

August 2010

# The Scoop News

## ***U.P. Vacation*** By Al H.

I just returned from spending 10 days on vacation. As usual we went to the U.P. to visit my wife's parents. It was a wonderful time and we had great weather.

Last year when I went up I had just finished cancer treatments and surgery. I should have stayed home because the trip almost killed me. I mean that exactly like it sounds! This year I was about 50% stronger and if I paced myself I could do a few enjoyable things.

My business this last year has been frustrating to say the least! I read the news or listened to the radio and it sounded like the economy had collapsed. I, on the other hand, had a steady stream of customers who had money in hand and were prepared to spend, but alas! I couldn't get the products! The shortage has been in the form of a couple land-based detectors but the big shortage has been in underwater detectors.

The two biggest makers of popular underwater detectors are also the two larger suppliers of metal detectors for gold prospectors. Well, if you didn't know it, there has been a full blown gold rush in Africa! The gold discovery was made with a couple detectors that would not have been my choice for that work, but the people in the African gold fields have a tribal mentality and you could not sell them anything other than what they were told to buy.

I guess greed took over! One of the gold detectors that was in demand was priced

high to begin with at \$4,500.00! But, after the supply in Europe and in the U.S. dried up, this same detector was selling for \$10,000 and up on the black market! So these two manufactures stopped all production on all their other models to build nothing but gold machines.

So now we have very few choices of waterproof detectors. One of the most respected companies did not get caught up in this mess and they did offer a waterproof detector but it had some flaws as far as most knowledgeable water hunters were concerned. What frustrated me was that this company's flawed water detector would accept the circuits from one of their totally hot land detectors. Also, they had a coil that they could use that would really make the whole package awesome!

I talked to my distributor about this combination of parts and even wrote to the company about my idea, but it seemed to fall on deaf ears. It was so frustrating to me because I knew this would be so easy to do and it would fill my need for a much needed product! But it seemed like nobody was listening.

Then, just days before I left on vacation, my distributor called me to say that he just got in a Top Secret Proto type detector that the factory wanted me to test! That's right! I said "ME TO TEST!" You could tell that the engineers used whatever they could scrounge together in used parts to put everything together, but it was all there in one neat package!

I packed my long handled scoop (one of the best in the world and made in Kalamazoo by club member, Steve B.). Also, my wind surfer suit that is like a diver's wet suit but with short sleeves and pants, some heavy-soled water boots and my waterproof detector – I was ready to go.

Up in the western U.P. some of the lake levels are way down. They had a mild winter with far less snow than usual (it came our way) and their spring was unusually dry. My father-in-law pointed out the absence of mosquitoes this year which is most unusual for that area. I understand that many water wells are even drying up!

I had hunted the local swimming hole a few years back and right away had started finding some great stuff! However, I was limited to very shallow water because what I had was a land detector with a waterproof coil. Sadly that sprang a leak after just a few good finds.

On another trip there, I got in the lake expecting big things and there was next to nothing! I was swinging my coil in chest deep water when a teenage boy popped out of the water and brushed his hair out of his face with both hands. "Are you finding anything?" he asked.

"Not much, just a few new coins," I replied.

"My uncle detected in here last summer, and you would be amazed at how much neat stuff he found!"

Just my luck! That was a few years ago and at the time the lake was at its normal level. This year when I was in water below knee-deep, it would have been over my head before! This was lake-bottom that was not hunted by that guy's uncle, unless he had been back recently.

There was nothing good about my battle with cancer. Even losing 80 pounds wasn't as good as you would think, because it included a bunch of muscle mass. I was expecting as soon as I got my bony legs in the cold water I would

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## **U.P** (cont. from page 1)

be retreating fast. I was little more than ankle deep when I got a clean strong signal. With my wife nearby, I scooped in the sandy mud then lifted the scoop from the water.

To my delight I could see mixed in with the bits of seaweed and snail shells a white gold ring! Gold on my first scoop! When I pulled it out of the remaining mud in my scoop I recognized the unmistakable look of a girl's class ring! I put the ring in my goodie apron and continued on. My proto-type detector has beautiful tone ID and the gold ring sounded just as it was supposed to. It is what I would describe as a sweet mid-tone. Copper and silver coins make an unmistakable high-tone.

I scooped up coin after coin when it occurred to me that my hunting at this location would be limited to just that day. So I started to ignore the copper & silver coin hits and intensify my gold search.

Unfortunately there is one coin that has the same signature to a metal detector as many gold rings and that is a U.S. and Canadian nickel. Another spoiler is those old aluminum can pull-tabs. I really didn't dig many pull-tabs but the nickels were coming up one after another.

This is so much fun you can really lose track of time. In fact if you are not on your guard about hypothermia which in cold water can creep up on you, you can be in danger before you realize it! I lost two friends to just that on the east side of the state. One of these men was a young military man and he drowned in waist deep water!

Even though this swimming area is unofficially closed as they redo the bath house and beach,

there was still a young lady doing life guard duty.

My wife and granddaughter had already gone to shore and I was the only one left in the water. I had a feeling that the lifeguard would have headed for home if it wasn't for me. I was right, the young lady, my in-law's neighbor, asked my wife, "Is he going to swim?"

About that same time I felt like I was inconveniencing someone, so I started working my way towards shore. All I could think about was coming back the next day, but the weather forecast was calling for bad weather and we had a 6 hour drive to our next stop, Sault Saint Marie.

That evening I showed my in-laws all of the recovered treasure. On closer inspection the 10K class ring was well worn and hard to read. My father-in-law got out his magnifying glass and took the ring out in the evening sunlight. When he came back in to the house he declared that the ring was from the local high school and it was from the class of 1950.

When this information sank in, my mother-in-law exclaimed, "That was my class!"

The only thing that was clear to see was the owner's initials, G.J. That seemed to be the only puzzle left. At first my in-laws struggled with coming up with a name and it was my father-in-law who made the breakthrough! Sure enough there was only one possibility--- it had to be her!

My wife popped the question, does she still live in the area? The question even came up, 'is she still counted among the living? Well, the answer was yes and yes! My mother-in-law put a phone call into her old friend and her first question was, "Gladys, do you still have your class ring?"

She said, "Funny you should ask. I was visiting with a couple of classmates yesterday when that same question came up! I know where my class ring is. It is at the bottom of the lake!"

"Not anymore!" my mother-in-law told her. The next day ring and owner were reunited!

**Be sure to be at  
the August  
meeting. We will  
have a cool  
surprise for  
everyone!**

## ***Detecting Etiquette***

*It seems that there has been a surge on detectorists being asked to leave a site, even public places that in the past we have been able to detect at without any problems.*

*Remember to use proper digging techniques and ALWAYS get permission to search a site.*

*If you know someone new to the hobby, take the time to teach them proper detecting etiquette.*

## ***Find of the Month Winners***

### **Jewelry**

1. 14K gold chain w/14K crucifix (John D.)
2. Silver hoop earring (Steve B.)
3. Antique telephone stick pin (Mike W.)
4. Inox tungsten carbide 15.5 gram ring (Steve J.)
5. .925 ring (Deb W.)
6. Italian .925 bracelet (Ron J.)
7. 14 K ring w/3 diamonds (Rick B.)
8. Men's 14K 11.8 gram ring w/5 diamonds (John A.)

The winner was the men's 14 K w/5 diamonds ring found by John A..

### **Coins**

1. 1835 large cent (Dave A.)
2. 1888 Indian head w/full liberty (Mike W.)
3. 1951 20 centavos Mexican coin (Deb W.)
4. Bicentennial half dollar (Ace C.)

The winner was the 1835 large cent found by Dave A..

### **Fob, Badge & Token**

1. 1900 members token for race track (Eric A.)
2. Pearson & Dana Boots & Shoes, Chicago, IL merchant token, 1858-1860 (Dave A.)
3. Token good for \$1 on a suit, Ross Miller Co. (Ron M.)
4. South Bend Bait Co. token, 1930-1945 (Jim L.)
5. WWI collar button (Tom B.)
6. Missouri sales tax token (Mike W.)
7. 1898 Atlanta peace jubilee token (Rick S.)
8. Boy Scout tie slide (Ace C.)

The winner was the 1900 Member token found by Eric A.

### ***Coin Raffle***

If enough tickets are sold at the August meeting, we will be able to give away the 1830 Silver Bust Half Dollar, which is our current coin raffle item. Tickets can be purchased during the break.

### **Most Unusual**

1. 1870's or later silver plated copper clasp (Janet G.)
2. Brass ??? (Steve B.)
3. Sterling silver thimble, child size #2 (Dave A.)
4. Cub Scout slide (Tom B.)
5. Gold plated sungfit collar button 1800-1930's (Mike W.)
6. Ornate wood stove piece, Beckwith's Round Oak (Ron M.)
7. Victorian era buckle (Keith P.)
8. Spoons found in one hole (Eric A.)
9. Part of a trap (Deb W.)
10. Beach find, "nuff said" (John D.)

The winner was the child's thimble found by Dave A.

*Congratulations!*

*Keep finding all those great items!*

### ***Winners!***

Our Fishbowl Silver Cache winner was Lester R. but he was not present so it carries over to next month!

Our silver dollar winners were Alex A. & Bill D.!

Our 50/50 winners were Keith P. & Gordon S.!

**Congratulations, everyone!**



The Scoop News  
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Look us up on the web!  
[www.swmss.org](http://www.swmss.org)

The Scoop News is the official newsletter of the Southwest Michigan Seek & Search Club. The newsletter is edited by Anna Matecun.

The club meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Plainwell Community Center.

From U.S. 131, take exit 49A and go east on M-89. go through three traffic lights, then another 1/8 mile. Turn right into the drive just before the second set of railroad tracks. The building is near the road on the south side of M-89. Parking is in the rear of the building. Enter on the west side.

Meetings are open to the public.

## ***August 28 Club Fellowship Hunt***

*For those of you that missed the last time we went as a club to Gun Lake- Yankee Springs State Park for a fellowship hunt, here is your chance. We'll start at 9:00 am, take a lunch break at noon and continue until your arm falls off or the park closes. You can show up when you want and leave when you want. We will meet at the pavilion that is on the left - a little ways down from the main beach. What's on the menu? Well, whatever you want because it's bring your own lunch, we'll just supply the fellowship. There are areas to hunt, both land and water - opportunities galore! A daily State Park pass costs \$6.00. So pack your lunch, sunscreen, bug spray and detecting equipment and join us at Yankee Springs State Park for a day of fun, fellowship and (most importantly) metal detecting!*