

Drywasher's Gazette

January 2026

Send Exchange Bulletins to:
Valley Prospectors
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Web Site: www.valleyprospectors.org
Email: valleyprospectors49@gmail.com
Next Meeting – Tuesday January 6th at San Bernardino Elks Lodge – Details Inside

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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CHEERS TO A YEAR OF GOLD & GOOD COMPANY

Holiday Party Recap

The Club gathered in Pinon Hills to celebrate and share a lovely potluck meal. We had a chance to celebrate with each other and to acknowledge the hard work of everyone throughout 2025.



Left: Prospector of the Year for 2025 - Brian Teeling
Right: Treasure Hunter of the Year for 2025 - Albert Naki



2026 Board Members ready to start the New Year



2026 Marks the Golden 50th Anniversary for the Valley Prospectors of San Bernardino

On December 2, 1976, about 100 people came together to form a local club centered around a drive to explore and locate gold. It was to be based on the values of inclusivity, volunteerism, and comradery, and to bring the joy of prospecting to others. Early on the Club formed with close ties to the Gold Prospector Association of America and the group determined that they would be governed with a democratic approach. The annual Christmas Potluck has been a tradition since these early formation years. Over the next few months, we will be writing about the incredible history of the club and of prospecting since the Club's founding.

In 1981 it was voted to formally become a non-profit with additional outreach to fulfill our educational mandate. The very next year the Club bought its first claims. Burro #1 and Burro #2 for a total of twenty acres available to club members. The skills and expertise of members helped expand the Club's holdings to claims on 265 acres of gold bearing land available for members to explore with access to another 550 acres open by the generosity of private stakeholders.

2025 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.

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)

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 – 60 acres

Over the years small miners have faced increasingly restrictive regulations, often targeted at larger commercial endeavors with larger environmental impacts or a small percentage of the small mining community acting in bad faith regarding national and state lands. In 2009, suction dredging in all sized mining operations became illegal in California. This vastly changed how prospectors could approach claims with water. Mass closures to areas for mining have come and gone. Balancing the needs of biodiverse natural resources with the availability of the public lands to the people has always been a continuing evolution of best practices. Recently the National Park Service has started fining AWD vehicles attempting to use roads and trails designated for "high clearance four-wheel drive" vehicles equipped with a transfer case capable of locking the front and rear axles together—something AWD vehicles lack. This is likely due to strained NPS resources available to make rescues of stuck vehicles in these areas. Accessibility to the full expanse of Club holdings is an area of concern with this in mind. The Club will certainly face challenges in the years to come, but given what has already been survived and persevered, it is clear that the Valley Prospectors of San Bernardino remains strong as of its Golden Anniversary.

Valley Prospectors December 2, 2023 - Meeting Minutes

December General Meeting December 13, 2025

Meeting was held during the Club's annual Holiday Party at the Pinon Hills Community Center.

Awards and recognitions were handed out by President Naki and Treasurer Lorraine Frost. Steve and Mary Schubert gave out special recognitions with a custom ribbon for those who had helped at shows and schools giving panning demonstrations.

2026 Governing Board Elections Results

President - Albert Naki

Vice-President - Lee Skillings

Secretary - Coreena Ross

Treasurer - Lorraine Frost

Members-at-Large

Steve Schubert	Stacey Dixon
Garry Devlin	Susan Birrell
Katherine Naki	Calvin Shipley
Ernie Tovar	Brian Teeling
Joe Chavez	Eddie Mejia
Joe Dixon	
Michelle O'Brien	



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

Members-at-Large Alternates - Diane Railsback,
Josh Riehl & Fred Borad tied (will break tie at Jan 6th meeting)

Volunteers are always needed for the various committees and roles that help keep the Club running. It would be easier than you think to join in.

As always, we are reminded to turn in claim reports on the Club website

When you share a Birthday Month with people like...

Elvis Presley

Isaac Asimov

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Alexander Hamilton

Dolly Parton

January Birthdays

Just remember
that they are
lucky to share a
Birthday Month
with you!

Happy Birthday from the Club!

2026 Membership Renewal Time

Renewals are \$40 and need to be paid by January 31, 2026.

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 payments to:
valleyprospectors49@gmail.com

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

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

**Don't Forget – Early Bird
Renewal is Always Welcome**

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP REMINDER 2026 DUES

DEADLINE IS JANUARY 31, 2026



AS OF WEDNESDAY, DEC. 18, 2026

GOLD IS

\$4,329.90 PER OUNCE.

\$139.21 PER GRAM.

<https://pricegold.net/>



Regional
News

All From AFMS Newsletter, December 2025

"I" SAFETY--SAFETY MATTERS

By Ellory Borow, AFMS Safety Chair

Yes, "I" safety. There are a great many published articles concerning the wisdom of using goggles to protect one's eyes from the hazards in our hobby. So, this article will focus on the "I". The "I" as in you, me, us, and we. Here is a short story to illustrate the point: I have a friend who pilots a helicopter. She has an excellent, first-rate mechanic tending to her flying machine. She feels comfortable with her mechanic's service and completely trusts his work in keeping her machine in tip top condition. That said, prior to each and every flight she "pre-flights" the helicopter. Prior to each of her helicopter flights, she examines the machine and checks to look at dozens and dozens of conditions including: weeping lubrication here, a grease spot that shouldn't be there, a control surface that does not look right, "play" in moving parts that should be just right - not too loose, not too tight, and so on. In other words, while she trusts her helicopter's mechanic, she double checks for herself before she flies.

There are comparable situations to "pre-flighting" an aircraft in everyday life. Take food safety for example. Before consuming any food, whether fresh or refrigerated, we typically take note of our food. Even though most of our food is checked multiple times before we get it, we also check it before eating it. Milk, for example, before consumption does it smell fresh? Is it lumpy as we pour it? Does its color look right? What might be its expiration date? Milk, as in all our foods, must pass our checks before eating it. Double checking should also be performed in our rock and mineral hobby. If your club is fortunate enough to have its own workshop, there is no doubt a person or committee of dedicated people ensuring the safety of everything in the workshop. There is a wisdom in us to double check things for sake of our personal safety.

Might an equipment guard have come loose the last time the equipment was used? Might there be a new spill on the floor? Might an electric cord have shifted into a dangerous position? Yes, we trust the safety efforts of others, but we also want to put the "I" in safety as being ultimately responsible for our own safety... and in helping with the safety of others.

Some examples:

- When setting up for a show, are the folding table legs in the locked position?
- Did we check the truck motor oil level before going on an extended collecting trip?
- Are the equipment guards secure on our lapidary machines?
- Are soldering fumes collected and safely ventilated as we work?
- Is there sufficient task lighting so we are not squinting and causing eye strain?
- Are we sure of the rocks a bit over where we are collecting?

These and numerous other situations remind us of the "I" in safety. We are the person ultimately responsible for our and our family's safety. That helicopter pilot - well, it's her hands on the collective and cyclic controls, it's her shoes on the pedals. It's her decision whether she feels safe in flying that day. Please make sure you feel safe in all you do in this great and wonderful hobby of ours. Be as safe as you can and enjoy it to the max. Your safety matters and so does your enjoyment.

From CFMS December 2025

March 7-8, 2026 – Ventura, CA

Ventura Gem & Mineral Society

Ventura County Fairgrounds, 10 W. Harbor Blvd., Ventura, CA

Hours: Sat 10-5, Sun 10-4

Contact: (805) 312-8467, info@vgms.org

Website: <http://www.vgms.org>

****VP will be doing Panning
Demonstrations! Volunteers needed.**

**Email the Club or talk to Steve S.
at the next meeting.****



FOR SALE
**KEENE 141 DRY
WASHER FOR \$900**

**IN VERY GOOD
CONDITION**

CONTACT RAY BY EMAIL
Email: ray141wj@gmail.com

Described by Keene Website as:
**Adjustable oscillating vibrator flow
gate controls. Super light weight
(20 lbs.) Folds into a 11" x 21" x 31"
for transport.**

**Have something you want to sell? Contact the newsletter crew by
emailing valleyprospectors49@gmail.com or by talking to
Michelle O. at one of the meetings.
Ads are free to place for Club Members. For additional details,
please reach out.**

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=ZUYlUlplK1ZQ1R1aTJmVndJQ0tNdz09>

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

2026 Calendar

DATE	DESCRIPTION	NOTES
01/06/26	General Meeting	San Bernardino Elks Lodge 2055 Elks Dr, San Bernardino, CA Starts at 6pm

CHECK HERE NEXT MONTH FOR THE UPDATED 2026 EVENT CALENDAR

New Officers and Board members please arrive by 5 pm for a short VP Board meeting. The Zoom meeting will be open as well.

General Liability Disclaimer

****READ BEFORE ENTERING OR WORKING ANY OF THE CLAIM SITES****

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.