

Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada Highgrader



Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada Officers and Standing Committees...

President – <i>Nicolas Johnson</i>	Vice President – <i>Carl Richwine</i>
Treasury – <i>Dara Thaler</i>	Secretary – <i>Dolores Gee</i>
Membership – <i>Marcia Richwine</i>	Audit Committee – <i>Fred Zajac</i>
Claims Committee – <i>Carl Richwine</i>	Education Committee – <i>Fred Zajac</i>
Librarian / Historian – <i>Dennis Johnson</i>	Merchandise Committee – <i>Jeff Harper</i>
Newsletter Committee – <i>Nicolas Johnson</i>	Outing Committee – <i>Morris Seguin</i>

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Secretary Minutes As of November 4th, 2009.

The GSSN met at the American Legion Hall in Henderson NV on Wednesday, Nov. 4th, 2009. The meeting was called to order and Nic led in Pledging Allegiance to the flag at 6:35PM. 65 signed in and there were four visitors. Several people said they found gold at the October outing plus at some other sites. Samples were passed around. Nic asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the previous month and Fred Zajac made the motion which was seconded by Mary Prohaska. There was no discussion and the vote was unanimously in approving the motion and it was so carried.

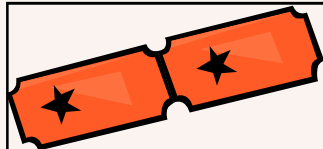
Next Dara gave the Treasurer's report and Jeff Harper gave a report on the Merchandise Committee. He showed a T-shirt sample and said prices were being negotiated. Under new business, Nic proposed that the next outing 11/21/09 be held at the 20 Acres claim (Meadview). Cooter mentioned that nearby accommodations would be available for around \$17 (When mentioning that you are a prospector) for those wanting to stay over. Morris will provide hamburgers and hotdogs.

Marcia then gave a report about the Dec. 2nd gathering

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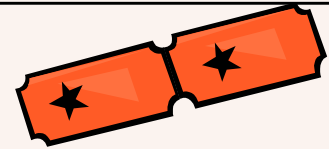
NOTICE

- Christmas Party December 2nd, 2009!! Good Eats, Prizes, Friends and more!!
- Outing!! Will be located @ the 20 Acre in Meadview! Saturday the 21st, 2009!!
- If anyone has any articles they would like to see in the Newsletter! Send it in to gssnhighgrader@gmail.com



!!RAFFLE WINNERS CORNER!!

Kitty Door Prize (\$18.00) - Randy Huffine
50/50 (\$45.00) Winner– Charlotte Foley



Umbrella.....Morris Seguin	12" Blue Keene Pan/vial.....Morris Seguin
Shovel.....Joyce Johnson	14" Blue Keene Pan/vial.....Julie Quinn
Race Hat/Batteries/cup holder.....Chuck Wherry	3' Tub.....Dennis Walker
GSSN mug/Flashlight/Gloves.....Charlotte Foley	3 in 1 Chess Game.....John Roberts
GSSN mug/Bag of Gold.....Fred Hissong	Bag/Windshield Screen.....Charlotte Foley
Dust Pan & Broom.....Terry Tucker	Round Pan.....Doug Parker
GSSN Mug/Stubby Hammer/Gloves.Gene Altobella	Straw Hat.....Jeff Harper

Continued General Meeting Minutes

(which will be our Christmas Party). No business will be conducted but there will be our regular raffle and 50/50. Jeff Harper said he'd donate an item. 3 people opted to have the Chinese raffle, but all agreed that regular raffle and 50/50 would suffice. Marcia asked people attending the party to bring a dessert item. She said everyone signing up for the party would receive a ticket for a special door prize. At this point Nic turned the meeting over to Fred.

Fred Zajac (Chairman of the Election Committee) had ballots available for the voting process, but since there were no additional names

suggested or volunteers stepping forward, he went through each office (hereafter noted) with the Secretary casting the unanimous ballot for each office — Carl Richwine: President; Ian Thaler: Vice President; Dolores Gee: Secretary; (Fred cast the unanimous ballot for Secretary); Dara Thaler: Treasurer; and Marcia Richwine: Membership. Fred then announced that the Audit Committee will meet December 14, 2009 (time and venue to be announced).

Fred suggested more volunteers come forth in the future to take an active part in the club's activities. He also mentioned that last week several

volunteers helped out at the E.W. Griffith School and at the McCaw School of Mines. He thanked the volunteers for their help. He also wanted to remind the group that "...if it can't be grown, it's got to be mined." Next, Nic mentioned some interesting articles in the ICMJ that he will include excerpts of an upcoming newsletter and some members added comments about this subject. (The meeting was adjourned at 7:45PM.)

By Dolores Gee

Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada, Inc.

Board Meeting Minutes Dated October 21st, 2009.

The GSSN executive board met on Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2009 in Boulder City. Attending were: Carl and Marcia Richwine, Dara Thaler, Dolores Gee, Morris Seguin, Fred Zajac, John Roberts and Janet Schelling.

Carl called the meeting to order at 6PM (President Nic Johnson was not able to attend.) The first agenda item concerned the Election Committee. Pre-printed ballots will be issued to members for the purpose of voting for new officers. Carl proposed that Fred be Chairman of the Election Committee; Fred agreed. The elections will take place at the November meeting after the break. Next, Carl mentioned he will check with Nic about when the newsletter will come out, so that a notice can be inserted relative to the upcoming election. Next, Carl commented on the successful outing the weekend of Oct. 16-18. He said Nic won the Panning Contest and Morris (the reigning

and now current champ) won the Metal Detecting Contest. Carl went on to say that the IRS is processing our 1023 application for non-profit corporation status. Carl then asked for a motion that Mohave Co. taxes be paid in one payment rather than two and Fred made such motion which was seconded by Dara. After a brief discussion, the vote was unanimously in favor of the motion and it was so carried.

Next, Marcia said that she and Carl had made up some new claim books and passed around a sample. She said we have 184 paid up members (through Nov. 1st, 2009). The Secretary mentioned giving board members more advanced notice relative to meetings but had nothing further to report. Dara made a brief Treasurer's Report stating we had funds totaling \$5,021.57 plus \$100 petty cash fund = \$5121.57. She stated that she is in the process of finalizing the current report and it will be available shortly. Carl reported that there was no activity concerning

claims and added that claims were paid up for the coming year. Morris commented on the Oct. 16-18 outing and thanked those who helped. He also suggested having another 3-day weekend outing before the hot weather sets in. Carl mentioned that the cost of the Oct. outing was approximately \$150. He said Tom Herrold gave a very interesting and well received metal detecting class. Fred said the E.W. Griffith's School presentation had enough volunteers and briefly described how GSSN's Education Committee works with the McCaw School of Mines. It was decided that the Audit Committee will meet Monday, Dec. 14th (Details forthcoming). The newsletter was discussed briefly; and the Merchandise Committee will have a report at the November Membership Meeting. Carl said that a gas grill and two gas tanks of propane had been purchased for the GSSN and

Continued Board Minutes from Page 2

asked for reimbursement. Fred made a motion to approve the reimbursement and Morris seconded the motion. A brief discussion about charcoal and grilling ensued (Fred and Morris will collaborate on a charcoal grill). Afterwards a vote was taken and it was unanimously agreed to approve the \$43 reimbursement to the Richwines. Marcia reported briefly at this time about her research relative to our Christmas Party. Carl then made a motion to buy some gold from T. Eggleston for Door Prizes; Morris seconded the motion. After a brief discussion, the vote was unanimously in favor of the motion and it was so carried. It was also decided to check with members at the Nov. meeting about

raffles for the Christmas Party. Carl then mentioned that the Mohave club sent the GSSN a one-year membership for their use (The GPAA had previously presented the GSSN with a similar one-year membership) and Fred made a motion to raffle off the Mohave membership as a separate raffle prize at the November meeting; and Morris seconded the motion. The motion was revised to state that the cost of each raffle ticket will be \$1. Nic will be asked to mention this agenda item at the next meeting. The vote in Favor was unanimous and it was so carried after a brief discussion. Carl then showed samples of a new GSSN business card (cost was \$29 for 500 cards). Fred made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30pm and it

was seconded by Morris.

By Dolores Gee, Secretary of Gold Searcher of Southern Nevada, Inc.



Oregon Governor Asks for Mineral Withdrawal

Grants Pass, Oregon—Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski wants to head off miners in Oregon after California stopped prospectors from using suction dredges.

The Governor sent letters on October 15 to Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar asking them to impose a mineral withdrawal on federal lands surrounding the Kalmiopsis, Wild Rogue and Copper Salmon wilderness areas on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest.

Conservation groups hope to meld the three wilderness areas and surrounding parts of southwestern Oregon into one big wilderness covering 1 million acres—a move Kulongoski has endorsed. Mining is already restricted in the wilderness areas, but the mineral withdrawal would

stop new claims in the areas surrounding them. The region includes portions of the Rogue, Illinois and Elk rivers.

The Siskiyou and Klamath mountains of southwestern Oregon were the site of Oregon's gold rush in the 1850's, and Kulongoski noted that the region has some of the best remaining salmon and steelhead habitat on the West Coast.

“With climate change increasing the pressure on plant and animal species, this area is a critical lifeboat providing intact habitat over a range of elevations from north to south,” Kulongoski wrote. “We are very concerned that the suction dredge miners are now heading for Oregon.”

The governor's policy director, Mike Carrier, said conservation groups had been urging the governor to call for the mining ban, and he decided to act now because

of the potential for increased mining in the area causing harm before a formal wilderness designation is considered by Congress.

The area is just over the hill from Happy Camp, California, where mining on claims along the Klamath River owned by the New 49ers Prospecting Club was practically shut down in August when Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed legislation imposing a state wide moratorium on suction dredging until a new environmental review is completed.

Joel King, Wild Rivers district ranger on the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest, said he had noticed an increase in recreational gold mining that he attributed to rising gold prices and the California dredge moratorium.

“Just about anybody who was mining in Northern California has been looking at Oregon for the

Oregon Governor Asks for Mineral Withdrawal from Page 3

next season because it's being litigated in California right now and we don't know how that litigation will come out," said Mike Higbee, a Grants Pass gold miner and member of the New 49ers.

"If we are unable to overturn it before next season, it would only be a natural fact that California miners are going to be looking at Oregon and Washington and Idaho."

Montine Blevins of the New 49ers said club president Dave McCracken has scouted out public access mining locations

with club members, but he has not made any new claims.

Higbee said he brought his dredge over from Happy Camp to state-controlled land on the Rogue River. There were 10 other miners from California working the river, he added.

"There are 3,000 licensed suction dredgers (In California) that they have never proved killed a fish," Higbee said. "They also have 3.2 million licensed fishermen, and their goal is to kill fish."

Gloria Forest of Sutherlin, treasurer of the Douglas County

Prospectors Association, said they regularly pull more lead fishing weights and other garbage out of rivers than gold.

Representatives from the departments of Interior and Agriculture said they had received Kulongoski's letter and were reviewing it.

Jeff Barnard, "Oregon Governor Asks For Mineral Withdrawal," ICMJ, November 2009, Volume 79, Number 3, Page 23,25.

Use your GPSr and Computer to find locations described in the Public Land

As someone new to gold prospecting, I had difficulty understanding the described location of placer gold districts in older publications, as well as descriptions of some existing claims. Part of the problem was converting the description of a claim, gold district or geological feature location in the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) for use with my GPS receiver (GPSr), or with the latitude and longitude marked on many maps. While I had a loose familiarity with the basic terms used in PLSS land descriptions (townships, sections, etc.), I didn't really know enough. The Wikipedia article on the PLSS is a good start, but perhaps better is this link from the National Atlas: http://www.nationalatlas.gov/articles/boundaries/a_plss.html.

In principle the PLSS is a simple system. As the nation grew, surveys were made of the land acquired outside the original 13 colonies, sometimes in large areas and sometimes smaller irregular areas. Each survey has an east-west "base line" and a north-south "Principle Meridian" line. Six mile square townships were surveyed in each direction - east, west, north and south - from the crossing of the Principle Meridian

and the base line. Each six miles east or west is a numbered "range", in each "range", townships are numbered north and south. Each township is divided into 36 "sections" one mile square. Sections may be divided into parts (called "aliquots"), such as quarter sections, or quarter-quarter (1/16) sections. The pictures on the web site make this clearer. A PLSS description begins at the large scale and becomes smaller as you read right: State, Principal Meridian name, Township and Range designations with directions (N, S, E, W), the section number, and aliquot parts of that section. Getting this into a latitude and longitude for a GPSr should be a tedious but straight-forward procedure. Naturally, it isn't.

The PLSS dates back to our nation's founding era (George Washington, remember, was a surveyor in his youth, before the nation or the PLSS existed.) The quality and accuracy, even the honesty of the surveys varied with time and technology. To avoid confusing land ownership, old errors are never corrected. Additionally, corrections needed to survey square townships onto a spherical earth marked with longitude lines converging to the poles make dislocations in the range divisions necessary. In the past, consulting paper

maps was the only easy solution, but the Internet and a computer-connected GPSr make locating PLSS described land easier. The following links and tips may not be the "best", but they've helped me - some are linked from the National Atlas page mentioned above.

First, use the BLM's Geocommunicator web site that many of us use to locate mining claims: <http://www.geocommunicator.gov/GeoComm/index.shtm> (click on the "Mining Claim Map" link.) We've discussed using this site before, and it isn't hard to learn, so I'll only mention the buttons and controls related to the PLSS. The "Group:" checkbox next to "PLSS" at the bottom center of the page controls whether PLSS grid and label overlays are displayed on the map. Under the "Layers" tab on the right side of the page, open the "PLSS" folder to check off options to control how much PLSS grid detail to show and how much labeling to do. The checkbox in front of the PLSS folder controls whether the PLSS overlay is displayed, just like the "Group" PLSS box located below the map does. You can see township and range labels, and section grids and

GPS Continued

labels down to the quarter-quarter (1/16) section, as well as additional surveys of smaller "government lots" in some areas. If your web browser is set up properly to allow the information bar at the bottom of the page to be used, it will show the latitude and longitude of the mouse pointer as you move it around the map. The information bar is where addresses of web sites normally appear when you move the mouse over a link on a web page. Reading off the latitude and longitude from the information bar as you hover the pointer over a feature of interest on the map, and entering it into your GPSr by hand, will solve many simple navigation problems locating claims, features on the topographic maps and aerial photography, or locations in the PLSS when the PLSS overlay is turned on.

To search on the map for a township description, click the "township" button at the top of the page. If you have enabled "pop-ups", you get a page requesting the information (starting with State & Principle Meridian name), needed to locate a particular township. Our AZ claims are in the PLSS survey whose Principle Meridian is PM-14, "Gila and Salt River". Fortunately, you can default some of this information and it will search and give a selection of possible township choices. The "Derive LD" and "Find LD" buttons at the top of the page allow you to "sketch" an area on the map and return a Legal Description (LD) in PLSS terms, or conversely enter a PLSS legal description and see it outlined on the map. Some Geocommunicator features are very sensitive to your browser version and settings, and I've never gotten the "Derive LD" function to work properly - you may do better if you have your browser set up correctly.

Finally, a new button has appeared at the top of the Geocommunicator Mining Claims page recently. It is just to the right of the "township" button, and is currently unlabeled, though it will show a label if you hover the mouse pointer over it: "Download Survey". It has an icon

that looks like a small envelope with a pointer on it. Click on it, and next to it appears three text lines you can click: "Sketch", "County", and "State". These link to downloads of PLSS survey data that can be used for various mapping functions. The best use I've found for this survey data is getting PLSS survey locations of section (or quarter-section) corners into my GPSr as waypoints. That allows me to quickly mark existing claim corners (since many placer claims are bounded by section, quarter section or quarter-quarter section boundaries.) Additionally it can help in determining the PLSS grid in unclaimed areas, or the boundaries between public and private land, recreation area boundaries, etc. The maps in some newer GPSr's have some PLSS grid overlay capability, but many don't, and even then loading survey corners can be helpful.

I'll give some examples of how to do this, but read all the way to the end before trying it because you may find that the easiest way to do what you want is not the first thing I describe!

For example, if we click on the "County" text mentioned above, a pop-up window will appear asking for a state and county. Please note that some of the following commands cause Geocommunicator to access large databases, and that may take a minute or two, so be patient - but not TOO patient. Sometimes Geocommunicator is working but the databases aren't - if so you'll just have to try again later. If you are interested in the areas near our AZ claims, choose "Arizona" and "Mohave" county. Next a new pop-up window will open, with the title "Cadastral Data Distribution", which will allow you to choose townships in Mohave county Arizona from which you can download data. The main Geocommunicator map page shows that our Gold Basin claims are in Township and Range 29N 18W, so we select that from the long list. What we want is survey data (not shape-files), so click on the "Export Survey Data" button. A new pop-up window appears titled "Survey Exporter", which allows us to choose what data we want. We want survey points, so under "Content Desired" click the circle next

to either "All Points" or "Control Points". Control points are the main survey locations (typically section corners), All Points will get you more survey points such as quarter-section corners, corners of various other all-quot parts or government lots that have been surveyed in the past - sometimes useful, sometimes not. Under "Format Desired" click next to "GPX". Each GPSr manufacturer has its own proprietary format for storing waypoints, but GPX (*.gpx files) can be read by most of the different programs used to download to GPSrs, and converted to the format needed by the particular GPSr that they handle. Now click the "Export to File" button. The page will alter to show "Exported file available for download:", and a link "Click to download", which you now click. If your browser gives you a choice, select "Save", and save the file somewhere on your computer where you can find it later.

What you do next depends on your GPSr and the software you use to upload and download data to it. Since I have a Garmin, and use their MapSource program, I open MapSource, and select from the menu: File / Open..., and select Files of Type: "GPS eXchange Format (*.gpx)", navigate to where I saved the file above, select and open it. I scroll over to the area on the map where I expect the Survey points (White Elephant Wash / Gold Basin area) and see a grid of section corner waypoints with 6 digit names. Naturally, a few corners are missing (weren't surveyed or recorded) and some extras appear. The gaps are usually easy to fill in by copying latitude and longitude from nearby corner waypoints and creating new ones. The extras have to do with various surveying and mapping corrections (e.g. range shifts) which you'll quickly recognize, and use appropriately. I can select certain of the corner waypoints to copy, and delete others - particularly useful to thin out unneeded points from an "All Points" download. I can also rename or change the icon of waypoints if that

GPS Continued

will help me keep track of which is which in the field. Selecting the desired corner waypoints either graphically on the map or from a list, I "copy" them to the clipboard, open another file with my pre-existing waypoints, tracks etc. from that area, and "paste" them in, save the whole thing, and then attach my GPSr to the computer and load the waypoints in using "Send to Device...". Be careful, all this file opening, pasting and saving can lead to loss of your old waypoints, etc., if you overwrite the wrong file, so take it slow and save into new file names often so you have backups. Also, download and save the waypoints and tracks on your GPSr before you upload new ones, so you don't lose any that are only on the GPSr and not yet backed up on the computer. Another gotcha: the next time you try to open a waypoint file, you may have to re-select the format for your GPSr (it may remember and try looking for .gpx files again), and you may have to navigate back to where you usually store your waypoint backups (it may remember where you told it to open the downloaded .gpx Survey file instead.) Minor issues, but confusing if you don't notice.

Please note that these survey waypoints will only locate properly if you have your GPSr map datum set to NAD83 (or WGS84). If you have the map datum set to NAD27 (or NAD27 CONUS) for use with older USGS Topo maps, etc., errors as large as 200 ft may occur.

The above process will likely be easier if you use another GeoCommunicator page, different but similar in appearance to the Mining Claims page. Look at the following page to learn about the Geocommunicator LSIS (Land Survey Information System): http://www.geocommunicator.gov/GeoComm/lis_home/home/index.html. Click on "Map Viewer and Download" along the left side of the page to get to the actual map download page. It works very much as we just described, but allows you to conveniently select which townships that you want to download by clicking and dragging on a map. This can avoid huge lists of townships to sort through before

you can download.

Here is a Web page that will convert a legal description of a location (section) into the latitude and longitude (and more) of the center of that section: <http://www.esg.montana.edu/gl/trs-data.html>. It is also linked from the National Atlas page mentioned above. If you can find the area you want on a map, here is a page that will give you the same information by clicking on a map (Geocommunicator can be used in a similar way.): <http://www.esg.montana.edu/gl/index.html>

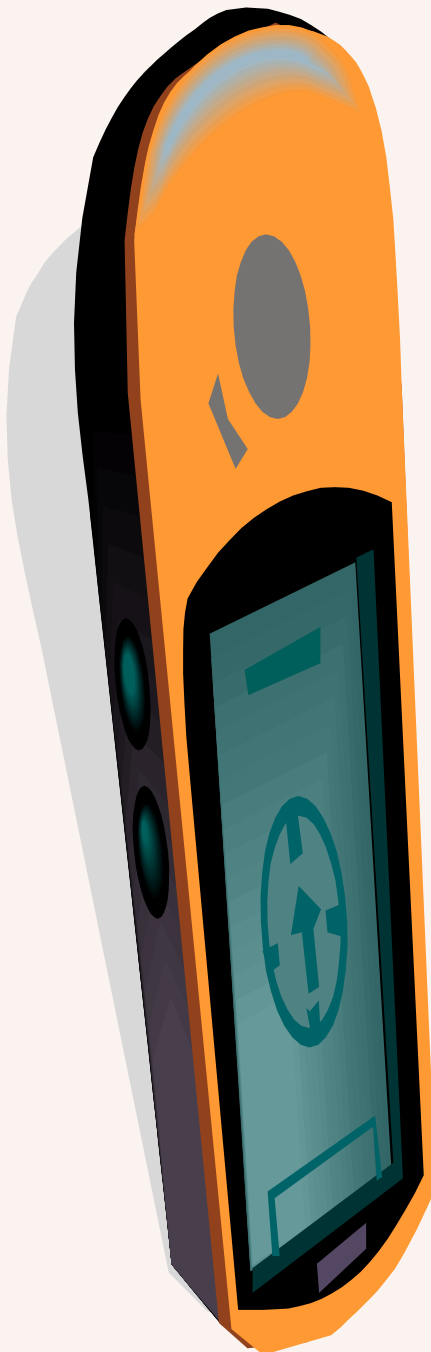
As an example of how it can be helpful to know how to convert locations described in PLSS format to latitude and longitude, take a look at this web page showing the other lesser-known placers near the famous Rye Patch placer area (a.k.a. Majuba Placers): http://nevadanuggethunters.myfreeforum.org/Google_Earth_Version_of_Some_Placers_SW_of_Winnemucca_about14.html

I learned about Rye Patch (just off I80 near Rye Patch Reservoir in northern Nevada) not long after I became interested in prospecting, and plan to take a trip up there one day. You won't even find it on reprints of older gold district maps because it was only discovered in 1938. It's been hard hit by detectorists and rockhounds since the 1960's but still produces nuggets, as well as nice crystal specimens for the rockhounds. I had no idea that so many other placers were near by, but the creator of this page took lists of known placers from several sources and converted them from their PLSS designations (using the "trs-data" page above) and plotted the section centers on a map. You may want to do something similar for areas you plan to visit where you can't find such complete publicly available maps.

Remember to always take a compass and paper maps as backup for the GPSr when travelling into

remote desert areas; also consider a Spot satellite messenger or Emergency Locator Beacon to allow a call for Search & Rescue if things go sour. And, leave some gold for me.

By John Bronstien
Gold Searchers of Southern NV, Inc



Application To : Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada, Inc.

P.O. Box 96732

Las Vegas NV, 89193 – 6732

Supporting Website:

Www.goldsearcher.com

Please Print Clearly

Last Name _____ First _____ Spouse _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ - _____ - _____ E-mail _____

Vehicle _____ Lic# _____ State _____

I understand that as a member of the Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada Inc., I can run for office and Participate in the voting on all major policies and officer elections. I will also be able to attend all meetings and use the club claims, subject to the club By-laws. I can also use club equipment by appointment and check out books and video's from out extensive library.

HOLD HARMLESS AGREEMENT

I / we, the undersigned, (hereafter referred to as participant) assume all risk and/or hazards associated with participant's involvement in the Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada Inc., a prospecting club. Participants agree to indemnify and **HOLD HARMLESS** all club officers, sponsors, and/or other third, fourth, etc., parties involved in club activities. Participants realize that metal detecting, gold prospecting, and associated activities can be dangerous. The terrain can be hazardous and there may be wild or domesticated animals and snakes present. Some locations may have open shafts, pits, and tunnels. Participants assume animals and snakes present. Participants assume all responsibility by signing below.

SIGNATURE _____ DATED ____/____/____

CLUBS ONLY FUNCTION IF MEMBERS VOLUNTEER

I/we will volunteer to assist in the areas checked. Please check at least one area.

ELECTED OFFICES

President Vice President Treasury Secretary Membership

COMMITEES

Audit Committee Claims Committee Education Committee Librarian/Historian
 Merchandise Committee Newsletter Committee Outing Committee Webmaster Committee

As of January 7, 2009 Dues are payable on the first of the month of your anniversary date. New members \$45.00 and to Renew is \$30.00.

Check # _____ Cash _____ By _____
Receipt _____ From _____ To _____
Card # _____ Card Sent _____ Claims Book Sent _____

DEDICATED TO THE PURSUIT OF GOLD!

Gold Searchers of Southern Nevada
A Non-Profit Corporation
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Put Bottom of label on this Line here. _____.

We print a membership application in each newsletter that must be used for all applications of New or Renewals. **We must have this information in its completed form to comply with our Bylaws.** Thank your for assisting your club with procedure!

Next General Meeting, 6:30 P.M.

December 2nd, 2009.

**425 East Van Wagenen Street
Henderson, NV. 89002-9111**

Do a little prospecting at our Website!

**!!Supporting Website!!
www.goldsearcher.com**

Membership is the life-blood of this Organization. Your renewal date is reflected on the address label, upper right. All of our programs cost this organization money. Your membership dues make it all possible. Membership numbers are important when contacting National Organizations, The Press, and Elected Representatives.