

DESERT GOLD DIGGERS GAZETTE

The official publication of Desert Gold Diggers Inc., Tucson, AZ

The Desert Gold Diggers is a non-profit prospecting club based in Tucson, Arizona, devoted to all aspects of small scale mining including panning, sluicing, dry washing, and metal detecting. In addition to promoting small scale prospecting, the club exchanges ideas and information on the various aspects of prospecting & mining. Visit our webpage at <https://desertgolddiggers.com> for more club information.



Desert Gold Doggers has 19 claims in southeastern Arizona. The claims are located in several gold producing areas including the Greaterville, Arivaca, Oro Blanco (Ruby), Las Guijas, Old Hat (Oracle) and Banner (Pinal County) mining districts. The club is constantly evaluating and pursuing additional claims.

In This Issue

- Message from DGD President Ralph Montaña: A TRIBUTE TO DAN WALKER (p.2)
- DGD Officer and Board Member Elections (p.3)
- Meeting and Event Summary / New Members (p.4)
- Meet Ray Darragh - DGD Gazette Editor (p.5)
- DGD Overnight Outing (pp.6-7)
- Outing Director's Report for February and March 2025 (p.8)
- February / March 2025 Membership Meeting Minutes (p.9)
- February / March 2025 Business Meeting Minutes (pp.10-11)
- YTD Price of Gold / An Interesting Fact About Gold (p.11)
- MASH Report / Club Store / Market Place (p.12)
- Implications of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo (p.13)
- The Mile Wide Mine (Tucson Mountains) (pp.14-16)
- The World's Deepest Gold Mine (pp.17-18)
- April / May 2025 Special Events Calendar (p.19)
- Editor's Notes / Disclaimer (p.20)

From the Desk of Ralph Montaña

President, Desert Gold Diggers Inc.

Desert Gold Diggers just lost a good friend, a mentor, and one of the early members of our club. Dan Walker, the DGD Outings Director, passed away on Monday, March 17, 2025.

Dan was born in Arkansas in 1949 and later relocated to California. He started prospecting 37 years ago in southern California on the east fork of the San Gabriel River in Azusa Canyon.

One morning Dan asked his wife, Janine, if she wanted to go panning for gold. She agreed to go, so they headed into the mountains with just a gold pan and a shovel. Dan met a man that was digging a large hole and he started talking to Dan about the gold nuggets he had found and the techniques he used to find them. That's when Dan caught gold fever.



Ralph Montaña, Desert Gold Diggers President

Dan loved dredging for gold in the San Gabriel Mountains and along the Yuba River. He and Janine spent their vacations every year traveling up the California Gold Highway (Highway 49) where they spent weeks camping at the Rams Horn Campground and dredging for gold just south of Downieville, California.

Dan and Janine moved to Tucson, AZ, in 1993, and that is when he joined Desert Gold Diggers. After retiring from Raytheon, Dan played an active roll in our club and recently served as the DGD Outings Director and the Chairperson of the DGD Board of Directors. Dan coordinated and attended all the monthly outings and was responsible for distributing the gold nuggets and other prizes to the winners of the detector hunts.



Dan was a great storyteller and really good to inform club members where to find gold on the claims, including how to process the gravels to find the gold. He really enjoyed prospecting on the Snoozin and Wishful claims where he found a considerable amount of gold.

Dan loved gold prospecting and will be buried in his yellow Desert Gold Diggers shirt and DGD hat. I speak for all of our officers and board members when I say it is with deep sadness that we say goodbye to our dear friend and convey our sincere condolences to his wife Janine and the entire Walker family.

Dan, you will be missed. Rest in peace old friend.

Dan Walker: 1949-2025

—Ralph

Desert Gold Diggers Officer Elections: April 1, 2025



Officer and Board positions are open for nominations! The elections will be April 1, 2025, at the monthly members meeting. This will be a “self-nomination” process. If you are interested in actively participating as a Desert Gold Diggers Officer or Board member, please nominate yourself using the sign-up that will be provided at the meeting.

The following is a short explanation of the responsibilities of each position. Please consider volunteering for one of the following officer or board-appointed positions:

- President: The principle executive officer of the club.
- Vice President: Schedules speakers/steps in for the President when needed.
- Secretary: Records the minutes at the members and business meetings.
- Treasurer: Tracks all funds and securities of the corporation.
- Outing Coordinator: Arranges and directs the monthly outings.
- Historian: Keeps club records up to date.
- Claims Director: Coordinates the search for new claims.
- Newsletter Editor: Produces and distributes the bi-monthly Gazette.
- Membership Director: Maintains/updates list of club members.
- Website Liaison: Acts as the interface between the Board and the web creator.

If you are interested in joining the DGD Board of Directors, volunteer for a 1, 2, or 3-year board position. One advantage of holding one of these positions:

Annual DGD membership fees are waived for officers and board members.



Meeting & Event Summary (April-June 2025)

Membership Meetings

1st Tuesday of every month at 6:00 PM.

Ellie Towne Community Center
1660 West Ruthrauff Road
Tucson, AZ 85705-1253

The monthly meetings are an opportunity for club members to socialize, listen to guest speakers, and participate in nugget raffles at the end of the meeting.

Guests are welcome to attend!

Business Meetings

3rd Tuesday of every month at 6:30 PM.

IHOP
4187 N. Oracle Road
Tucson, AZ. 85705-2721
(Southwest corner of Oracle and
Limberlost Road)

Club members are welcome to attend
the monthly business meetings.

Events Schedule

April:

01: Membership Meeting; 6:00 PM
Officer and Board Elections

06: (Sunday) Outing: BRUISER
CLAIMS; 8:00 AM; Circle K in
Oracle

15: Business Meeting; 6:30 PM

May:

06: Membership Meeting; 6:00 PM

10: (Saturday) Outing: SNOOZIN
CLAIMS; 8:00 AM; Arivaca Road &
Mile Post 7

20: Business Meeting; 6:30 PM

June:

03: Membership Meeting; 6:00 PM

08: (Sunday) Outing: HOPE
CLAIMS; Gardner Canyon Road
and Highway 83

17: Business Meeting; 6:30 PM

Welcome NEW Club Members!

Joseph Adam (Tucson)
Frank Burns (Phoenix, AZ)
Justine and Alex Burton (Tucson)
Richard & Diana Butler (Tucson)
John Byerly (Tucson)
Francisco Flores Lopez (Tucson)
Jeremy & Melissa Ford (Tucson)
William Foster (Tucson)
Philip & Judith Lipton (Tucson)
Cliff & Karen Lyons (Oro Valley)
Iain McLaren (Glasgow, Scotland)



Caleb Prater (Arivaca, AZ)
Kevin Rogers (Green Valley, AZ)
Louis & Margaret Sandbak (Oracle, AZ)
Leroy Taylor (Tucson)
William Weir (Paisley, Scotland)
J.D. & Rebekah Word (Sahuarita, AZ)

Meet Ray Darragh - DGD Gazette Editor

Greetings fellow Desert Gold Diggers! My name is Ray Darragh and I'm a board member and editor of the Desert Gold Diggers Gazette. You may have seen me at the members meetings and outings—I'm the old guy taking pictures! I have three sons, six grandchildren, and a very understanding wife that has tolerated me for over 51 years!

Like most people in the Old Pueblo, I am not a Tucson native. I was born in Iowa, grew up in Salt Lake City, Utah, and served in the Army after graduating from high school. When I returned home I needed a job, and a friend who worked for the Postal Service (USPS) recommended I take the civil service exam.



Ray Darragh

I passed the exam and began my USPS career in Salt Lake City as a mail clerk, but decided that sitting at a letter case and sorting mail by hand eight hours a day for the next 40 years was not for me! I had an electronics background, so I passed the required exams and worked for several years as an electronic technician servicing automated mail processing equipment. In 1990, I was offered a manager position at the Tucson Main Post Office, but was reluctant to relocate my family. After moving, we all agreed that it was a great decision—the weather in Tucson was absolutely beautiful and I could not believe I had spent so many years in Utah shoveling snow!

During my career, I worked and lived in many different states. I retired from the USPS in 2010 as the Southeast Area Manager of Maintenance Operations in Memphis, TN, where I was responsible for the maintenance of all mail processing equipment and delivery vehicles in Tennessee, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

My wife and I moved back to Tucson in 2011. Several years later I joined the GPAA and attended several GPAT monthly meetings and outings. I felt like something was missing and decided to give Desert Gold Diggers a try. I attended my first DGD outing in Arivaca as a guest and everyone was so friendly, helpful, and willing to share their prospecting knowledge that I joined DGD that day. Although I have a limited amount of prospecting equipment, I enjoy swinging my metal detector and prospecting at the Placer Pond and Bruiser claims.

I've been a member of DGD since 2022 and after fun three years of digging, processing dirt, and metal detecting, I am still trying to find that elusive gold nugget. I know there's a big, beautiful, lustrous, one-ounce gold nugget out there with my name on it and I will not quit prospecting until I find it!

— Ray Darragh

Desert Gold Diggers 2025 Spring Overnight Outing

The March overnight outing was held at the Las Guijas Road campsite. Becky and Joe Marihugh were on-site on Wednesday, March 19, to reserve the camping area and to place signs along the road to provide directions for members not familiar with the area.

Members started to arrive Friday to select campsites and set up prospecting equipment. The weather Friday night was nice and campers enjoyed sharing crockpot dinners. After dinner, the movie *City Slickers 2: The Legend of Curly's Gold* was shown.

The weather was cool on Saturday morning and Darrell Marihugh hid nickels and pesos coins for the metal detector hunt. All targets were found. Afterwards, members went to the Pilgrim's Pride claims and found some good gold, including a couple small nuggets and some pickers. A writer from the Epoch Times, Allan Stein, attended the detector hunt and spoke with members because he is writing a feature article that explores the connection between rising gold prices and the growing interest in metal detecting.

Lunch began at noon and consisted of hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans, potato chips, coleslaw, potato salad, condiments, soft drinks and desserts. Thank you to Becky Marihugh, Hank Bassaraba, and Grady Dees for preparing, grilling, and serving the food.

The gold nugget/gift card raffle began after lunch. Thanks to everyone who participated and the volunteers who sold tickets. The member-donated items that were raffled were definitely appreciated.

At last count, 50 members attended the outing. The overnighter was a complete success with many thanks for the good weather and help from club and board members.

March Outing Raffle Winners

Gold Nugget Winners:

- Brad Guinyou
- Mary Harrison
- Hank Bassaraba (2)
- Jim Gacey
- Michael Comstock

Gift Card Winners:

- Klondike Keith
- Jim Gacey (2)
- Rick Harrison
- Anne Nopens



Proof Set Winners:

- Bob Burgette
- Dan Scheper

Hangover Bucket:

- Jim Larson
- Mike Lee

Desert Gold Diggers Spring Overnight Outing *(continued)*



THANK YOU to the board members who planned and organized the overnight outing, and club members who assisted with other activities. Your hard work made the outing a success and your assistance was truly appreciated.

Outing Director's Report (FEB 9): Placer Pond Claims

The February outing has held at the Placer Pond claims. Twenty-four (24) members met at Highway 83 and Greaterville Road prior to 8:00 AM. Ralph (President) went ahead of the group to place numbered coins for the detector hunt next to Placer Pond.

There were 24 coins hidden for the detector hunt with three (3) worth gold nuggets, three (3) worth a \$2 bill, and 18 worth a dollar coin. There were two large Asian coins added to the mix to be kept by the finder, and one person found both. Two \$1 coins were not found. If somebody finds them, return them to Ralph for your prize.



Approximately 3-4 pounds of brass casings and metal was picked up prior to and during the detector hunt. After the hunt, members went out to find the yellow rocks and I hope you found some.

The next outing will be held the Snoozin clam area. It will be on March 21-23 off Mile Post 7 on Arivaca Road. It is our overnight camp time.

—Ralph Montaña (for Dan Walker)

Outing Director's Report (MAR 21-23): Arivaca Claims

Preparations for our March annual overnight outing started on Wednesday, March 19th, with the majority of members arriving on Friday to set up their camping and prospecting equipment. Friday Night was the crockpot dinner followed by the movie City Slickers 2.



On Saturday morning, 34 members signed in for the detector hunt. We hid 60 targets—50 nickels and 10 \$1 pesos. The prizes consisted of six (6) gold nuggets, two (2) gift cards, and ten (10) 1-gram silver bars (donated by Darrell). The others consisted of dollar coins and all targets were found.

Members then headed out to the Pilgrims Pride claims to dig and drywash. Members were finding good gold, including a couple small nuggets and some pickers. 50 members showed up for lunch prepared by Becky Marihugh with help from Grady Dees and Hank Bassaraba. The raffle was after lunch and a big thanks to everyone who participated and the volunteers who sold tickets.

As some members headed home on Saturday afternoon, Ralph Montaña stayed until Sunday to take members out and do some more digging. The outing was a success.

—Darrell Marihugh

Membership Meeting Minutes: February 4, 2025

- Ralph Montañño convened the meeting at 6PM; opened with the Pledge of Allegiance; introduced guests & new members; recognized birthdays/anniversaries; discussed MASH information.
 - Next outing is Sunday, February 9, at Placer Pond claims; meet prior to 8 AM at Highway 83 & Greaterville Rd.
 - Alex Ruger will speak about fossil hunting at a future meeting.
 - The March spring outing is March 21-23 in Arivaca; crockpot cook-off Friday night with a movie; Saturday is the detector hunt; lunch at noon for \$6; raffle afterward.
 - April 1 is the election; need a Vice President, Website Liaison, Secretary, and board positions.
 - Ed Madson found a guest speaker for March; he owns a mine in Canada.
- Raffle winners:**
- Hat: John Stutz
 - Shirt: Keith Oliver
 - Badge: Bob Burgette
 - Find of the Month: David Fuller
 - Yellow Ticket: Sean Mosely; Kevin Sarni; A. Morales; Bink; Beth Sausen;; Bill Horky; Bob Burgette; Bob Kurneta
 - Red Ticket: Brad Guinyou
 - Meeting adjourned at 7:27 PM
-

Membership Meeting Minutes: March 4, 2025

- Ralph Montañño convened the meeting at 6:00 PM; opened with Pledge of Allegiance; introduced new members/guests; asked who had birthdays and anniversaries; shared MASH information—Dan Walker in rehab.
- Elections for DGD Officers and Board of Directors coming up in April, asked members to please volunteer.
- Overnight outing is March 21-23.
- Ed Madson found speaker—David Joyce works in mining in Canada.
- Red Ticket: Dave Riley; Bill Horky
- Find of the Month: Darrell Marihugh
- **6 gram Gold Nugget Winner:**

Raffle winners:

- Hat: Marion Vittetoe
- Shirt: Maureen Lee
- Badge: Joe Vasko
- Yellow Ticket: Darrell Marihugh; Doug Hayden; Joe Vasko; Zach Re; Max Offermann; Joe Koehler; Rich Butler

David Riley

- Ralph adjourned the meeting at 7:33 PM.



David Riley: Gold Nugget Winner

Business Meeting Minutes: February 18, 2025

- Ralph convened meeting at 6:30 PM.
- Read agenda; agenda approved.
- Read previous minutes; approved.
- Gazette: Ray's bio in the next issue; will include a story about the Mile Wide mine; 1/4 ounce nugget to be raffled at March members meeting.
- MASH Report: Dan Walker, Hank Bassaraba, and Becky Marihugh.
- Membership report: 9 new members; 6 renewals; 310 current members.
- Gold Master: Raffled 16 nuggets this month—5.3g valued at \$503.44.
- Treasurer: Income \$3,406.17; expenses \$3,248; net income previous month \$157.37.
- Outing Director: 24 members at Placer Pond; two targets at detector hunt not found; members headed to claims after the hunt.

- Claims Director: in process of finding new claims; most good areas are already claimed.
- Historian: Mary looking for speakers.

OLD BUSINESS

- Looking for \$1 gold coins for outings.
- Need to fill vacant VP, Secretary, and Website Liaison positions; need 1 and 2-year board members.
- March outing: buy for 60 guests; \$100 in gift cards and the rest toward gold to give away; will play the movie City Slickers; porta potties on Friday.

New BUSINESS

- Home baked goods to be provided at the April members meeting.
- Saturday 5 PM board dinner
- Bob motioned to adjourn; seconded; meeting adjourned at 7:17 PM.

Business Meeting Minutes: March 18, 2025

- Ralph convened meeting: 6:30 PM.
- Agenda read/approved.
- Darrell read previous minutes; minutes approved
- Ray passed around draft of the FEB/MAR Gazette for comments; would like to do a tribute to Dan Walker; requested pictures from overnight outing.
- Webmaster: No report.
- Membership report: 16 non-renewals; eight (8) new members; three previous members; 304 total members.
- Treasurer report: No report.
- Gold report: Sold four bags of paydirt; inventory of 131 nuggets; two large nuggets.
- Outing report: Nothing to report since the outing is next week; there

will be 10 additional targets for the detector hunt at the outing.

- Claims report: Several members have been looking for new claims; must do more research
- Historian: No report.

OLD BUSINESS

- No old business discussed.

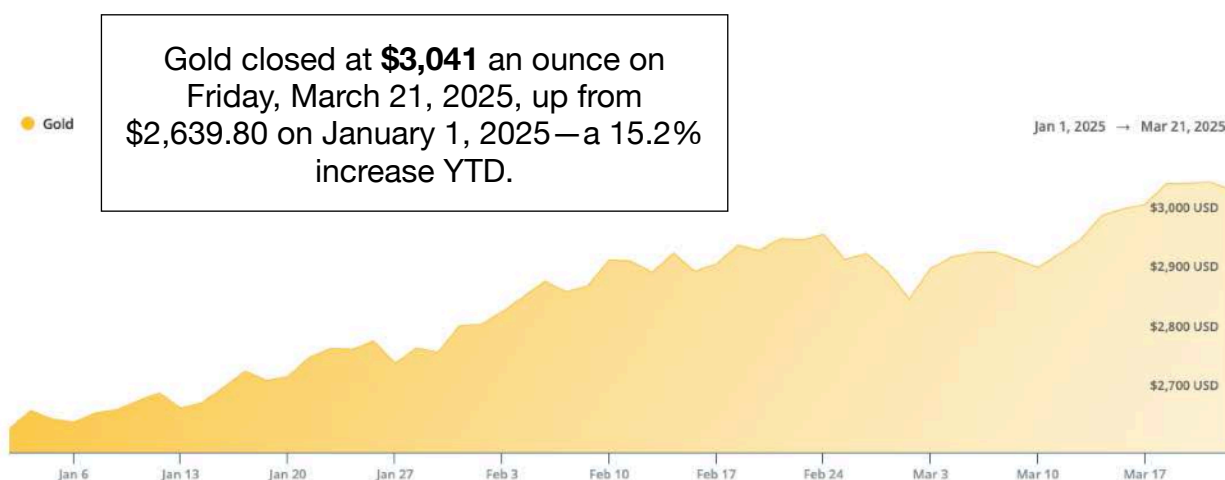
New BUSINESS

- Need to get additional gold dollar coins for detector hunt; Hank will get enough for at least six months.
- Vote called on areas of responsibility; Goldmaster, Outing Director, and Secretary—each person is responsible for keeping and inventorying their own supplies; Dave motioned to pass, Grady seconded, everyone agree and motion passed.

Business Meeting Minutes: March 18, 2025 *(continued)*

- Elections will be conducted at the April 1 members meeting; need Vice President, Secretary, and Web Liaison.
- David Fuller volunteered to be the meeting Chairman at future business meetings; all board members agreed.
- An Epoch Times reporter, Allan Stein, will attend the March outing; doing a story on metal detecting as gold prices are rising.
- Bob motioned to end meeting, Dave seconded; meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.

YTD Gold Price Trend 2025

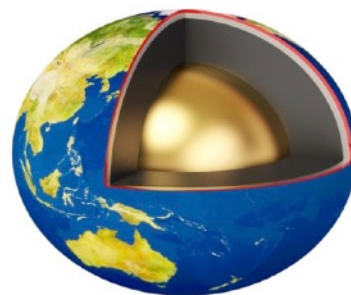


An Interesting Fact about Gold

Scientists recently discovered that the earth has enormous amounts of gold close to its core. The earth was in a molten state when it formed over 4 billion years ago, and as meteorites bombarded the earth, most of the gold and heavy elements from the meteorites sank to the earth's core. The silicate mantle that formed over the core billions of years ago trapped enormous amounts of gold.

Scientists believe there is enough gold at the core of the earth to cover the planet's surface in 13 inches of this

yellow precious metal, but it's 1,800 miles below our feet at temperatures of many thousands of degrees.



Depiction of the Earth's Core

MASH Report

1. Dan Walker passed away March 17, 2025.
2. Hank Bassaraba had lung polyps removed.
3. Becky Marihugh had surgery.

If you have an illness, injury, or death in the family please contact Amber Clark at amclark4691@gmail.com

Club Store

Be sure to stop by the Desert Gold Diggers Club Store at the monthly membership meetings. You can purchase Columbia long-sleeve shirts, DGD polo shirts and T-shirts, DGD hats and patches, license plates, DGD window transfer decals, bucket handle grip replacements, and numerous other prospecting items.

The Club Store carries DVDs that contain the color "topo" maps, GPS coordinates, directions to the claims, and other useful information. Laminated topo having color maps on one side and the GPS coordinates and directions on the other side are also available.

Please support the Desert Gold Diggers with purchases from our club

Market Place.....



FOR SALE: Minelab Equinox 800 detector (complete package). Purchased in 2020 and only used twice. Purchased for \$950 plus tax. Will sell for \$800 or best offer. If interested, contact Steve Piscitello at (208) 661-7523;

FOR SALE: Blue bowl 3-tier gold cube; minicab 12-inch evolution coil; an 8" x 6" Sadie coil; gold screamer; and pans and classifiers. Would like to sell as a package, but will consider selling items separately. Call John at (602) 741-7893 for information.

WANTED:

I am interested in purchasing the two following items that are no longer manufactured:

1. Broll 5-gallon bucket cart/hauler
2. Wilson's Brother prospecting classifying trommel.

If you would like to sell either or both of these items, please contact Gary Sturm at (253) 740-4009 or e-mail at garysturm@hotmail.com

If you're searching for something specific you'd like to buy or sell, or have lost/ found something while on our claims, please contact DGDGazette51@gmail.com.

Implications of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo

The Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo was the peace treaty between the United States and Mexico that officially ended the Mexican War (1846–1848). The treaty was signed on February 2, 1848, in Guadalupe Hidalgo, a city in south central Mexico near Mexico City. The treaty defined the "Mexican Cession," which was the territory that Mexico was obliged to cede to the United States as a result of the war for the sum of \$15 million.

The treaty was a watershed moment that dramatically transformed the United States as Mexico ceded approximately 55% of its pre-war territory, including present-day California, Nevada, Utah, most of Arizona, and parts of New Mexico, Colorado, and Wyoming. The treaty facilitated a massive territorial expansion, effectively redrawing the map of North America as shown in the map below.

The treaty's economic implications were significant because just days before the treaty was signed February 2, 1848, gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill on January 24, 1848. The ensuing Gold Rush of 1849 attracted hundreds of thousands of prospectors, boosting the economy but also leading to lawlessness and environmental degradation.

Although most of Arizona was ceded to the United States in 1848, it wasn't until 1854 that Tucson itself became part of the USA. This occurred when Mexico sold the southern part of Arizona and part of New Mexico to the United States in what is known as the Gadsden Purchase. Arizona, formerly part of the Territory of New Mexico, became a separate territory on February 24, 1863. The United States acquired the region through the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the 1853 Gadsden Purchase. It wasn't until 1912 that Arizona achieved statehood and became the forty-eighth state of the United States.

Many historians have wondered if Mexico would have ceded this territory if gold had been discovered in California several years earlier. If Mexico had known about the riches of gold in California, the United States might look much different today.



The Mexican Cession 1848

The Mile Wide Mine (Tucson Mountains)

The Tucson Mountains west of town were once extensively prospected for copper, silver, and gold. Early mining activity started in the 1690s after the founding of San Xavier Mission. The first mining claim, the Nequilla Mine, was staked in 1867 and the Amole Mining District was created in the early 1870s and encompassed the Tucson Mountains. It was one of the earliest recorded mining districts in North America.

The area now is part of a Pima County park and the Saguaro National Monument. However, back in the late 19th-century and early 20th-century, prospectors established approximately 120 mines and prospector pits with the first claim registered in 1865.

The Tucson Mountains are composed of volcanic rocks that collapsed into a caldera about 70 million years ago. The caldera was about 12 miles wide and 15 miles long. The volcano collapsed as the result of rapid eruption of volcanic ash which piled up in flows that reached an accumulated thickness of about three miles. Kinney Road runs just east of the western ring fracture zone of the caldera. East of Kinney Road is geologically down, about 1,000 feet into the caldera, although now the rocks are topographically higher.

Toward the end of the volcanic episode, magma rose and penetrated the flows, metamorphosing some, and bringing hydrothermal solutions carrying copper, gold, silver, and other metals.

Most of those 120 odd prospects were just holes in the ground, but four mines

had some consequence: Old Yuma, Gila Monster, Gould, and Mile Wide mines. Of the four, the Mile Wide Mine turned out to be a mile wide fiasco for everyone involved.

The Mile Wide Mine was initially named the Copper King Mine. When George Reininger purchased the mine from the original owner, L. Martin Warer, in 1915, the name was changed to Mile Wide because that was the width of the entire claim. Though this mine was never a premier metal-producing site in southeastern Arizona, it was one of the best in the Tucson Mountains.

The Mile Wide Mine lies in Saguaro National Park West, and like other mines within the park's boundaries, it is not advertised as a destination on the trail guide because of safety concerns. However, the mine has both history and ore production that give it a position of noteworthy comment in the history of the Tucson Mountains.

The Mile Wide Mining Company was instrumental in both excavating and running the mine during its brief existence. Its prime years of operation were 1917, 1918 and briefly in 1941.



The Mile Wide Mine

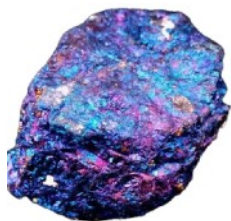
The Mile Wide Mine *(continued)*

These years are notable because of the wartime status of the nation. Despite the low grade of ore produce, the Mile Wide Mine was still a profitable venture. It was during the operation of the Mile Wide Mine that one of the only instances of documented corporate theft occurred in the history of the Amole Mining District. Charles Reiniger became proprietor of the mine in 1915 after having purchased the option from its original owner, L. Martin Warer.

Reiniger sensationalized his findings of copper and managed to persuade stockholders to increase their share of stock in the company's future. However, the company had only produced \$25,000 worth of copper and 70,000 pounds of silver. Reiniger sold his stock in 1919, absconding with \$100,000 and was never heard from again.

Several proceeding owners took over the leadership of the company. However, by 1942 the mine permanently closed down after it became obvious that there were no significant mineral bonanzas to be found. The Mile Wide Mine produced 34,000 tons of ore (copper, gold, lead, molybdenum and zinc) during its brief history.

Also extracted at the Mile Wide Mine were the copper-rich ores bornite and chalcopyrite. Bornite is contained in



Bornite

veins of igneous rock and has the appearance of bronze, brown and purple hues. Chalcopyrite is a soft and brittle copper ore that appears metallic and yellow.



Chalcopyrite

Access to the Mile Wide Mine for miners removing copper ore was a matter of importance. Because of its location deep in the interior of the Tucson Mountains, a road system was developed. Evidence of this road now serves as part of the modern King Canyon trail system that goes through a wash, which connects with another trail heavily overgrown with vegetation, allowing the hiker access to the remains of the mine. It was upon this road that mining trucks carried ore to Tucson, which was then shipped by rail to the smelter in the town of Sasco, 25 miles northwest of Tucson.

The trailhead to access the Mile Wide Mine is on Kinney Road at the King Canyon Trail Head. Take the King Canyon Trail for 0.9 miles to King Canyon Wash at the junction with the Sendero Esperanza Trail. From this junction the route heads due north along the old mining road for 0.6 miles to the mine. This road is almost nonexistent at the junction of the two trails, but traces of it are still visible. There is also a vague trail that follows this road from others who have visited the mine site.

The Mile Wide Mine *(continued)*

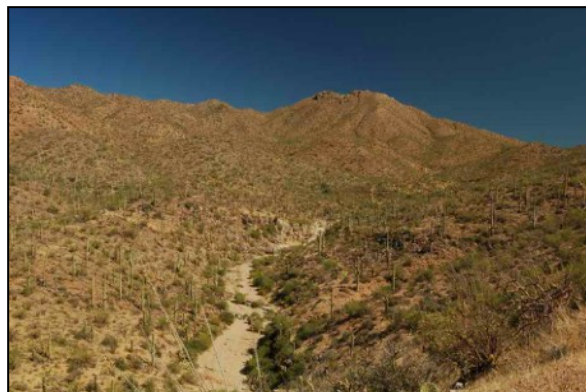
Once past the trail junction, the road becomes more obvious. This trail is rocky and in places overgrown with cactus or brush but should not require much trail finding skills. Along this road are rock walls built to support the road and in one spot there must have been a bridge to cross a small wash.

The mine shaft at the mine is fenced off to keep people out, but unfortunately, some have crawled under the barbed wire fence. The fence is only a few feet from the shaft, therefore, everyone should stay outside the fence line.

Along the road to the Mile Wide Mine are several shafts and some structures still exist, along with rusted tin cans scattered along the mountainside near the mine—remnants of the ephemeral Mile Wide Mining Camp.

The short hike (round trip is three miles) is well worth your time if you are into old mines and history. If you do visit this site, leave things as you found them for others to enjoy and be safe and do not get injured—that's the fastest way to have this area officially shut down.

Mile Wide Mine
LATITUDE & LONGITUDE:
32.26333, - 111.15556



The King Canyon Trail



Mile Wide Mine Shaft

Information obtained from internet sources including:

<https://arizonadailyindependent.com/2013/04/15/old-mines-of-the-tucson-mountains/>

<https://hikearizona.com/decoder.php?ZTN=20873>

WARNING!

Abandoned mine sites are a GREAT safety hazard. Dangers include old explosives, hazardous chemicals, bats, bees, snakes, spiders, bobcats, mountain lions, and other predators. Falls and cave-ins are common. Entry into these mines is prohibited and strongly discouraged.



The World's Deepest Gold Mine

Located west of Johannesburg in South Africa is the Mponeng Mine—the world's deepest gold mine.

Construction began in 1981 with a process called 'shaft-sinking' where a huge vertical structure is slowly sunk underground. Once sunk, miners continue to dig deeper by building more electro shafts and a labyrinth of tunnels to reach the gold deposit.

The main shaft of the Mponeng Mine is over 2.5 miles deep, which is equivalent to 10 Empire State Buildings stacked on top of each other. Owned and operated by AngloGold Ashanti, approximately 4,000 miners take the plunge each and every day to work underground at Mponeng. To access the mine, workers board an elevator shaft — called a "cage" — that fits 120 people at a time and travels up to 40 MPH to the first stage of the mine located 1.6 mile below the Earth. A second elevator takes workers even deeper, while the last part of the mine is only accessible on foot, adding to the mine's mystique and the physical demands placed on its workers. The trip from the surface to the bottom can take over an hour due to

atmospheric pressure increases, leading to potential health risks like decompression sickness (the bends), especially if proper ascent procedures aren't followed meticulously.

At the bottom of the world's deepest gold mine is a 30-inch seam of gold called the Ventersdorp Contact Reef. This is what the miners came for, but gold production has steadily fallen over the past few years, forcing the miners to dig even deeper to reach the deposits. That far into the Earth's crust, conditions are intense. Rock walls in the Mponeng mine reach temperatures of 140°F (60°C) and humidity levels often exceed 95%.

To keep things cool, the mine uses a unique cooling system to manage the underground temperatures. Over 6,000 tonnes of ice slurry are pumped into underground reservoirs, and giant fans help to spread the air flow.

Every day, about 5,000 pounds of explosives are detonated throughout the mine to access deeper gold reserves, and 6,400 tons of rock are excavated.



Above Ground Operations, Mponeng Mine

The World's Deepest Gold Mine *(continued)*

There are a couple interesting facts about the Mponeng Mine. At least 10% of the gold in South African mines is stolen and criminal syndicates help illegal miners sneak into the mineshaft. After hiding out for months on end, these miners turn a ghostly gray from the lack of sunlight and are referred to as 'ghost miners.'

In addition to finding gold in the mine, the first known organisms that live totally independently of the sun have been discovered deep in the mine. The bacteria, called *Desulforudis Audaxviator*, exist without the benefit of photosynthesis by harvesting the energy of natural radioactivity to create food for themselves. The bacterium, which lives in depths from .9 to 1.8 miles below the Earth's surface in ground water at the mine, is one of the only few organisms known to man that doesn't not require sunlight for nourishment. Some experts speculate that similar life forms may exist on other planets.

To produce an ounce of gold in this mine requires 38 man hours, 1,400 gallons of water, enough electricity to run a large house for ten days, and chemicals such as cyanide, acids, lead, borax, and lime. In order to extract South Africa's yearly output of 500 tons of gold, nearly 70 million tons of earth are raised and milled. Gold is getting so expensive that the mine only needs to extract 0.35 ounces (approximately 9.92 grams) from a ton of rock to be

profitable, and Mponeng excavates 6,000 tons of rock per day.

Mponeng is part of the Witwatersrand Gold Belt, which is the world's large and richest gold reserves. Around 50% of all the gold ever mined on earth was produced here.



Mponeng Underground Mining Operations



Mponeng Excavation Equipment

This information was obtained from internet sources including:
<https://money.visualcapitalist.com/descend-worlds-deepest-gold-mine/>

April 2025 Special Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1 Member's Meeting 6:00 PM	2	3	4	5
6 BRUISER Claims 8:00 AM	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 Business Meeting 6:30 PM	16	17	18	19
20 EASTER	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May 2025 Special Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6 Member's Meeting 6:00 PM	7	8	9	10 SNOOZIN Claims 8:00 AM
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 Business Meeting 6:30 PM	21	22	23	24
25	26 MEMORIAL DAY	27	28	29	30	31

Editor's Note

It's difficult saying goodbye to a friend. Ralph Montañño did a nice job paying tribute to Dan Walker and I will miss Dan's dry sense of humor. I chuckle to myself when I think of one of the first times I met Dan. The club was at a monthly outing at the Bruiser claims and it was my first time at Bruiser. I was anxious to learn about prospecting and having the ability to identify all the different types of rocks I found while digging and classifying the dirt. As I was digging, I found a large, dense green rock that I had never seen before. Knowing that Dan was the Outings Director, I knew he could tell me what type of rock it was. I approached Dan, showed him the rock, and asked him what kind rock it was. Dan looked at the rock, looked at me, and replied "It's a green rock."



Ray Darragh, DGD Gazette
Editor

Dan, you will be missed. Godspeed on your new journey.....

"May you always find yellow in the bottom of your pan"



The Desert Gold Diggers Gazette is published as a service to the members of Desert Gold Diggers Inc. Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the management and its members and neither the Desert Gold Diggers, its Board, nor the editor of this publication assume any liability for damages resulting from the use of Gazette information and club maps. There are risks associated with prospecting and the Desert Gold Diggers membership application states:

"I acknowledge that prospecting and prospecting locations can be dangerous with numerous natural and artificial hazards. By signing up, as a member of the Desert Gold Diggers Inc., I, my spouse, my family, and/or my guests agree to release the Desert Gold Diggers Inc., their officers or assignees, and/or property owner(s) from any liability incurred during prospecting operations/outings. I further agree to have any guests accompanying me to one of the clubs claims on a private outing, to sign a club waiver prior to the outing."

The Desert Gold Diggers Board encourages submissions of articles from club members about prospecting or mining, as well as opinion pieces or the sale of items. All submissions will be reviewed and approved by the Board prior to inclusion in the Gazette.