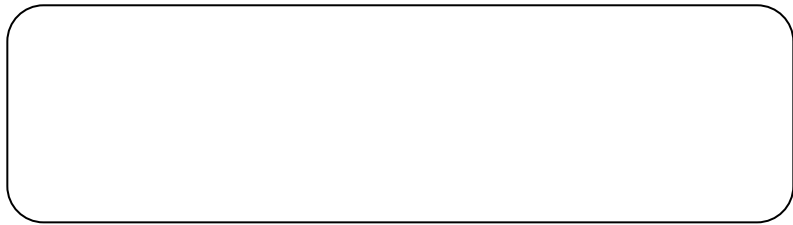


# Drywasher's Gazette

JANUARY 2024

Send Exchange Bulletins to:  
Valley Prospectors  
PO Box 2923  
San Bernardino, CA 92406-2923  
valleyprospectors49@gmail.com



Web Site: [www.valleyprospectors.org](http://www.valleyprospectors.org)

Email: valleyprospectors49@gmail.com

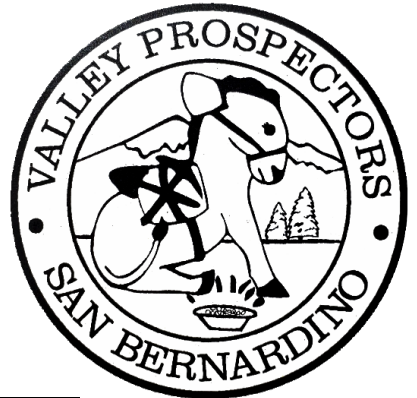
Mail: Valley Prospectors, PO Box 2923, San Bernardino, CA 92406-2923

Next Meeting/Event – January 2, 2024 – Elks Lodge San Bernardino 6-8 pm

## Mission and Code of Ethics

Valley Prospectors Inc. is a non-profit educational organization dedicated  
*To promote Gold Prospecting as a healthy family activity.*

## A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION



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## Annual Valley Prospectors Holiday Potluck & Awards *The Club Ended the Year with Good Cheer and Companionship*



2023 Award recipients Diane Railsback; Everett Miller; Joe Dixon and Susan Birrell being recognized for their contributions and hard work during the year

Sharing a bountiful meal with good friends is always a highlight of the Club's year. Turkey and ham paired with delightful sides offered something for everyone to enjoy. It was a truly a beautiful day in the High Desert.

President Devlin hosted in his last official function after serving two years at the helm of the club. We are thankful for his service and look forward to incoming President Schubert next year.

Ernie Tovar walked away with the grand prize trommel. We look forward to all his golden finds!



Susan Birrell led a craft to make a fun paper creation filled with holiday jokes for the kids and kids at heart to enjoy during the event.



The Dixon Crew manned the ticket raffle table filled with many surprises for the winning bunch of prospectors. A few lucky members even got to take home-made 3D printed puzzle Christmas Trees that were



Donated by Lisa Cox as part of the table centerpieces. They were Creative and beautiful. Michelle O'Brien made our Christmas Tree favors. In the spirit of giving and sharing, toys were collected for the Spark of Love Toy Drive to benefit children in need across all ages. The unwrapped toys were dropped off at the local fire station. Thank you to everyone who contributed to making a child's Holiday a little brighter with your gift. In the New Year we look to carry on this spirit of companionship and service in all the Club does.

## Valley Prospectors Presidents Message January 2024 PREZ SAYS

Welcome board members and committee chairs. Thank you for volunteering to support the club for the 2024 year. Together we will promote mining and rock hounding. I will need all our members to make our club grow and have fun together. Please be ready to volunteer at the shows and outing we are planning. Let us be the best prospecting club in California. Our board members are ready and waiting to hear your ideas to better the valley prospectors. May you always find gold in your pan.

Steve Schubert  
President 2024



### IMPORTANT NOTICE

As a reminder, Greg Herring from First Class Miners and VP, is spearheading the opposition to the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument and Expansion of Joshua Tree National Park (JTNP) into the Eagle Mountain Mining District and other areas near JTNP.

As stated in his online petition:

"This proposal by the National Park Conservation Association and CALWILDS will eliminate desert mining for well over 350 active mining claims, as well as restrict recreation on hundreds of square miles of SoCal desert. If you enjoy recreation of all types and mining in our desert between the Coachella Valley and the Colorado River, to include the Eagle Mountains, please help stop this effort. The 2016 Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan already provides all the protection this area needs. The proposal was submitted to Congressman Raul Ruiz (CA-25) in September 2023 for consideration. And it has been submitted to the House as Bill HR5660, but their plan is to have President Biden sign an Executive Order to create these. Tell Congressman Ruiz and your own Congressman that you do NOT support this Monument nor Expansion by signing this petition."

As of Dec 9<sup>th</sup>, the online petition he started has 973 out of the needed 1,000 signatures, and has stalled. He's asking for anyone who has not yet done so, to PLEASE sign the petition TODAY.

Additionally, please share the petition on your social media.

If you feel so inclined, you can also write to Congressman Ruiz by sending an email to his local representative, Shayra Hernandez at this email address: [Shayra.Hernandez@mail.house.gov](mailto:Shayra.Hernandez@mail.house.gov). Shayra is compiling all the Opposition emails and petition signatures.

Let all your friends know about the potential to limit, if not eliminate, access to their public land. Who do you know who are off-road enthusiasts, hikers, rock-hounders, climbers, campers? TELL THEM, and ask them to sign the petition.

Proponents of the Monument have already made a trip to Washington D.C. to promote it.

If we don't soon convince Ruiz to stop this, it'll be too late.

## Valley Prospectors December 2, 2023 - Meeting Minutes

Garry called the meeting to order @ 1:05 P.M. at the Pinon Hills Community Center. Joe D lead the flag salute.

Garry and Lorraine handed out yearly awards, certificates of recognition, and Thank You to:

**Miner of the Year:** Joe Dixon

**Treasure Hunter of the Year:** Susan Birrell

**Man of the Year:** Everett Miller

**Woman of the Year:** Diane Railsback

Lorraine explained how the votes were tabulated and informed us of the new officers.

**President:** Steve Schubert

**VP:** Susan Birrell

**Secretary:** Diane Railsback

**Treasurer:** Lorraine Frost

**Members-at-Large:** Mike Ryan, Joe Dixon, Rosie

Duysings, Joe Chavez, Stacey Dixon, Katherine Naki, Art Duysings, Ernie Tovar, Albert Naki, Mindy Ryan, Brian Teeling, and Coreena Ross. The three Members-at-Large alternates are Keith Christensen, Lee Skilling, and John Howell.

The new signatories for the bank accounts will now be Steve Schubert, President; Diane Railsback, Secretary; Lorraine Frost, Treasurer; and Garry Devlin, Assistant to the Treasurer.

Meeting adjourned by VP Susan at 1:30 pm

Lady Luck drawings and Gift Prizes were awarded

What topic would you like to have presented or who would you like to do presentations at our meetings?

Please contact VP Susan with your ideas!



*Above: The Newly Elected 2024 Valley Prospectors Board*

## It's Time for Membership Renewal

Renewals are \$40 and need to be paid by January 31, 2024.

It's easy to quickly pay online with options like Zelle available. Just use the club's e-mail address and don't forget to add your name and membership number in the notes.

Zelle send payments to:  
[valleyprospectors49@gmail.com](mailto:valleyprospectors49@gmail.com)

You can also use the VP website online form to get an electronic invoice sent to your email. It's easy to pay with PayPal from there.

For additional details, see the website - Membership Renewal - Valley Prospectors

### Don't Forget - Early Bird Renewal is Always Welcome

AS OF FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2023

**GOLD IS**

**\$2.0345] PER OUNCE.**

**\$65.4] PER GRAM.**

2022-2023 CHANGE UP \$256.10

<https://pricegold.net/>

## 2024 Calendar is in the Works...

### Upcoming EVENTS

Thank you to everyone who participated in the potential event poll at the Holiday Party. Below are just a few of the outing that are in the works.

Dates and details to be determined. Stay tuned for updates.

-Susan Birrell

Full Weekend Event

#### RED CLOUD MINE

Yuma, AZ in the "Silver Mining District", started in the 1800's as a silver and lead mining area for Wulfenite.

Full Weekend Event

#### TRILOBITE DIGGING

Utah trip to dig fossils.

2-day Event

#### SHARK TOOTH

Ernst Quarry - Dig starts at 7:30am  
Abundant aquatic fossils and shark teeth.

Day Trip

#### MOJAVE RIVER MUSEUM - BORAX MINE MUSEUM

Includes rockhounding in surrounding area.

Day Trip

#### WESTERN SCIENCE CENTER

Hemet, CA One of the largest natural history museums in Riverside County featuring local history and pre-history.

1-2 Day Event

#### PETROGLYPH TOUR

Pending event date weather, will be a day trip or overnight camping.

1-2 Day Event

#### 2 BURROS LOCAL TOUR

Includes prospecting the 2 Burros claim, the Owl Mining Store, and a local tour of local features.

#### OTHER EVENTS

**Silversmithing Class** Victorville, CA \$100 Learn to make a silver ring start to finish.

**Rock Journey** 6 week hoteling/camping caravan. Join for a few days or the whole journey focusing on Agate, Fluorescent Minerals, Fossils, and whatever we find!

Illinois - Geodes & Fossils/Michigan - Omar's, Fluorescent Sodalites, Unakite, agates, fossils, & more/S. Dakota - Fairburn and Bubble Gum Agates, Petrified Wood, Jasper, Rose Quartz/Montana - Moss Agate, Iris Agate & Sapphires!!



to the DOI and it gets approved by congress. Until that happens, Happy Recreational Rockhounding and Enjoy Your Public Lands.

Another area of concern is the proposed creation of the Chuckwalla National Monument of 700,000 acres of Public Land. - **H.R. 5660: Chuckwalla National Monument Establishment and Joshua Tree National Park Expansion Act of 2023** - which includes the Wiley Well District and the Hauser Geode Beds collecting areas. As of today the bill is still in committee and has a 3% chance of passing. Contained in the Bill is a paragraph that allows for noncommercial collecting of rocks, minerals, and semi-precious gemstones, so long as such recreational use is consistent with the purposes specified in applicable laws (including regulations), applicable management plans, and input from the Commission regarding potential impacts to culturally sensitive sites and resources. If the bill does pass Congress and is signed by the President, we, in Southern California, will have the only two National Monuments that allow the removal of natural resources. The Hauser Geode Beds MOU with the BLM will need to be revised to meet any new requirements. If the Bill does not pass Congress there is chance that the monument will be established through a Presidential Proclamation which most likely will not have rockhounding allowed. We will then be at the same point in the process as we were in the MTNM in 2016. If the land becomes part of the Joshua Tree National Park, all of the collecting sites within the 700.000 acres will be closed.

Again, Happy Rockhounding and Enjoy Your Public Lands. To learn more on the proposal go to:  
<https://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/118/hr5660>

If there are any other issues that you have concerns about please let me know so they can be researched and a possible coarse of action may be able to be created.

## CFMS News

*From the January 2024 CFMS Newsletter*

### ROCKHOUND SOAPBOX

By John Martin, PLAC Chair  
[alaa@amlands.org](mailto:alaa@amlands.org)

### An Update on Public Lands of Southern California Deserts

Happy New Year CFMS Recreational Rockhounds. Just an update on some of the things going on in the CFMS area regarding Collecting. The Mojave Trails National Monument (MTNM) Management Plan is still in the final stages. The BLM has received many comments on the Management Plan from Rockhounds across the country and I thank all of you who sent in a comment to make the voice of rockhounding be heard. For now Recreational Rockhounding is considered an acceptable recreational activity within the MTNM. The final approval will be when the local BLM submits the plan

## Looking for Articles and Ideas for the New Year

The Valley Prospector Newsletter Crew is looking for short articles, memories of Club activities, local history, or other topic ideas for the Drywasher's Gazette going into 2024. Remember that sharing your knowledge and club history helps to build the next generation of prospectors helping to grow this unique hobby that we all love. We look forward to hearing from you. Just e-mail the club's general e-mail address with "Newsletter" in the subject line or reach out to the Editor team Coreena Ross or Michelle O'Brien.

Cheers for the New Year!

