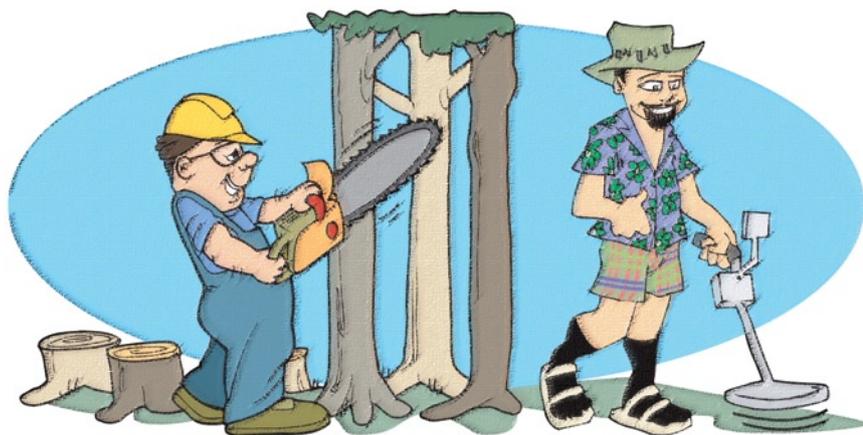


By John D. Matonich, LS

John Matonich is President and CEO of Rowe Incorporated, and is a licensed surveyor in Michigan and Ohio. He currently serves as Chairman of the Joint Gov't Affairs Committee for ACSM, and Chairman of the Bylaws and Resolutions Committee of NSPS.

Hunting Buried Treasures



Just before Fathers' Day last year my bride asked me what I would like as a gift. I'm never too bashful about receiving a present, but this time it was difficult to think of something. I pondered for a day or two when it hit me. I decided I needed a metal detector. One time while hunting I came upon a guy who had one. He was using it in a clearing that once was a site of a logging camp. He had done a bunch of research on the area and could even describe how the camp was laid out. I was fascinated by his story and found myself thinking about life in a logging camp before the turn of the century. My new friend went on to tell me how he had found many sites of old logging camps and using his trusty metal detector, he found a bunch of "treasure", from old coins to jewelry to silverware.

I approached my wife and told her I had decided on a Fathers' Day gift. I handed her a copy of a description of the metal detector I wanted. Of course, I had spent several hours on the Internet researching to find the right one and

printed a page out of a catalog to insure I would get it. When I handed it to Ellen she looked at me with a funny expression and asked if I was feeling okay. I assured her I was and wondered what the problem was. She said she had this vision of me wearing sandals with black socks and plaid shorts strolling through a park with a safari hat on in search of bottle caps. She felt I wasn't old enough yet to have a metal detector. I told her I didn't even own a pair of plaid shorts and I wanted to take the detector up north to explore the old campsites I spent years hunting around. Reluctantly, she gave in and presented me with my own detector all wrapped up in its own box. It also came with a copy of a treasure hunting magazine and I delighted in relating stories to her about finding rings and coins and such to the point I thought she would run screaming out of the room.

The day finally came when I was able to take my present up north to our cottage. I had read the instructions a dozen times and couldn't wait to take the digging tools that had come with it and go to work finding some

treasure. I hadn't been searching a few seconds when the earphones erupted. I carefully dug around and lo and behold there it was – an old fashion pull tab. Undaunted, I continued my search. Thirty minutes later, I had found three more pull tabs, a piece of wire and a rotted soup can. By this time Ellen had come out on the deck to enjoy the day and see just how bad I was doing. Of course, I explained treasure wasn't going to be found on the first try. She just shook her head and began to read her book. It wasn't too much longer when I heard a totally different sound in the earphones. My heart raced as I dug a little and finally found something of value – a penny. I triumphantly held up my newly discovered treasure and said, "See, I knew this was worth it. If this is here there must be more." I decided to savor my loot and took a break to have a drink. I set the penny on the railing of the deck so the whole family could share in the spoils of the search. For some strange reason no one had the same feeling of victory that I had.

I have used the detector a few more times since last summer and other than a few more pull tabs I have found the grand total of three pennies; but, none were more important than the first one. What I failed to tell my family is I remembered shortly after finding it that I had thrown the penny there myself the previous fall when I found it in the bottom of my pants pocket. Oh well, a little detail not really important compared to the thrill of discovery. I know this coming summer will bring even more opportunities to explore and go in search of whatever could be buried out there. I have had an unusual desire, though, to get a pair of plaid shorts. And that's the situation as I survey it . . . *AS*