

# Drywasher's Gazette

February 2026

Send Exchange Bulletins to:

Valley Prospectors

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Next Meeting – Tuesday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> – Details Inside

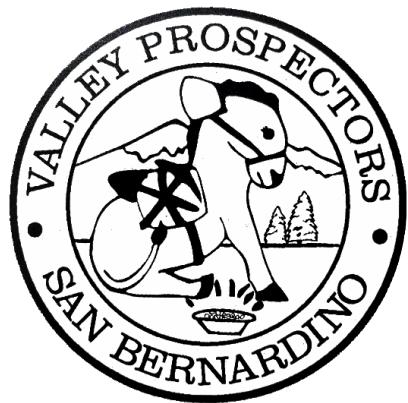
## Mission and Code of Ethics

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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On Saturday January 24, 2026, the Club had a meet up at the VP Summit claim. A wonderful turnout of 17 members met at the Camp Cajon Historical marker in the chilly morning hours to caravan into the claim together. Thankfully, member Don was able to guide our group through an alternate path on side roads to the claims as one of the railroad crossings was blocked by repair work. With the clear blue sky and snow dusted mountains, the view was beautiful. Travelling together as a group is a great way for new members to learn safe routes to the claim locations and to connect with other experienced miners who know the claim well. Each claim had its own geologic personality.



Half of the caravan getting ready to depart.



Left: Perfect Day

Right: Sluicing Summit material to extract black sand and gold.

\*All Photos by M.O.



The roads still have plenty of deep muddy puddles, drainage channels, and soft sandy areas from the recent rains, but everyone arrived safely. With the area still so damp, many members brought out their recirculating sluices or highbankers. The gold bearing sections of the claim originate from ancient Holocene era rivers. Tectonic movement and flooding have influenced how the deposits are spread out over the area. With some finding luck up the hills and others trying their luck in the surrounding gulleys. Regardless of where you start, safety is a top priority, and it is highly advised that you mine with a buddy and have first aid equipment on hand.

Summit Saturdays or Sundays have been a long-standing tradition in the club tracing back to the very beginning in the late 70's. For many members this was the first club claim they visited as a new prospector due to its ease of access and proximity in the local mountains.

## The Silver Surge

For the first time in history global silver prices have surged through the \$100 threshold per ounce in the first month of January. This is an overall rise of 249% over January 2025. Silver deposits are closely related to gold geologically, often occurring together in hydrothermal vein systems. Gold ore is likely to have a silver component prior to refinement. This amalgam is called electrum. Silver tarnishes when exposed to the air to develop a black patina that has been known to fool some miners into discarding it.

## February Book Recommendations

*Fictional Tales that Bring Stories of the California Gold Rush to Life*

Some authors have taken the echoes of history and woven them into historical fiction to recreate the vivid era of the Gold Rush through storytelling. Here are a few stories of adventure and how love can grow from the threads of adventure through adversity. The stories are rarely fairytales. Harsh realities clash with dreams for the protagonists. Through all of them the spirit of tenacity inspires modern prospectors to keep digging and dream big.

### **Daughter of Fortune by Isabel Allende**

A classic book about a Chilean orphan who follows her husband to California with dreams of riches. He quickly abandons her in San Francisco to seek the gold fields alone. Pregnant with his child, she follows him to the world of single male fortune seekers, women making a living through prostitution, and the tumult of the mining camps. As time goes on, she begins to find her own independence forging a new future.

### **Two Wolves by Giselle V. Steele**

Four childhood friends journey to the gold fields of California with dreams of fast riches. In 1848, a thin piece of metal about the size of a ladybug altered the history of California. To some, the discovery was a dream come true, but to others, it became a living nightmare. The story of Two Wolves follows the lives of four childhood friends that make the arduous journey through California gold country with dreams of striking it rich and easy riches. They quickly discover that the truth is a far more morally complex landscape explored by richly created characters laced with adventure.

### **Calico Palace by Gwen Bristow**

In 1848, San Francisco was a town of just 900 people. These residents were among the first to experience the thrill of the first gold finds. Early on initial ore samples were dismissed as "yellow mica" and those who believe the tales of golden natural treasure were mocked. When they returned laden with gold, they began to build the foundation that would be the infamous San Francisco. Some cracked under the pressure and realities of the Gold Rush and others capitalized on the opportunity to become more.



Mary Schubert has kindly volunteered to take over the Club Apparel sales this year and will be having periodic specials and sales on classic merch. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary apparel is in the design phase. Keep an eye on the Newsletter for details.

February Club Apparel  
SALE  
SPECIAL OFFER  
Crew Neck Pullover  
Sweatshirts  
**\$15.00 EACH**

CONTACT MARY  
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DETAILS OR E-MAIL  
[valleyprospectors49@gmail.com](mailto:valleyprospectors49@gmail.com)

## January General Meeting Minutes January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026

President Albert Naki called the meeting to order.

The meeting started at 6:05 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Steve Schubert.

**Approval of Minutes:** President Albert Naki asked for the approval of the general meeting minutes. A motion was made to accept the December 13th, 2025, general meeting minutes as published in the Drywasher's Gazette. Steve Schubert seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lorraine Frost gave the treasurer's report. Garry Devlin will be the co-treasurer this year and he will assist Lorraine Frost with the treasurer's position.

**Outing Report:** Lorraine Frost said the club was going to review last years outings schedule and try to match the same schedule.

**Claims Report:** Lorraine Frost said she is going to put together a claims committee for the club,

**Lady Luck Report:** Bural gave the Lady Luck report.

**Membership Report:** Lorraine Frost gave her report. There are currently 260 Family Memberships and 7 Lifetime Memberships and 1 Honorary Membership.

**Finds of the Month Report:** Everett Miller gave his report. He also spoke about the Christmas Party and the awards that were handed out.

**Editor Report:** Articles must be submitted to the newsletter by January 10th, 2026, according to Michelle O'Brien. Members are requested to submit articles for the newsletter.

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

**Christmas Party:** Mary Schubert thanked everyone who helped with the Christmas Party.

**Schools Report:** Steve and Mary Schubert spoke about doing the gold panning demonstrations for the schools.

**Club Apparel:** Mary Schubert gave her report.

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

**Program Report:** Lorraine Frost said they were going to show a video presented by the Professional Prospector.

**Program:** The program for the meeting tonight is the Professional Prospector video. President Albert Naki called for a break in the meeting and the time was 7:06 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 7:27 p.m.

**CFMS Report:** Bural LaRue gave his report.

**New Business:** Lorraine Frost spoke about the initiation fees being sent into the operating account. Lorraine Frost made the motion. Steve Schubert made the motion and Bill Vest seconded the motion. The motion carries.

**Name Badge Winner:** Aidan Keeling **Door Prize Winner:** John Bonson

**Treasure Finds of the Month Winners:** 1st. Joe Chavez, 2nd: Fred , 3rd: Brian Teeling. President Albert Naki called for the meeting to be adjourned. Stacey Dixon made the motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Mark Lash seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.





## Terry Lee Forrest Jun 19, 1946 – Oct 3, 2025

Terry Forrest was an early member of the Valley Prospectors and long time member of GPAA. He was a multi-talented man with a reputation for hard work and a keen eye for the everyday moments with his passion for photography.



*In Memoriam*

## James Tappon

Died Oct 31, 2025

Tragically killed at the age of 69 in a car crash in his hometown of Yucca Valley on Halloween. It has been reported that he had recently been engaged to get married again after being widowed. The driver of the car that hit Mr. Tappon is being charged criminally with driving while intoxicated, murder, and vehicular manslaughter. The driver has plead not guilty on all charges.

Our sincerest condolences go out to his family and fiancé as they grieve.



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*

AS OF TUESDAY,  
JANUARY 27, 2026

GOLD IS

**\$5129.50 PER OUNCE.**

**\$163.78 PER GRAM.**

<https://pricegold.net/>

CFMS Newsletter January 2026

All From AFMS Newsletter, Vol.78, No. 9 – Dec 2025

## Christmas Wish from 1942

This poem was featured on the cover of Mineralogist Magazine in 1942. The magazine's headquarters was in Portland, Oregon; a national magazine, it published news of rock and gem clubs and of the federations of that time.

The poem was written by Grace Dearborn, a secretary for the Boston Mineral Club, who wrote monthly articles for the club. She was active in Girl Scout work and numerous civic clubs of Boston. She was widely known in the New England states for her lectures on the earth sciences.

There wasn't a title to the poem, but Grace wrote it as a Christmas wish for everyone who loves the rock-gem-and-geology adventure!

Here it is, 79 years later. [Now, in 2025, 83 years later!  
~AFMS Editor]

Took a spin around the country.  
Object, Mineralogy.  
So many places to explore,  
So many folks to see.  
Renewed a lot of friendships,  
Brought back some minerals too.  
Some nice new gems, and one of them Is  
a Christmas  
wish for you.

(From Jennifer Haley's article, "AFMS Historian Finds A Christmas Wish From Seventy-Nine Years Ago" as published in the MWF News, January 2022.)



CFMS Newsletter January 2026

## Upcoming Club/Society Shows

### Feb 28-Mar 1, 2026 – Vallejo, CA

Vallejo Gem and Mineral Society

McCormic Hall, 900 Fairgrounds Drive (Solano County Fairgrounds), Vallejo, CA

Hours: Sat & Sun 10-5

Contact: (707) 644-9764, vgms01@yahoo.com  
Website: <http://vjgems.com>

### Feb 12-Mar 1, 2026 – Indio, CA

San Gorgonio Mineral and Gem Society

Riverside County Fairgrounds  
46350 Arabia St., Indio, CA 92201

Hours:

Thu-Fri (12-13th, 19-20th, 26-27th) 3 pm-10 pm.  
Sat-Mon (14th-16th) 10 am-10 pm  
Sat-Sun (21-22nd, 28th-March 1) 10 am-10 pm.

Contact: (951) 963-6751,  
[peggyrichard@yahoo.com](mailto:peggyrichard@yahoo.com) Website:  
<http://sqmgs.org>

**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.**

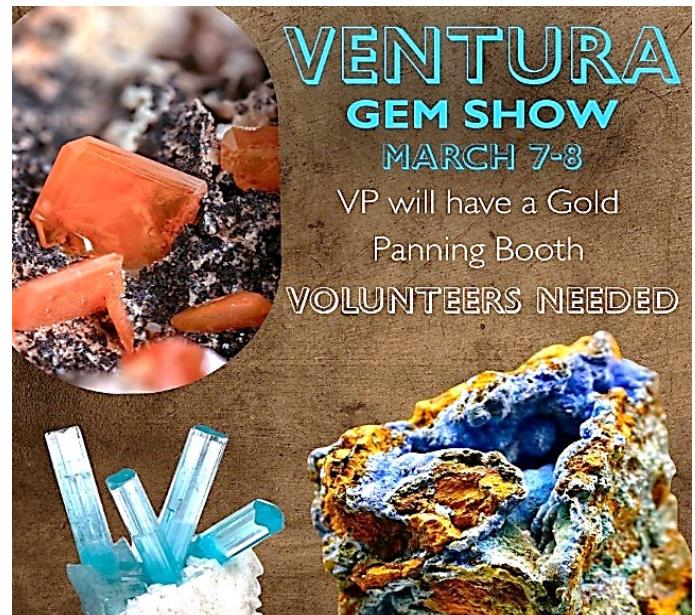
**Hold Harmless Agreement:** Valley Prospectors and its members are not responsible or are to be held liable for injury, illness or death occurring at any club claim, function, or outing by any member or guest. Each member and their guests are responsible for properly being informed of potential hazards 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.

### \*\*\*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=ZULyUlLK1ZOQ1R1aTJmVndJQ0tNdz09>  
**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)

### Upcoming Events... Mark Your Calendars



# Drywasher's Gazette

## Calendar of Events

DATE	DESCRIPTION	NOTES
JAN 24	Summit Saturday	VP Summit Claim Outing Meet at Camp Cajon Historical Marker just past the McDonalds at the Cajon Pass Junction 8 am – Caravan in to claim together.
FEB 13-15	Quartzite Gold Show	*Information only* no planned VP Events
FEB 21	Coolgardie -Oro Rico	Meet at Starlight Donuts 8am in Barstow, CA Will caravan to site together
MAR 7-8	Ventura Gem Show – @ Ventura Fair Grounds	-Need Volunteers- Setup - Friday, March 6 <sup>th</sup> Panning Demos - Sat-Sun
MAR 21	Coolgardie -Oro Rico Special Event - Metal Detecting Hunt	Meet at Starlight Donuts 8am in Barstow, CA Will caravan to site together
APR 24-26	First Class Miners Ord Mtn Event	VP invited to FCM outing
MAY 9	Victor Valley Museum – 10 – 3 pm	Panning Demonstration
MAY 16	Hungry Man claims outing	Meet at Camp Cajon 8 am
MAY 27	May 27 -School Program - Big Bear Museum	Contact Steve Schubert
JUN 6-7	Randsburg – 2 Burros Claim Outing - Sat-Sun	Meet at claim – See Members Only section of website for claim directions
JUL 11-12	July 11-12 – Mountaineer Days – Wrightwood - Sat-Sun	Setup at 9 am Saturday
JUL 17-19	Miners Folly – Fri-Sun 50th Anniversary Membership Appreciation Picnic on the 19 <sup>th</sup> at Museum	Held at Big Bear Historical Museum Chuckwagon Lunch - \$15 RSVP
AUG 7-9	Invite from FCM to Ranger Steve Outing at Big Bear Special Event - Metal Detecting Hunt on Saturday, Aug 8 <sup>th</sup> Fri-Sun	Camp Miners Folly
AUG 15-23	Pickett III and Gold Venture – Union Flats	Northern Claims Event
SEP 12-13	Indian Gulch/Jackass 1 – Camp at Miners Folly – Sat-Sun	Meet at Miners Folly
OCT 23-25	VP Rendezvous 2026 – Ord Mtn	
NOV 14	Coolgardie – Oro Rico	Meet at Starlight Donuts 8am
DEC 5	Holiday Party & Awards Event	Pinon Hills Community Center

\*\* 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.