

# The Prospector

## Portland Gold Prospectors, Inc.

GPAA Portland, Oregon Chapter - September, 2018



### Treasures Aren't Only in the Creeks!

On August 9, 2018, we received the following e-mail from Eileen Hodges:

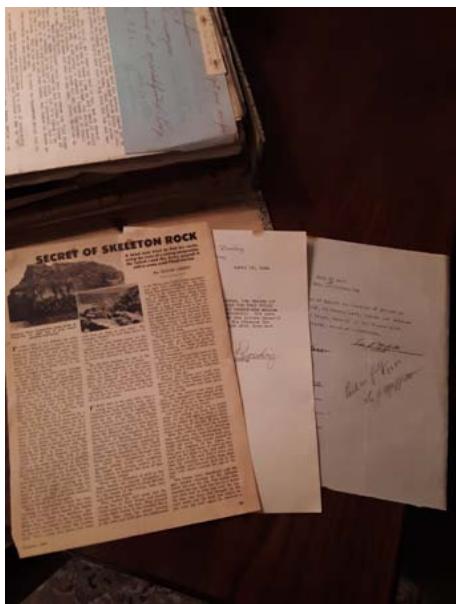
*Mr. Lewis,*

*My name is Eileen Hodges, and I live in Canby, OR. My husband and I were members of the LDMA. I still am.*

*Getting to the point. My husband received a box of old magazine and newspaper articles about prospecting from my stepfather's father. He lived close to Redding, CA and some of the clippings regard the Nevada desert. Would your chapter of the GPAA be interested in these clippings? If so, I would like to meet to let you and others look at them. If not, would you know someone who would like them?*

*I don't want to just toss them.*

*Thank you,  
Eileen Hodges*



Chapter President Mike Lewis responded by saying the chapter would be happy to have the information and invited Mrs. Hodges to attend the August Chapter Meeting.

Mrs. Hodges came to the meeting and talked about how she and her husband had received the information, which is contained in a small box. She said her stepfather's father had accumulated the information over many, many years. The array of information is primarily focused on prospecting and stories about prospecting.

Upon inspection, the box is packed with hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles, with many interesting stories, maps, and other information.

At this point in time, there is some discussion about preserving the information on a thumb-drive and inserting the pages into protective sleeves. In interim, we will be pulling stories from the box for publication in the chapter newsletter.

Thank you to Mrs. Hodges for thinking of our chapter and for giving us all of this interesting and nostalgic information. We will enjoy it for years to come!



### PRESIDENT'S BLOG

Hello, fellow prospectors!

I think it is time to address the "elephant in the room" when I express my concern over the lack of participation by more members in our chapter when it comes to outings and other activities in which we are involved. How do we encourage people to step-up to run outings? How do we make it more feasible for people to participate in outings? I am concerned because the future of our chapter depends on both growing the chapter and insuring there is participation by its members to keep it relevant and viable. The same people should not be responsible for running every outing and activity. I am certainly open to suggestions and look forward to discussing this issue at the next chapter meeting.

Please note that our chapter has primary responsibility for organizing the 2019 GPAA Gold and Treasure Show, which will be at the Portland Expo Center in March. We will need all of the help we can get to make sure the show set-up and take-down run smoothly, as well as making sure there is a solid presence of the chapter during the show. Organizational meetings will start in October and will include the SW Washington Chapter as well as other chapters in Oregon and Washington. Jerry Johns has agreed to take the lead this year, and I will be assisting him.

**Continued on Page 2**

## 2018 Portland Gold Prospectors Board of Directors

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## Secretary's Report August 19th, 2018

### Portland Gold Prospectors, Inc.

**Milwaukie Grange Hall**  
**12015 S.E. 22nd Ave.**  
**Milwaukie, OR. 97222**

The meeting called to order by President Mike Lewis at 1:30 P.M.

The president then led members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Attendance** - 32 attendees and 3 guests were present.

**Meeting Minutes** - A motion was made and seconded to accept the Secretary's Report of the previous month as written and published in the August newsletter. The motion was approved by the members present.

**Treasury Report** - A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasury Report. The motion was approved by the members present.

**Correspondence** - The Eastern Oregon Mining Association newsletter was available for anyone that wanted to look at it. Bill Bench also brought in the monthly update for the Public Lands for the People and the GPAA monthly information also for anyone interested.

**Donation** - We had a nice donation from one of our guests named Eileen Hodges. She had inherited a bunch of old newspaper articles and other information pertaining to mining from many years ago. We thanked her for this nice stuff that will be available for members to view in our library.

**Permit** - Dave Chiara had to make a trip down to Albany, OR. and get a permit from the State of Oregon that cost our chapter \$80 as we now learned the state needs to know everyone who is digging in the state.

**Outings** - 11 people came to our Lewis River outing earlier this

month. A few people found some color. One guy and his grandson got about 20 flakes. Our next outing is on September 9th at Steve Lewin's claim Direct One. For anyone interested in going there is a sign up sheet and we will meet at the Safeway in Battleground at 9:00 A.M. and caravan up there. His claim is about 5 miles from ours on Copper Creek.

**Club Merchandise** - A sign up sheet is still available for people who are interested in purchasing Tshirts and Sweatshirts at various prices. The patches have already been ordered and will be available soon.

**Education** - At break time Richard Ruth demonstrated his homemade classifier.

**Raffle** - The raffle was held with \$1 and \$5 tickets. Joe Wood was the big winner of the \$5 raffle for the Gold Nugget.

The Meeting was adjourned at 2:35 P.M.

Submitted by Yolande Kragerud,  
Secretary

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### **Blog - Continued from Page 1**

Lastly, the term of Chapter Vice President is up at the end of this year. Bill Bench has said that he is not interested in running again. We will open nominations at the November Chapter meeting.

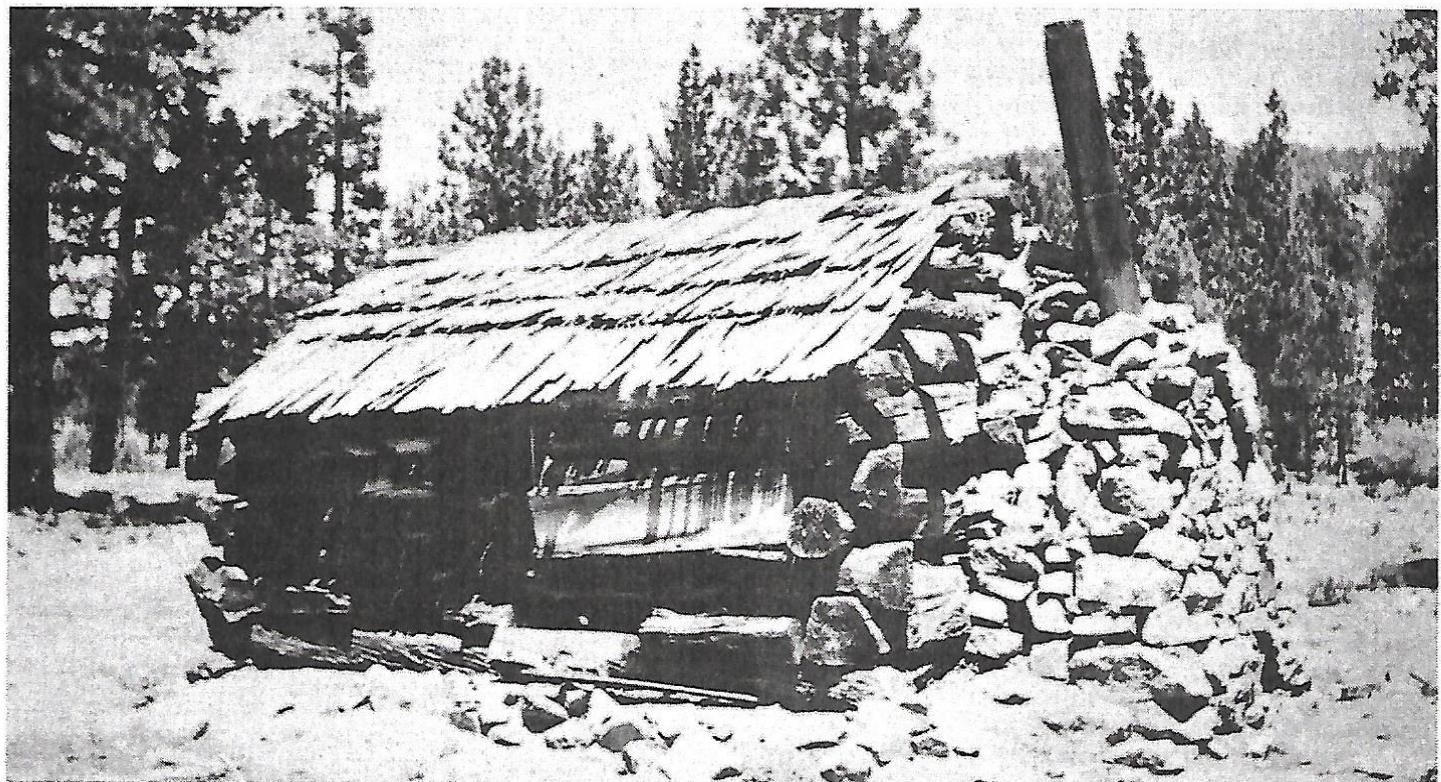
Hope to see you at the next chapter meeting on September 16, 2018!

Thank you and Happy Prospecting!

Mike Lewis  
President  
Portland Gold Prospectors, Inc.

# THE CURSE OF VAN DUZAN'S TREASURE

Somewhere in San Bernardino County the jealous ghost of a murdered miner guards a fortune in hidden gold.



Photos by Neil Murharger

by Louise Cheney

There's a lost gold mine in the Van Duzan Canyon, located in the south wall of the 8,000 foot divide that separates the Bear and Holcomb valleys in San Bernardino County. The story of the rich mine, its discovery and its subsequent loss is neither a fantasy nor a legend dreamed up by some old timer for the main elements in the tale are well substantiated facts and there is undisputed evidence that a rich deposit of gold was located and that it still exists.

Many men saw the gold that Van Duzan brought out of the canyon that now bears his name but none knew the location of its source. Only Van Duzan and his partner possessed that vital knowledge and they confided in not a single soul. Consequently when Van Duzan was murdered and his partner faded into oblivion never to be seen again in the vicinity, the mine was lost. There is a strong possibility that one other man, a Frenchman, found the Van Duzan diggings in 1886 but like his

predecessors, he, too, kept his secret well and the location never became known. And then, like Van Duzan's partner, he too vanished from the face of the earth. So the mine was lost once more, (that is, if the Frenchman's find was the Van Duzan lode) and lost it has remained for around a century although many hopefuls have searched for it.

Van Duzan made his appearance in the Holcomb Valley during the mad gold rush of 1860-1870 triggered by Uncle Billy Holcomb's discovery of gold in a large valley north of Big Bear Lake. Van Duzan was no greenhorn prospector. Possessed of a better education than the average man of his day and equipped with a working knowledge of geology and engineering, he used no helter-skelter, hit or miss methods in his search for "color." First he made a careful appraisal of the region and then with a partner whose name has been lost to history, located in the canyon where the two

men built a cabin. After a few weeks Van Duzan showed up at the mining camp with a supply of rich gold with which he purchased needed supplies. Though neither Van Duzan nor his partner volunteered any information as to the source of their sudden wealth, it was assumed in the settlement that they had struck a rich lode in the canyon.

The two men worked steadily week after week and then Van Duzan confided to a friend that he and his partner were preparing to pack their gold to San Bernardino for banking. So consequently a few days later little attention was paid to the partner who, driving several laden pack animals, left the valley and headed in the San Bernardino direction. It was a week before a chance visitor happened upon the body of Van Duzan in the cabin. He had been murdered, shot to death. No trace of the gold was found and the partner never returned to the valley nor was he ever seen by anyone who had known him there.

It was in 1861 that Van Duzan was murdered. Many men tried to locate his claim in the years that followed but none succeeded and eventually his mine came to be catalogued as another lost digging of the west.

Then one day in 1868 two prospectors came to the Holcomb valley and concentrated their efforts in the canyon which now bore Van Duzan's name. One was a middle aged Frenchman and his partner was a youth by the name of Stebbins. The Frenchman displayed quite a knowledge of lode mining and began his search for gold in the higher levels of the canyon. It was not long before he, like Van Duzan, appeared in the mining camp with a quantity of rich gold which appeared identical in characteristics with that which Van Duzan had mined seven years previous.

The Frenchman kept as tight a mouth as Van Duzan before him and no one could learn the source of his wealth. He even forbade his partner, the youthful Stebbins, to accompany him to his diggings. And then one morning the Frenchman left the camp to work his mine and never returned.

Stebbins stoutly maintained that he knew nothing of his partner's fate. There were some who were of the opinion that the Frenchman had acquired a good sized stake and quietly faded away. Others entertained the suspicion that he had been murdered and his body tossed down some unused mine shaft. Then too there was a possibility that he had been caught in a cave in and that both his body and his mine had been covered with fall-

ing rocks and earth. The mystery was never solved.

Stebbins remained in the valley for several weeks after the Frenchman disappeared but he never found a trace of the lode. Then he, too, disappeared completely.

The Holcomb Valley gold rush came to an end by 1870 for with depth the ore played out. First the miners drifted away and then the merchants in the settlements that had sprung with the coming of the prospectors in the initial days of the boom. The buildings and houses in the once booming camps in time fell prey to vandalism and deterioration and in time trees and vegetation took over the roads that once thronged with commerce to the gold camps. The years swept by and finally half a century was gone. During this period, many men, from time to time, sought the lost Van Duzan mine but it eluded every search and remained lost.

Then one day an old white haired man came to Holcomb Valley. He said his name was Stebbins and that he had prospected there as a boy. He boasted that after he left the vicinity he had prospected for gold with much success in the Klondike, at Tonopah, Golfield and other rich areas. He stated that he now believed his experience in the above areas would serve him in locating the Van Duzan.

Hopefully, the old man began his search in the canyon. But he found that the years had left their mark on the terrain. The bed of the canyon had been eroded by Caribou Creek and the underbrush had thickened to an almost impenetrable thicket. Landslides had also lacerated the walls and the earth was pock marked with pot-holes and tunnels made by hopeful prospectors.

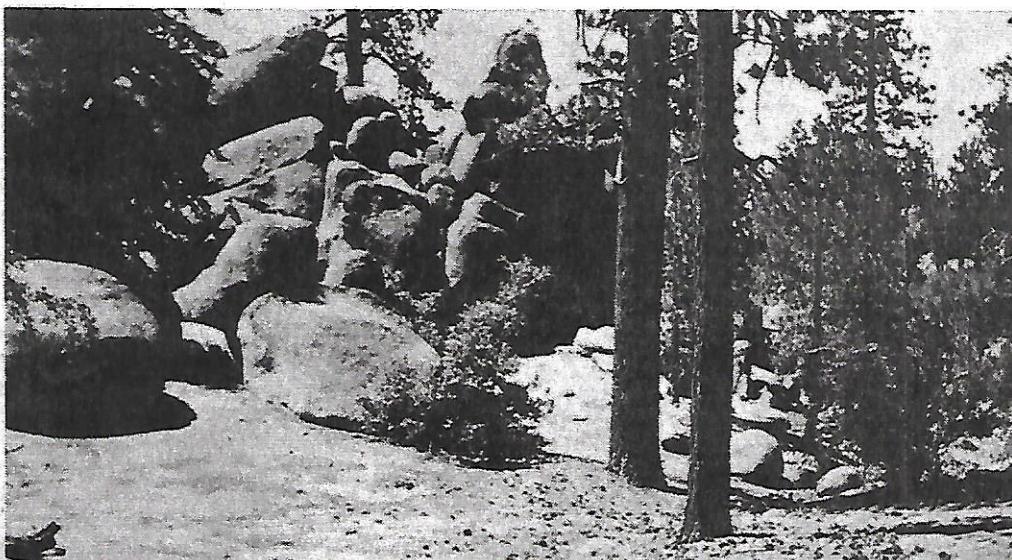
Undaunted Stebbins started his search for the elusive Van Duzan Mine. Day after day he combed the canyon. Week after week he hacked his way through the thickets. After months of back breaking labor he came up with exactly nothing. The Van Duzan defied all his efforts. Eventually his age put an end to his search.

Others took up where Stebbins left off. Even today over a century since Van Duzan hit "color" in the canyon, men still hunt for his lost mine. And so far it has defied them all. But it is there, in rugged Van Duzan canyon, waiting for some lucky prospector to tap its golden richness.

RW

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

This article is based on material supplied by the late Mr. Fish and material in the California State Library.



Holcomb Valley at Van Duzan Canyon. Uncle Billy Holcomb's discovery of gold was the start of the whole mess.

## Direct One Outing September 9

Steve Lewin, Washington State Director of GPAA, and a member of our chapter, is opening up his claim in Washington for a chapter outing. The "Direct One" outing is scheduled for September 9, 2018. Steve has asked that people meet at the Safeway Store in Battleground, Washington at 9am.

We will caravan to the outing from there. Chapter President Mike Lewis will be there and will have a chapter sign visible on his truck. You can sluice, pan, high-bank, or dredge, however, please note there are rules regarding how each participant's activity is spaced along the water.

Please make sure you have a copy of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife [Gold and Fish](#) Pamphlet. It contains the rules for mineral prospecting and placer mining. There is a link to the pamphlet in this newsletter. (Please note the pamphlet is over 40 pages long unless you can print "double sided".) We look forward to seeing you at the outing.

Steve Lewin will have a safety meeting for all participants to go over some rules for prospecting on the claim.

The outing will end between 2-3pm.

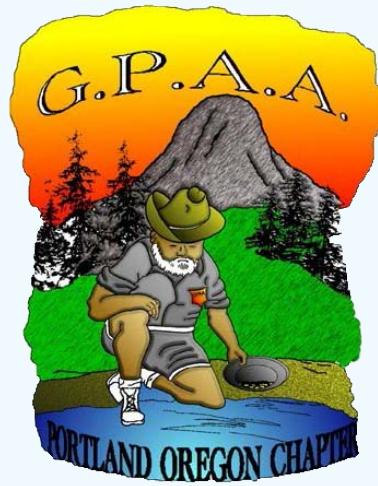
Be sure to bring your own lunch and water, etc.

Please either e-mail or call Mike Lewis with any questions regarding the outing: gmlewis238@msn.com 593-413-8283.



## Shirts and Sweatshirts With Chapter Logo

Hello everyone: We are working on a couple of options for chapter logo t-shirts and sweatshirts.



We need to get a consensus at the September Chapter Meeting. The two options are as follows:

**OPTION 1:** Minimum order = 30 – can be a combination of t-shirts and sweatshirts

3" Digital Print of Chapter Logo on the upper left side of t-shirt and sweatshirt

T-SHIRTS WITHOUT POCKETS: ..... \$10.95\*

T-SHIRTS WITH POCKETS: ..... \$14.95\*

ZIP-UP SWEATSHIRTS: ..... \$28.95\*

\* plus sizes are \$2.00 more per up size.

**OPTION 2:** Minimum order = 35 – can be a combination of t-shirts and sweatshirts

"Portland Gold Prospectors, Inc." in black lettering on the upper left side of t-shirt and sweatshirt and an 8" Chapter Logo digital print on the back of t-shirt and sweatshirt

T-SHIRTS WITHOUT POCKETS: ..... \$16.99\*

T-SHIRTS WITH POCKETS: ..... \$20.99\*

ZIP-UP SWEATSHIRTS: ..... \$41.99\*

\* plus sizes are \$2.00 more per up size.

**PATCHES:** Please note we have 50 patches coming. They are round, about 4 inches in diameter, with a black twill background and are embroidered with the chapter logo. They should be available at the September 16th Chapter meeting for \$6.50 each. They have an iron-on backing, although sewing on after ironing on is the preferred method to make sure they stay attached.

## The Three Bares - by Robert Service

Ma tried to wash her garden slacks but  
couldn't get 'em clean  
And so she thought she'd soak 'em in a  
bucket o' benzine.  
It worked all right. She wrung 'em out then  
wondered what she'd do  
With all that bucket load of high explosive  
residue.  
She knew that it was dangerous to scatter it  
around,  
For Grandpa liked to throw his lighted  
matches on the ground.  
Somehow she didn't dare to pour it down the  
kitchen sink,  
And what the heck to do with it, poor Ma jest  
couldn't think.

Then Nature seemed to give the clue, as  
down the garden lot  
She spied the edifice that graced a solitary  
spot,  
Their Palace of Necessity, the family joy and  
pride,  
Enshrined in morning-glory vine, with graded  
seats inside;  
Jest like that cabin Goldylocks found  
occupied by three,  
But in this case B-E-A-R was spelt B-A-R-E----  
A tiny seat for Baby Bare, a medium for Ma,  
A full-sized section sacred to  
the Bare of Grandpapa.

Well, Ma was mighty glad to get that worry  
off her mind,  
And hefting up the bucket so combustibly  
inclined,  
She hurried down the garden to that refuge  
so discreet,  
And dumped the liquid menace safely  
through the *centre* seat.

Next morning old Grandpa arose; he made a  
hearty meal,  
And sniffed the air and said: 'By Gosh! how  
full of beans I feel.  
Darned if I ain't as fresh as paint; my joy will  
be complete  
With jest a quiet session on the usual  
morning seat;  
To smoke me pipe an' meditate, an' maybe  
write a pome,  
For that's the time when bits o' rhyme gits  
jiggin' in me dome.'

He sat down on that special seat slicked shiny  
by his age,  
And looking like Walt Whitman, jest a silver-  
whiskered sage,  
He filled his corn-cob to the brim and tapped  
it snugly down,  
And chuckled: 'Of a perfect day I reckon this  
the crown.'  
He lit the weed, it soothed his need, it was so  
soft and sweet:  
And then he dropped the lighted match  
*clean through the middle seat.*

His little grand-child Rosyleen cried from the  
kichen door:  
'Oh, Ma, come quick; there's sompin wrong; I  
heared a dreffel roar;  
Oh, Ma, I see a sheet of flame; it's rising high  
and higher...  
Oh, Mummy dear, I sadly fear our comfort-  
cot's caught fire.'

Poor Ma was thrilled with horror at them  
words o' Rosyleen.  
She thought of Grandpa's matches and that  
bucket of benzine;  
So down the garden geared on high, she ran  
with all her power,  
For regular was Grandpa, and she knew it  
was his hour.  
Then grasin' gaspin' Rosyleen she peered  
into the fire,  
A roarin' soarin' furnace now, perchance old  
Grandpa's pyre....

But as them twain expressed their pain they  
heard a hearty cheer----  
Behold the old rapscallion squattin' in the  
duck pond near,  
His silver whiskers singed away, a gosh-  
almighty wreck,  
Wi' half a yard o' toilet seat entwined about  
his neck....

He cried: 'Say, folks, oh, did ye hear the big  
blow-out I made?  
It scared me stiff - I hope you-uns was not  
too much afraid?  
But now I best be crawlin' out o' this dog-  
gasted wet....  
For what I aim to figger out is---WHAT THE  
HECK I ET?'

The new ***Washington Gold and Fish*** pamphlet is available. You must have it with you whenever you prospect in the state of Washington.

Download a copy to print here: [Gold and Fish](#)

## 2018 Events Calendar – Subject to change as year progresses.

- Sept 9th:** Direct One in Washington
- Sept 16th:** PGPI monthly meeting 1:30pm
- Oct 13th:** Weather permitting;  
Beach mining - Low tide 9:20am
- October 14th:** PGPI monthly meeting 1:30pm
- November 18th:** PGPI monthly meeting 1:30pm
- December 16th:** PGPI monthly meeting 1:30pm



## Classified Ads

Here is a Classified Ads section. If you have anything to buy, sell or trade that would be of interest to prospectors, please contact the newsletter editor Tim Snyder at [wrshpmzshn@gmail.com](mailto:wrshpmzshn@gmail.com).

### Want to buy:

One Gold Cube ,  
4 stack with pump, hose and stand.  
Contact Jim Erwin, cell 503-519-6200.

## Sponsors and Member Businesses

**SUMMIT TRAILER**

Greg Swanson  
[ggreg@summittrailer.com](mailto:ggreg@summittrailer.com) 503-804-8239

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971-279-2006 [summittrailer.com](http://summittrailer.com)

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[www.thegoldlab.com](http://www.thegoldlab.com)

**Ruth Enterprises** 

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**Richard & Elaine Ruth**

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