

# Drywasher's Gazette

September/October 2025

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Next Meeting – Tuesday October 7<sup>th</sup>

## 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

General Membership Meeting is held first Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm at the Elks Lodge in San Bernardino, CA.



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## July & August Event Recap

### Club Member Appreciation Picnic at Miner's Folly

Members gathered together at the Miner's Folly Claim in the beautiful Holcomb Valley during July to celebrate the community that our Club creates. Blue skies and the rumble of dry washers were the background to a lovely potluck picnic and BBQ.

The gold pan tossing competition challenged veteran members and guests ending in a "toss off" for first place. All in all, a good day to be a prospector among friends.



Photo Courtesy of Kent Bryant

### 2025 Wrightwood Mountaineer Days

*Thank you to all that came to help in Wrightwood Gold Panning. Thank you to Lorraine, Calvin, Michael, Lee, Brian, Joe, Fred, Burl, Michelle, and Mary. We had a great time showing kids and people how to pan and how equipment for mining works. Thank you for all the help setting up and packing it up at end of the 2 days. Could not have done it without all of you.*

- Steve Shubert

Valley Prospectors were proud to participate in the 61<sup>st</sup> annual Mountaineer days. Pie eating contests, petting zoos, reenactors portraying gunslingers and saloon girls, live music and a parade full of local pride highlight what a special small town Wrightwood is. The kids enjoyed the axe throwing and mechanical bull and the adults competed for the Best Beard and Moustache.



### Chasing the Gold at the Northern Claims

An incredible meet up of members from across the state converged on the Union Flat campground in search of Yuba River gold this August. The Club nearly filled the campground. We could not have asked for better weather and each day was like a postcard.

Fresh and ripe wild blackberries dotted the campground. Members Paul & Mike even made them into

delicious blackberry cake. We also took the opportunity to get all the claim paperwork and tax obligations up to date on a trip to historic Downieville. With a population of 500, it is also the county seat of Sierra County. Original placer claims records back to the Gold Rush are archived in the small office along with a replica gold nugget display.



Photos from A. Frost and M. O'Brien

## Ord Mountain Rendezvous Info

We will all start converging on the Ord Mountain primitive campgrounds starting at 10am Friday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025. There will be porta potties brought in for the event, but there are no other facilities in the area.

### Saturday Main Events

**Jim Straight Memorial Metal Detector Hunt** - 9:30 am \$20 registration. By Valley Prospectors

**Kids Metal Detecting (free)** – 11:30 am

**Trash Hunt** (Free Entry) at Noon on October 24th

**Hamburger/Hot Dog Lunch** sponsored by Valley Prospectors \$5 gets you a fresh from the grill hot dog or hamburger, chips, and water. BBQ is hot and ready at noon

**Gold Panning Contest** - \$5 registration by First Class Miners – 2 pm

**Chili Cook-off** – Entry FREE - Saturday Night – bowls due by 4:00 pm for judging

**Potluck** starts at 4:30 pm

**Bingo after Potluck** .25 cents. Winner(s) split the pot!

**S'mores and Campfire** after dark.

### Directions

I 15 North – take Highway 247 (Barstow Road), Barstow – turn right, and approximately 16- 19 miles down Highway 247 you'll see a brown BLM route marker 6640 on the road. The road is on the east side. Take a left if you are coming from Barstow on this dirt road and you will see a large BLM Informational canopy sign posted for the area. Follow this dirt road up a small and easy grade. The camp area is on the left side of the road. It is not hard to see and it's easy to get to. GPS coordinates: N34 degrees 41.008, W116 degrees 57.398  
Dry camping (primitive)\*





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## September General Meeting Minutes September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025

President Albert Naki called the meeting to order. The meeting began at 6:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Art Fairchild.

**Approval of Minutes:** Approval of Minutes: President Albert Naki asked for the approval of the June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025, Meeting Minutes as published in the July Drywasher's Gazette. Art Fairchild moved to approve the Meeting Minutes from June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025. Steve Schubert seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lorraine Frost gave the treasurer's report.

**Wagonmaster Report:** Steve Schubert spoke about the Wrightwood Mountaineer Days. The dates of the outing were July 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The club had a great outing with the Gold Panning Booth. He said the \$10.00 Gold Bags sold out quickly.

**Outing Report:** Lorraine Frost spoke about the Membership Appreciation Lunch that was held at Miner's Folly in Big Bear, CA. The dates of the outing were July 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

The next outing will be held on September 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025 and it will be at the Indian Gulch/Jackass Claims. The club will camp at Miner's Folly Claims.

**Lady Luck Report:** Steve Schubert gave his report. **Finds of the Month Report:** Everett Miller gave his report.

**Membership Report:** Lorraine Frost gave her report. There are currently 258 Family Memberships and 7 Lifetime Memberships and one honorary membership.

**Gold Sales:** Art Fairchild gave his report.

**Editor Report:** Articles must be submitted to the newsletter by September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025, according to Michelle O'Brien. Members are requested to submit articles for the newsletter.

**Claims Report:** Lorraine Frost gave her report. **Club Apparel:** Lorraine Frost gave her report.

**Northern California Claims Report:** Lorraine Frost spoke about the Yuba River trip. There were eleven Valley Prospectors members and families who attended the outing. Coreena Ross also gave a report, and she handed out eight Drywasher's Gazettes newsletters and nine new membership applications. Steve Schubert also spoke about sniping on the Moriah Claim.

**Rendezvous Report:** Lorraine Frost gave her report. Lorraine said the Rendezvous Outing will be held on October 24<sup>th</sup>, through October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025, and it will be held in the Ord Mountains.

**Refreshments Report:** Mary Schubert thanked everyone who brought refreshments to the meeting tonight.

**Courtesy Report:** Mary Schubert gave her report.

**Christmas Party:** Mary Schubert spoke about the club's upcoming Christmas Party that is going to be held at Pinon Hills Community Center on December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025. The time of the Christmas Party is going to be from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. She reminded everyone to pay \$5 per person to RSVP for the Christmas Party.

**Guests:** President Albert Naki recognized the guests who were attending the meeting.

President Albert Naki called for a break in the meeting and the time was 6:32 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 7:00 p.m.

**Program:** Lorraine Frost spoke about the 1872 Mining Laws and looking for new claims for the club. She also spoke about what you need to know when looking for claims.

**Old Business:** There was no old business to discuss.

**New Business:** Lorraine Frost made the motion to nominate Steve and Mary Schubert to receive an Honorary Lifetime Membership. Coreena Ross seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**Valley Prospectors 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration:** Lorraine Frost spoke about the upcoming 50th Anniversary of the founding of Valley Prospectors and she will check to see if the person who does the chuckwagon will be able to do the outing in Big Bear, CA.

**Door Prize Winner:** Bill Vest **Treasure Finds of the Month**

**Winners:** 1<sup>st</sup>: Albert Naki, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Ernie Tovar, 3<sup>rd</sup>: Kent Bryant

**Gold Finds of the Month Winners** 1<sup>st</sup>: Joe Dixon, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Brian Teeling, 3<sup>rd</sup>: Lorraine Frost

President Albert Naki called for the meeting to be adjourned. Steve Schubert made the motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Everett Miller seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

AS OF MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>

GOLD IS

\$3.61140 PER OUNCE.

\$115.59 PER GRAM.

<https://pricegold.net/>



**Congratulations to  
Steve & Mary Schubert  
on being named  
Honorary Members for their  
long service and dedication  
to the Club!**



From Steve and Mary Schubert

*Steve and I wish to thank the Board and Membership for honoring us as Honorary Members of the Valley Prospectors. What a wonderful gesture from all of you.*

*Thank You*

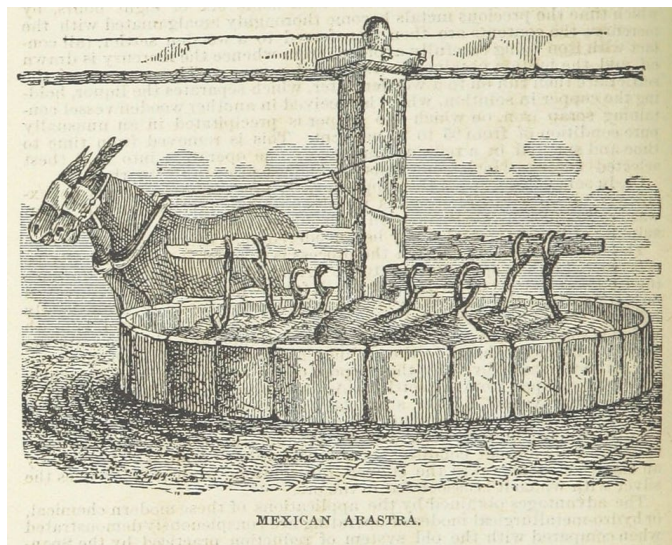
## What in the World is an Arastra?

By Michelle O'Brien

Independent small-scale miners often explore the remnants of Gold Rush-era operations, hoping to uncover what previous prospectors left behind. This is exactly the case in Holcomb Valley, where several of the Club's claims are located. Although the initial gold discovery in the area came from placer deposits in a creek, it was hard rock mining that ultimately established the region as a significant gold producer.

Miners relied on explosives and sheer physical effort to extract gold-bearing quartz from the valley's many deposits. But recovering the gold required powerful crushing equipment—and that's where the arastra (also spelled arrastra) played a crucial role.

Foundations and tailings from arastra processing can be found all over Holcomb Valley. Much like a grain mill grinds wheat into flour, the arastra used large, heavy stones to crush gold-bearing ore into fine particles. These crushed materials were then processed using sluices and mercury to extract the gold. The crushing stones typically took the form of a large wheel set on its edge or, in simpler designs, were simply heavy



rocks dragged over the ore by a rotating center post. The word arastra comes from the Spanish verb arrastrar, meaning "to drag along the ground." In the early days of mining, these devices were powered by mules, horses, oxen, or water wheels. As technology advanced, steam engines and gasoline-powered motors took over, keeping the crushing mechanisms in motion. Compared to the more complex and costly stamp mills, arastras were easier to build and maintain, making them a practical first step for miners looking to scale up their operations.

Top Right: The arrastra of Death Valley's Gold Hill mill was built in 1934  
Source: <https://westernmininghistory.com>

Bottom Left: From The Handbook to Arizona scanned on  
<https://jenikirbyhistory.getarchive.net>



*From CFMS Newsletter August 2025 & Reprinted  
from AFMS June 2025*

## **One Liners and Laughs for Rockhound Joy**

By Jennifer Haley, AFMS Historian

There is always at least one person, if not more in each club, who are admired for their wit or just bringing a smile to your face whenever you are around them. During your monthly meetings, play time on field trips, working on your shows and in the lapidary shop, someone seems to have the spontaneous gift for creating wonderful smiles.

One of the earlier Rocks and Minerals magazines from nearly sixty years ago, had a section in some of their issues each year for wit. When I read these, I thought what a fun idea for clubs to pay attention to, and add to their newsletters and send in for their federation newsletters as well. Your juniors can be very clever, so I am sure you can gather some witty statements from them too. Some of your officers and chairmen may have some words of wisdom that have stuck with you, and those could be used also. Here are some examples from the magazine. The title of this particular section for this issue was, "How I Became a Rockhound."

- "I started picking up rocks on trips, then got stopping at rock shops, then built a tumbler, bought a secondhand rock saw, and here I am, rocks running out my ear.
- "Rocks have always interested me, but due to the Tulsa rock show I really went overboard. I never have had a dull minute since!"
- "I started out looking for uranium-and here I am."
- "My mother made me do it."

If you inspire your club members to get their minds behind this, I think you'll find quite a few more smiles enjoying wit and humor. Enjoy your club and your federations.

*From CFMS Newsletter August 2025*

*Reprint of From The Roadrunner, 2/89 via The Glacial Drifter, 09/1990*

## **AN IDEAL CLUB MEMBER'S ALPHABET**

*By Myrtle Griffith*

- A – ALWAYS attend meetings.
- B – BRING someone with you.
- C – COMMUNICATE
- D – DEVELOP mutual understanding and respect.
- F – FRIENDSHIP--cherish and nurture this valuable community.
- G – GENEROSITY, GOALS, GENTLENESS--use when needed.
- H – HONESTY--use it regularly.
- I – IDEAS--share with other members.
- J – JEALOUSY--avoid like the plague.
- K – KNOWLEDGE--help promote it.
- L – LABOR--donate when and where needed.
- M – MISTAKES--correct yours, overlook others.
- N – NONSENSE--use frequently--breaks monotony.
- O – ORDER--help maintain at all meetings.
- P – PATIENCE--develop as much as possible; rockhounds need a large amount.
- Q – QUARRELS--never indulge. They serve a good purpose.
- R – ROCKS--study, hunt, collect, work, polish or build with them.
- S – SHARE your talents, energy, knowledge with others.
- T – TALENT--use and improve as much as possible.
- U – UNITED--help the club stay that way.
- V – VALUE friends, members. yourself and the organization.
- W – WORK--an important ingredient; be willing to help carry the load.
- X – RATE all gossip, malice, petty peevs and negative attitudes.
- Y – YESTERDAY--leave it where it belongs--in the past.
- Z – ZEAL--be generous with it, encourage others to do likewise.



## Birthday Wishes from the Club



**Visiting or Working on a Club Claim or on a Claim the Club has Permission to Work?**  
**\*\*Please Read the Following\*\* This Applies to ALL Club Members and Their Guests.**

**Hold Harmless Agreement:** Valley Prospectors and its members are not responsible or are to be held liable for injury, illness or death occurring at any club claim, function, or outing by any member or guest. Each member and their guests are responsible for properly being informed of potential hazards or risks that may occur while engaged in any activities while on club claims. **"ENTER CLAIMS AT YOUR OWN RISK"**. By requesting to be a new member or by renewing my Valley Prospector's membership I have read and understood this agreement and agree to the above statements.

## Updated Club Claims List

Check out [www.valleyprospectors.org](http://www.valleyprospectors.org) for more information and maps to each of the claims. After each trip to a claim, fill out a claim report on the Club website.

*Seriously, turn in your claim reports after every claim trip even if you did not recover gold. These records prove that the claim is active and is critical to maintaining claim ownership. Link on the Club website.*

### Club Owned Claims

JACKASS #1 PLACER – 160 acres  
INDIAN GULCH PLACER – 60 acres  
MINERS FOLLY PLACER – 60 acres  
PICKETT #2 PLACER – 30 acres  
PICKETT #3 PLACER – 20 acres  
GOLD VENTURE PLACER – 20 acres  
MORIAH PLACER – 15 acres  
THE 2 BURROS PLACER – 20 acres  
HARVEYS ORO RICO – 120 acres  
VP Summit Placer – 60 acres

### Private Claims Granting Member Access

Hungry Man – 110 acres (Livingston & Devlin)  
Hungry Man 2 – 120 acres (Livingston & Devlin)  
Hungry Man 3 – 120 acres (Livingston & Devlin)  
Hungry Man 4 – 120 acres (Livingston & Devlin)  
Chunker – 80 acres (Livingston & Devlin)

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## \*\*\*GENERAL MEETING REMINDER\*\*\*

You're invited to be our guest at the General membership meetings that are held on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:00 pm at the Elks Lodge at 2055 Elks Dr, San Bernardino, CA. **Can't make it in person? Join in via Zoom meeting.**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83026668634?pwd=ZUlyUlpLK1ZOQ1R1aTJmVndJQ0tNdz09>

**Meeting ID: 830 2666 8634      Passcode: 661754 One Tap Mobile**

+16694449171,,83026668634#,,,,\*661754# US+16699006833,,83026668634#,,,,\*661754# US (San Jose)By Audio Only: • +1 669 444 9171 US

**Want to Contact the Newsletter Crew or any other Committee Member?** Check out the Directory on the Club website or e-mail [valleyprospectors49@gmail.com](mailto:valleyprospectors49@gmail.com)

## Calendar of Events

DATE	DESCRIPTION	NOTES
<b>OCT 24-26</b>	<i>Ord Mountain Rendezvous</i>	<i>Main Events on Saturday</i>
<b>NOV 15</b>	Coolgardie Oro Rico Outing	
<b>DEC 13</b>	Holiday Party Potluck @ Pinon Hill Community Center 10433 Mountain Rd Pinon Hills, CA	<i>\$5 covers entry and gets 2X raffle tickets</i> <i>RSVP to Mary Shubert or by email:</i> <a href="mailto:valleyprospectors49@gmail.com">valleyprospectors49@gmail.com</a> <i>Pay in cash or Zelle (Put VP Holiday Party in notes)</i>

*\*\* As always events are subject to last-minute change due to weather or availability. Please make sure to check the Facebook group for any last-minute updates. If you are not on Facebook, please e-mail or text another member who has access.*



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Remember that all prospectors may be judged by the example "You set."

Leave flora and fauna as you found it.  
"Do Not Destroy any property,  
public or private!"

"Obey all laws". Please do not litter.

*Each member of Valley Prospectors should strive to set a good example for others*