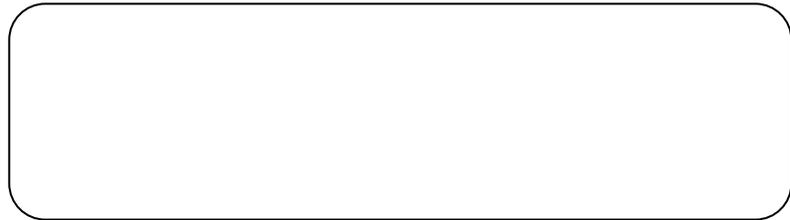


# Drywasher's Gazette

April 2026

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  
Next Meeting – Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</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.

## In this Issue:

Rare Mojave Blooms.....	2	Beat the Heat Tips.....	4
Upcoming Events Notices.....	2	March Meeting Minutes.....	5
Event Recaps.....	3	Baby Rattlesnake Season.....	6
Hold Harmless Agreement.....	4	Club Swag Sale Details.....	6
Gold Price.....	4	Meeting Zoom Link & Reminder.....	7
April Birthday Wishes.....	4	2026 Event Calendar.....	7





## Rare Blooms to Look for in the Mojave Desert this Spring by Michelle O'Brien

Many imagine the Mojave Desert as a dry and desolate place devoid of life, but anyone who has spent any amount of time stopping to observe and look closely finds that life has an amazing way of adapting to the arid environment.



Lane Mountain Milk-Vetch  
*Astragalus jaegerianus*  
Credit: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Lane Mountain Milk-Vetch** is the Special Ops Survivalist of Mojave blooms and is only found in the region of our Coolgardie claim, North of Barstow, CA. It uses other plants to anchor and protect itself from the desert extremes. It is in the same plant category as the common pea plant. It only blooms in April, May, and June. Only 22 of these plants have been reported to be seen in the last 40 years.



Barstow Woolly Sunflower  
*Eriophyllum mohavense*  
Credit: iNaturalist.org

**Acton's Brittlebush** is a bright flowering plant that is roughly 3" tall producing bright yellow blooms beloved by pollinators. It was only first described in 1905. Although named after Acton, CA, this flower has a wide range even beyond the Mojave into Baja and Arizona.



Acton's brittlebush in flower.  
*Encelia actoni*  
Photo: Neal Kramer 2011 via U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Barstow Woolly Sunflower** is the truly *Mighty, but Tiny* resident of the Mojave and is exclusive to that region. It can be seen near Kramer Junction and Opal Mountain with blooms peaking in April. Seeds can lay sleeping for years waiting for the right conditions to bloom.

**Mojave Monkeyflower** aka the Blackhole Monkeyflower is likely to be seen in rocky banks above desert washes. It is only found in the Mojave and at just a little under a half inch tall at most it can be challenging to locate when it blooms between April and June depending on rainfall.



Mojave Monkeyflower  
*Mimulus mohavensis*  
Credit: Instagram Public  
Photo by sheriff\_woody\_pct

Prospectors have the luckiest lot that as we search the ground for signs of geological treasure, we can encounter botanical riches that many will never have a chance to see in their lifetimes. The Newsletter Crew would love to see your pictures of spring blooms from your adventures to the claim. Send them to [valleyprospectors49@gmail.com](mailto:valleyprospectors49@gmail.com) and be sure to include your name so we can give you credit if we publish the pictures.

**You're Invited**

First Class Miners has invited our Club Members to join them at their Outing to Ord Mountain

**April 24<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup>**

Community & Connections

Beautiful Weather  
Dry Camping  
Amazing Sunsets

**WHITE ELEPHANT RAFFLE**

TIME TO RAID THE GARAGE!!

Donate prospecting items you no longer use, related outdoors equipment, or anything you think another Club Member might appreciate

WHEN:  
March 7th Meeting

## ✦Event Recaps✦

### Ventura Gem Show in March by Michelle O'Brien



The weekend of March 7-8 the Club demonstrated panning for the public at the Ventura Gem & Mineral Show. This is historically one of the biggest shows we participate in with our gold panning booth.

**An Extra Special Thank You to everyone who made the trip out there to help. These events are only possible because of your volunteering.**

We had a unique chance to connect with the future of rockhounding by doing a special demonstration for a group of Pebble Pups. They are the component of the Ventura Gem & Mineral Society for

youths 5-13 years of age. We presented both the history and the tools of prospecting before giving them a chance to try their hand at panning for gold to earn their Prospecting Badge.



### Rialto Schools Demo in February

The Panning and Gold Rush history demonstration for the elementary classes at the Rialto School District went extremely well and they asked us to return for another demonstration in the future. Thank you to the volunteers who brought their equipment and knowledge together for these kids, many of whom had no idea that golden treasure was in their local mountains.

**The Volunteers Make This Club Great by Sharing Gold Prospecting with the Public and Continuing the Legacy of Southern California Gold Mining.**

## 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.**

AS OF MONDAY,  
MARCH 16, 2026  
GOLD IS  
\$5,014.90 PER OUNCE.  
\$161.02 PER GRAM.

<https://pricegold.net/>

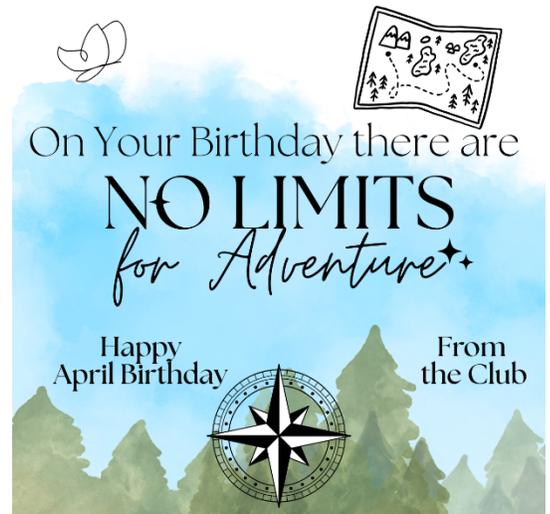
**Hold Harmless Agreement:** Valley Prospectors and its members are not responsible or are to be held liable for injury, illness or death occurring at any club claim, function, or outing by any member or guest. Each member and their guests are responsible for properly being informed of potential hazards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

## Beat the Heat by Michelle O'Brien

Spring can bring many ups and downs in the weather on our desert claims. California has been seeing some unprecedented record temperatures for this time of year. Preparing for heat is crucial to a safe prospecting and mining trip. Here are a few things to keep in mind.

1. **Start Early.** Cooler morning temperatures are a boon to the hard digging ahead of you.
2. **Cover up.** It seems counterintuitive but good sun coverage from a light moisture wicking garment can really be a game changer. Hats help, but can trap heat on your head, so keep that in mind.
3. **More is Better.** Take more water than you think you will need. As a few members have found out the hard way, unexpected trains, vehicle breakdowns or even just losing track of time can make those extra liters a lifesaver.
4. **Look Ahead.** Make sure to check weather forecasts as close as possible to your departure to make sure you have the best possible information to make good decisions.
5. **Potty Breaks Save Lives.** If you have not needed to urinate in 2 hours, you need to drink water ASAP. We often don't realize that dehydration and heatstroke are kicking in before it's too late. This is a good way to remind yourself to drink up.
6. **Stop & Listen.** If you feel dizziness, nausea, vomiting, slurred speech, or feel like you are having trouble articulating a thought... STOP. You need to cool your body down as soon as possible. These are all signs of potential heat stroke.

Take care of yourself out there and fill your holes.



## February General Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Coreena Ross

March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026

President Albert Naki called the meeting to order. The meeting started at 6:06 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Joe Chavez

**Approval of Minutes:** President Albert Naki asked for the approval of the February general meeting minutes. Lee Skillings made the motion to accept February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026, general meeting minutes as published in the Drywasher's Gazette. Joe Chavez seconded the motion and the motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:** Lorraine Frost gave the treasurer's report. Lorraine said she has the budget for the committee chairs.

**Outing Report:** Valley Prospectors will participate in the Ventura Gem and Mineral Show to be held on March 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Volunteers will be needed to help set up the panning demonstration booth. Volunteers will be needed to help with the panning demonstration booth on both days. Steve Schubert reported there are going to be 18 children at the Ventura Gem and Mineral Show who will be earning their merit badges in gold prospecting, Pebble Pups.

**Lady Luck Report:** Bural LaRue gave the Lady Luck report. Bural LaRue said next month's Lady Luck raffle will be a White Elephant.

**Membership Report:** Lorraine Frost gave her report. There are currently 278 family memberships and 7 Lifetime Memberships and 1 Honorary Membership. Lorraine is currently working on membership renewals and there are 47 members who need to renew their club memberships.

**Finds of the Month Report:** Everett Miller gave his report, and he also explained how the Finds of the Month worked.

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

**Gold Sales Report:** Steve Schubert talked about the two gold nuggets that Valley Prospectors owns and a discussion followed. Valley Prospectors is going to keep the nuggets for a raffle that will be held at a later date.

**Refreshments Report:** President Albert Naki thanked Katherine Naki for bringing the refreshments to the meeting.

**Courtesy Report:** President Albert Naki recognized the March birthdays.

**Membership Appreciation Lunch:** Lorraine Frost gave the report. The club will hold its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party at the Big Bear Museum. There'll be a chuckwagon lunch served.

**Club Apparel:** Mary Schubert gave her report and noted that special apparel sales are continuing.

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

**Program Report:** The March Program will be treasure hunting spots in Cajon Canyon.

**Program:** President Albert Naki introduced Fred Borad as the speaker for the March meeting.

President Albert Naki called for a break in the meeting and the time was 7:00 p.m. and the meeting resumed at 7:31 p.m.

**New Business:** Michelle O'Brien gave her report and discussion followed.

Lorraine Frost said she received a paper outlining the guidelines on the Northern California Claims and the discussion followed. President Albert Naki spoke about the guidelines while out on the club claims. A Maximum of two (2) 5 gallon buckets of dirt can be removed from a VP Claim per visit.

**Name Badge Winner:** Brian Teeling **Door Prize Winner:** Mark Landero

**Treasure Finds of the Month Winners:** 1<sup>st</sup>: Brian Teeling, 2<sup>nd</sup>: David Tamulevich.

**Gold Finds of the Month Winners** 1<sup>st</sup>: Brian Teeling, 2<sup>nd</sup>: Fred Borad, 3<sup>rd</sup>: Michelle O'Brien

President Albert Naki called for the meeting to be adjourned. Calvin Shipley made the motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Lee Skillings seconded the motion.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.

## Spring is in the Air!

### It's Baby Rattlesnake Season by Michelle O'Brien

All around the desert, mama rattlesnakes are huddled down in their moist dens ready to give birth. (Rattlesnakes do not lay eggs.) The unusual weather patterns of the past weeks have triggered an early start to the springtime emergence of baby rattlesnakes in the region. A newborn is roughly 6-12 inches long and has a small button at the tip of their tail that will later evolve into the trademark rattle. Until then, they are silent and fully venomous. They are little clones of their adult parents showing the broad triangle head and stocky body with bold patterns.



The biggest issue is that baby Rattlers seek out cool shady places, sources of moisture, and hiding places they can squeeze into. For the desert prospector that means extra caution when picking up equipment off the ground without a good visual check or long-distance poke with a stick. Rattlesnakes are generally solitary creatures but may cluster near the den where they were born for the first few days. Avoid leaving shoes, bags, or gear bags where a baby rattler may be able to access them seeking shelter. Avoid placing hands or feet in thick brush, under rocks, or near logs, common hiding spots. Sturdy high ankle boots and loose-fitting pants are advisable to limit exposure. Snake shin guards are also available at most sporting goods stores. Juveniles are more likely to coil and strike than move away when threatened.



Top: Adult Rattle on Tail  
Bottom: Neonatal and Juvenile Tail "Button"

Photo Credit:

RattleCam Group on Facebook & San Diego Zoo

If Bitten: Immediately seek medical attention and get to the nearest location for professional help. Do not try to capture the snake. Try to remember its color and shape so that you can describe it. If possible, take a picture of the snake from a safe distance. Knowing what kind of snake bit you can help with treatment.

Deterrents: Snakes have strong senses of smell. The reality is that only strong, natural scents like garlic, cinnamon, clove oil, and vinegar have proven

effectiveness in deterring snakes. They are not infallible and the best course is awareness and avoidance. Commercial snake repellents have mixed results. Solar powered ultra sonic devices are also available. Trash and food wrappers accessible to rodents draws out snakes looking for food. Keep tents zipped up.

**Shake Out to Get the Snake Out, But Avoidance is Best!**

**APPAREL**  
APRIL DEALS

March's Deals Continue on this Month.  
Magnetic Car Signs, Window Clings,  
Hats, and other swag also available

Contact  
Mary Shubert for Details  
or e-mail  
valleyprospectors49@gmail.com

**CLUB LOGO**  
POLO SHIRT \$5.00

**CREW NECK**  
PULLOVER  
SWEATSHIRT \$15.00

# Drywasher's Gazette

## Calendar of Events

DATE	DESCRIPTION	NOTES
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 – 50th Anniversary Membership	Appreciation Picnic on the 19 <sup>th</sup> Sat - Held at Big Bear Historical Museum \$15 RSVP
AUG 7-9	Invite from FCM to Ranger Steve Outing at Big Bear Fri-Sun	Camp Miners Folly Special Event - Metal Detecting Hunt on Saturday, Aug 8 <sup>th</sup>
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.

### \*\*\*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=ZUlyUlplLk1ZOQ1R1aTJmVndJQ0tNdz09>

**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)

### Temporary Mojave OHV Trail Closures Status

As of March 16, 2025, there is no new information released regarding closure of OHV routes in the Mojave Preserve. Please check <https://www.nps.gov/moja/road-conditions.htm> for the most up to date closures and notices. Although county-maintained roads, emergency access routes, and other permitted uses should generally remain open. We have some reports that signage has gone up on some OHV routes. If you see any closures that may affect claim access, please notify us by e-mail as soon as possible. Thank You!