

Calgary Metal Detecting Club

# The Buzzer

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The Buzzer is published by and for the membership of the CMDC – Canada's oldest Active Metal Detecting Club.

Visit us on the internet @ [www.cmdc.org](http://www.cmdc.org).

## PANDEMIC RING RECOVERY & RETURN

Dave Rosychuk is a detectorist in Vancouver, British Columbia. He loves to hunt, and you might find him in local parks or woods, or out detecting the beach at low tide. He loves detecting, sweeping his metal detector back and forth for bits of history, for lost objects and sometimes even gold. He loves to find lost treasure – but he thinks that as nice as finding a treasure is, if you can return it to the original owner, that is even better.

During May of 2020, during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Dave Rosychuk found himself with unexpected time on his hands. Like many others, Dave was laid off from his job as an assistant prop master on films. He turned to what he always did to calm his mind – He got his metal detector and went out hunting for treasure. .

With the lockdown and social distancing rules, Dave Rosychuk knew that one of his lumber camp or mining town hunts was not going to work out. Dave knew that he had to stay close to home, so decided to hit a park area close to home – the PNE grounds. The PNE had always been his go-to place to relax. At a time where isolation is a defining characteristic, and there have been incalculable losses and changes - this detectorist's find on the PNE grounds reminds us that sometimes what is lost is not gone forever.

In 2014 Aaron Martinello, a PNE groundskeeper, stopped the lawn mower he was riding, pulled off a glove and realized his wedding band was missing. His heart sank. He'd always feared he would lose the ring at work. "I'm a gardener. I've got my hands in the dirt all the time," said Martinello.

A few days later, Martinello was still frantically looking for the lost ring when he spotted Rosychuk with his trusty Minelab Equinox 800 sweeping the bright green lawns of the PNE. Martinello asked Rosychuk to help him find the ring. Although Dave Rosychuk spent hours hunting for the missing wedding band in 2014, he was unsuccessful.

When Rosychuk was sweeping the lawns at the PNE in May of 2020, hoping to find something good. He was listening to the language of his machine, when he heard the solid low-tone that meant this could be something special. Dave heard the tone on his detector that he associated with gold. Dave Rosychuk dropped to his knees, and cut a neat horseshoe plug in the lawn, the kind that can be tamped down afterward without damaging the grass. He carefully searched the hole, and was thrilled when he pulled out a beautiful gold wedding band.

Dave Rosychuk was happy to find that lovely gold ring – but to be honest, it took him a couple of days before he recalled meeting with the man on a mower who lost his wedding ring in 2014. When it struck him this could be the same ring, he headed back to the PNE grounds but couldn't find Martinello. The 17-year-employee, now a father of two, had been laid off in March of 2020 due to the pandemic. By the time Rosychuk found the ring, Martinello had already endured weeks of unemployment and lockdown isolation dancing to songs from Frozen and "every other Disney movie," with his 7 and 3 year-old daughters.

On the PNE grounds, Rosychuk found another groundskeeper, who gave him Martinello's number. Dave phoned and described the ring. Aaron Martinello was thrilled. He thought that his precious wedding band was gone forever. "Words can't express how I feel, how important that ring is to me." Martinello said. "To get it back it six years later, at this point in time with what's going on — it picked me up." Within days, Rosychuk had returned the plain gold band, and Martinello handed over a case of beer and a whole lot of gratitude.

In a time of losses, Dave Rosychuk was lifted too, by the chance to turn something lost, into something found – and to bring happiness into a life in lockdown.

## MY BEST "WORKING HOLIDAY" HUNT

By KEVIN NIEFER

A few years back I made a trip to a real estate conference in St. John 's, Newfoundland. I thought while I was there I would try to do some metal detecting if I had any spare time. I drove by some school yards, but each one seemed to have a lot of children playing. All I wanted was a place to be by myself and a little peace and quiet to enjoy the few hours I had to spend detecting. I came across a good size park with only a few people around, and thought "this will have to do".

I started my hunt by looking in the Southwest corner of the park where it seemed likely that a lot of people would sit under the trees. All I was finding was bottle caps & pull tabs. An older man came up to me and asked how I was doing. I told him that I didn't find anything yet. He explained that they had a lot of concerts in that part of the park, and that locals did a lot of drinking beer in that area. Well, that explained the bottle caps and pull tabs. I hunted that area for a while more and found a few new pennies and a nickel. I decided to wander over to another part of the park by a band stand where I found a few more coins, but it was mostly new stuff and pennies. I started towards a ball diamond on the West part of the park, when I hit a "good" signal. I pulled a Coronation token out of the ground. Wow! It was the first one I had found. About 3 feet away I had another "coin" signal. I started digging and found a U.S. silver mercury dime from 1944. Cool! That Mercury dime was only third one I had found.

I worked the park around the ball diamond for a while, finding mostly modern pennies. It was time to start working my way back to the car. I followed the path, working my detector off to the side of the pathway, and BINGO! There was a great sound, reading "coin". I dug it, and out popped out a King George V Newfoundland large cent (1920). That was my first large cent, ever. It was a dream come true. When I started the day all I was looking for was one good coin, and now had found three. I got up with amazement and started again, then BAM! The same sound again - out popped another George V large cent, this one from 1927. I detected about 6 more steps, when I got another great sound. To my amazement out came an 1899 Queen Victoria Canadian large cent. Wow! Life couldn't be any better than that.

This was one of my best days detecting. I found 3 large cents all prior to 1927, a silver mercury dime and a Coronation token all in 2 ½ hours, as well as 51 other coins, mostly pennies – but some were King George VI. Western Canada isn't really that old. Living in Western Canada it is harder find really old coins, as most of the Calgary area dates back about 100 years.

With such a great day's hunt, I couldn't wait to go back and get in another dig before I left Newfoundland for home. After the conference ended the next day I headed back to the same park. I went to the area where I found the 3 large cents and started hunting. The first thing I found was a 1974 Riverdale Tennis Club tag. After a few pull tabs, I hit another great sound. I dug down and found a nice a 1906 (King Edward VII) Canadian large cent. I got up from digging that coin, and the first swing of my detector located a 1919 George V Newfoundland large cent. Within 6 inches I located another large cent, this one from 1919.

I started gridding the area, but found nothing else, so I headed towards the South end of the park. I was working around the big beautiful old trees, when I had couple of nice sounds reading an 81 on my Whites DFX. I pulled out a 1962 silver dime. I started to grid-hunt the area, and about five feet away pulled out a 1940 king George VI dime in excellent condition. It was like it was dropped yesterday. A few feet away, out popped a third silver dime, this time from 1952. Over the next 15 minutes I found 1942 and 1943 Newfoundland pennies, a 1951 commemorative nickel, and pennies from 1939, 1942, 1951, 1960, and 1962. Well, I pulled out 39 coins.

The two-day total for my trip to Newfoundland was 6-large cents, 4 silver dimes, a Coronation token, and a total of 90 other nice coins. This is one my best detecting trips while on a working holiday. I can't wait to get down East again, where older coins are so easily found.

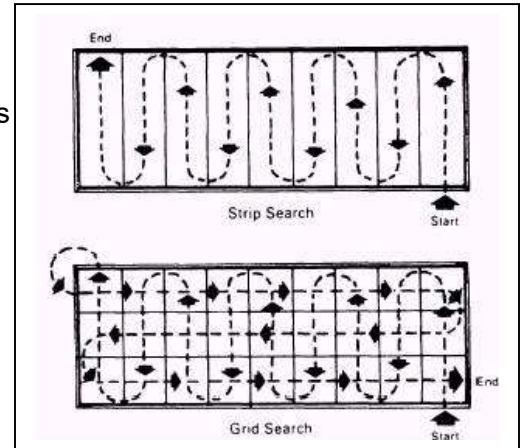
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Kevin Niefer is a local real estate agent. He has been an avid metal detecting hobbyist and a member of the CMDC for over 20 years. Kevin has been involved with "Ringfinders" and also has a few metal detecting videos on YouTube that are worth watching. This story was previously published in the Buzzer in 2012. It has been slightly edited for size.

## Patterns for Metal Detecting an Area

If you have found a site you feel is a "hot-spot", and you want to cover a large area, sometimes it is best to plan a systematic search pattern that you will walk with your metal detector. This will prevent you from missing an area, going over the same area twice, or perhaps area. One favorite way for Metal Detecting hobbyists to hunt an area is a "Strip" or a Grid" search pattern.

A search pattern is not recommended when "scouting" an area you have never hunted before. If you have an area that you are not sure has anything good to find you may want to pass through it quickly in an erratic manner, hunting wherever you think might be a possible site for an item to be recovered. Some people find it useful to imagine the area in previous use, and do some random hunting or a strip search around areas that they think may have been gathering places in the past - like by a stream or under some trees. If something good shows up in the pouch, then they plan for a more thorough search pattern. If you find nothing in your initial survey of an area, it may be best to move on and not waste time covering the area thoroughly.



Many think the best method for a thorough search is using a Strip search. Even if it's just in your mind, a pattern is an excellent method for a search. It may be a good idea to sketch out your strip or grid on paper to work out the most optimal way to cover the whole area in the shortest amount of time. Walking an area in a Strip search of parallel lines will work well. Walk in a straight line then turn and come back in the opposite direction with a little overlap in you coil sweep. Continue in this fashion until you have covered a nice large block of your target area.

If you are very meticulous you can even knock some stakes (or things like kebab sticks) into the ground and connect them with string, tape, or even a laser pointer to help guide your path. This a technique used by mine sweepers to clear minefields in dangerous areas of the world. If you are very meticulous and the area is yielding some good finds you can then go back over the same area but at right angles or diagonally across the area already searched – Very often this yields more great results in good areas. As long as you have a good plan in your mind and plenty of commitment you will locate your treasures!

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## SIGNS THAT YOU NEED TO GO TO METAL DETECTORS ANONYMOUS

1. All of your pants have grass stains on the knees
2. Anytime you are walking, you look at the ground -- even indoors
3. When you are in church and the minister says, "Please be seated," You respond with "Amen, brother. Or at least a barber."
4. When using your weed whacker, you're concerned about your "sweep speed."
5. If you roll over in bed, you may bend one of your detectors.
6. Eveready and Duracell send you birthday and Christmas cards every year.
7. You treat all strangers as if they own a house from 1743.
8. Your trash cans are full of pull tabs, bullets, and nails -- but you don't drink, hunt, or do carpentry.
9. Your clad finds pay for a good dinner for you and your spouse at least twice a year.
10. You ask your children's friends if they live in an old house.

## Metal Detecting Tips

**Have Reasonable Expectations** - You are going to find targets, lots of them. They are not all going to be “good finds” – Patience and positive thinking are important if you want this to be a rewarding hobby. Don’t expect that every target will be long lost treasure. We live in a disposable society, and much of what we find will be trash. Even though treasures and relics are there waiting to be found, they are not the only targets you will dig up. Even so, the odds are very high that you will find something interesting, or something with a story behind it. Sometimes it may only be modern coinage, but I have almost always come home with something. Every time I find an oddity - something that I don’t recognize, I run to my computer and research to see what I have. Having a positive attitude will help you appreciate every new find!

Note - You will **dig trash**, and lots of it. It’s an unfortunate part of metal detecting. But hey - we are cleaning the environment every time we put the garbage that is recovered from the ground into a trash can. I carry a finds pouch for just that reason. One section is for trash and the other for coins and other finds. It’s unbelievable the amount of trash people leave behind, but they are also leaving good targets for us to recover. Another tip is to know your detector well enough to know the sound or frequency of “the good stuff.” Some people don’t like to dig pennies – but silver is located at almost the same frequency. Some people hate to dig pull-tabs or aluminum – but gold is located right around that area. Some of my favourite gold rings sounded just like a pull-tab until I dug them up. Little did I know when I was discriminating out pull-tabs how many gold rings I may have missed.



*Treasure Hunting during the Covid era*

## Using Google Maps in Metal Detecting

I suspect that most of you are already using Google Maps. If not, you may want to experiment, and learn some of its secrets. One feature I like is the "street view". It gives the ability to toggle between the satellite, or map - and then take a look at the same area from the ground. The Google Maps program can also give you directions to get to the area you have decided to hunt.

I experimented recently using Google Maps with a few parks around my area, and was able to see raised ground in a large oval in the park when using the satellite view. I recognized the old "berm style" skating rink layout that I know dates a park to the late 50s. I then used the "street view" feature of Google Maps, and was able to see what the park looked like today, and to plan my best starting point for that park. Many features can be seen by satellite, including slight disturbances, old foundations, or trees that look older than the surround areas. All are features that are worth taking note of.

When you can also use the availability of historical aerial photographs, you can see changes that have happened to a park over time. I remember being amazed at a modern satellite photo of a park, and noting a path the cut kitty corner from one end to the other - and that the same path was visible in a historical aerial photo taken 60 years prior. That is something to make note of and hunt around.

Google Map images taken in late summer can also show differences in the grass in areas where cement or stone foundations retain summer heat. The change in vegetation where this occurs are often visible in the satellite images. In Britain these map indications have been used to locate iron-age era round-houses and Roman villas.

Another way to use Google Maps is to compare the satellite and Street view imagery with "old" historical maps. Many community histories will have a map of older neighborhoods, and if you are lucky - you may even have access to some of the old railway maps that date back to the early part of the century. I think the library may have a copy of those. If you can identify a feature on the maps, you can often exactly pinpoint the same are using the Google program, and find out if any of the local area might be considered a "public area".

You may remember my story a while back about locating the present-day site of the Hubalta Railway Station in North East Calgary. I used the aerial photos from the mid-1920s to locate the original site, and then used the Google Map site to see what the same location looked like in a modern satellite image.



These two images show the Hubalta Site, one photo taken in 1926 and the other in 2009.

If you are not familiar with the mapping program, and all that it offers, be sure to check it out. It's free, and you will be amazed at all the many features available to help the detectorist.



**METAL DETECTING QUICK TIP - Keep a Metal Detecting Journal - This helps you keep track of your hunting sites, and provides you with the chance to analyze possible patterns in those sites. You can record date & time, section detected, and what was found. Another thing to note is the best season to hunt the site. You can make note of what challenges you encountered and return better prepared next time you hunt that area. You can also remove it from your list of hunt-sites if the site doesn't pan out the way you wanted.**

## SADDLE RIDGE GOLD COIN HOARD

One morning in February of 2013, much like any other morning, a couple in California were out walking their dog along a wooded trail on their property. We don't know their names, but let's call them "John" and "Mary". On this particular walk, one of them noticed something strange on the side of the trail. Mary spotted an old tin can poking out of the ground. Intrigued, Mary and her husband John carefully worked the tin out of the dirt. As they did, they uncovered something that would change their life forever: The corroded tin can was filled with gold coins. John and Mary looked around, and soon located more cans. By the time they were done they had uncovered over 1400 pristine gold coins.



The gold coins were obviously old – they were all minted somewhere between 1847 and 1894, but they were in amazingly good condition. Incredibly, as the couple found out shortly afterward, they were worth about 10 million dollars. It was the largest discovery of a lost treasure cache in U.S. history. Yet no one could figure out how it got there. No one knows who buried it. The Saddle Ridge Hoard, as the treasure came to be known, was probably buried on the property sometime in the late 19th century.

Most of the coins are \$20 gold pieces minted in San Francisco after 1854, during the gold rush. However, there also some earlier coins minted in Georgia, which raises the question of how they found their way to California. Unlike most coins, many of the Saddle Ridge coins are in "near-mint" condition, which suggests that they never even entered common circulation. That excellent condition is part of why the coins are so valuable.

Taken at face value, the coins are worth about \$28,000, which was a huge amount of money when the coins were buried. The equivalent today would be approximately \$900,000. But due to the rarity and condition of the coins, they're now worth millions on the open market. But why would someone bury a fortune in coins on their property and never come back to claim them? There are a few possibilities. Some have suggested that the coins came from a 1901 bank heist in San Francisco when an employee walked out with around \$30,000 in gold coins. Given the timing and the value of the coins stolen, it would make sense, but the US government was able to determine that the coins did not match those lost in the bank heist.

There's a better chance that the coins have a more mundane origin story. Some people assume that this hoard was the life savings of a miner who struck it rich during the Gold Rush. This theory is taken with a grain of salt, given that by the time the coins were buried the Gold Rush was more or less over.

The most likely explanation is the one that is generally accepted. It is believed that the coins were likely buried by a wealthy person who lived on the property and simply didn't trust banks to keep their money safe. So instead, they buried their money somewhere "safe" on their property but died before they could tell anyone where it was. It might be hard for any amateur sleuths out there to find out the answer, since both the location of the coins and the identity of the people who found the cache are being kept secret. It's possible that one day soon, someone will be able to figure out how the coins ended up being buried. But for now, the secret of the largest buried treasure Cache find in The United States of America will remain a mystery.





## Location, Location, Location

We have been told that one of the rules in selling houses is "location, location, location" The same thing applies in metal detecting. Key factors in finding great places to metal detect are about locating that spot that no one else has detected before, or finding one that is continually replenished.

**High activity areas** are hunt locations that provide a continuous supply of metal detecting finds. These areas include high-utilization parks, schools, and sport fields, etc. It is important to think where items can be lost. I know of several parks that are busy all summer. One park I like to go to always has cars in the parking lot, and people making use of the various facilities. Take a look around, and imagine where people are playing, or might have relaxed for a picnic. Look for that big shady tree, but don't forget the baseball outfield, and check where spectators would sit and watch the game. Is there a shady area where parents might sit that has a view of the playground? You will be surprised by the amount of coins and items lost in a continually replenished park. They may not be old, but you will never go home skunked.

**Old ground** is where you look for relics and silver coins. Do your research and look for existing sites with history, and existing public access today. You might be able to arrange a permission on private property, but researching local history is the key. Use your eyes and investigate the area. What age are the parks in your area? How old are the houses around those parks? You can ask older residents about the area and gather good information. You can also use the internet to glean information. There is a lot of information available online. You can find old maps, check out old newspapers, read community histories, and even look at early 1900s aerial photos. All these are available online at "Ourfutureourpast.ca", an Alberta Heritage project.

You may find both location types in one local park. Canmore Park is a well-used park in Northwest Calgary that also brought the recovery of a wagon license from the 1920s. Shouldice Park has areas for sports fields and picnics, but the history of the area goes back to the late 1800s. Baker Park is well used today, but at one time the property hosted a military camp, and a Veteran's hospital built just after the first World War. These are only a few local Calgary parks that might fall under both "High Activity" and "Old Ground" categories.





**WOW! I think its circa 1980. Great relic find!**

## LOCATION AND MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Although cancelled until further notice, the Calgary Metal Detecting club usually meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30 pm in the auditorium of the Brentwood Co-op store, located just off Crowchild Trail between Charleswood Drive and Brisbois Drive N.W. You have to enter the store and go down-stairs (door by the Bakery) to find the meeting room. We will restart the monthly meetings after the Covid 19 crisis is over.

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>CIR Realtor – Relocation Specialist</b></p> <div style="background-color: black; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;">  <p style="font-size: 1.2em; margin: 0;"><b>Kevin Niefer</b></p> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>See Below</i></p> <p style="margin: 0;"><i>Finding Houses - Creating Homes</i></p> <p style="margin: 0;"><b>403-968-1496</b></p> </div> <p>To find out more information send Kevin an email @ <a href="mailto:kevin@kevinniefer.com">kevin@kevinniefer.com</a>, or give him a call at 403-968-1496</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BONNA-JEAN CAMPBELL</b>  <b>Brand Promotor</b>  <b>The Thrive Experience by Le-Vel</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Introducing BURN          BURN calories, BURN fat, and          Ignite your body into Thermogenesis</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Introducing PROTEIN BARS          Premium Nutrition – Sequential Bar Technology          Lemon Meringue – Cinnamon Roll – Cookies &amp; Cream – Birthday Cake          Check this out and more on my website:  <a href="http://www.Thrivewithbjc.thrive2point0.com">www.Thrivewithbjc.thrive2point0.com</a>          Email: <a href="mailto:Thrivewithbjc@gmail.com">Thrivewithbjc@gmail.com</a></p>
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