



**Support The Hobby**

I would like to point out to the News Brief readers that there are a number of organizations taking on the challenge against various types of legislation dealing with metal detecting and gold prospecting. MDHTALK's recommendation is to visit their website and give strong consideration to joining the fight. In some cases your support may be to send emails and / or write a letter to specific legislators or to provide funds to help with the fight. Here are the organizations and a link to their website.

[Go to the Join The Fight MDHTALK Webpage to read more about each of these organizations](#)

- MDHTALK News Pages
- U.S. & W.W. News
- U.K. News
- U.S. Archaeology
- U.S. Legislation
- W.W. Meteoritic
- Other Media

**What is a News Brief?** The news brief provides a brief look into any news event. The intent of the news brief is to provide you, the reader, with news clips on what was taking place in the hobby last month. To read the whole story select the Article Link or go to [MDHTALK.org](http://MDHTALK.org). There are more news stories placed on the MDHTALK website for September the news stories listed in the MDHTALK News Brief are just a portion of all the hobby related news reported the past month. **The news Brief is now available in Adobe PDF format, there is a link at the top of this webpage.** The news brief is no longer emailed; it is only available on the MDHTALK website and can be downloaded.

**The Website's featured article for this month is: Banned:**

by Lee Wiese

[Download this Article](#)

- MDHTALK Article Links
- Return Stories
- MDHTALK Find a Club
- Read Newsletters
- FaceBook Clubs

- I was told in a gruff kind of way by a parks and recreation worker to leave the park, that all parks in city were being banned to metal detecting. The park employee said someone in the past had created holes in the park ground while metal detecting and the city had banned future use of metal detectors.
- I was told last year by a park worker that I could not metal detect in their part. But I had called the park director before I went and he told me it was ok. I told the park employee that if he didn't believe me call the park director. He then said ok.
- I was told that metal detectors may be used on DNR land or waters only for locating specific lost personal items. A special permit is required.
- I was camping at my favorite state park for a few days. I went metal detecting and pulled up a lot of clad, on the 2nd day I was just filling a hole when one of the rangers came up. He asked me what I found, I showed him, he took a pause and asked if I had the park managers permission to metal detect. I know the rules, I read everything about metal detecting state parks. I have been metal detecting this park every summer for years. I said I did not and he took another pause and said that he would consider giving me permission to metal detect there but only at the beach. The next day I looked in the park store and there was a sign posted on the door that read "Metal Detecting is Prohibited in this State Park and Legal Action Will Be Taken."
- I was detecting for about a half hour when a police officer walked up and exchanged pleasantries. I said I was just detecting for a few coins. The officer said, "I know I've been watching you for a while, and I like what I saw. You made two trips to the trash can and I can't tell where you have been digging. Just wanted to say thanks, and keep doing what you are doing. The problem is that someone from the Parks and Recreation Program may run you off. They don't even allow tent pegs in the ground." About a half hour later the Parks and Recreation guy shows up and I was tossed out of the park.
- People will call the police on you just for having a detector. You have not broken any laws or dug any unsightly holes. You are just enjoying the hobby. The cops come over and usually say you need to leave or just move along. Sometimes the police are open to metal detecting and after a few questions leave you alone. However, if a park ranger comes to check out the complaint be prepared to leave immediately or get a ticket



These comments are because almost every state, county, city, and town have rules / regulations that create comments like those above and these rules / regulations put restrictions on metal detecting which result in banning.

## Metal Detecting Early Years

A very early Federal act [AAA-American Antiquities Act of 1906](#) is a very broad Federal law that addressed historical sites. However, it had little to no impact on metal detecting before the ARPA act in 1979.

In the early years, 1950s - 1980s, there were few detectorists in the hobby and no local or state laws against metal detecting. The hobby was pretty much a user's choice of where and how to practice metal detecting on most public lands.

### How Did Change in Law and Attitude Come About?

The change in attitude towards metal detecting started to take place with the passing of the Federal [ARPA-Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979](#). This act set the stage for the establishment of federal, state and local agencies to identify and define archaeological sites as protected and making these sites off limits to many people related activities including the hobby of metal detecting.

The Federal [NHPA-National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended in 2000](#) was passed before the ARPA-Archaeological Resources Protection Act. The 1966 Act set in motion the requirements to identify structures and surrounding grounds that could be or are of historical significances and should be protected for future generations of Americans.

Following are two major Federal acts were passed after ARPA:

- [1990 Native American Graves Protection](#),
- [1996 American Battlefield Protection Act](#).

Each of these acts are more specific in their protection of certain human remains, lands and sites.

The adoption of these five acts at the Federal Government level put in place the ability for states and local governments to follow suit and either adopt these acts in whole as their state law or to write their own regulations and laws to complement the Federal Acts.

***Examples of direct regulations against metal detecting may be worded similar to the following:***

- Metal Detectors: No person shall use a metal detector or similar device on parklands, except as provided in a written permit granted by the General Manager of the District.
- It shall be unlawful to use a metal detector or similar device in any District Facility or Parkland without a permit.
- Use of a metal detector in our parks is strictly prohibited.

***Examples of indirect regulations that can be applied to make metal detecting illegal may be worded similar to the following:***

- Prohibited Activities Defacing or Destruction of Property: No person shall injure, deface, cut out, displace, remove, fill in, raise, destroy, excavate, tamper, or create any disturbance to property contained within the Park whether it be natural or manmade.
- No artifact or any other organic or inorganic material may be removed from any historical area of the park.
- No artifact or any other organic or inorganic material may be removed from any area of the park, via metal detecting or any other form of excavation.
- It is our goal to provide as many positive recreational opportunities for park visitors as possible, and the use of metal detectors, or "treasure hunting," in the park system is not illegal. City code does not prohibit it however, it is our obligation to protect the park's resources and to ensure that damage to the park by visitors is minimized, and it is illegal to dig in any park area with any tool. Violators are subject to citation.

With this concept in mind, park visitors with metal detectors are welcome in the parks so long as they do not do any digging. Park staff have been directed to politely ask treasure hunters to leave all digging tools outside of the park and to inform them that sifting through the top few inches of sand or fir bark in play areas is acceptable so long as they do not use any tools or inconvenience playground users. The City is, in fact, grateful for any assistance treasure hunters might render with regard to the removal of any trash or debris they might find during their hunt.

- Treasure hunters observed digging in the park or otherwise damaging park resources will be informed that they are breaking the law. If they continue to break the law, park staff will contact Public Safety.

**Today's Metal Detecting Situation:**





Today, the result of these five Federal acts is that more and more local cities, towns, schools and counties are closing their public land to metal detecting. The type of regulation that is being put in place against metal detecting can be either directly related or indirectly related to the metal detecting hobby.

Since the adoption of the ARPA-Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 archaeologist have been hired at almost all levels of government to identify archaeological sites and to get regulations and laws passed to protect archaeological sites. During the past 20 years this has taken place at a rapid rate in the U.S. Archaeologist have also contributed to a negative attitude toward detectorist that has permeated all levels of government and the public at large.

Keep in mind that metal detecting hobbyist do not have a voice in Federal or State governments. There is not a strong metal detecting association in the U.S. that can represent metal detectorists. However, there have been cases of hobby support by local metal detecting clubs in some communities. This is rare but it does happen.

Another contributing factor is that many detectorists do not practice good target recovery methods on public grounds. This has caused many cities, towns and counties to create laws or regulations that impact metal detecting on non-related archaeology sites. (parks and beaches in general)

Never bring shovels, spades or any digging tool that should only be used in a garden to recover a coin target in a park.

Tools of the trade to recover a coin target are: 10 inch- ¼ inch shaft screw driver, 6-to-8-inch knife, a drop cloth and an electronic pin pointer.

Also carry a bag or apron where you can place trash that is recovered while metal detecting.

### What Can Be Done?



Manufacturers, distributors and dealers must step-up and provide hands on training for every new detector sold before it is taken into possession much like when you purchase a fire arm. In most states to purchase a fire arm you must first go to a class on safe and proper operation. Strong manufacture involvement is a requirement not just a pamphlet but hands on how to practice the hobby correctly and safely. Individuals who metal detect must take ownership for their behavior and practice [Responsible Metal Detecting](#) while out detecting.

#### Responsible Metal Detecting is to:

- Know and Follow the Law.
- Gain Permission.
- Apply the Metal Detecting Code of Ethics.
- Join a Metal Detecting Club and National Metal Detecting Association.
- Understand the Potential Cultural Value of Your Find.
- Volunteer Your Services to the Hobby.



#### Here are links to a self-certification metal detecting class:

- [Metal Detecting 101](#)
- [Metal Detecting 102](#)
- [Metal Detecting 103](#)

These small steps will not do away or improve the [current metal detecting environment](#) in the U.S. but may slow the change that is currently taking place which is to eliminate the use of metal detectors on public property.

### Hobby Related News

#### General U.S. and World Wide Hobby News

- Amateur divers discover 'enormously valuable' hoard of Roman coins. [Article Link](#)
- EARTH Metal Detecting Club holds annual hunt, picnic. [Article Link](#)
- Metal detecting suspected at Taranaki pā site. [Article Link](#)
- Hoping for an engaging discovery. [Article Link](#)
- Treasure hunters storm Skaha Lake beach in Penticton. [Article Link](#)
- Armed with metal detector, Logan man became leader in fight to save battlefield. [Article Link](#)
- Man finds 1969 high school class ring on Ormond Beach, owner's son flies from California to pick it up. [Article Link](#)
- Impromptu Metal Detector Built From The Junk Bin. [Article Link](#)
- Lose A Ring? A Club Near Rochester Exists to Find Lost Rings. [Article Link](#)

#### Other News Sources

- **American Digger Relic Roundup.** For diggers and collectors of history. An hour long program every Monday Night at 9:00 PM eastern standard time. Join your hosts Butch Holcombe, Jeff Lubbert and Heath Jones as they explore the past. Learn more about Metal Detecting, Treasure hunting in all it's forms, and the preservation of history. [September Pod Cast Link](#)
- **Archaeology and Metal Detecting Magazine** present the BIG metal detecting podcast. A weekly show bringing all areas of history together with our guests, news and much more. [September Pod Cast Link](#)
- **Coin World** - Numismatic and Coin Collecting [September News](#)
- **Garrett Searcher** [September- October Searcher](#)
- **Gold Prospectors Assn of America (GPAA)** - News on legal issues for the gold prospecting community [September News](#)

- A Collectible Counterfeit? The Story of Henning Nickels. [Article Link](#)
- That's beneath the surface? [Article Link](#)
- Man finds 1969 high school class ring on Ormond Beach; owner sought. [Article Link](#)
- Vero Beach teen finds 1715 Fleet gold coin, thousands of Seminole War artifacts. [Article Link](#)

## U.K. News

- Antiquities found by the public 'filled gaps in collections' – museum curator. [Article Link](#)
- Buried treasures galore on weekend of metal detecting adventure. [Article Link](#)
- 'I believe I've found King John's lost treasure', search leader says. [Article Link](#)
- Treasure Hunt Resumes At Historic Emar Mutt In Puri, Metal Detectors Begin Fine Combing. [Article Link](#)
- What is mudlarking and how to get involved in London. [Article Link](#)
- Burnham metal detector enthusiast's ring recovery service featured on national TV. [Article Link](#)
- Amateur Treasure Hunter Discovers Trove of Sixth-Century Gold Jewelry . [Article Link](#)
- 'My eyes nearly popped out of my head': Detectorist finds £250,000 pendant in Shropshire. [Article Link](#)
- Enormous' treasure trove of sixth century gold found in Denmark Access to the comments. [Article Link](#)
- Oxfordshire is the 10th best place to find buried treasure. [Article Link](#)
- Metal detectorist finds Viking coin hoard in the Isle of Man. [Article Link](#)
- Metal detecting: 'I dream of a find that changes history'. [Article Link](#)
- Bronze Age hillfort filled with treasure unearthed in France may be 'lost capital city'. [Article Link](#)
- Treasure dating back hundreds of years found in Swansea by metal detectorists. [Article Link](#)
- Metal detectorist's 'disbelief' at second Viking find on Isle of Man. [Article Link](#)
- How Scotland forged a rare alliance between amateur treasure hunters and archaeologists. [Article Link](#)

## North America Archaeology News

- Veterans at Revolutionary Battlefield Dig Find Camaraderie. [Article Link](#)
- Clovis Camp Site Discovered In St. Joseph County, Thought To Be Earliest Archaeological Site In Michigan. [Article Link](#)
- Excavation to explore church's role in Underground Railroad. [Article Link](#)
- Farm field find rewrites archaeological history in Michigan. [Article Link](#)
- Unlocking the Secrets of Mesa Verde National Park. [Article Link](#)

- **Mel Fisher Salvage Update**
- **PLP FALLFEST 2021**
- **Prospecting and Mining Journal (IMCJ) September News**
- **The Archaeology and Metal Detecting Magazine** The Archaeology and Metal detecting magazine are one of the lead online sites in their genre. Offering multiple platforms for Archaeological, Historical and metal detecting news, articles, research areas and much more. [September News](#)
- **1715 Fleet Society October Newsletter**

## Jewelry Returns

- Searcher makes a golden return. [Article Link](#)
- Metal detector hobbyist finds class ring lost 10 years earlier in New York. [Article Link](#)
- Metal detector hobbyist returns class ring after a decade in the dirt. [Article Link](#)
- They cry, I get a lot of hugs': This man has one of the most rewarding jobs in San Francisco. [Article Link](#)
- Hawaii man with metal detector recovers heirloom ring lost in the ocean. [Article Link](#)
- Leader Telegram.com Lost and found in Lake Hallie. [Article Link](#)
- 41 Years Later, Woman Reunited With Class Ring Lost in Pinebluff Lake. [Article Link](#)
- Fitness app, metal detector help reunite man with lost wedding ring. [Article Link](#)
- Joy as detectorist finds wedding ring on beach. [Article Link](#)
- Metal detectorist finds lost locket containing owner's father's ashes. [Article Link](#)
- Kinsale's Good Samaritan with a metal detector strikes again to find lost wedding ring. [Article Link](#)
- Florida hobbyist metal detector finds ring lost during 1987 'senior ditch day'. [Article Link](#)

## W.W. Meteorite News

- Meteor showers and shooting stars: Formation, facts and discovery. [Article Link](#)
- Meteor captured by Jersey camera over English Channel. [Article Link](#)
- NASA tracking giant asteroid heading for Earth's orbit. [Article Link](#)

## Event News

### Metal Detecting & Gold Prospecting Events.

Now is the time to start planning and getting your club's 2021/22 hunt information on the web. The sooner it is out and available to the metal detecting community the greater the chance for people to see it and give your event some consideration.

[Select here to View the Complete Event](#)

[Add Your Event Information Here](#)

- **October 01, 2021** (Three Days)  
Tamasee, South Carolina  
Digger's Detector Hunt & Training  
Garrett Metal Detectors
- **October 08, 2021** (Three Days)  
Stringer District in Kern County, Ca  
PLPs FALLFEST  
PLP - Public Lands for the People
- **October 09, 2021** (One Day)  
Cullman, Alabama  
2021 Deep South Treasure Hunt
- **October 16, 2021** (One Day)  
Garland, Texas  
46th Annual Open Hunt  
Lone Star Treasure Club
- **October 19, 2021** (Five Days)  
Stanton, Arizona  
2021 Diggers Dirk Party at Stanton  
LDMA-Lost Dutchman Mining Assn
- **October 23, 2022** (One Day)  
Bremerton, Washington  
47th Annual Moonlight Hunt,

Check out your event before going it may have been postponed or canceled.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| WBTHA-Warrior Basin Treasure Hunters Assn   | MDAW-Metal Detecting Assn of Washington   |
| • <b>October 09, 2021</b> (Three Days)<br>Chazy, New York<br>DIGSTOCK<br>Adirondack Detecting                 | • <b>October 30, 2021</b> (One Day)<br>Seaside, New Jersey<br>Halloween Beach Hunt 21<br>Xclub East Coast Treasure Hunters          |
| • <b>October 09, 2021</b> (One Day)<br>Brownwood, Texas<br>CTTC 2021 Open Hunt<br>Central Texas Treasure Club | • <b>October 30, 2021</b> (One Day)<br>Blacksburg, South Carolina<br>19th Treasure Hunt Of The Carolinas<br>Joyce and Randy Gatchel |

### Colin World A Collectible Counterfeit? The Story of Henning Nickels [Web Link](#)

A few years ago, I decided to start coin roll hunting, and with \$25 I opened an account at the nearest bank that had a coin counting machine. After becoming friendly with the tellers, I began buying boxes of coins, pennies, nickels, dimes, and quarters to search. While I was mostly looking for 90% junk silver coins and early wheat pennies, I always kept my eyes open for any interesting errors and oddities.

To my astonishment, I found several extreme error coins. While I did find a decent quantity of junk silver coins, the most interesting pieces I pulled were a 75% delaminated state quarter and a blank pre-'82 95% copper planchet.

But one day, as I was sitting at my desk going through a pile of nickels, I found a war nickel dated from 1944 but without the standard large "P" mintmark over Monticello on the reverse. Unsure if I had found an error, I consulted the internet.

It turned out that I had found a counterfeit Henning nickel.

This led me to search for additional information. Who was Henning? How could I be sure that my piece was actually a Henning nickel? What was the story behind these counterfeit coins?

Here is what I found.

Francis Leroy Henning was born in Erial, New Jersey on September 18, 1891. By the 1930s, Henning began his counterfeiting career by printing fake \$5 bills, which at the time had almost the same purchasing power as modern \$100 bills. Therefore, this was quite a serious counterfeiting threat. The appropriate authorities caught up to him relatively quickly, and Henning was tried, convicted, and sentenced to three years in prison. It is unknown ("accounts vary") whether this jail time was served in Boston or Buffalo.

It is known, however, that by his release in 1939, Henning had already begun to plan his next counterfeiting scheme.

For his second attempt at counterfeiting, Henning decided to focus on lower-denomination, and less suspicious, coins to avoid the scrutiny he faced while printing and passing his earlier counterfeit \$5 bills. Fully in business by 1953, Henning rented a building in his hometown of Erial to house his DIY coin press. This new operation was disguised as the "Child's Plastic Moulded Products Company". While conducting his counterfeiting activities, Henning was fully employed by the firm Day & Zimmermann, Engineers in downtown Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Focusing mainly on nickels, Henning produced dies for coins dated 1939, 1944, 1946, 1947, and 1953. Since all Henning nickels "appear in circulated grades", this means the dies were made via the transfer process.

Henning's problems stemmed from his coins dated 1944, since it seems he either didn't know or didn't care that the wartime nickels had a different mint mark. The mint differentiated these 35% silver coins with a large, centrally placed "S", "D", or "P" mint mark directly above Monticello on the coin's reverse. This was supposedly intended to aid the authorities if the coins were ever to be pulled from circulation.

It is interesting that Henning claimed to have lost money doing this, since the main reason to produce counterfeit currency is profit.

According to his testimony, Henning purchased almost \$6,800 of Monel (an alloy of 79.1 % copper, 20.5 % nickel, and 0.4 % iron) in early 1954 from the Scoville Manufacturing Company. Even before labor, the production costs of his counterfeit nickels cost Henning between 3-3.5 cents per coin. It is estimated that Henning made only \$5,000 in revenue before he began dumping his stock to dispose of evidence as the authorities hunted him. After throwing hundreds of thousands of coins with a face value of approximately \$20,000 into New Jersey's Cooper Creek and Pennsylvania's Schuylkill River, Henning was "still about \$2,000 short of just his metal costs".

On top of that loss, the government imposed a three-year prison term and a \$5,000 fine on Henning.

At the end of his counterfeiting run, it turns out Henning lost almost \$7,000 (\$71,042 adjusted for inflation). I can almost imagine Henning running around Jersey and Pennsylvania to the Benny Hill theme song throwing his coins away all frazzled.

By 1955, the authorities had arrested Henning. Also, the United States Mint had returned to the cupronickel standard for nickels and was able to melt and refine a large number of blanks recovered from Henning's Erial facility as well as approximately 40,000 coins (\$2,000 face value) salvaged from the Cooper Creek for use in striking authentic coins that year.

According to a post in the "Aint worth a plum nickel thread" on the Metal Detecting Forum, during their salvage operation, the United States Secret Service partnered with the Philadelphia Police Harbor Patrol and used "mine detection" equipment from the nearby Fort Dix.

So, how did Henning get found out?

Henning's very first deposit of counterfeit nickels at the bank raised eyebrows because all the coins were of the same date. While Henning claimed to be a "vending machine operator", the incident spooked him. As a result, he claimed to have created 12 dies (six obverse and six reverse) of various dates. Later, local New Jersey numismatist Harmen K. Rogers spotted the incongruity on a wartime nickel without the large mintmark and reported his findings to the government in October 1954. The Secret Service finally took serious notice when a teller at the Pennsauken National Bank in Pennsauken, New Jersey reported a few months later that he had "\$2.40 in suspected counterfeit nickels" from Henning. Incidentally, this bank was "located between" Erial and downtown Philadelphia, meaning that Henning must have deposited the coins during his daily commute.

Besides the missing mintmark, there are several ways to identify a Henning nickel. Firstly, many of the coins dated 1944 are too heavy and weigh 5.40 grams instead of the official five grams. This is despite the coins all being struck from dies simulating circulation. Other examples average 4.85 grams, which is "well within the weight tolerance of moderately circulated mint-struck nickels." Another main way to identify these counterfeits is the "low spot" or "void" on the left-hand leg in the "r" on "Pluribus". While this defect is "very distinct[ive]", it does not appear on all of Henning's reverse dies.

Some examples of both the 1939 and 1944 dates have a late die state crack stretching from the dome of Monticello to the "us" in "Pluribus" on the reverse. This crack means that Henning's dies must have been poorly made and began to crack partway through production, and since Henning stated it "only took four hours" for him to create each die, this makes sense.

Additionally, there are a series of raised dots on both sides of many specimens. Examples include a raised dot between the obverse "GOD" and "WE" as well below Jefferson's cheek and in the field above the left side of Monticello. One type also has a "raised area" directly in front of Jefferson's collar.

Today, Henning nickels are relatively rare. The 1944 dated type is usually the only example available to collectors. Winston Zack, the author of *Bad Metal: Copper and Nickel Circulating Contemporary Counterfeit United States Coins* (2019), states that any other type is extremely "difficult to locate." In his book, Zack values the common examples at between \$30 and \$50, and the rare varieties at \$100. That being said, examples of the common 1944 variety are currently being sold for \$100 or more.

It is important to note that it is technically illegal to own any counterfeit currency, but it is highly unlikely that the Secret Service will be knocking on your door for owning one of these pieces.