

# THE GOLD NUGGET

June 2026

## The Prez Sez..! by Kevin Singel



It has been a busy month since I last wrote one of these columns. In addition to an interesting presentation by Suellen Barnhard, the President of the 130 year old(!) Denver Mining Club, our club had a Pirate's Hunt detecting outing, a gold prospecting outing, a panning demo at the Aurora Water Festival, and another demo at the Old Arvada Memorial Day event. Keep reading to learn all the details!

The Pirate's Hunt has become a popular monthly event organized by our resident pirate, Robert Ahr! All are welcome to get in on it and I am sure there will be a report from him in this newsletter, so, enough said here but I think it is a really cool feature event of our club!

On the Saturday morning after the meeting, 16 vehicles worth of club members gathered at site C-06 in my first guidebook (that's the BLM site on CO-119 downstream of Black Hawk for those who know). We chatted a bit and then scattered to try our luck at various points along the public access section of the creek. We had panners, sluicers, high-bankers, and gabbers (someone who does more talking than digging lol) in attendance. Results were mixed with some folks finding very little and others being delighted by the larger flakes they saw in their pans. In the discussions at the end of the day, it became clear that one strategy led to the bigger flakes and more successful prospectors. I was struck by the fact that this was a great example of why it pays to be a member of a prospecting club! Gathering the insights of about 20 prospectors means we learned a lot about that area in just one short day of digging! I'll share that tip at the next meeting, so I hope to see you there. PS. We also had a new person join the club at the outing, welcome John B!

The following Thursday morning, 7 of us gathered to teach gold panning to hundreds of Aurora 5th graders (and a few of their teachers!) as part of the Aurora Water Festival. The club is paid for this service, so the group of volunteers not only had a fun time with the kids but also raised some funds to pay for our facility rental at the Clements Center - thanks again to all who participated this year!

Then the Sunday afternoon of Memorial Weekend, your president and Dave Mullen ran a panning booth in front of the Arvada Army Navy store. We had fun chatting with folks, teaching kids to pan, and handed out some flyers about GPOR to interested adults. As you may know, The Army Navy store sells some prospecting basics so it can be a quick way to get a gold pan or a vial if you are on that end of town. We appreciate them being so welcoming to us!

Wow, right? So, what's next? Well at our June Meeting I will do a very short talk on my recent visit to the Rye Patch area in western Nevada to take a metal detecting class to learn about my new detector, and to do some detecting with friends from the western slope. May more exciting, we will also have our Prospector's Yard Sale. Bring your unneeded prospecting gear to sell and bring some cash for those great deals on the gear you need! If you do bring gear to sell, be sure to bring a tarp or tablecloth to protect the floor or table where you place your items at the Clements Center...thanks in advance.

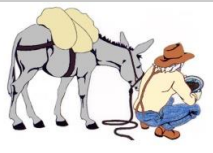
Then, later in the month, we will have another Pirate's Hunt and another fun group prospecting outing. This one will be right in town, on the south edge of Westminster, just north of Clear Creek, on a little side creek (so no worries about high water). It will be on the Saturday after the meeting as we often do. More details will be shared both at the meeting and via another email from the club (once I get the Outing Flyer put together lol).

Meanwhile, don't wait for the club events to occur, get out there with your detector or gold pan and Find Your GOLD!

## Vice President's Corner..! by Gary Hamilton



So hard to believe that the calendar year is almost half over, I have very little to report compared to our Prez. Energizer Bunny Singel. I am however past my second Hip replacement and well on the mend. However at my 6 week checkup my Dr. made me realize I can start doing more things but still need some time and strength before I am ready to get in the water and navigate slippery rocks. I really enjoyed our speaker last month, Suellen president of the Denver mining club. She gave me insight that mining comes in many forms and abilities. I have been to Nebraska for my high school class reunion. Every graduate of the school is invited. For inspiration for all this year the oldest one there was from the 70 year class and he rode his motorcycle from California. He was one of my dad's good friends. I am now in Utah helping my daughter move into a new old house that needs some work. She is excited to make it her and our grandson's home. I will be back for the next



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meeting for sure. I am going to metal detect the yard while I am here. The house was built in 1948. Hope to have something for the finds of the month. So the one thing I do have to report is that I have been working to make plans to revive the club picnic This is one suggestion from the survey. I am looking for a couple of members that would like to help with the planning. The plan is to have food (picnic) and to have annual panning and detecting competitions so you have a few months to hone you skills. I will be sending out the rules soon. Looking forward to seeing you at the next meeting. Hope you bring some good equipment for sale. This would be a great time to bring your friend that has been thinking about wanting to learn to hunt for gold or detecting. They should get a good deal to get them started.

## From the Treasurer/Secretary Ledge..! by Bill Chapman



First thing, the club finances remain sound with both savings and checking accounts well in the black. I have the printed reports on the back table at each meeting for any and all members who want to see the particulars.

Things seemed a bit subdued in the back of the room this week as the board elected to not hold the blue ticketed drawing in May. Here's the story. In March, the membership voted that for the blue ticket, or "special nugget drawing", the prize will not be a nugget at all but a shiny new Minelab™ Gold Monster 2000 metal detector.

Unfortunately, we have run into a difficulty obtaining the prize to award. Minelab™ can't produce the Gold Monster 2000 fast enough to meet the world-wide demand, so the club is currently on a waiting list to obtain one. Why is the demand so great you may ask? The answer is "results", pure and simple, results. The Gold Monster 2000 finds the gold! I suspect we may be hearing some details of how good it is in the president's column this month. He hunted last month in the Rye Patch, Nevada, with two fellows using the Gold Monster 2000 for the first time...very successfully.

The gold nugget drawing (red ticket) sales were quite brisk as was the 50/50 (green ticket) sales (we missed you Yam). At this coming meeting the membership drawing prizes (white ticket) have been considerably enhanced with donations from Yvonne S. and Gregory G. These are the tickets you get from Shellie as you sign in wearing your name tag. Sorry, only one to a customer.

Just a reminder, the membership annual dues renewal is now \$45.00. So, please continue to support the club by buying additional red and green tickets while the blue ticket sales are suspended

## Board Meeting Minutes from May 14, 2026 via Zoom

x	Kevin Singel (P)	x	Gordon Smith (Sec)	x	Robert Ahr	x	Ron Yamioloski
x	Gary Hamilton (VP)	x	Andy Doll	x	Shelly Zornes	x	Joe Johnston
x	Bill Chapman (T)		Erik Von Halle	x	Mitchell Ross	x	Bobby Manning

**Quorum Present:** Y

**Call to Order at:** 7:33 pm.

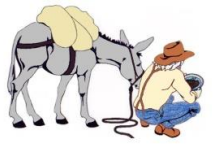
**Reading and Approval of Minutes:** Corrections: 89 sites in Kevin's book would be impacted by NFS changes, not 80 % as reported. Denver Mining Club will provide the speaker in May, not John Olson as reported. The email for the Club president has changed and the old address was still listed in the minutes. Approved as read/corrected: Moved: Bobby M.; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Robert A. .

**Treasurer's Report:** Questions: The CD maturity date is still wrong Approved as read/corrected: Moved by Gary H.; 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Bobby M.

**Committee Reports:** Panning Demos/Educational Outreach – the demo done at the Aurora Water Festival on 14-May was a hit. Due to some missed/late communication, the Club did not receive much lead time but we got enough volunteers in time to pull it off. Weather was great and approximately 750 5th graders attended this annual event. Thanks to the members that volunteered: President Singel, Secretary Smith, Yvonne Smith, Jack Meineke, Joe Johnston, Frank Zahn and Roger Schlenger.

### QUESTION OF THE MONTH

In what year was the only robbery of Fort Knox and how much bullion was taken?



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**Unfinished Business:** President Singel still needs to connect with the Minelab contact on the acquisition of a new Minelab metal detector for the next blue ticket drawing.

**New Business:** President Singel will not be attending the August meeting and VP Hamilton will lead the meeting

**Planned Outings:** May 23<sup>rd</sup> at the North Clear Creek BLM site [Site C-06 in Kevin's book] June meeting will be the annual Garage Sale/Swap meet in addition to regular Club business and activities

**Board Members Items of Discussion:** Member Hamilton – So many things go on at regular meetings, Gary suggested an annual competition/picnic in order to facilitate his “Bring-A-Friend” idea. That way members would have plenty of time in advance to invite friends and relatives and there would be more activities for guests to participate in and more attention could be showered on them that we are able to afford during regular meeting where Club business must be transacted.

Treasurer Chapman again brought up the fact that more gold was given away last month than sales of red tickets, putting the club upside-down on being able to replenish what we give away in the future. It was agreed that President Singel will bring this up to the attendees at the next meeting. The consensus of the Board was to handle white and green ticket drawings and FOM announcements immediately after the break, giving Treasurer Chapman time to calculate total red ticket sales against the amount of gold in the evening's drawing. Should the sales fall short, nugget(s) can be withdrawn to balance out. This experiment will be attempted at the May meeting.

Member Johnston shared that a medical condition he has been diagnosed with will prevent him from continuing with the Club Library. Joe will handle the library for the May meeting and Yvonne Smith has agreed to temporarily take over the library until a permanent replacement can be found. President Singel will announce this at the meeting.

**This month's General Meeting Program:** Suellen Barnhardt, President of the Denver Mining Club will be speaking about the club.

**Announcements:** Next Board Meeting June 11, 2026 at 7:30 pm via Zoom Next General Meeting: June 17, 2026 at 7:00 pm

**Adjournment:** Meeting stands adjourned at 8:55 pm.

### 2026 GPR Board of Directors Members President

Kevin Singel

### Vice President

Gary Hamilton

### Treasurer

Bill Chapman

### Secretary

Gordon Smith

### 2 Year Board Members

Robert Ahr (2026)

Andy Doll (2026)

Erik Von Halle (2026)

Joe Johnston (2026)

### 1 Year Board Members

Shellie Zornes

Ron Yamiolkoski

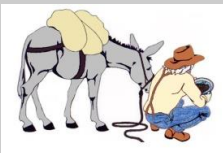
Mitchell Ross

### Past President/At Large

Bobby Manning

## General Meeting Minutes from May 20, 2026

1. Meeting called to order at: 7:07 p.m. by **Pres. Singel** with the Pledge of Allegiance. The FOM table is now closed to new entries.
2. **Pres. Singel** announced the evening Program: Suellen Barnhardt talking about the Denver Mining Club.
3. **Pres. Singel** then gave the Metals Report. Gold: 4544.00, Silver: 76.00, Platinum: 1955.00, Palladium: 1370.00, Rhodium: 9825.00. He also reported on the number of web hits at: 171,299 which is approximately 1,000 higher than at the beginning of 2026.
4. **Treasurer Chapman** reports that the Club remains in the black and a report is available for review for anyone who wishes to see it at the back table. However, we have been losing significant money on the red ticket drawing so we are implementing changes to keep the gold cost in line with the ticket sales. Blue ticket sales are temporarily suspended because there currently are no Minelab Gold Monster 2000s available for sale in North America. Once the Club is able to obtain one, blue ticket sales will resume. There are some great nuggets to be given away so be sure to grab those raffle tix!
5. **Dir. Zornes** reported the Membership figures for this evening. We had 41 people in attendance consisting of: 39 paid members and 2 guests.
6. **Pres. Singel** read the “**Question of the Month**”, which was: “**How much gold was used in the 2026 Winter Olympics Gold Medals?**” Members are encouraged to submit their answers at the front table. **Be certain to print your name and the answer on the entry form legibly!** Those with correct answers will receive a red ticket for the gold nugget drawings later in the evening.
7. Additional items to be discussed beside the red ticket sales vs. number of gold nuggets offered, plus the current lack of blue ticket sales, include: The Monthly “Pirates” Hunt conducted on the last Wednesday of each month, weather permitting. Also any recent club outings as well as the upcoming outing to North Clear Creek BLM site on May 23.
8. Speaker of the Month Introduction: Suellen Barnhardt is President of the Denver Mining Club, a club with a 136 year history. Before that she worked professionally in the mining industry for many years.



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9. **Pres. Singel** informed the membership that the 2026 Outings and Speaker schedules are being booked now. Please share any requests or suggestions with him or another board member.
10. **Pres. Singel** reminded attendees to vote on the **Finds of the Month** and answer the **Question of the Month** during the break. Monthly winners from the FOM tonight will be photographed and be saved for the Finds of the Year competition in December. All gold submissions must be weighed dry and only one submission per person per category. A reminder that entries must be submitted to Dir. Ahr at the FOM table prior to the start of the meeting. Only finds found within the last 30 days may be submitted.
11. The break was announced at: 7:57 p.m. **Pres. Singel** reminded everyone to patronize the Refreshment Table as well as Vote on the FOMs and answer the QOM question. **Club Members only**, are encouraged to purchase Special Drawing (blue) tickets while our guests tonight are eligible to purchase gold bags, 50/50 (green), and gold drawing (red) tickets to support GPOTR.
12. The meeting was called back to order at: 8:23 p.m.
13. Winners of the **“Question of the Month”** were announced. The answer was: Either 6 grams per medal OR 245 gold medals or 6 grams for a total of 1470 grams. There were 31 winners who received their extra red ticket for the gold drawings.
14. **Pres. Singel** announced the winners for the **“Finds of the Month”**:
  - **Best Coin – 1925 Mercury dime found by John Olson**
  - **Best Jewelry – Fancy sterling silver ring found by Robert Ahr**
  - **Best Costume Jewelry – Pink faceted stone in a sterling silver setting found by Shellie Zornes**
  - **Best Mineral – Several crystal points found by Kevin Singel**
  - **Best Artifact – 1941 projectile from a practice round found by John Olson**
  - **Most Gold – gold from Rye Patch, NV trip found by Kevin Singel**
15. **Pres. Singel** concluded the evening with drawings for the numerous door prizes donated by Club members followed by the drawings for the door prizes and gold nuggets. Members are reminded that holders of tickets for the regular gold drawings who did not win may redeem those tickets by presenting them at the end of the meeting where they will be reimbursed at .01 cents on the dollar. Otherwise, they shall be considered to have been donated back to the Club. Those assisting in the drawings were: Bill Chapman, John Olson and Andy Doll.
16. **Pres. Singel** then conducted the 50/50 drawing. Carrie won \$ 50 and \$ 50 went to the Club.
17. **Pres. Singel** reminds members that sometimes during the meetings, his time is overwhelmingly taken up. It is not his intent to be inaccessible and he encourages anyone with questions to contact him by e-mail at: [goprresident@gmail.com](mailto:goprresident@gmail.com) or phone at: 720-934-1428 outside the meetings at any time.
18. **Pres. Singel** thanked **Greg and Nancy Knerl** and all those who contributed to the Refreshment Table. Each member is encouraged to chip in and add to the spread each month. Remember to donate to the ‘tip jar’ also, which helps to defray costs. This really helps the folks who run the table. The Club appreciates the efforts that each of you make to add to the refreshment table.
19. The June meeting will be: the annual Garage Sale and Swap Meet.
20. The next meeting will be held on **June 17 , 2026 at 7:00 p.m.**
21. Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m. Remember to always prospect safely!

## Volunteer Needed

Dear fellow club members, we are looking for a volunteer to run the club library. This includes helping folks check out books and return them at club meetings. It also includes transporting these three bins (could probably be thinned out) back and forth to meetings. To learn more, see our prior guardian of the sacred tomes, Joe Johnston, Yvonne Smith who is our current, interim, volunteer, or your President, Kevin Singel.



## A Miner’s Laugh

An old retired miner was sitting on the bench at the local park enjoying a little sunshine when a woman walked up to him and said, “Excuse me sir, I’m doing a little survey. May I ask you a few questions?” The old boy looked at her and thought why not, so he said go ahead. She asked, “If you’re traveling in a bus and a female gets on the bus and there is no available seat, would you give up your seat for her?” The old boy said “No!”. She asked, “What if the lady was pregnant, would you give up your seat then?” Again he said clearly “No!” The woman continued, “But what if the lady was a senior lady,





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would you give up your seat then?” Again, the old boy stated emphatically “No!” The woman said, “You, sir, are an exceptionally selfish man with no manners. Who do you think you are?” The old man smiled at her and replied, “Lady, I’m the bus driver..!”

*(Taken from the internet and revised just for all us ‘old miners’)*

## Finds of the Month for May 2026

- Best Coin – 1925 Mercury dime found by **John Olson**
- Best Jewelry – Fancy sterling silver ring found by **Robert Ahr**
- Best Costume Jewelry – Pink faceted stone in a sterling silver setting found by **Shellie Zornes**
- Best Mineral – Several crystal points found by **Kevin Singel**
- Best Artifact – 1941 projectile from a practice round found by **John Olson**
- Most Gold – Gold from Rye Patch, NV trip found by **Kevin Singel**

*(There were no photos submitted for publication this month)*

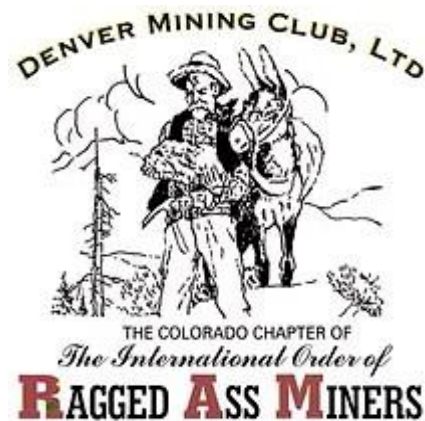
## May Program Notes

The May Program featured **Suellen Barnhard**, the President of the 130 year old(!) Denver Mining Club, who spoke about the Organization. Back in 1890, when gold and silver mining was a principal industry in Colorado, a group of pioneer giants in the industry formed the Colorado Mining Stock Exchange, purchased land at the corner of 15th and Arapahoe Streets in downtown Denver, and erected the Mining Exchange Building. It opened, with great fanfare on November 18, 1891. Many important mining men and corporations had offices in the building.

These men gathered for lunch to discuss mining events of the day in various old-time restaurants within walking distance of the exchange. Out of these informal

gatherings grew the Denver Mining Club. Early on, subjects for discussion included mining news from around Colorado—reports by prospectors on new discoveries and by miners on activities in the mining districts. In 1935, Guy L.V. Emerson became president, and club meetings were held every Wednesday at the Denver Dry Goods Tearoom until 1975. Since 1975, the club has met weekly—except for federal holidays—in various dining establishments, mostly on the west side of the Denver metro area where many members live. Attendance ranges from 25 to 50 people who enjoy lunch, good company, and presentations on wide-ranging topics, mostly related to mining.

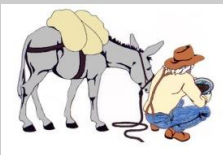
During the Depression, the International Order of Ragged Ass Miners came to life. The term “R-A-M” had been in common use for many years in reference to the often hardscrabble life of miners around the world. Today members consider it to be a synonym for the Denver Mining Club. Several members of our Club are Honorary members of the R-A-M, including Pres. Singel and Past Pres. Long. It was a very interesting and enjoyable program.



## The Pirate’s March Hunt (May 2026) by Robert ‘The Pirate’ Ahr

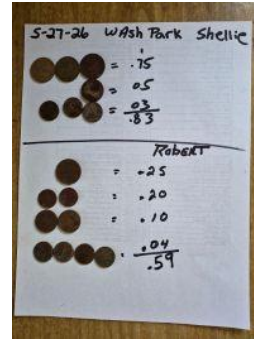
Well, Wednesday started off to be a cool morning and we had 8 for breakfast and 7 for the hunt. We decided, or I should say Shellie decided, that we should go to Washington Park and with that thought in mind, that’s where we went. By the time we started to hunt the weather had warmed up and it turned out to be a nice day. So, the top Pirate was Bobby M. with 4.68, followed by John O. 1.85 and a ring, and Joe + Chris K. cleaned up with 1.39. Shellie Z. .85 and myself with .59 for a total of 9.34 for the day.

Not a great day for finds but a great day to be out with friends. See you all at the next G.P.O.R meeting June 17, 2026, at 1900hrs. Bring in those finds and don’t be shy.



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P.S. I need to add that Cindy O. just wasn't feeling it that day, so she enjoyed the day by people watching which was probably better for the knee's. Remember to keep on swinging and you can contact me at 720-532-5210.



## Annual May Aurora Water Festival Panning Demo

Once again, the Club performed an Annual Panning Demo at the Aurora Water Festival held at the Aurora Community College on May 21. We have been doing this event for the last 15 years, since 2011 and they have always been a ton of fun. This year, they bussed in tons of fifth grade kids from various schools all over Aurora to participate in and learn about various forms of water use, from historic uses such as panning for gold to learning about how cities and their populations use water today, including conservation techniques. Many thanks to our volunteers, Gordon and Yvonne Smith, Jack Meineke, Frank Zahn, Joe Johnston and Roger Schlenger as well as Pres. Kevin Singel who demonstrated their panning skills for all the kids who came. Not sure who took the actual photos but we appreciate them.



## Arvada Army Navy Surplus Panning Demo

On Sunday, May 24, Pres. K. Singel held a panning demo at the Army Surplus store in Arvada where he demonstrated panning to customers who were interested. He was doing a short demo for the store in as much as the store sells prospecting supplies and books and Pres. Singel has a number of his books on sale there. He was able to talk to customers about Finding Gold in Colorado as well as promote the Club to interested parties. As you can tell from the photos that Pres. Singel took, it was a well done display and certainly eye catching. He reported that there were quite a few people who stopped by and were interested in what we do and where we go to do it. Good job Mr. President!!! (Photos by K. Singel)





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### Grubstaker Prospecting Outing May 23, 2026

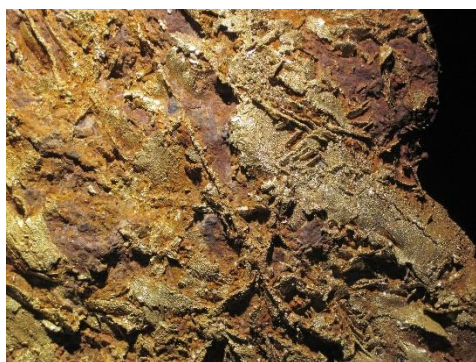
The Club held a prospecting Outing on May 23, Saturday, at the Grubstaker Claim on north Clear Creek along Hwy 119. There was a decent turnout for the event and everybody had a great time as the weather cooperated for a change. Wasn't too hot nor was it overly cool but when you are in the creek and finding the yellow 'shiny', it doesn't really matter anyway. Hopefully, some of those folks who found gold will get it dried and cleaned up and bring it to the next meeting for a little show and tell. Thanks to all who came out and had a good time playing in the water. *Photos were taken by Pres. Singel.*



### Colorado's Gold & Silver Mining History JANUARY 17, 202 BY PATRICK MCGUIRE Part 1 of 2

The story of Colorado's history is inseparable from mining. A few historic events include an internationally famous gold rush that flooded the area with powerful new people and ideas, the founding of Denver, plus a mining-related economic downturn that devastated the state and dethroned some of its most influential citizens. Colorado's mining history is far more dramatic, impactful, and complex than you might think

According to *History Colorado*, mining was by far the most significant industry in the state in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and it's still important in Colorado to this day. The result of mining activity in the state wasn't just discoveries of gold and silver, but a host of sweeping economic, social, and political changes that shaped Colorado into what it looks like today. Oh, and that whole becoming an official US territory and eventually a state in 1876 thing? Historians largely credit mining for that too.



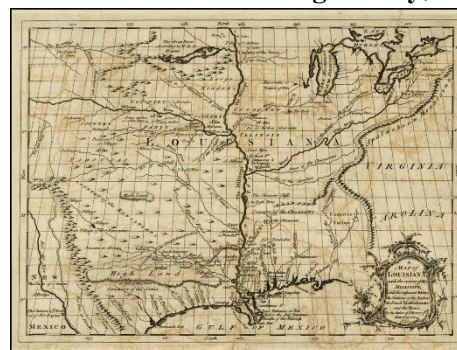
*Gold vein stockwork in limonite near Breckenridge, CO. Photo: James St. John*

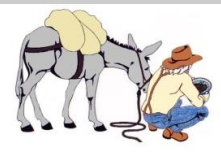
If you need to be further convinced of how important mining was in Colorado, just look at how many abandoned mines are in the state. There are over 18,000 of them. Today, we're exploring Colorado's mining history with a riveting timeline of events. They span from an area that is rumored to have hosted the ancient mining of turquoise and the first reported sightings of gold in the region, to a deadly massacre that helped make labor laws in the US more favorable to workers.

Here are some of the **notable events from Colorado's mining history**, in chronological order:

#### ??? – present: **King's Manassa Mine:**

Located in south-central Colorado near Manassa just west of the Rio Grande River, some say that the King's Manassa Mine is the oldest turquoise mining deposit in the state. It was potentially mined by ancient Native Pueblo peoples centuries ago. In his search for gold, Israel Perviose King stumbled upon the mine in 1894 and filed a claim on it the following year. The mine has been in the King family ever since and produces King's turquoise, which is widely loved for its gorgeous deep greens.





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1758 – The first sighting of gold in Colorado is reported north of the Arkansas River  
*Pratz map showing District of Louisiana, plus Mississippi and Arkansas Rivers; published in London in 1763.*

Ethnographer, historian, and naturalist Antoine-Simon Le Page du Pratz is widely thought to be the first person to report seeing gold in the area (part of the District of Louisiana) that would become the state of Colorado in 1876. Pratz's 1758 map portraying where he saw gold is frustratingly vague.

It consists of a brief description of a site north of the Arkansas River located close to a tributary flowing from a mountain that he described as "a rivulet whose waters rolled down gold dust."

But with those who explored America a short time later describing Pratz's map as unreliable and filled with doubt, it's hard to know where exactly Pratz saw gold, or if he even saw it in the first place.

### 1807-1857 – Rumors of gold and modest discoveries



Prospectors in what was then the "Pikes Peak" region of western Kansas Territory, circa 1858.

In a journal entry written in 1807, the explorer and brigadier general Zebulon Pike wrote that a man named James Pursley showed him gold nuggets that he claimed he found in the South Park region of the land that would later become Colorado. Pike mentioned in his entry that he questioned the finding. More than 40 years later, gold was rumored to have been spotted in south-central Colorado in the modern-day town of Lake City, but no one could nail down the exact spot of the finding.

But two years later, prospectors traveling west to California's gold rush panned small amounts of gold near present-day Denver and Arvada at Cherry

Creek, the South Platte River, and Ralston Creek. William Green Russell and a team of prospectors that included Cherokee Native Americans traveled to the South Platte River the next year and discovered gold at Little Dry Creek. Historians credit this discovery for launching the Pikes Peak Gold Rush that occurred the following year.

1858 – Montana City, which later became Denver, is founded by gold-seekers

Reconstructed cabin and mine headframe at site of Montana City, Colo.  
Photo: Plazak

Setting his sites on finding more gold, William Green Russell and a group of prospectors founded the settlement of Montana City on the banks of the South Platte River in 1858. But to the great dismay of the ragtag group, little gold was found in the area, and the settlement went bust.

Russell and his team might not have found riches when they settled next to the South Platte River, but they are credited for establishing the first settlement in Denver and helping to kick off a gold rush that helped birth Colorado.



### 1859 – The Pikes Peak Gold Rush begins



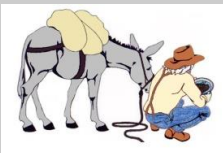
Ruins of the Swan River Gold Dredge, Summit County. Photo: Plazak

After the areas surrounding Denver repeatedly produced disappointing amounts of gold, news that placer gold was discovered in the mountains west of the area in early 1859 quickly spread around the still-new nation of America and far beyond.

In January of 1859, the prospector George A. Jackson found the first substantial amount of gold where Chicago Creek empties into Clear Creek in present-day Idaho Springs.

Jackson, who first traveled to the area after seeing clouds of steam rising from the hot springs, tried to keep his discovery a secret until word of his

find spread after he tried to pay for mining supplies with gold dust. By that spring, throngs of prospectors flooded the area, including John H. Gregory, who struck gold between Black Hawk and Central City.



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Many other gold-bearing veins were discovered in the area soon after. Central City's population exploded from 10 to 10,000 in a single month that summer as hopeful prospectors flocked to the area.

Later in 1859, rich gold deposits were found along the Georgia Gulch on the Swan River in the town we now know as Breckenridge. Named for the western Kansas Territory's iconic peak, the Pikes Peak Gold Rush was now in full swing. It would later be known as the Colorado Gold Rush.

1860 – Gold coins are first minted in Denver

Pair of \$10 (left – “eagles”) and \$20 (right – “double eagles”) gold coins minted by Clark, Gruber & Company. Photo: Pi3.124

Before the Denver Mint started producing coins in the city in 1906, three men minted gold coins in Denver first during the Pikes Peak Gold Rush. To not have to pay the hefty shipping costs it took to ship gold to the East Coast, Austin Clark, Milton Clark, and Emanuel H. Gruber founded their own private mint in Denver in July of 1860.

Located on the corner of 16th and Market, the establishment minted

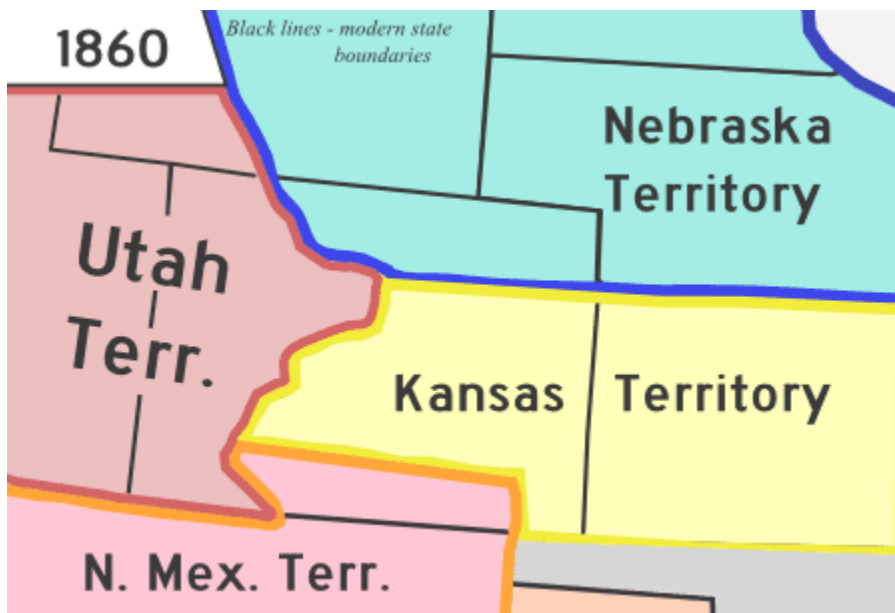
\$10 gold coins imprinted with the emblem of Pikes Peak surrounded by forest. Coins representing larger currencies were later added, and the private mint changed hands and became the United States Mint at Denver by an act of Congress just two years later.

But instead of producing coins as planned, the mint operated as an assay office due to the

“hostility of the Indian tribes along the routes, doubtless instigated by rebel emissaries (there being a Civil War), and bad white men,” according to the Mint's Director.

For the first few years the office was open, it was the most substantial building in Denver. Plans for the coin-producing Denver Mint as the country knows it today didn't emerge until 1896 when Congress approved a separate site in Denver to produce gold and silver coins. After years of delays, the mint began operating in 1906.

1861 – At the behest of gold-seekers, Colorado becomes an official territory through an Act of Congress



*Circa 1860 map drawing the Colorado Territory from the Nebraska, Kansas, and New Mexico, and Utah Territories.*

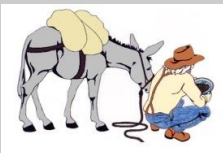
With the burgeoning gold mining industry bringing thousands of settlers to the area, a movement to recognize it with a national territory designation followed immediately after the Pikes Peak Gold Rush began in 1859.

Promoted by William Byers, publisher of the Rocky Mountain News, and land speculator William Larimer, Jr., the Jefferson Territory was established in 1859. But it never gained legal status and recognition by the American government. Arguments over slavery held up Congress, causing a deadlock between the Republican-controlled House of

Representatives and the Senate, which was held by Democrats. But shortly before the Civil War broke out in the spring of 1861, enough Democrats resigned from the Senate to allow Republican leaders of both houses to officially designate new territories.

Along with Nevada and Dakota, Colorado became a designated territory soon after. The decision paved the way for the territory to achieve official US statehood in 1876.





### Gold Prospectors of the Rockies Page 10

As Colorado miners left to fight in the Civil War, gold production began to wane. With the majority of the easily discoverable gold already accounted for, the remaining miners changed their tactics by sinking their mine shafts and setting their sites on complex refractory ores. Almost as quickly as it had begun, the Pikes Peak Gold Rush was over.  
*Part 2 of this series will continue next month*


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**Contact the GPR President**

*(Layout Design Subject To Additional Cost)*

<b>Upcoming Announcements and Special Events for July 2026</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>(GPR Events)</b></span>						
Western Museum of Mining & Industry, 225 North Gate Blvd. Colorado Springs, CO 80921 ( <a href="https://www.wmmi.org/">https://www.wmmi.org/</a> )						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4 Independence Day
5	6	7	8	9 Zoom Board Meeting 7:30pm	10	11
12	13	14	15 GPoR Club Meeting	16	17	18 Highbanker Fest at Big Bend
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26 Panning Demo Arapaho County Fairgrounds	27	28	29 Pirate's Hunt (Weather permitting)	30	31	