicing and panning part of the plan. We did stop at the spot that we had planned to sluice and pan just to see if it had been worked recently. It looked like very little digging had taken place since we were there two years ago. This area produced some pretty good gold for me about fourteen years ago, but it has decreased over the years. In spite of that, Bob and I decided that we are going to take another trip to that area. This time we are going to set up a sluice box and do some digging for gold. The gold from this area is larger on average than the gold found closer to Denver, so that is a plus. I certainly can't move big rocks and dig the way that I could fourteen years ago, but I am looking forward to giving it my best effort in a few weeks. I will catch up with you folks in a future newsletter article with the results of our efforts. That is about it for now, so until next time MAY ALL YOUR ADVENTURES BE... GOLDEN !!!!! Questions or comments?. Call or text me..... 303-263-7204 Joe Fortunato

From the Treasurer/Secretary Ledger by Joe Kafka



The Coronavirus has disrupted everything so whenever we are able to reconvene, the next Meeting will feature a nine (9)-nugget giveaway that will include a 2.4-gram nugget. We should have a new "Special Nugget" by then as well. Be sure and bring extra cash for the nugget giveaways The Club remains in the



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black and members may request to see the financial report at any time that I have at my desk in the back. Hope to see you all there at the next meeting.!!

Board Meeting Minutes From Jul 2020

James Long	Joe Shubert	Joe Fortunato	John Johnson
Mike Stevens	Joe Johnston	Chris Kafka	Brandon Luchtenburg
Joe Kafka	Bobby Manning	Andy Doll	Gary Hawley

THERE WAS NO BOARD MEETING FOR MAY DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC.
HOPE TO SEE YOU NEXT MONTH.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH FOR THE NEXT TIME WHENEVER WE MEET?

Subtract the # of electrons in an atom of gold from its atomic weight and that number is the answer to this month's question.

2020 GPR Board of Directors Members

President

James 'JJ' Long

Vice President

Joe Fortunato

Secretary/Treasurer

Joe Kafka

2 Year Board Members

Joe Johnston (2017)

Joe Shubert (2018)

1 Year Board Members

Andy Doll

Brandon Luchtenburg

John Johnson II

Bobby Manning

Chris Kafka

Mike Stevens

Past President

Gary Hawley

General Meeting Minutes From Jul 2020

DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC, THERE WAS NO MEETING. WE HOPE TO MEET SOME NIGHT??

A Miner's Laugh

An old miner named Norman is 89 years old. He's played golf every day since his retirement over 20 years ago. One day he arrives home upset. "That's it," he tells his wife. "I'm giving up golf. My eyesight is so bad that once I hit the ball I can't see where the dang thing goes."

His wife sympathizes and makes him a hot cup of tea. As they sit down she says, "Why don't you take my brother with you and give it one last try."

"That's a terrible idea" says Norman, "your brother's 102 years old. How could he help?"

"He may be 102 years old", says the wife, "but his eyesight is perfect."

Norman figured he'd give it a try.. So, on the next day, he heads off to the golf course with his brother-in-law. He tees up, takes a mighty swing and squints down the fairway. He turns to the brother-in-law and says, "Did you see the ball?"

"Of course I did!" replied the brother-in-law. "I have perfect eyesight".

"Where did it go?" says Norman. The brother-in-law replied, "Where did what go? Do I know you?"

Taken from the internet and revised just for all us 'old miners'





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The finds of the Month 2020:

Be sure to bring your finds of the month that you have collected since the **February meeting**. All those finds will be in competition when we can reconvene next, which may in fact, not be until May. The judging has started anew for the year 2020 and the November 2019 Finds are included in the 2020 contest.

Be sure to save all your winning items for the November 2020 judging.

A new Treasure Hunt is Afoot...

Get your traveling shoes on because there is a new national treasure hunt underway. While the Forrest Fenn Treasure involved the Rocky Mountains, this new hunt is in the Great Lakes region. Here is what we know. A Michigan jeweler has buried \$1 million in gold, silver and diamonds from Detroit to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in a new 'Treasure Quest' to rival the Fenn hunt. But there are some different twists to this one. Johnny Perri, owner of J&M Jewelers in Macomb County, and his wife Amy, buried \$1 million in gold, silver, diamonds and antiques across Michigan from the Detroit area to the Upper Peninsula. Starting August 1, 2020, the treasure will be up for grabs. But, you will have to be a registered Treasure hunter to participate and even search for it. After 23 years in business, J&M Jewelers is closing following a month's long forced temporary closure related to the Covid 19 pandemic. The monthly Treasure Quests will provide a new source of income for the Perri family as each registrant must pay a \$50.00 hunt fee. Johnny could have sold the contents of his shop and retired, but instead, he put his 'entire life investment into the ground with an ideal hope and dream to give all fun, adventure, bonding with each other, and the memories that will last a life time', he said on the Treasure Quest website. After going stir crazy



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while stuck at home amid the pandemic, Johnny and his then fiancée, Amy, began outdoor adventuring. Those adventures led him to understand that he was not happy in his business and to the idea of turning his inventory into a treasure hunt. "I had the time of my life hiding the treasure, but I am even more excited about hearing the stories of those who are about to venture out to seek it," Johnny Perri said on the website. The first quest begins at 10am on August 1, in Oakland County. The prize is two 100-ounce bars of .999 pure silver, which is worth about \$4,200.00. The winner will have the option to keep the bars or to sell them back to Johnny. The next month, September, will feature another hunt, which will be for eight 10-ounce silver bars, 10 one-ounce Walking Liberty coins, 40 one-ounce Buffalo coins, 20 one-ounce Prospector coins and 50 one ounce miscellaneous silver coins for a total of 200 ounces of .999 pure silver. Information on additional future hunts has not been released yet. You will

have to go to Johnnystreasurequest.com to register for a hunt. Only registered hunters will have access to clues, maps, puzzles and riddles. So, if you went after Fenn's treasure, then maybe you will want to take a whack at this one. At least you know that the treasure will be within a certain Michigan county and not somewhere within a three or four state region. And the hunters will be limited to only those who have fronted their \$50.00 fee instead of the multitudes that searched for Fenn's treasure. Might be less chance of dying while you are at it too, who knows.

How to Tell Fool's Gold from Real Gold by Tom Massie

The most important key to success for any miner is to be able to positively identify placer gold. So many times, 'leaverite' (leave it right where you find it) is mistaken for gold when a few simple tests, which can be made in the field, would quickly remove any doubt. Fool is a very heavy mineral with a specific gravity of 19 which means that it is 19 times heavier than water. In a gold pan, gold has a tendency to 'hang back' as compared to lighter, worthless minerals. Most of the fool's gold that is lost to panning is in reality shiny flakes of mica or chunks of iron pyrite. When oil or grease is present in the water, however, fine flat flakes of gold can float on the surface of the water, so try to avoid contaminating the water with oil. Gold is an excellent conductor of heat and electricity and has a melting point of 1942 degrees F. Gold is very soft and can be easily scratched or flattened with a knife. Pyrite is brittle and breaks apart in chunks and is hard to scratch with a knife. On a streak plate, gold leaves a golden streak and pyrite leaves a greenish black streak. Gold has a metallic luster and is usually golden in color, inclining to silver white when alloyed with silver.



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Physical Properties of GOLD

Specific gravity:	18.5 to 19.3
Hardness:	2.5 to 3.0, malleable, ductile
Color:	pale to silvery yellow
Streak:	pale yellow
Luster:	metallic
Cleavage:	none
Fracture:	hackly
Melting point:	1100 degrees C

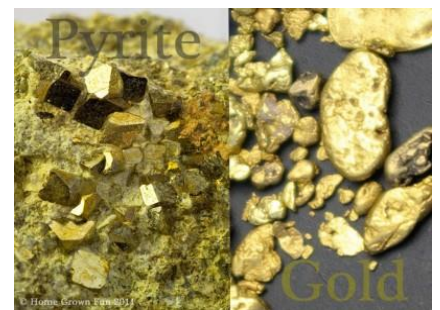
Remember that placer gold does not always shine like jeweler's gold which is refined and highly polished. Sometimes the gold can have a coating of oxide minerals that can be cleaned off with nitric acid. The surface of placer gold is nearly always roughened or pitted by abrasion in the stream due to its softness. Sometimes gold may have quartz particles attached which indicates that the gold has not moved a great distance from its source. A further test for gold is to try dissolving the specimen in nitric acid. Gold will not be affected by nitric acid while pyrite and other sulfide minerals will smoke and dissolve. And of course, placer gold can be refined and assayed to determine the gold content. Placer gold occurs in a variety of shapes, the courser particles indicating less distance travelled from the original source while particles become finer as a further distance is traveled. Rolled, curved, or

flattened grains, angular or sub-rounded pieces, plates, scales and tiny specks of 'flour gold' are common forms of placer gold. Gold is usually classified into five different categories. Course gold is that which will not pass through a 10 mesh screen. Medium gold is that which will not pass through a 20 mesh screen and averages 2200 particles to the troy ounce. Fine gold is that which will pass through a 40 mesh screen and averages 12,000 particles to the troy ounce. Very fine gold will pass through a 40 mesh screen and averages 40,000 particles to the troy ounce. Flour gold is that which is so fine it is the size of dust particles and averages from 100,000 to 800,000 colors to the troy ounce. TM

Four quick ways to distinguish fool's gold from real gold

(Some additional tips from Pres. Long)

- **SHINE:** When you're viewing fool's gold with the natural eye, it will glisten, not shine. The edges will look sharp and it may separate in layers. Gold shines at any angle, not just when the "light is right".
- **HARDNESS:** Get a piece of copper and try to scratch the copper with the gold. If it scratches it is pyrite. Pyrite is harder than copper. If you do have real gold, be careful with this test. You wouldn't want to damage a beautiful gold nugget!
- **RESIDUE:** Gold will leave a pure yellow residue while pyrite will leave a greenish-black powdery residue when rubbed against white porcelain.
- **EDGES:** Pyrite has sharp edges and gold has rounder edges. The shape of fool's gold is a lot more angular.



Have you ever wondered if the physical gold that you are buying is real gold or fool's gold? Well, for the veterans, they'll probably be able to tell real gold from fool's gold in the snap of a finger while new investors can't differentiate the real from the fakes no matter how they look at them. There have been some reports of unscrupulous sellers (fancy words for scam artists) in northern Colorado selling gold coins which are actually fake gold or counterfeit. Here are some easy tips on how you can separate fool's gold from real gold.

Jewelry pieces:

Look for some sort of mark as to its karat value in terms of purity. If it is marked with a number after the letter 'k' (e.g. 18k, 22k, etc.), it is assumed to be a solid gold alloy with a mixture of gold and other metals unless it is marked 24k, which means solid gold. Jewelry pieces are seldom made of solid gold as gold is too soft and is easily damaged.

Common bullion coins and bars:

Check the markings made by its maker and its weight and dimension. The markings and measurements are usually accurate and not easily faked. Faking these coins is considered illegal in most countries as they are often considered legal tender.

Numismatic coins:

Numismatic gold coins are the hardest physical gold for investors to identify. The general market for these coins is usually numismatic collectors who pay a higher premium above spot price of gold for them. The higher premium is also the very reason for the production of fake coins.

To identify the real from the fake, one must be armed with information from books and references about the particular coin. I wouldn't recommend common retail investors to go into collecting numismatic coins without thorough research. It



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would be great if the coin could come with a certificate of authenticity though that could be faked as well. I recommend that you buy only from highly reputable firms and never from someone you don't know nor is associated with a major firm that you can prove.

(Excerpts from) 10 Keys to Prospecting Like a Pro by Chris Ralph

Want to find a lot more gold when you get out there to prospect? Well, I have put together 10 ideas that I think will help you become more successful, and get you out there prospecting like a pro. It seems that far too many prospectors, (and sometimes, me too) will head out to those same old spots where we have found gold in previous years, even if that means we will continue to just find only a little bit of gold in those same old spots. That is the common prospector's rut, chasing after those last crumbs. Successful prospecting is an ongoing quest to find rich spots with good gold, a real search, and that is one of the true secrets of success. So, let's take a look at my ten keys to prospecting like a pro.



Research Pays Dividends: Research is like homework from school, and no one really wants to do that, so a lot of prospectors put it off and don't do any real serious research to find new locations, yet there is no question that it pays off. There are many ways to do this, but two of my favorites are old mining district reports and mining history books. Most states have some form of government mining and geology bureau, and they all seem to have different names in each state. Depending on the type of mines there, the reports might cover not just gold but silver, gemstones and a variety of other mineral products. I also find that old history books for the area are very helpful. Many of these books were written by people with ties to the area they are writing about. As a result, the books often contain valuable information about old mining discoveries that just can't be found by any other means. When I see these kinds of books for sale, I try to get a copy for my collection. Sometimes they contain information from old newspapers of the day. Newspaper articles often contain information that didn't make it into the governmental reports.

Learn the Basics about Geology: Reading and learning about gold geology is another thing that feels so much like a homework assignment that many prospectors want to skip it. You don't need to be a geology expert, but some basic understanding can be really helpful. Every mining district or region where you might be prospecting has a productive geology that is favorable for that district, and changes from place to place. Most old mining reports will state what that favorable rock type, contact or fault zone is for the deposits in the district. Once you have discovered what the favorable type is in that area, then you can find other places with similar geology nearby. These places may prove productive. Understanding and being able to recognize the favorable rock types that produce gold deposits is work but it also leads prospectors to success. Knowing the best places to focus your prospecting efforts is critical.

Think Outside of the Box: When prospectors get in a rut, they are often using their same old methods of finding and recovering gold. Sometimes success means tossing out a lot of your old assumptions and starting fresh and thinking outside the box. Sometimes this means exploring new locations, and sometimes this means working old locations with some new or different technology. Several years ago, I took a new metal detector to a spot that had produced only a small amount of gold with previous detectors. This was a more sensitive detector and I started out trying some old spots. Within ten minutes of arriving, I found a nugget, and another five minutes later. I think I went home with about 20 nuggets that day, all because I had used a different metal detector. Sometimes it is switching up methods completely. I have taken detectors to places I had only dry washed before, and dry washers to places I had only previously metal detected. A new level of success came with the change in method. Sometimes a change as small as a different type of equipment, can make a big difference in the amount of gold that you take home.

Persistence: Another big secret of prospecting success is to never be fully satisfied with the amount of gold you are finding. Unless you hit it really big, you should continue the quest and try to find more. Yet the amount of work required to get out and explore to find new areas makes it difficult. You know in your mind that not every trip out to a new area is going to be successful and yield a lot of gold. When exploring, you will experience more failures than successes. Sometimes, with high hopes, you get out to that new spot, and soon determine that it is just not what you expected. Many prospectors are put off by the amount of work that can be involved in finding and exploring a series of new places. The frequent failures can be discouraging. Yet, in the end you will learn a lot and gain experience through your explorations, and when you do find a good new spot that is productive, it will be well worth your time and all the more rewarding



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because of all the work that you put in to find it. Remember that exploration is something all the more successful prospectors get out to do on a regular basis.

Consider Hard Rock and Placer: Most new prospectors start with a focus on placer deposits, and this makes sense because placers are easier to work and get some gold. But as you gain experience, you should start to think about hard rock sources for several reasons. One goal that a prospector can work towards is finding the source of the placers they are working. Not all placer deposits are suited to yield a productive search for their source. Some placers are the result of hundreds of different small sources that are combined to produce the placer gold that has been found. Working to find a multitude of small sources is very difficult. The sources best suited to exploration are those where there is only just one or perhaps only a few main sources for the placer gold. Gold that is rough and coarse hasn't traveled far from its original source. Sometimes that source is a hard rock deposit that may have a rich residual placer still sitting in place at the outcrop of the hard rock vein system. The dumps around hard rock mines can be an interesting spot for the prospector, and are often overlooked as a source for gold. I recently crushed up a pound of hard rock ore I got off a mine dump with my detector and ended up with almost half an ounce of gold. Still, not all old hard rock gold mines are well suited for prospecting, as most hard rock gold is very tiny. However, some mines will have coarse, easily visible gold in at least some of the ore. The size of the gold is not always reported in the geology reports, so it frequently takes going out to the mine and looking at the dump rock to determine what potential the mine has. In a number of instances over the years, I have found specimens on old hard rock mine dumps that have visible gold in them. The old timers didn't intend to throw out nice visible gold specimens on the dumps, but once in a while, they did so by accident.

Look Before You Leap: An important source of information for the prospector is aerial photographs. When I started out, these were very tough to get. The quality was low and they were nearly impossible to find. The internet has changed all that. The quality is amazing and locations all over the world can be viewed on Google Earth. I used to have a tough time making out a car in aerial photos, but now I can see extreme amounts of detail like individual branches in trees and narrow paths trod by deer and other animals. I can tell the difference between natural rock outcrops and hand sacked piles of rock left behind by old timers working placers. I can also see some very small mine workings. Sometimes, rock features and patterns that cannot easily be seen at eye level on the ground are obvious in a view from far up in the sky. These include scraped nugget patches where miners have removed the brush to work a productive nugget area, even if the brush has partially grown back. You can sometimes see rock contacts that may be mineralized and extend far beyond the area you were initially looking at. Another important thing on aerial photos is roads that are not shown on any map but could provide easy access into places that otherwise seem nearly impossible to reach. You can often see in advance which roads seem overgrown or the ones in the best shape and most commonly traveled. Selecting the right access road can really save a lot of time.

Establish a Plan of Action: It is not enough to just have a place to go. You need to have an idea of what you are looking for and how you will find it when you get there. You need a plan to guide your actions in the field. I find I am more productive if I have to put together a list of what I want to look for when I get out and explore. Sure, you can change your plans as needed, but at least start out with a plan for how you will find gold at this location that you will be working.

Use Information to Your Advantage: Another thing that goes with having a plan is maps, GPS and note taking. Maps and a GPS device will help you to know exactly where you are and ensure that if you do make a significant discovery, you can get back to that spot. You want to find gold, not be the origin of a lost miner story. A great thing about Google Earth is that it also ties in well with GPS. When you get home with your notes and readings, you can check them against Google Earth and any maps you may have. Use your GPS when you are in the field to guide you to the points of interest you have identified to explore. Don't wonder if you have found the right spot. Your GPS device will tell you with certainty that you have arrived at where you want to be.

Know the Land and Claim Status Before You Go: When exploring a new area, it is good to have an accurate idea of the mining claim status in the area. This is true even if you are only looking to explore some old club claims. It can be handy to know about any of the other claims located around those old club claims. The BLM's LR2000 data system gives the public internet access to the BLM's claim records, although using LR2000 is a whole skill in itself. In order to use the LR2000 website, you will need to know the specific area you are interested in researching. You must know the coordinates of the location within the federal land survey system which includes the section, township and range. The USGS topographic maps will show the sections, etc., of this survey. These online records will allow you to search individual sections to see what existing mining claims are out there, and which of them are active or inactive.



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Conduct a Thorough Review: Researching and exploring to find new areas is a lot of work and many of your trips to new areas will be unsuccessful. But there are lessons to be learned even from unsuccessful exploration trips. You can still learn a lot about these new locations through study, but reviewing what you did and did not see, and when you find a good new spot with good gold will be all the more rewarding. Your prospecting experience is cumulative and you can take what you have learned in the past and use it to grow, whether successful or not. Even a failure to find a good spot can be instructive and help you to find gold the next time out.

(Chris Ralph is the Associate Editor of the ICMJ and has a degree in Mining Engineering from the Mackay School of Mines in Reno, Nevada. He has worked for precious metal mining companies conducting both surface and underground operations and has continued his interest in mining as an individual prospector.)

Colorado State Gold Panning Championships for 2020 will be held at the Western Museum of Mining and Industry in Colorado Springs on August 7, 8, and 9th. Try your hand if you feel lucky. Contact WMMI if you are interested in competing or just show up for the festivities.

More precious than gold: Why the metal palladium is soaring 20 January 2020

The price of the precious metal palladium has soared on the global commodities markets.

It has jumped by more than 25% in the last two weeks alone, and almost doubled in value over the last year.

At about \$2,500 (£1,922) an ounce of palladium is more expensive than gold, and the pressures forcing its price up are unlikely to ease anytime soon.

But what is palladium, what is it used for, and why is its price rising?

What is palladium?

It is a shiny white metal in the same group as platinum, along with ruthenium, rhodium, osmium, and iridium.

The majority of the world's palladium comes from Russia and South Africa. Most of it is extracted as a byproduct in the mining of other metals, usually platinum and nickel.

What is it used for?

Its key commercial use is as a critical component in catalytic converters - a part of a car's exhaust system that controls emissions - found mainly in petrol and hybrid vehicles.

The vast majority of palladium, more than 80%, is used in these devices that turn toxic gases, such as carbon monoxide, and nitrogen dioxide, into less harmful nitrogen, carbon dioxide, and water vapor.

Image copyright Getty Images Image caption Catalytic converters are relatively easy to remove from vehicles

It is also used, to a far lesser extent, in electronics, dentistry, and jewelry.

The metal's soaring value in recent years has seen a jump in the theft of catalytic converters around the world.

London's Metropolitan police said the number of thefts in the first six months of 2019 were more than 70% higher than the whole of the previous year.

Why is its price rising?

In short, it is because demand for palladium outstrips supply, and it has done for some time.

The amount of the metal produced in 2019 is forecast to be below global demand for the eighth year in a row.

As a secondary product of platinum and nickel extraction, miners have less flexibility to increase palladium output in response to rising prices.



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And that shortfall looks set to continue, with South Africa, which produces around 40% of the world's supply, last week saying its output of platinum group metals, including palladium, fell by 13.5% in November compared to a year earlier.

Meanwhile, demand for palladium from carmakers has increased sharply for a number of reasons.

Around the world governments, notably China, are tightening regulations as they attempt to tackle air pollution from petrol vehicles.

At the same time the diesel emissions scandal in Europe has also had an impact. Consumers there have been shifting away from diesel cars, which mostly use platinum in their catalytic converters, and are instead buying petrol-driven vehicles, which use palladium.

The US-China trade deal, which was signed earlier this month, has also boosted prices. Traders expect the agreement to help ease downward pressure on global economic growth and slow the decline in Chinese car sales



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Contact the GPR President

(Layout Design Subject To Additional Cost)



Coming Announcements and Special Events for Sept 2020

(**WMMI** - Western Museum of Mining & Industry, 225 North Gate Blvd. Colorado Springs, CO 80921
(<https://www.wmmi.org/>) (Free to GPR Member with badge)

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7 Labor Day	8 WMMI Lecture Series: Richard O'Meara: "One Blast, One Chance for Success" 7:00 PM 8:00 PM	9	10	11	12
13	14		16 GPR Club Meeting??	17	18	19 WMMI Outdoor Display & Machinery Demonstration 10am & 1pm
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			