THE GOLD PAN

The Newsletter of the

Comstock Gold Prospectors

Feb. 17, 2017

BLACK BILLIE

Next Meeting: FEB. 28th, 2017
UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS*
Speaker of the Month: Webb Varnum

(Mark your Calendars)
Mar. 28th, 2017
Apr. 25th, 2017
May 23rd ,2017

1 Year Gold – NYSE

02/17/2017 – Last	$1243.00
One Year High (at closing)	$1243.00
One Year Low (at closing)	$1234.00

1 Year Silver – NYSE

02/17/2017 – Last	$17.99
One Year High (at closing)	$18.05
One Year Low (at closing)	$17.97

ALL MEMBERS WELCOME
Board Meeting is held at 6:30pm
General Meeting
4th Tuesday of each month
7:30 PM at the
Masonic Wadsworth Lodge #25
2425 Pyramid Way, Sparks, NV

PRESIDENTS LETTER:

I hope all of us took care of our Valentines. This is a month where not much is going on in the prospecting community outdoors though there is a lot going on "inside" which will have consequences for us, mostly not favorable.

Bill has included some of the "inside" goings on in this letter. Bill and I will be going to the MMAC district meeting in Downieville this weekend (the 18th) and all are invited. A good chance to understand firsthand how we are furthering our mining rights endeavors. The new administration is going to be on our side and will rescind burdensome regulations for the mining industry and others.

The BLM is going to have an "open house" Tuesday the 21st of Feb at the Nugget from 5 to 7. The topic is the withdrawal of an additional TEN MILLION acres in our State of Nevada!!! This is in addition to the Pershing, Washoe etc. lands bills. We and all residents of Nevada have to wake up and pay attention now! TEN MILLION!!!

Try and attend. We found out about this through the Elko paper (thanks Justin). WE went to the local BLM and they had no info? We finally looked it up and confirmed the date and location. We had short notice again.

Just a recap: under O's tenure without congress approval, 554 million acres were put off limits for "conservation" purposes? That is equal to 3x the state of Texas!

In which amounts to 69,250,000, acres a year while "in" office! His last month in office he set aside 300,000 acres in Clark County. Some of these takings maybe withdrawn, but I doubt it.

As a note, Oregon and Washington are following in California's stopping mining and the imposition of big fines. The more we pay attention to MMAC we may be able to take these states to task with the

formation of Mining Districts which will have federal "jurisdiction" and not this mishmash of state regs.

Webb will be our speaker this month imparting his vast knowledge of the Comstock engineering marvels! He also wrote a short guide on evaluating a dry placer claim…good info.

Six of us attended a panning demo at the Hidden Valley School. We were very well received by the 24 students and teachers. We will be back. (Harley is not a Nevada Licensed Geologist there is no such animal). Good PR!

No need to mention the weather. The spring water flow should be the best ever for prospecting. A lot of road damage in NV. and CA. Check for conditions before heading out and maybe bring extra gear for the possible impossible.

Thanks for paying attention,
Jim

Monday, February 20th from 8-2 the NV legislature is having a "get together" for those interested in mining in NV.

Tom Calicrete told me of this and he will be hosting a table on behalf of NMEC. It is at the legislature bldg. in Carson...JR

Water Board Dredging Hearings By Bill Vogt

On February 6, 2017, the California Water Board held their final mandated public hearing into the effect of dredging on water quality. The meeting was held in Sacramento and, while I had intended to attend, inclement weather and lack of motivation prevented me from being there in person. However, thanks to my subscription to the Mountain Messenger (an enjoyable weekly from Downieville I highly recommend), I attended the session via webcast. Since I wasn't planning to make any presentations myself, this turned out to be a great way to attend one of these things with one exception. Based on some of the comments of the moderator and participants I got the sense that there was tension in the room but I couldn't feel it.

The purpose of these hearings has been for the Water Board to gather information that they will use to help them decide whether or not they need to be involved in the dredge permitting process and if so to what extent. This has been mandated by the California Legislature and the dredging moratorium will not be lifted until they have issued their report. At this point in time it is estimated they will reach a decision in the spring of 2018. If anyone would like to learn more about this or would like to sign up for email notification go to the following site: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/npdes/suction_dredge_mining.shtml.

There were very few people in attendance at this meeting and less than half of them made presentations. The presenters were either people that favored dredging or those that were against it and water quality seemed to be a secondary issue. There were presenters on both sides of the issue with maybe a few more pro then con and the moderator tried to alternate between the two sides. After the presentations there was a brief question and answer session where the Water Board staff and the moderator fielded questions from the audience. The meeting started at 1PM and concluded at 5PM.

One thing that was made abundantly clear to me by watching and listening to this meeting that has never before really stuck me is the fact that those that are opposed to dredging want it banned completely. There is no middle road and they aren't bashful about saying that. As far as they are concerned the Water Board should just conclude that dredging pollutes the water and that no mitigation is possible so dredging should just be prohibited (small scale that is).

Some of the highlights of the meeting to me were as follows. Shannon Poe, President of AMRA, showed a video where he demonstrated sucking a tomato and an apple up and through a 4 inch dredge and causing no harm to demonstrate how fish aren't harmed should they ever be run through a dredge. He also a showed a video demonstrating that Fish and Game use the same type of hoses used by dredgers to stock fish. My favorite was his video showing a lake being stocked from the air several thousand feet up by a plane flying about 150mph. A gentleman representing a resort organization spoke about the dramatic negative impact the moratorium has had on rural communities. He also commented on dredgers ability to remove mercury from the streambeds and the concept that the higher up the waterways the better. This theme was presented by several of the presenters and it goes like this. Dredgers can recover a high percentage (98%) of the mercury they suck up. Mercury cannot convert to harmful stuff (I'm not a chemist) at colder temperatures (like rivers and creeks in the mountains) but can at warmer

temperatures (like lakes, reservoirs, and the delta). The best plan for removing the mercury is to let the dredgers dredge the higher rivers and creeks removing the mercury before it ever gets a chance to flow downstream to the lakes, reservoirs and the delta (nah, that makes too much sense).

Since the meeting I have tried to find a recording of this session to pass on to others but I have been unable to locate one. Prior to this meeting there were four others and they were probably webcasted as well but I haven't found any recordings of them either. If I do find any in the future I will get the links posted to our Web site. Keep posted for further developments in the ongoing saga of dredging in California.

Panning Demo
Hidden Valley Elementary School
By Bill Vogt

On February 7, I along with five other Club members (Wade Lavery, Fred Leissler, Harley Ponsler, Jim Richards, and Keith Wilson) performed a gold panning demo for Maggie Wirtanen's sixth grade class at Hidden Valley Elementary School.

This event was arranged by Fred Leissler who in casual conversation with his friend Maggie mentioned that he was into gold prospecting. At this moment in time Maggie's class is discussing gold and prospecting so she asked Fred if he would be willing to make a presentation to her class. Fred did her one better and arranged for a group of us to put on one of our standard panning demonstrations.

Maggie began the class by passing around a vial with about ½ ounce of gold that Wade had loaned her for this purpose and asked her students to write down on a piece of paper how much they thought it was worth. As they were doing this Wade briefly spoke on the subject and introduced to the class the Club members present.

The teacher went around the classroom asking the students what they had written down and the amounts ranged from a low of $15 to a high of $5000. There was one student who had written $500 which Wade confirmed was very close. Wade presented this student with a small vial containing a few flakes of real gold and some iron pyrite in recognition of her being the closest.

After this exercise Fred gave a short presentation on gold prospecting and was assisted by Harley who gave a brief explain of where placer gold comes from. Fred also discussed claim ownership with some assistance from Jim. At one point in the discussion Wade interjected the safety aspect of prospecting and encouraged the students to always be with someone else and to be particularly careful around the slippery rocks near waterways. There were quite a few good questions from the students and reference was made by some of them to the Gold Discovery series on TV. We then turned our attention to actually panning for gold. Everything was done in the classroom where we had limited space for setting up our equipment. Consequently, we only set up two tables with four tubs. Fred, Harley, Jim, and Keith manned the panning tubs while Wade refilled the pans and fielded questions from students who mulled around his table and I circulated around the room taking pictures and talking to the students and teacher.

In just a little over 30 minutes, our panners were able to accommodate about 24 future prospectors. At the start of the panning phase the teacher had asked the students to write down what they had learned that class period. After all the students had finished panning and we were cleaning up the teacher asked some of the students to read what they had written. From what I heard the students learned a lot and seemed to enjoy themselves. We told Maggie that we would be willing to come back anytime and I suspect she might take us up on that offer. In addition, during the time we were there another teacher came into the classroom and was curious about what we were doing. She teaches history and her class is just now talking about the gold rush period.

We may be going back to Hidden Valley Elementary School sooner than we think.

GENESIS OF MINERAL DEPOSITS

By D.W.Varnum, Geologist

Primary Ore Deposit

A mineral deposit is an enlarged amount of a certain mineral (gold, silver, etc.) in a restricted location in the earth's crust. Such deposit could be very rich (primary are usually not very rich) or very poor.

Water that contains the proper chemicals (acid, basic) the elevation of temperature and enough pressure will dissolve any mineral.

A simple example: water will dissolve salt,

Personal Ads: Are free to Members for a maximum of three editions of The Gold Pan Newsletter!

heated water will dissolve more, a pressure cooker will increase the amount of salt dissolved. The inside of the earth is like a pressure cooker and at elevated temperatures more minerals are able to be dissolved, and then to be transported by the water.

The original source of all minerals is the magma within the earth. Some deposits are placed by the magma itself as it rises toward the earth surface. Others are placed by geothermal activity.

The source of the water necessary for the geothermal placement can be of the following types:

1. Meteoric surface water, rain or snow:
2. Connate water that comes from any source and is trapped in the sediment;
3. Metamorphic water driven out of the existing rock by the metamorphic action of the earth on the rock by heat and or pressure;
4. magmatic water found in the magma in the earth core.

Where the water comes from little matters; the important thing is that this water is now ten to fifty kilometers (6-30 miles) beneath the surface of the earth and is starting to rise toward the surface. As it moves, it comes into contact with hundreds of cubic kilometers or rock with which to react and it absorbs minerals that it will late redeposit. The water moves through channel ways, whether cracks or fissures or by dissolving the host rock as it proceeds upward to the earth surface. As it rises, the hydrothermal fluid comes into contact with many types of rock. From these it takes on it acidic or alkaline nature and is able to dissolve and absorb minerals. The higher the temperature and the pressure of the water, the more material can be taken into solution. Under the right conditions, correct pH, temperature and pressure, water can dissolve anything, even gold or platinum. For example: Gold when in hydrothermal solution below 300 degrees C seems to favor forming sulphide ores. When the solution is above 300 degrees C it favors chlorides. So, depending on the temperature, the pH, and the existence of 2 to 3 kilo bars of pressure, (1 bar is 14.7 pounds per sq. in.) , gold can be absorbed and transported, to be redeposited when condition change.

In some area there is, at or near the surface, mineral formation going on now. These places are mineral - rich hydrothermal zones of the Salton Sea, and the East Mesa of Imperial Co. Calif., the Dead Sea area and the deep trenches of the oceans. In the Imperial Valley the brine is made up of salts of potassium and calcium and sodium. It contains up to 30% solids, of which 7% is iron, 1% each magnesium, zinc and lead, 20% copper, and 7% silver. A test well on the East Mesa is 2470 M deep (8000 ft.) deep. Its temperature is 350 degrees C., and the brine is discharged at a temperature of 130 to170 degrees C. The brine leaves a deposit of metallic platting that looks a lot like steel galena (a low grade silver, lead ore), on the inside of the pipes. The deposit contains silver with a content of up to 20% by weight, but at the time I was there it did not warrant profitable processing it is too dirty. (6)

Closer to home, at Steamboat Hot Springs Nevada, there is production of several minerals: mercury, Sulphur dioxide as well as silver, gold and base metals. Silicon dioxide is transported by the hydrothermal water as well; this allows for the formation of Quartz crystals, amethysts, agates, jaspers, and etc. They are deposited like an ore.

The process that is needed to form quartz crystals is believed to be the following: in acidic water at 500 degrees C, at 1.75 Kbs. The silicon dioxide is dissolved and transported toward the surface. As the temperature and pressure decreases or the fluid reacts with the channel rock and the pH changes, the silicon dioxide starts to crystallize. If the process is slow enough and there is enough silicon dioxide there will form a double terminated crystal. If there is a larger opening and trace minerals a vug of amethysts. Under different conditions there might form cryptocrystalline milky- white quartz or a red-orange agate.

What are the mechanics or depositing or redepositing? Let’s discuss how that process starts and continues. Suppose we have a solution of silicon dioxide. What would cause a vein or a ore body of this material to form? There are several possibilities. First a temperature change of as little as 20 degrees C. could start the recrystallization process very slowly.

What would cause a heat loss contact with channel rock or the mixing of magmatic water with meteoric water, causing a dramatic cooling. Second a large pressure drop of a Kb could cause a vein or ore body. The pressure drop could be caused by venting to the surface of the water in a hot spring.

Third, a chemical reaction causing a change in the pH , the cause of this could be a different wall rock. Any one of these changes would mean that the fluid will carry less of the mineral so some precipitate out of solution to start a vein, a lode, a geode, a vug, etc.

The process does not necessarily stop here. Water may continue to alter the deposit erosion may bring it close to the surface of the earth and alter the mineral itself, resulting in some of the most interesting minerals and valuable ore deposits. These changes to the ore is known as secondary enrichment (4 and 5)

Secondary Enrichment

Secondary enrichment of ore deposits is also known as cold - water replacement. The process of enrichment of ore deposit is not a dynamic as hydrothermal emplacement of primary deposits, but it is nevertheless very interesting.

In general, the enrichment process is basic to deposits of all types. We will first discuss copper, gold and silver and then go on to silicification of other materials and lastly of the similar changes on organic compounds.

These ore bodies were originally placed 450 million years ago and at a depth of 1 to 10 miles below the earth's surface in the harden magma. Mountains were formed by the lifting of this hardened magma. Erosion begins to remove the overburden, and in time a deposit is exposed as an outcrop. If the ore is porous, water can enter the material, and cause it to break up and to concentrate. This could result in a placer deposit in the case of gold. Or if the is of the right type, the amount of water and the surrounding gangue rock is of the proper material and everything is in correct proportion then the primary ore body can be dissolved and concentrated at a lower level. (4)

The process is complicated. Briefly, the water passes over iron pyrites or iron sulfides (Sometimes, copper) to release the sulphur, and with water it forms as sulphur acid. This dilute solution of sulphur acid dissolves the copper, and silver etc In order for this to take place, ferrous sulfate and oxygen must be present.

As long as pH is correct and other chemicals remain in balance, the dissolved materials are carried downward. At some point the chemistry changes, and the mineral is redeposited as a pure metal, as a sulphate or sulphide of the metal. This step can occur over and over again. Finally, the mineral reaches the end of the oxygenation zone and the process comes to an end. The resulting material is generally below the water table and can be as deep as 2000 ft.

In some mines a "bonanza" of pure metal can be found above a rich sulphide zone. The pure metal can be anywhere from a few millimeters to several meters thick as a large cap sheet.

Gold is different. It requires sulphur acid, Manganese dioxide, chlorine and oxygen. This enrichment has been found to a depth of 200 to400 ft. (7)

The same process is also responsible for many silicon dioxide concentrations such as amethyst vugs (some are primary), geodes with amethyst or quartz crystals or with agate. These are formed via cold water transportation of silicon dioxide.

Roland Blanchard describes the formation of large jasper lenses at Ninety Mile Copper Mine in Queensland. These lenses are up to 3 ft. thick and 15 to 20 ft. long. They are formed by the replacement of amphibole that has been bleached white (called "soap") with quartz from the bottom up. The color comes from the ferric oxide hydrate, which causes creams, browns, tans and reds to emerge. These lenses are formed at about 140 ft. at the end of the oxygenation zone at the dry season water level. (2)

William Harvey Emmons describes the formation of gangue materials by cold water enrichment. Some of these minerals are corundum, garnet, spinel, tourmaline, zircon, rhodochrosite, and turquoise, among many other. (3)

The silicification of organic material - for example, bone or wood - is cold water replacement called either fossilization or petrifaction. The process is similar to that of ore enrichment. The acid water dissolves the silica and it is carried to a new location. The organic

material itself will change the pH and cause the silica to precipitate, changing the organic material one cell at a time. the silica replacement is a pseudomorph of the wood or bone. The replacement material may be called agate, jasper, opal, etc. These are all types of microcrystalline quartz. (1)

References

#1. Weiland ,G. R. The Cuadrado Petrified Forest pg. 51-68
#2. Blanchard , Roland NBMG Bulletin 660pg 174-179
#3. Emmons ,William Harvey USGS Bulletin 625 pg. 48-503
#4. Wiley , John The Geo Chemistry of Hydrothermal Ore Deposits, 1979
#5 Lindgren, Waldemar Mineral Deposits
#6 Information on the Imperial Valley comes from company reports of Republic Drilling, Magma Geothermal, Union Oil, and The state of California Department of Gas and Oil.
#7 Boyle R>W>
The Geochemistry of Gold And Its Deposits

Definitions

Hydrothermal: of hot water or action of hot water, or the product of its action, such as the deposits precipitate from hot aqueous solution; the solution itself.
Kilometer (k) = .6 miles
Kb (kilo bar) = 14507 lb. per sq. in
Pseudomorph = a replacement that takes the form of its host desert dice s an exact replacement of pyrite to hematite

COMSTOCK GOLD PROSPECTORS MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING JANUARY 24th, 2017

Call to Order: Jim Richards began the Board Meeting at 6:30pm.

Board Members Present: Jim Richards; Justin Shaw, Nadine Miller and Wade Lavery. Members at Large: Harley Ponsler and Tim Bartlett present.

Support Staff at Board Meeting:
Webmaster: Dave Terwilliger

Claims Committee at Board Meeting:
Chairman Mr. Shaw, with fellow Board Members Mr. Richards and Mr. Lavery with Members at Large: Mr. Ponsler and Mr. Bartlett present.

Support Staff on-site:
Membership/Chairperson & Historian: Bill Vogt, Sergeant of Arms: Al Gottsch, Webmaster: Dave Terwilliger and Equipment Custodian/Raffle Coordinator: Mike Maxwell

Support Staff not on-site: Outings Chairperson: Nancy Terwilliger and Clothing Custodian: Teresa Jones.

Motion to accept the Board Meeting Minutes: Board Member, Second: Board Member. Voted and accepted by the attending Board Members.

Adjournment: Jim Richards announced at 6:56pm.

COMSTOCK GOLD PROSPECTORS MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING JANUARY 24th, 2017

Call to Order: Jim Richards began the General Meeting at 7:30pm.

Pledge of Allegiance: President Jim Richards began the meeting by leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Members Present: Jim Richards; Justin Shaw, Nadine Miller, and Wade Lavery.

Members at Large: Harley Ponsler and Tim Bartlett present.

Support Staff on-site:
Membership/Chairperson & Historian: Bill Vogt, Sergeant of Arms: Al Gottsch, Webmaster: Dave Terwilliger and Equipment Custodian/Raffle Coordinator: Mike Maxwell

Support Staff not on-site: Outings Chairperson: Nancy Terwilliger and Clothing Custodian: Teresa Jones.

Correction to Minutes: President's Letter a name was incorrect, was: Barry Reid, should be: Harry Reid. Member At Large Ken Walls is changed to Tim Bartlett. Ken's work has restricted his time at meetings, but teamed up with our Newsletter Editor Lisa (Ken's Wife) we should be proud of their work in support of the Club.

Treasurer's Report: Read by Treasurer Nadine Miller. Nadine has done a great job and continues to support the Club whilst taking care of Husband "Bud".

Membership's Report: Current membership is 325. Number of Life Memberships available is 13. Activity since last report as follows; Members dropped 5 with new Memberships adding 0. Thank you to our Membership/Chairperson Bill Vogt for keeping the "Records".

Claims Report: Membership was informed that the Club Claim named Shiloh is still available. Because of the high flows Yuba River and Feather River claims are to be assessed for the need of replacement claim markers.

Looking ahead in the next few months for Members: to assist our very own Bill Vogt in that task. Please remember Bill and his "Merry Band" of volunteers keeps us LEGAL while we enjoy prospecting.

So many of our claims (owned & licensed) are in the Sierra County Mining District which we have members involved looking to developments. Another organization, Land Matters (http://www.mylandmatters.org), is a non-profit group that is doing some very interesting services that can educate our members who want to be more informed and proactive in all aspects of prospecting. Then you have MMAC (http://www.mineralsandminingadvisorycouncil.org) with their stated mission briefly stated as "The Council's mission is; 1: Bring together all the groups and organizations that are fighting for the same thing. 2: Organize, modernize, institute and unify all Nation-Wide Mining Districts. 3: Minerals and Mining to be recognized as Federal Mineral Grantees and Federal Public Land Stakeholders. 4:to recognize the Federal Mining Districts". A lot of reading, but having knowledge is power and protects your prospecting rights in participating. Warning, ask about road conditions at all claims to avoid a cancelled trip. There are quite a few hardy souls that are not stopped by a little mud or snow or rain, consult them before the Meeting starts.

New Business Report:

Follow online the PLP involvement in CA and Western US. Public Lands bills are being stalled in U.S. Congress at this time.

Outings Report:

In March the Gem Faire returns to Reno-Sparks Livestock Events Center March Friday 17th 12-6, Saturday18th 10-6 and Sunday19th 10-5 and Club volunteers are needed to staff the panning demos. If you want more to do, how about the 8th Annual Gold Show at the Underground Gold Miners Museum in Alleghany, CA June 17th & 18th 10-5 (see undergroundgold.com). Pleasant Valley Elementary School has once again asked for our panning demonstration in April for Spring Break, need volunteers.

Report on Club Notices:

Our Coordinator is **Jessica for CGPC's Christmas Party** on Tuesday the 6th of December is moving ahead. Christmas Party will start at 5pm. for set up, and the seating at about 6:30pm. ***Many thanks to Jessica and the Board shall support your efforts!***

Guest Speakers: Bob Thomasson.

Looking For Outing Partner(s):

Please use our Website, Prospecting Contact List is available for members who wish to get together. Sign up if you are going out or if you want to go out. Let us know what you want to do: panning, sniping or sluicing.

CGPC Quarterly Assessment Drawing:

Due today, only two assessments submitted. Therefore, Club President declared they should be carried over to February's meeting.

Attendance Drawing: (ticket(s) supplied at sign-in table): In attendance **CGPC's Kent Sampson** ticket number was called for a silver ounce round! Come to our next meeting on Tuesday February 28TH, 2017 for the next silver ounce round to be awarded!

Membership Drawing: CGPC's member drawn; Kevin Plumb of Fernley was called out for six Silver (ounce) Rounds. Sorry he wasn't here tonight. This month on Tuesday February 28TH, 2017 there are seven Silver (ounce) rounds to be awarded. A random number generator is used to select a possible winner from our Membership Roster and your chance to be picked is always a possibility.

Thank you for attending our meeting, hope you had a good time, your participation to be informed and also share your experiences is key to an active club such as ours, continue to see you again!

Total attendance: 45
Members: 45
Guests: None

Motion to accept the Club Meeting Minutes and adjourn meeting: Club Member, Second: club Member. Voted and accepted by the attending Club Members.

Adjournment: Jim Richards announced at 8:22pm.

Club Wear and Club Merchandise:

Call for details and place your order. Clothing Custodian: Teresa Jones, Home 775/673-5253 between 3pm to 8pm, please leave voice mail with name, phone number and subject. Teresa's Email: teresajones5930@sbcglobal.net

NEW MEMBERS:

Christine & Everett Easley, Greenville, CA.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS-2017

President: Jim Richards - 775/225-2494
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Treasurer: Nadine Miller - 775/867-3550
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Member at Large: Tim Bartlett
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Outings Chairperson:
Nancy Terwilliger 775/530-8284 cell
Email: naterwilliger@sbcglobal.net

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE RAFFLE TABLE. . .

Help to pay for the meeting hall. Please remember to contribute. It does not really matter what it is. Clean out your garage.
If you don't have a use for it, someone else does. Don't throw it away; put it on the table.

One man's garbage is another's man's gold!
Thank You!!

Mike Maxwell
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