

Drywasher's Gazette

November 2025

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



Web Site: www.valleyprospectors.org
Email: valleyprospectors49@gmail.com
Next Meeting – Tuesday, November 4th – Details Inside

Mission and Code of Ethics

Valley Prospectors 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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Coolgardie Mining District

Covering a vast portion of the American southwest and bridging three states, the Mojave Desert is far more than an empty wasteland that it is often portrayed in modern media. It is certainly dry, expansive, and certainly deadly, but it also offers a multitude of mineral resources luring the most adventurous of prospectors.

The Coolgardie Mining District is located to the northwest of Barstow, CA in the northern territory of the Mojave desert. It is to the west of the famous silver mining town of Calico founded in 1881. The nearby Rand Mining District was a heavy gold producer starting in

1895. The name, "Coolgardie" was a perhaps hopeful nod to the successful gold mining town of Coolgardie in Australia. Similar to its namesake, a lack of local water resources provided a major hurdle to mining operation.

Coolgardie is a dry placer mining region that draws on ancient riverbeds eroded from quartz veins to the northeast and east. The region saw its heyday between 1900-1915, but mining has never really ceased since that time. The humble dry washer and puffers reign supreme for modern miners. The area looks like a broad flat valley that is pocked marked with surface digging pits and holes to a labyrinth of underground tunnels chasing the best gravel deposits. The biggest mining operation was the Coolgardie Mining Company which had developed gas powered dry washers capable of processing up to 100 tons of material a day. Additional deposits of copper, silver, and even cinnabar have been reported nearby. Miners have noted that they do not see as much black sand in the Coolgardie deposit as much as you see in other ancient placer regions. The geology of this phenomenon is unclear. The source material has been speculated to be similar to a material called "quartz agate" by locals that is in a soft brown substrate of host rock. Ultimately, it is likely the mountainous source of this gold pocket has been long eroded away.

Metal detectors still find success in the region going over old workings from the early 1900's as larger gold would be rejected from the old timer's screen on the dry washers and rockers.

As always, be safe and partner up before heading out. Snakes and abandoned mines are a constant hidden danger. For those adventurous enough to do a little exploring, this region is a hidden gem with many untapped areas. (Images from <https://mojavedesert.net/> Article by M. O'Brien)

Upcoming Events... Mark Your Calendars

Ord Mountain
Rendezvous
Fri-Sat Oct 24-26th

Chili Cook Off
Metal Detecting
Raffles & Community
S'Mores
Gold Panning

Oro Rico Claim Outing
Coolgardie Mining District
Saturday Nov. 15th

Additional details will be
announced at next Club Meeting

Sat. Dec 13th
Potluck
11am-3pm
Set up begins 9am
*Help Welcome

Holiday
Party

Pinon Hills
Community
Center

Ord Mountain Rendezvous Info

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

Trash Hunt (Free Entry) at Noon on Friday (getting the field ready for the hunt)

Saturday Main Events

Biscuits & Gravy Breakfast – 8:00 am by High Desert Gold Diggers

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

Kids Metal Detecting (free) – 11:30 am

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

Gold Panning Contest - \$5 registration by First Class Miners – 1 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. Winners 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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October General Meeting Minutes October 7th, 2025

President Albert Naki called the meeting to order. The meeting started at 6:06 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by John Howell.

Approval of Minutes: Approval of Minutes: President Albert Naki asked for the approval of the September 2nd, 2025, Meeting Minutes as published in the September Drywasher's Gazette Mark Lash made the motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from September 2nd, 2025. John Howell seconded the motion and the motion carries.

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

Outing Report: Brian Teeling gave his report.

Lady Luck Report: Steve Schubert gave his report.

Membership Report: Lorraine Frost gave her report. There are currently 261 Family Memberships and 7 Lifetime Memberships and 1 Honorary Membership.

Finds of the Month Report: Everett Miller gave his report.

Editor Report: Articles must be submitted to the newsletter by October 10th, 2025, according to Michelle O'Brien. Members are requested to submit articles for the newsletter.

Rendezvous Report: Lorraine Frost gave her report. Lorraine said the outing Rendezvous Outing will be held on October 24th, through October 26th, 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.

Valley Prospectors Insurance: Lorraine Frost spoke about purchasing the liability insurance for next year. This insurance covers all of the members while out prospecting on the claims.

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 13th, 2025. The time of the Christmas Party is going to be from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. She reminded everyone to RSVP for the Christmas Party. There'll be sign-up sheets passed around at the next meeting for people to sign up and what you might bring

Membership Appreciation Lunch: Lorraine Frost spoke about next year's membership appreciation lunch. She's going to ask the Big Bear Museum to see if the club can use their facilities for next year's 50th anniversary of Valley Prospectors. The club purchased a business membership in the Big Bear Museum.

Club Apparel: Lorraine Frost gave her report. There are T-shirts that are for sale at the meeting and the cost is \$5.00. They're clearing out the club apparel so the club can buy new stock.

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

Program Report: Lorraine Frost said Bural LaRue is presenting tonight's program it's going to be about his trip to Africa and Kruger National Park.

Valley Prospectors Club Nominations: Steve Schubert called for the Valley Prospectors Club Officers nominations to be opened. The so far nominations are:

President: Albert Naki

Vice-President: Lee Skillings, Joe Dixon

Treasurer: Lorraine Frost

Secretary: Coreena Ross

Members at Large: Joe Dixon, Stacy Dixon, Katherine Naki, Joe Chavez, Brian Teeling, David Tamulevich, Ernie Tovar, Eddie Mejia, Fred Borad, Michelle O'Brien, Garry Devlin, Susan Birrell, Diane Railsback, Steve Schubert, Josh Riehl, John Howell.

Steve Schubert called for the Valley Prospector's Club Nominations to be closed. Lorraine explained the voting process.

President Albert Naki called for a break in the meeting and the time was 6:55 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 7:12 p.m.

Program: Bural LaRue spoke about his trip to Africa and the Kruger National Park.

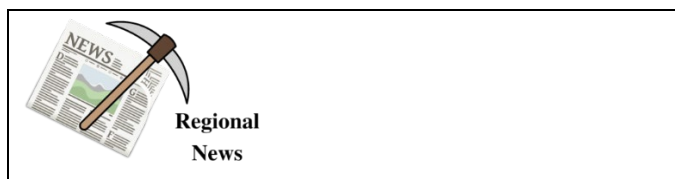
Old Business: There was no old business to discuss. **New Business:** There was no new business to report.

Treasure Finds of the Month Winners: 1st. Albert Naki, 2nd. Joe Chavez, 3rd. Donald Snyder.

Gold Finds of the Month Winners: 1st. Donald Snyder, 2nd. Joe Dixon, 3rd. Brian Teeling.

President Albert Naki called for the meeting to be adjourned. Stacy Dixon made the motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Joe Chavez seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.



All From AFMS Newsletter, Vol. 78, No. 8

Pineapple Opals

From The Opal Express, The American Opal Society, September 2025

Pineapple opals are pseudomorphs—minerals that have replaced another mineral while preserving the original crystal shape. In this case, opal replaces ikaite (a hydrated form of calcium carbonate).

-Ikaite forms only under specific conditions—low temperatures, high alkalinity, and elevated pressures—typically in deep marine or cold sedimentary environments.

-Over time, as environmental conditions shift, the unstable ikaite decomposes and is replaced molecule by molecule by silica-rich fluids, forming opal.

-The original crystal habit of ikaite, which features radiating spear-like formations, is preserved—resulting in the iconic spikey “pineapple” shape. Opal pseudomorphs are created by the deposition of opal in casts (molds) of fossil bone, teeth, shell, belemnoids (ancient relatives of cuttlefish), crinoids (sea lilies), wood, fir cones and even skeletons of large prehistoric animals. Many of these fossilized forms contain exceptional quality noble opal.

White Cliffs is the only place where these marvelous (and very rare) pseudomorphic opals have been found. White Cliffs is a small town in outback New South Wales in Australia, in Central Darling Shire. White Cliffs is around 255km northeast of Broken Hill, 93km north of Wilcannia. At the 2021 census, White Cliffs had a population of 156. To the objective observer White Cliffs is really a single purpose town. Miners started coming here (the local Aborigines found it far too hot for permanent settlement and occasionally visited the place as they traveled to and from the Darling River) in the 1880's and, apart from its minor function as a service centre for the surrounding properties, it remains a town driven by opals. The summer temperatures, typically over 40°C (104°F), forced the miners underground.

Pineapple Opals cont.

The 100 million years old sandstone conglomerate in which the opal seams were buried carried two advantages. It was remarkably stable (no one has ever died from a mine collapse in White Cliffs) and it was relatively easy to dig. By around 1900 miners were burrowing into the hills in an attempt to find opals and escape from the heat. The real way to see White Cliffs is from the air. It appears like a strange moonscape with an estimated 50,000 disused diggings.

Fewer than a few hundred authentic pineapple opals have ever been documented, making them one of the rarest opal types on Earth. Their scarcity, combined with their bizarre and beautiful form, makes them highly coveted by mineral collectors and museums. Top specimens can command very high prices in the collector's market.



Top left: Pineapple Opals: Rare Pseudomorphs from White Cliffs, Australia. Photo-Grant Pearson

Middle: Pineapple Opals: Rare Pseudomorphs from White Cliffs, Australia. Photo-RedEarthOpal

Bottom: The Heart of Australia, a 3,510 ct double pseudomorph ikaite-calcite-opal gem specimen, is considered one of the finest ever unearthed. (Pineapple Opal Fossil). Courtesy of Graeme Downton

Reference Material:

www.geologyin.com

Wikipedia

www.aussietowns.com.au/town/white-cliffs-nsw

www.whitecliffstopal.com/

Pictures found at: www.geologyin.com/2016/08/gorgeous-opal-pineapples.html

Above article via Breccia, October 2025

AFMS Newsletter Goes Digital February 2026!

By Linda Jaeger, AFMS Editor

When February 2026 rolls around the AFMS Newsletter will be completely digital. There will be no hard copies mailed from AFMS. As always, the newsletter will be posted on the AFMS website.

The newsletter or the hotlink directly to the newsletter on the website will be emailed to each of the regional federation editors for them to forward to the clubs in their federation. Each club would then email (forward) the same email or hotlink to their club members. Clubs can print the newsletter for their members who do not use email. See the September AFMS Newsletter for more information about the decision to go digital.

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Clain Information

More details on the Club Website

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 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)

AS OF MONDAY, OCTOBER 13TH

GOLD IS

\$4.103.02 PER OUNCE.

\$131.92 PER GRAM.

<https://pricegold.net/>

To the November Babies...

HAPPY
Birthday

May All of Your Days be
Amazing!

Valley Prospectors



OF SAN BERNARDINO

Holiday Party

& Potluck

Sign-up by e-mail

valleyprospectors49@gmail to Sign-up

\$5.00
per
Member

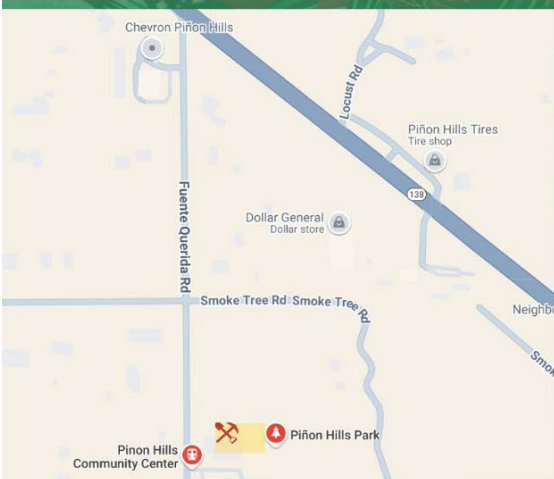
11am-3pm

Pinon Hills Community Center

10433 Mountain Road

Pinon Hills, CA 92372

Saturday December 13th



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

Calendar of Events

DATE	DESCRIPTION	NOTES
OCT 24-26	<i>Ord Mountain Rendezvous</i>	<i>Main Events on Saturday</i>
NOV 15	Coolgardie Oro Rico Outing	<i>Meet 8am at Starlight Donuts in Barstow, CA we will caravan in to the claim.</i>
DEC 13	Holiday Party Potluck @ Pinon Hills Community Center 11 am – 3 pm	<i>\$5 covers entry and gets 2X raffle tickets RSVP by 12/2 to Mary Shubert or by email: valleyprospectors49@gmail.com Let her know what you are bringing for the feast. 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.*

WE NEED YOU!!

50TH ANNIVERSARY 1976-2026



VOLUNTEER IN 2026

Support Your Community
 Contact valleyprospectors49@gmail.com
 or let us know at the next meeting



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