



Secretary: Marlea Sheridan

Editor: Penny Esplin

**DATE: April 6, 2013**

**Short and Sweet by the Prez:** Our February and March meetings you might say have been quite the adventure. As miners we are used to a bit of adventure now and again, whether to run off a bear bent on teething on our dredge pontoons or shifting our position while in the bottom of a dredge hole just at the right moment to avoid a falling boulder weighing hundreds of pounds, but we took it to new levels in February cosponsoring the first ever Oregon Gold Miners Rally on the steps of the state capital. It took only 9 working days to put this extremely important event together with much help from our membership and that of the Willamette Valley Miners led by President Eben Ray. We can't forget also the other miners representing associations from across the Willamette Valley and Washington that showed up in force to join our rally committee.

Wow!!! We had hundreds of miners arrive from as far away as Canada and North Carolina carrying banners and signs declaring Mining Is Not Evil to Truth is in the Science. Miners protested the multitude of anti-mining bills brought forth by the legislature this session that would result in limited use to an all out ban on suction dredging. Bills so poorly written there would also be unintended consequences to other unassociated groups not targeted by these hate filled bills, SB 115, 370, 388, 401 and 12 with its sister bill in the House HB 3251.



Penny Esplin, Millennium Digger News Editor

Eben Ray, Pres. Willamette Valley Miners

Rally goers were drawn in to form a makeshift battle line in front of the capital ironically directly under a giant gold plated Oregon pioneer, a logger astride the top of the capital dome. Unnecessarily, our legislature has chosen to cause a conflict between the two main themes of our state song honoring those that built the state and the natural beauty of this

state. I guess the glory days of our state are in the past for our citizens. You can see in the senate bills the disdain some of our elected officials have for the hard working citizens of Oregon.

## Oregon, My Oregon

Land of the Empire Builders,  
Land of the Golden West;  
Conquered and held by free men,  
Fairest and the best.  
Onward and upward ever,  
Forward and on, and on;  
Hail to thee, Land of Heroes,  
My Oregon.  
Land of the rose and sunshine  
Land of the summer's breeze;  
Laden with health and vigor,  
Fresh from the Western seas.  
Blest by the blood of martyrs,  
Land of the setting sun;  
Hail to thee, Land of Promise,  
My Oregon.



This presumed joke did not escape the eye of the many speakers of the event. Tom Kitchar, Waldo Mining District President noted pointing up at the gold man atop the capital dome the gold plating originally may have been mined from the vast natural resources of our state, but was re-plated likely from gold dug from an unsafe hole in the ground by the Chinese, probably children. From across Oregon gold mining leaders showed up to rally the miners against these bills that for some would bring to an end to what made our state the land of promise and for others the passage of SB 115 (now SB 838) or SB 401 would be devastating, axing total yearly incomes and reducing the rest to only memories.

A great thing did come out of the rally that has been missing for a long time we finally were able to bring miners together from all across Oregon's rich mining districts. If nothing else comes out of it the Millennium Diggers and the Willamette Valley Mining Associations should be very proud. Oregon's mining community together will roll on against those that pit the citizens of Oregon against the beauty of Oregon. You say how can that be? We have mined

in Oregon using various methods for over a century and a half and our state has some of the most pristine and healthy rivers and scenery in the world. It proves that Oregon gold miners can adjust to use the best management practices that work hand in hand with our environment, we benefit each other, and without the addition of more government control.

We can stop these bills but we all need to call, write and email on each one of these bills. I have attached at the end a sample of how to set up your letter. You need to be respectful but there is no reason you cannot be passionate about what you want to tell your legislators. Keep it to the point and no more than one page long. Best to keep as short as possible or they will not have time to read it. If you have more to say send multiple letters.

It's simple at this point, Keep Fighting until the end of the session or they will rob us of our heritage.

I am really looking forward to getting back to normal and seeing everyone at our next meeting.

Claudia Wise, President



Claudia Wise, Pres. Millennium Diggers  
Karla Edwards Oregon Citizens Lobby  
Joseph Greene, Treasurer Millennium Diggers



Ken Orndorff, Millennium Diggers (right of center) dark blue jacket.





Marvin Swain, Millennium Diggers and Jim Yerby, New 49ers on security duty.



Terry McCarthy, Millennium Diggers, center front... small scale miners are responsible

We held our March meeting in conjunction with the Willamette Valley Miners meeting.

**Attendance:** There were 13 Millennium Digger members in attendance.

**Meeting Minutes:** We met privately during the break and Ken Orndorff made a motion for the Millennium Diggers to match the lobby funds (\$200) that EOMA and WVM donated to reimburse individuals for the expense of being at the capital working to stop the anti-mining bills that keep popping up in the senate and house. Delmon Ray seconded the motion. Motion carried. Claudia will have the funds sent to WVM treasurer, Jim Perky who will be in charge of the WVM account set up for this purpose. Reimbursement will be for travel costs, meals and printing costs associated with providing professional testimony and in helping write the minority report with Senator Olsen.

EOMA and Waldo mining district has started promoting the new ½ pound of Gold Raffle. The first of 2 preliminary raffles leading up to the Grand Prize raffle at the spring 2014 GPAA Gold Show was held at the GPAA Gold Show, March 30th. Grand prize at the first drawing was a 4 inch dredge. The winner is not listed on the Waldo Mining District site yet but I will let you know as soon as I find out.

***Tickets are on sale thru waldominingdistrict.com!*** Tickets purchased are good for all 3 raffles! The 2<sup>nd</sup> drawing will be held at the Golden Jubilee in Baker City, July 21, 2013 -The 3<sup>rd</sup> and final raffle drawing is for the **Grand Prize of ½ pound of Gold, to be held at the GPAA Gold Show in 2014.**

**Linn Baustin** stepped down after 10 years of calling all members every month and reminding us of our upcoming meetings and events. For now I will only call those I know do not have email If someone wants to volunteer to notify members of upcoming meetings/events please contact me.

Claudia Wise, President Millennium Diggers contact info: [notsowise\\_55@yahoo.com](mailto:notsowise_55@yahoo.com), 541-990-7009.

**Ideas for Events/Outings:** Ken Orndorff is also a member of the Willamette Agate and Mineral Society (WAMS), where he is in charge of scheduling their outings. He wanted to know if we were interested in any of the rock-hounding trips they are associated with, such as: Ochoco/thunder-eggs; Bear Creek/petrified wood; Glass Buttes/obsidian; Paulina/limb casts; Maury Mountain or Hampton Butte/green petrified wood, or McDermitt. -We decided to discuss it further during our next meeting in February. \_This was carried over to our April meeting. Please bring your ideas for outings.

### **Rocks/Treasures for April –starting with the Letter “J”**

Bring rocks and treasures to share with the group.

“J”: Jasper, jade, junk, jewelry, jokes? etc...

### **ACTON ALERT!**

At this point two anti-mining bills have been introduced into committee SB 401 and a new re-write SB 838. Both will have the effect of destroying or at least curtailing suction dredge mining in Oregon. We are putting a concerted effort by the mining community to address our legislators.

Writing to your legislators is of utmost importance, whether by calling, emails or regular mail. Let's flood them with protest! Let your State Senators and Representatives know if you are their constituents! That will grant you priority above those that are not. Title the letter with the Senate Bill #, requesting their opposition. Using your own words, let them know how the bill affects you as a miner and urge them to oppose each bill, writing a separate email for each Senate Bill. Important: don't forget to include your name and address and asked that your letter be included in the public testimony.

The Senate Bills are listed below, with talking points to use as a guide:

#### **SB 838 (Previously SB 115)**

- \* **Prohibits placer mining in Oregon using any form of motorized Equipment.**
- \* **Prohibits any and all dredging in the state of Oregon.**
- \* **A maximum of one year in prison and a \$6,250 fine or both.**
- \* **SB 838 is a taking of all of your mining rights.**
- \* **SB 838 is a preemption of the Federal Mining Law.**
- \* **SB 838 will cause state wide takings litigation by miners against the state of Oregon.**
- \* **The enormous cost to the state defending SB 838 will be prohibitive.**

#### **SB 401**

- \* **Wild and Scenic creek and river designations prohibit all mining.**
- \* **Covers all designated waters beds and banks.**
- \* **Also a setback of 1/4 of a mile on each side above high water mark is an outright taking of Federal mining rights, guaranteed under the law.**
- \* **SB 401 will create massive takings litigation by miners over the 1/4 mile set back.**
- \* **SB 401 would stop or curtail most building on private lands.**
- \* **SB 401 targets most streams in Oregon that are gold bearing.**
- \* **SB 401 is an overt act by the Oregon Legislature to destroy mining and miners in Oregon.**

**At a time when Oregon is trying to recover and produce jobs this is a major jobs killing bill.**

These Senate Bills will kill placer mining in Oregon. It should make you very angry that the environmentalists and their cohorts in the state legislature would do this to us.

**HB 3251 (Same as SB 12):** Has completed public testimony and is scheduled for a Work Session by the House Committee on *Agriculture and Natural Resources*. You have until the committee convenes Monday at 3pm to send in written testimony. This bill **would prohibit the gross weight of all vehicles to not exceed 200lbs. When we all know that the average weight of an ATV starts at 500lbs!**

**SB 370 and SB 388 have not been scheduled for a committee hearing as of this newsletter. I will keep you posted through the Diggers email if I find anything out.**

**ALSO WE HAVE TWO PRO-MINING BILLS THAT NEED YOUR SUPPORT**  
**PLEASE WRITE YOUR LEGISLATORS**

**SB 732 AND HB 2841**

**Our Next Club Meeting: May 23<sup>rd</sup> @ 7:00**

Visit our website at <http://www.millenniumdiggers.com/>

The Millennium Diggers Club is a group based in Keizer, Oregon, which is near Salem, Oregon. The club is for people that share an interest in searching for things of value. The club's charter is to provide members with a club that will help promote the hobbies of metal detecting, prospecting, rock hounding, and treasure hunting. Part of our yearly dues pay for mining claims that are available for all club members to use. We use club meetings to share information about locating gold, silver, coins, jewelry, gemstones, fossils and metal detecting. We plan club outings each month where we can help each other learn all aspects of our hobbies. This is a great family activity, bring the kids! Please feel free to drop in on one of the monthly meetings or outings.

**We meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month, 7:00 p.m, at:**

**Clear Lake United Methodist Church**

**920 Marks Drive**

**Keizer, OR 97303**

We meet in the church's Fellowship Hall; a real a nice meeting place complete with tables, chairs and a kitchen. The church is located across the street from the Clear Lake Fire Station. There's plenty of parking in the church's parking lot.

## **MINER'S PLEDGE OF SUPPORT**

**FOLKS: As explained below, at least several bills have been introduced in the Oregon 2013 legislature that if enacted would prohibit most mining as we know it, statewide.**

**A Miner's Rally was held at the Oregon State Capitol Thursday, Feb. 28, 2013, with a good turn-out of at least several hundred. WE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE, and many in the legislature say they are against the bills.**

**HOWEVER, and as Mark Twain once said: "*No one is safe while the legislature is in session*", we must still prepare for the worse!**

**And the worst is, any of these bills become law!  
In the event any of these anti-mining bills are enacted, our only recourse will be to take the State to court. This will cost thousands of dollars. For now, we are NOT asking for donations (for this cause), but instead we are asking for PLEDGES OF SUPPORT of \$100.00 (or more).**

**In the event that litigation is required, we will contact those that made Pledges and request the funds. If we can get 1000 Pledges of \$100.00 each, we will have raised \$100,000.00 to fight the battle!**

**Please go to <http://waldominingdistrict.com> for a downloadable pledge of support**

**Please mail your Pledge to:**

**Waldo Mining District - Pledge  
P.O. Box 1574  
Cave Junction, OR 97523**

**Thank you!**



**Example letter: please write your own you can use the talking points above.**

April 6, 2013

Subject: Please oppose **Senate Bills 838**

Dear Senator,

I am writing you today to ask that you vote no on senate bill 838. This is an unnecessary bill that shows a complete lack of scientific understanding of small-scale gold dredging's inconsequential effects and an absolute disregard on the part of the bill sponsors for the associated net benefits that small-scale suction dredging has on the environment. Including the importance suction dredging plays in improving salmonid habitat.

Please take the time to educate yourself on this issue and help support keeping the miners in the water making a living. Please vote no on SB 838 senate.

Sincerely,

Your signature

Print your name

Address