

# Sacramento Valley Detecting Buffs

A Nonprofit Organization  
The Public is Invited to Attend

*SVDB Newsletter*

Web Site <http://www.sacramentovalleydetectingbuffs.com/>

Issue Date March, 2007



## Sacramento Valley Detecting Buffs

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### Editor's Minutes for Meeting of February 1, 2007

#### President: John Duffy

- John called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and welcomed members, guests and visitors. John read an intestinal gases joke given to him by Bob Maytum.

#### Vice President's Report: Peter Johnson

- Peter was not in attendance.

#### Treasurer's Report: Allan Woltman

- The January beginning balance was \$4,441.41 Expenses: \$2,959.40 & income: \$1,093. The January ending balance was \$2,575.01.

#### Hospitality: Al Ezell

- Al got a big round of applause from everyone for bringing great munchies and drinks to our monthly meetings!

#### Hunt Master Report: Rick Costello

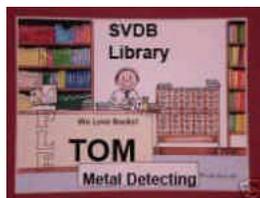
- Rick put together another great hunt – this time at San Juan Park in Citrus Heights on February 17<sup>th</sup>. There were 20 of us participating in another fun event. There was plenty of sunshine, mild temperatures and lots of coins were found by everyone. Lucky token winners were rewarded with 5 silver dimes for each token. It was also good to see Rick Morris back again hunting after his December surgery.



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### *Librarian Report: Tom Schweppe*

- Tom reported that there are a few people that have overdue books that need to be returned. Other than that the library is in great shape!



### *Membership Report: George Magann*

- George said that we now have a record number of 142 SVDB members for 2007. He also reported that several people joined FDMAC tonight. James Neeley won the random membership drawing.

### *Web-Site Report: Lee Wiese*

- I need you to provide to me or George, our membership chairman with your e-mail addresses so that you can get the SVDB e-mail Updates. The web-site is getting about 1,300+ hits per month this is up from six months ago by about 30%.

### *New Business:*

- President John Duffy told us that Bob Harrison volunteered to run for club secretary. The SVDB membership then voted to confirm that Bob is our club secretary for 2007. Congratulations Bob!

### *Old Business:*

- *SVDB Club Patches and Decals*

Lee had our SVDB club logo on a patch and sold these patches at the meeting for \$5 each. There are still some patches available.

### *President's Corner:*

- I first started metal detecting on April 21, 2001 when I took my new JW Fisher's Pulse 8X underwater (pulse induction) metal detector down to Discovery Park. Two hours later I had found a dime and two pennies, plus quite a few pull tabs and beer bottle caps. Finding valuables that first year was a challenge - \$14.48 worth of coins in nine months.

One of the things I noticed was how "dirty" or corroded many of the coins were, even those that might not have been underground all that long. It took a while before I made the connection to "clad" coins simply not having any resistance to discoloration from exposure to minerals and water in the ground.

It took several years and another kind of detector to locate my first silver coin - a 1954D dime and I had to go to Missouri at that... but, what thrill to see that shiny coin

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sitting there in the dirt, so unlike all the red-discolored dimes I had dug to that point. I never gave much thought to finding shiny nickels, because after all, they are made of a 75% copper / 25% nickel alloy, right?

Then just this month I found out about the Wartime



"Silver" nickels. On October 8, 1942, the wartime five-cent piece was introduced to eliminate nickel, a critical war material. A larger mint mark was placed above the dome on Monticello, and the letter P, to indicate Philadelphia, was used for the first time indicating the change of alloy to 56% copper, 35% silver and 9% manganese.

This alloy was used through 1945 and the pre-war composition was resumed in 1946.

I made this discovery when I found a "shiny" nickel sitting about 5 or 6 inches down. While it was not as clean and bright as the silver dimes and quarters I had found I knew it was something different. A quick check of "The Official Red Book, A Guide Book of United States Coins" gave me the information I quoted above and it also confirmed my thinking that there is always something new to learn about our hobby....John Duffy



Next month: Systematic vs. random hunting.

### *FMDAC Update by Lee Wiese FMDAC Western States Chapter VP*

- The FMDAC Web-site is: <http://www.fmdac.org>  
The site was updated in December with the addition of many new articles and there is a page with all the state parks regulations by state. Take a look. The site has a lot of information about current metal detecting bills in Kentucky, Arkansas, Texas, and Washington. You can also access all of FMDAC's Newsletters - there are many.

- **The Spring FMDAC Convention** is scheduled for May 4<sup>th</sup> to May 7<sup>th</sup> at Mesa, Arizona. A flyer and information is available at <http://www.fmdac.org>

- The FMDAC Western Chapter (Mike Smith, President & Lee Wiese, VP) are planning a HUNT for September during Heritage Days at Foresthill, CA. There will be two HUNTS on Saturday, Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2007 and we

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are working the Motherload Goldhounds in Auburn to finalize the hunt location. Put this on your schedule - we will make it happen. Flyers will be available at the March Meeting.

### **SEE YOU AT THE NEXT MEETING on March 1**

- **SVDB Meetings are held at the SMUD Building located at the intersection of Elkhorn and Don Julio in North Highlands. The meeting is held on the first Thursday of each month and starts at 7:30 pm.**

### **SVDB Day-In-The-Park**

There are two day-in-the park hunts per month. The hunts are on the first Sunday and the third Sunday of each month. Breakfast is at 8:00 am with the hunt starting at 9:00 am. See the following for meeting place:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Hunt: Meet at Denny's at Watt and Auburn
- 3rd Sunday Hunts: Meet at Pancake House at 21<sup>st</sup> and Broadway

Winston Char and Don Compton each won a silver coin for their finds at this month's Day in the Park hunts.

### **SVDB Finds of the Month (FOM):**

The Show and Tell for February had lots of interesting finds. Roy Evans struck it rich with his diamond ring finds. Photos of these finds are on our website under FOM on the left side of the web page.

### **SVDB February Raffle**

Mary Ann Mejia and James Neely sold tickets of \$446. This was a good raffle for the slow month of February. Our new club secretary, Bob Harrison (Mr. Lucky) won the gold coin for tonight.

### **A Reminder**

If you plan on hunting in **RENO** and/or **OREGON**, make sure you get a permit.

**Roseville** requires a permit to hunt. Get it at the Park and Recreation Office

**San Jose Parks** also require permits.

### **SVDBers Go to Arizona for FMDAC Hunts**

During the week of February 4th to February 11th, five members of SVDB and the Goldhounds traveled to the Phoenix, Arizona area for two FMDAC hunts. On February 4th, it was an all silver hunt along with tokens. Among the five of us we gathered 190 silver coins. Hunting were: Ray, Kay, and Hal Carlisle along with Ann and Rick Costello. Kay won a top quality set of earphones. Rick won a White's Bullseye 2 pinpointer.

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The following Sunday we hunted at Apache Junction for three hunts. The first hunt was called an enhanced hunt in which small gold nuggets were attached to coins or other metallic objects. Ann detected the most nuggets, seven. We all found nuggets, but not as many as Ann.

The second hunt of the day was a hunt mostly of tokens and clad coins. There were Great prizes. The top ten prizes started with a low of \$300 value to a high of a Minelab detector. Several detectors were offered as prizes. Kay won a "Gold Buddy" along with a large, three-foot bird bath. The rest of us won smaller prizes.



The last hunt of the day was a nugget hunt. There were over a hundred nuggets planted. Hal and Ray both found two nuggets each. The rest of the party was skunked. (But we had great excuses for our poor showing.) To make the hunt more exciting, we were detecting in and around a large

preserve of cactus with many pretty varieties, but very prickly.

Some of the more mobile cacti jumped out in front of us and zapped us! .....Rick Costello

### **Steve's Nugget Detector Guide Updated 8/1/2006**

**Steve Herschbach owns the largest metal detecting and outfitters store in Anchorage. It's called Alaska Mining & Diving Supply. He pulls no punches in evaluating the following gold detectors.**



### **Tesoro Lobo Super TRAQ (List \$799, 17.5 kHz) -**

Automatic ground balance and full-range discrimination make this one of the most versatile nugget detectors made. The Lobo is primarily a nugget detector, but is also suitable for coin and jewelry detecting. The automatic ground balance makes this detector easier to operate than manual ground balance detectors. Seven accessory coils are



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available for the Lobo.

Steve's Opinion - Until recently, the Lobo was the hands down winner in the versatility department. Very good nugget detecting in a light weight package, combined with a basic but very capable coin detecting circuit. The discrimination mode is intended for coin detecting, but doubles as a good iron id nugget hunting mode, as long as the discrimination is not set too high (1.5-2). Newer detectors, like the White's MXT below, are now offering a very significant challenge to the Lobo, but it still wins points with me for its light, convertible design. The Lobo can be hip or chest mounted and has a very good selection of accessory coils. All in all the Lobo is an excellent and versatile nugget detector.

**White's MXT Tracker (List \$799, 14.7 kHz)** – This model from White's Electronics is possibly the best all-around detector on the market today. The 14.7 kHz frequency makes it more sensitive to gold and jewelry than most coin detectors. What separates the MXT from the other models listed here is its full-range target id circuitry with LCD readout. This makes the MXT a superior coin, relic, and jewelry detector. Thirteen accessory coils are available for the MXT (White's, Jimmy Sierra, EXcelerator, Sun-Ray).



Steve's Opinion - One of my favorite all-around detectors! The MXT is the choice for someone wanting both excellent nugget hunting capability combined with a discrimination system to rival the very best detectors available. The LCD readout is similar to that on many coin detectors, but unique among detectors with serious nugget detecting capability. You get full target id and depth readings, ground phase, battery strength, and more. The coil selection is truly exceptional. The MXT is getting rave reviews from coin, jewelry, and relic hunters, and is a serious contender in the nugget detecting arena. It has proven to be a particularly effective machine at Ganes Creek, Alaska, with many pounds of gold found. The MXT is not quite as sensitive to small gold as the White's GMT, but it may actually be a better choice for those hunting larger gold nuggets. Note for 2006 - Pounds of gold continue to be found in Alaska at Ganes Creek and other locations with the MXT, making it one of the most productive nugget detectors in Alaska.

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**White's Goldmaster GMT (List \$799, 48 kHz)** – The GMT has exceptional small gold capabilities with its high 48 kHz frequency. The GMT features automatic ground balance for ease of operation, and also has manual ground balance for those wishing full control of their detector. The GMT also has the most advanced iron discrimination system available in a nugget detector today. Four accessory coils are available for the GMT (White's and Jimmy Sierra).



Steve's Opinion - The GMT features both automatic and fully adjustable manual ground balance... your choice and a real plus on the GMT. The LCD based "iron probability" readout offers more subtle iron discrimination than the all or nothing audio id on other units. The GMT rivals the Gold Bug 2 on small gold, and clearly outperforms it in highly mineralized ground. The unit is in the same box as White's coin detectors. I don't fault the MXT for this, as it is designed for more general use. But the GMT is pure nugget detector, and in my opinion should be in a convertible box. As it is, you cannot chest or hip mount the standard GMT. Most people, however, do not seem to mind this obvious bias of mine on ergonomics. It is the best selling nugget detector in the Anchorage area.

I often compare the GMT and Gold Bug 2 as both are very popular in the Anchorage area due to their small gold abilities. I view the GMT as a Cadillac, with all the bells and whistles. The Gold Bug 2 is more like a manual shift 4WD truck. The GMT is technologically superior, but the Gold Bug 2 is better built for off-road use. It all comes down to if you want a Cadillac or the truck!

**Fisher Gold Bug 2 (List \$879.95, 71 kHz)** – The Gold Bug 2 is the highest frequency detector on the market, for extreme sensitivity to the smallest gold nuggets. In moderate to low mineral conditions, no detector will pick up a smaller nugget than the Gold Bug 2, especially if it is paired with its 6.5" accessory coil. The lightweight and tough hip mountable design is great for rough terrain. The Gold Bug 2 is a manual ground balance unit. Two accessory coils are available for the Gold Bug 2.



Steve's Opinion - The Gold Bug 2 is another of my favorite

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detectors. It is a very popular detector in the Anchorage area, and is ideal for nugget detecting on the Kenai Peninsula. It has extreme sensitivity to small gold, a real plus in Alaska. I also feel it has the best physical design of any nugget detector on the market. Lightweight, extremely tough, and convertible from rod mount to chest or hip mount. It's main drawback is that it gets poor depth on gold in mineralized ground. It is also a bit harder for beginners to learn than newer units with automatic ground balance. But for many areas in Alaska the Gold Bug 2 is hard to beat. The Gold Bug 2 has a particularly effective "Iron ID" mode that not only rejects iron targets but most hot rocks.

### Minelab X-Terra 70 (List \$899.95, 3, 7.5, 18.75 kHz) –



This newer detector has a unique design feature. The standard unit comes with a 7.5 kHz round 9" coil. Accessory coils are available not only at 7.5 kHz, but also at 3 kHz and 18.75 kHz. You can literally change the frequency of the detector by changing the coil!

The X-Terra 70 has a large number of features and operating modes making it suitable for almost any type of metal detecting, be it for coins, jewelry, relics, or gold nuggets. In addition to the stock 9" 7.5 KHz round concentric coil, Minelab offers a 9" 3 KHz round concentric coil, 9" 18.75 KHz round concentric coil, 5" x 10" 18.75 KHz elliptical DD coil, and a 10.5" 18.75 kHz round DD coil. A small coil is said to be in the works.

Steve's Opinion - I like the new X-Terra 70. It is a very viable alternative to the White's MXT for all around type detectors that are strong on gold. The MXT is far more proven and has a better selection of coils available and so is the safe choice, but the X-Terra 70 bears watching. It has a very powerful all-metal Prospecting Mode, and handles hot rocks and trash extremely well in its discrimination mode. I particularly like its very compact and lightweight design. People will tend to use the 18.75 kHz coils for gold, but for tailing piles the lower frequency coils may handle hot rocks better while still hitting larger nuggets. There are lots of variables to experiment with on the X-Terra 70 and so it may be some time before its true potential is revealed.

### Minelab Eureka Gold (List \$995, 6.4, 20, 60 kHz) –



This is the only nugget detector that allows you to change frequencies with the flick of a switch; 6.4, 20, and 60 kHz, all using the same coil, unlike the X-Terra units. This makes the Eureka Gold one of the most versatile VLF detectors available for handling different ground conditions. The 20 kHz mode is used for most detecting for great all-around performance. The 60 kHz mode is used in low mineral soil looking for extra small nuggets. The 6.4 kHz mode is used in extreme mineralized soil that would overwhelm most detectors. The Eureka Gold is a good choice for someone hunting areas with widely varying mineral conditions. Two accessory coils are available for the Eureka (Minelab and Coiltek).

Steve's Opinion - The Eureka Gold with its three selectable frequencies will handle a wider range of ground conditions than most other VLF detectors. For a 60 kHz detector, it for some reason lacks the edge of the Gold Bug 2 or GMT when it comes to the smallest nuggets. Its best setting is the 20 kHz mode, as the detector seems optimized for this frequency. You will lose significant depth on larger nuggets in the 60 kHz mode. The Eureka is a good choice for large nuggets in more mineralized ground, but for small gold in less mineralized soil less expensive detectors will meet or exceed its performance. Still, for somebody traveling to many different areas, the Eureka is a great choice due to its ability to switch frequencies.

### Garrett Infinium LS (List \$1250, Pulse) –



This Pulse Induction unit almost totally ignores ground

mineralization and most hot rocks. While not as sensitive to small gold as VLF detectors, the Infinium will operate smoothly in areas where regular detectors are ineffective. An added plus is that the unit is totally waterproof, and can be totally submerged when used with the optional underwater headphones. Seven accessory coils are available for the Infinium (Garrett and Westcoil).

Steve's Opinion - I like the Infinium, and bought the first production machine in Alaska. There are some areas in Alaska where hot rocks drive VLF detectors nuts.

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Petersville north of Anchorage is the best example. Graphite hot rocks are so thick as to make detecting with VLF detectors a real challenge. The Infinium totally ignores those rocks and will see gold through them. The Infinium will help in any areas where hot rocks present a real problem. Since it is totally waterproof it can be used in streams or pouring down rain without fear. The Infinium has lots of bang for the buck.

But it is important to note the Infinium is a pulse induction (PI) unit, like the Minelab GPX-4000 below. This means it has rudimentary discrimination compared to VLF units. It is best to view PI units as all-metal, dig-it-all detectors. They do have some limited discrimination capability, but it is not why you get a PI unit. Depth in mineralized ground and an ability to ignore hot rocks are the selling points. In addition, PI units have poor sensitivity to small gold compared to VLF units, and so someone with less expensive VLF unit can run circles around someone with a PI unit at locations like Crow Creek Mine or Mills Creek, Alaska. I tend to consider PI units as elephant hunting guns, best used when larger nuggets are known to be lurking in an area.

**Minelab GPX-4000 (List \$4500, Pulse)** – This detector's review and Steve's concluding remarks will be included in the April Newsletter.

**As Will Rogers said** *"Don't let yesterday use up too much of today."*

**If you have any questions or comments on this newsletter contact the editor, Don Dunn at [dadunn02@yahoo.com](mailto:dadunn02@yahoo.com).**

### Classified

#### Minelab X-Terra 50 for Sale



Includes:

- 1) Two coils and covers.
  - 9 inch 7.5 KHz
  - 9 inch 18.75 KHz
- 2) Manual
- 3) Koss UR-30 Headphones
- 4) Factory Shipping Container

The X-Terra 50 is made to accept coils at two different frequencies: Standard (9") 7.5kHz coil to find larger, deeper targets and (9")18.75kHz coil to find smaller, shallow targets. This means maximum flexibility whatever your type of search. More treasure finds and Deeper. *Changing coils on the X-Terra 50 is like changing detectors, only you don't have to change the detector!*

**VFLEX** - Minelab's new single frequency technology: VFLEX uses state of the art digital and mixed signal technology. For X-TERRA users, this high precision technology means dependable performance (high sensitivity, stability, repeatability) and improved immunity to tough environmental conditions

**This detector is very lightly used. One coil shows no wear the other has a few marks on the cover.**

**Price: \$445.00**

**Contact: Lee Wiese @ 916-780-7365  
or [lee-wiese@surewest.net](mailto:lee-wiese@surewest.net)**

