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The Nuggeteer



19 September 2020

Tonight's precious metals spot prices per Troy ounce were:
Gold \$151.05, Silver \$27.59, Platinum \$914.66, Palladium
\$2312.06, Rhodium \$10200.00.

A message from the Chapter President
Tim's Tidbits
Greetings Fellow Prospectors

We hope to go out as a group very soon hang in there and we
will see you guys soon.

Tim

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Member profile for September is

Jonathan (Jon) Ray

Let me start with a little introduction about where I'm from and where I'm heading. I'm originally from a small Western Pennsylvania town where hard work and good moral values seemed the norm. The town was not only named after a famous general but is still famous as the birthplace of the original Bantam "Jeep". My Father was a geology teacher and would always point out the "schists" or make up of rock formations which would intrigue any kid to want to collect rocks, which I still do. He spent many years teaching me and my many siblings so many things about the outdoors and more importantly how to think about and overcome a problem. I spent many years hunting and fishing, dirt bike riding and eventually digging through old house foundations for old bottles and an occasional "find". I started to metal detect in the 70's and my buddy and I found several pre-1860 coins and of course the bottles.

Growing up in a military family I enlisted in the early 80's and spent the next 22 years traveling around the world with the Army. It was this traveling that made me set a goal to travel to all 50 U.S. States (just one left). I also picked up many skills as a mechanic on "everything" which helped me get a few jobs after retirement. Along with my wife Patti and my three sons (now all veterans) and daughter we settled back into retired life in the Springs' as the grand babies came along. I also went back to school and finished up a Bachelor of Science.

While stationed in Kentucky and around 1990 I saw a couple gold shows on TV featuring the Buzzard and thought that was interesting. I didn't make the connection until years later when I started to watch Gold Fever with Tom Massie that prospecting became something I'd like to do. I joined the GPAA in early 2012 when I was laid off and finally had some time to get out there. I traveled to Camp Stanton twice that year and once to the Italian Bar Camp and prospected several claims in Arizona with some success. It wasn't until 2013 that I discovered the local GPAA club meetings with leaders like Bob and Alton that enticed me to join them on a few outings.

It was also in 2013 I was assigned to the M1 Tank factory in Lima Ohio to run the Government Quality Assurance oversight of the production of tanks and other combat systems. I discovered a semi-local club there called the Buckeye chapter and participated in several outings or prepping for their open-to-the-public "Gold Rush Days". Being in Ohio also gave me the chance to expand my collection of gold recovery equipment. I deployed to the Middle East in 2016 and then joined the LDMA when the timing seemed right. In 2020 I was "allowed" to move back to Colorado Springs and again work on Fort Carson as an Equipment Specialist.

As I did in Ohio, I encourage everyone to participate in the regional Gold Shows. I've helped set up or tear down a few and meet some good industry known celebrities. I would also encourage everyone that we are the guardians or ambassadors of our claims and to pick up after ourselves and those who may have trashed those claims. It wasn't beneath me to pick up several bags of trash along the highway near the Delores River claim and haul it home. When you seem to not be able to "get on the gold" try to find the positive of your predicament. Lastly, I encourage all of our members to take someone along on your prospecting adventures to spread your wealth of knowledge and maybe spark some gold fever in the next generation.

Now as for where I'm heading. I intend to hit those slopes and gullies when I can and find if nothing a small adventure. And after a second retirement go full tilt in prospecting, traveling and camping with my family. May there be gold in all your pans.

September 19th, 2020 COSGPAA Chapter Update

The September 2nd, 2020, monthly meeting was rescheduled to Saturday, September 19th, from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. The meeting was held at our normal location, but outside under canopies, behind the building in the picnic area.

The meeting was attended by 18 members and guests. Vice President Joel Swisher began the meeting at 1:06 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Joel welcomed new member Bryan Trelstad, who is new to prospecting and metal detecting.

Treasurer/Claims Committee Chairman/Outing Coordinator Alton Oakes gave a financial report, discussed the loss of the Dolores River claims, and reported on possible outings.

BLM Placer Claims CSC 1,2,3 & 4 along the Dolores River, south of Grand Junction expired on September 1st. The claims had been shared with all GPAA members in the Claims Guide since 2011, with the annual fees paid by GPAA. In mid-August, GPAA notified us that our claims were not receiving sufficient visitation to justify their cost and were being returned to the Chapter for maintenance. Each claim was for 160 acres and carried an annual BLM Maintenance Fee of \$1,320 (total \$5,280), due NLT September 1st each year. When we originally staked the claims in 2009, the annual fee was only \$120 per claim. Due to the short notice, our inability to contact all the original claimants, and the cost, we allowed the claims to expire. Unless claimed by someone else, those 640 acres are again open to public access under BLM rules.

The prospects we had for access to private placer and load mines in Georgetown are no longer available. At least for this season. Also, the option of a chapter outing to the Lebanon Silver Mine and Georgetown Loop Railroad was not possible before the mine access closed for the winter on October 1st. The mine and railroad were already fully booked for weekend dates through the end of the season. The tours re-open in February so dependent on weather that outing could be in next year's schedule.

At the August meeting an outing to the Hidee Gold Mine in Central City for a tour and panning was discussed with eight members expressing interest. Details were provided at this meeting and the membership selected a date of Saturday, Oct 3d. We will meet in the mine parking lot at 10:30 AM and attend the 11:00 AM mine tour. There was not enough confirmed participation to qualify for a group discount, so attendees should expect to pay full fees. A separate e-mail announcing the outing was sent to the membership.

A long-time chapter member has offered us the opportunity to hold outings at two of his placer claims, one on Beaver Creek in Fairplay and the other in Summit County near Breckenridge. Access roads to Beaver Creek are normally closed beginning in October to prevent wet weather damage. A scouting visit is planned to both claims to verify claim markers and coordinate with USFS on access and mining restrictions. As we found with the claim in Alma, reported in the August Nuggeteer, community restrictions for COVID 19 may affect our access.

Alton also discussed information he recently received when he contacted the BLM Royal Gorge Field Office about an outing to Beaver Creek. BLM provided a copy of their current publication "Mining in the Royal Gorge Field Office Area", which has been distributed to the membership in a separate e-mail, and copies were provided at the meeting. What was of particular interest in the document was that dredging could be considered a Casual Mining Activity (CMA), except on the Arkansas River. A previously prepared NEPA document specifically excluded dredging the Arkansas from being considered a CMA, therefore requiring a Notice of Intent or Plan of Operation. GPAA headquarters will not submit a Notice or Plan for the GPAA Arkansas River Group claims as the required Reclamation Bond does not exclude damage caused by other public users within the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area. BLM will only accept a Notice or Plan from the claim owner (GPAA); therefore, individual members or chapters cannot work independently for permission to dredge those claims. Chapter member Richard Cook announced that the Gold Prospectors of Colorado (GPOC) was holding a dredging outing on their Arkansas River claims on September 26th. The GPOC has an approved Plan of Operation for those claims.

Members present at the meeting were polled and it was decided that there would be no meeting in October and we would plan for a return to our regular meeting schedule beginning on Wednesday, November 4th, at 7:00 PM. The Salvation Army building is being remodeled and our meeting space should accommodate our pre-COVID normal attendance of 25 – 30 members with adequate social distancing indoors. Please watch your e-mails and/or our website for changes that may occur. We will send a reminder the week of the October 26th.

A door prize drawing was held, and winners claimed four gold pickers and two silver coins. The meeting ended at 2:45 PM. Thank you again this month to the volunteers who helped to set-up, take down and store the canopies, return the folding chairs, and load up the meeting supplies.

The Nuggeteer is published monthly following the regularly scheduled chapter meetings. It will be distributed by email and posted to the Chapter web site. To be added to or removed from our email list, please send your request to cosgpaahospitalitycommitee@gmail.com.

COLORADO SPRINGS CHAPTER GPAA MEETINGS

Meetings are held on the First Wednesday of each month
From 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM at:
The Salvation Army building:
208 Cunningham Drive
Security, CO 80911

Meeting Dates:

Future meeting dates are dependant on the COVID-19 pandemic.

No meeting in October 2020
November 4 2020 inside in our normal room.
December 2 2020
December 5 2020 "Christmas Party

Winners for 19 September meeting
I did not get a picture of the winners.

Gold is:

Jon Ray
John Wood
Lorraine Sirois
Mark Amesberg

Silver is:

Don Bray
Mark Amesberg

**"Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to
be understood."
Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Continued story of Fenn's Treasure from last month

By 2016, Fenn estimated that 65,000 people had joined the hunt for the treasure.

It's not hard to see why.

Fenn promised a hidden treasure worth nearly 2 million dollars, filled with gold coins, ancient Chinese jade carvings, and hundreds of rubies amongst other treasures. Treasures that felt straight out of Pirates of The Caribbean or The Goonies fanfare.

The chase was not without controversy. Due to the lack of the information and nature of the narrative, questions remained as to the authenticity of the story and treasure itself.

Calls quickly arose suggesting that he was simply using the treasure hunt to sell his book -- a claim that is quickly disputed by Fenn and his staff. However, ten percent of the book's proceeds continue to go to assisting cancer patients amongst other charities as recently seen in "Our Saving Chase" story from the January/February 2019 issue of the Gold Prospectors Magazine.



Landscape of Rocky Mountains National Park, Colorado
Photo by Peter Pryharski.

The hunt is threatened

As the years wore on, suspicions burrowed in. As there was no proof to back up Fenn's claims, plenty of detractors suspected the entire treasure was concocted.

Fenn always stuck to his story, and continuing to provide hints to the treasure hunters over the years. The hints themselves were never specific, once revealing he "drove a Sedan" to where he hid the treasure. While also adding it was at least 8.25 miles north of Santa Fe and at an elevation higher than 5,000 feet.

Unfortunately, the vast area of the Rocky Mountains where the treasure could plausibly be buried caused treasure seekers to push into dangerous territory in pursuit of riches.

Over the decade, five adventurers perished in pursuit of the treasure. One fell over five hundred feet after losing his footing on a steep slope.

These deaths and other close calls raised concerns that the treasure hunt was downright dangerous. The ex-wife of one victim publicly claimed the treasure was a hoax.

Fenn pushed back on these criticisms. He explained that the treasure was in an area that would not be hard for an octogenarian to reach (as he himself had hid it at age 80).

Still, criticism ensued. New Mexico State Police Chief Pete Kassetas urged Fenn to call off the hunt, saying that the adventurers were “underestimating New Mexico.”

Even still, Fenn refused. He doubled down. He said that he would take the secret of the treasure to his grave. It would either be found, and he'd confirm it, or he'd die and leave it for a future adventurer to find.

Can you confirm it?

As the hunt wore down, another creeping fear set in: what if the treasure had already been found? Fenn hadn't specified that he would know if the treasure was found -- other than going to physically go check on the treasure.

In short, it was possible that the treasure had already been found, and Fenn didn't know or had chosen not to publicly announce the find.

As the years dragged on, the adventurers still came in droves to The Rockies, but the optimism waned.

Would the treasure ever be found?

Ten years later...

On June 6th, 2020, Forrest Fenn proudly announced that the treasure had been found. Fenn himself announced it on his blog, saying that, “It was under a canopy of stars in the lush, forested vegetation of the Rocky Mountains and had not moved from the spot where I hid it more than 10 years ago.”

At last, the global hunt for the fantastic treasure had drawn to a close.



Rocky Mountains (Photo by Blue Ox Studio from Pexels)

(UPDATE) For a moment, there was fear that perhaps Fenn wouldn't release photographic evidence of the treasure, leading to discussion as to whether it had even existed at all. Luckily, on June 16, Fenn released photographic evidence of the treasure. It is not known how Fenn got back in possession of the treasure for these photographs, but we can speculate that the unknown finder partnered with Fenn for public verification of the treasure's validity.

How was it found?

This remains a mystery. Fenn only says that he received an email with the photo of the treasure he buried -- confirming it had been found.

This low-fi form of confirmation gives a bit of credence to the fear that the treasure could have been found without the world knowing. The finder was not obligated to confirm the find of the treasure, nor was Forrest Fenn obligated to tell the world the hunt was over.

All of it was dependent upon positive sportsmanship.

Luckily, sportsmanship prevailed.

Who found it?

his remains a mystery. Forrest Fenn only mentioned that it had been found by an anonymous man from "back East."

We can only speculate as to what that means. Eastern Seaboard? Eastern Europe? East of New Mexico? Who knows!

The end of the treasure hunt

For a man whose public life has been defined by the Thrill of The Chase, Fenn now has to adjust to a life no longer centered on the treasure hunt.

"I feel halfway kind of glad, halfway kind of sad because the chase is over," he mentioned. "I congratulate the thousands of people who participated in the search and hope they will continue to be drawn by the promise of other discoveries."

It's a bittersweet end for Fenn. He inspired tens of thousands but isn't able to share in the joys of the discovery the way other adventurers can. But at the end of the day, his puzzle that took ten years to finish has finally been solved.

The Legacy of the Chase

Forrest Fenn's Treasure has spurred tens of thousands of treasure hunters to get out and explore the Rocky Mountains

Only one ever found the treasure, but it's safe to say that thousands have been inspired.

In this way, Fenn gave the world an additional treasure -- one that wasn't buried at all.

He gave the world the treasure of a love for exploring the great outdoors. The treasure only required a little bit of imagination, determination, and an adventurous spirit.

Thanks to Fenn, thousands fanned into the Rocky Mountains, exploring rarely trod miles of wilderness in hopes of striking riches. Thousands came back empty handed, but filled with memories and a newfound love of nature.

If his hope was to “get people off of their couches,” we’d venture to say he was very successful over the last decade!

The joy of the treasure

Treasure hunts have captured our collective imagination for centuries. Treasure Island, by Robert Lewis Stevenson, chronicled the hunt for Flint’s treasure on the high seas. Raiders of the Lost Ark followed Indiana Jones as he searched for the lost Ark of the Covenant.

There are countless others: The Maltese Falcon, The Treasure of the Sierra Madre, National Treasure. The ability of a hidden vault of treasure to inspire our collective imagination knows no limits.

This allure has occasionally found itself leaping from the page into our real lives. From 2015-2018, the allure of the Nazi Gold Train cropped up in Poland, spurring treasure hunters and the Polish Government to begin an extensive search, going so far as to use ground penetrating radar.

It came up empty. No train discovered.

That’s what has always made The Fenn Treasure so wonderful. The creator announced it to the world. It wasn’t announced as a rumor, it was announced as fact: Fenn amassed it and hid it and it was up for the taking.

“All you had to do was look.”

That is perhaps the greatest treasure that Fenn provided. He allowed the fantasy of the treasure hunt to finally exist in all its glory in our reality.

It’s real, and it’s been found.



Nathan Dennis is a freelance writer based in New York.

Update on Forrest Fenn

Forrest Fenn was an antiques dealer and author who hid a treasure chest and inspired a 10-year public hunt for its secret location. Died: September 7, 2020. Details of death: Died of natural causes at his home in Santa Fe at the age of 90.



**Sunny Mountain Prospectors LLC
3007 North El Paso Street
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80907
(719)722-3998
<https://sunnymountain.net>**

Lets support our local prospecting business.

**"You will face many defeats in life, but never let yourself be
defeated."
Maya Angelou**

OUTING INFORMATION

When: Saturday, October 3, 2020 – Hidee Gold Mine, 1950 Hidee Mine Road, Central City, CO - Tour and Optional Panning

Where: We will rendezvous Saturday at 10:30 am in the parking lot at the Hidee Gold Mine. The Tour begins promptly at 11:00 am. (Subsequent tours begin each hour till 3:00 pm) Tours are limited to 10 people if not part of a group.

Details: Participants in this outing have three options: A mine tour, A mine tour and panning, or just a day of panning; and your option determines the cost. The mine is well lit and safe. The average temperature inside the mine is 45o F, so a light jacket and closed toe shoes are recommended. The accessible workings are on the 135-foot level of an adit driven about 600 feet into the mountainside. The ground is level and the ceiling height is generally above 6 foot, so little stooping is required. Visitors to the mine are welcome to try their hand at Hard Rock Mining. A hammer and chisel will be provided to carve out a gold specimen from the main ore vein, which you keep as part of the tour. The tour is about an hour long. Wheelchairs and Strollers can have a difficult time in the mine and cannot access one area due to stairs. However, several gold ore veins are seen, all geology and history are explained and 90% of the tour route is accessible.

After the tour we will have lunch (bring your own) in the picnic area. Those that added the panning option in their admission can pan for the remainder of the day and keep what they find. and then on to the panning area.

Cost: The cost of the tour is \$24.95 per adult (age 15 and older); \$14.95 per youth ages 4 to 14; and children younger than 4 are free. Include panning with the tour, add \$6.00. All day panning without the tour is \$12.00. The Mine accepts cash and major credit cards.

Directions: From Colorado Springs, take I-25 north to exit 194 and go west on Colorado 470. At the juncture of CO 470 and I-70, take I-70 west towards Grand Junction. Go about 18 miles on I-70, and take exit 243 Central City Parkway. Follow the signs towards Central City. Hide Mine Road will be on the left at mile marker 6.3.

**Thanks,
Alton Oakes 719-439-3590
Hospitality Committee**

**"In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's
the life in your years."
Abraham Lincoln**