



Founded March 26, 1949

Celebrating our 75<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary in 2024!



5850 Commerce Blvd, Suite 100  
Rohnert Park, Ca. 94928

# Redwood Empire Coin Club

Volume 76, Issue 9, Meeting #874, September 13, 2023

Next Meeting: October 11, 2023

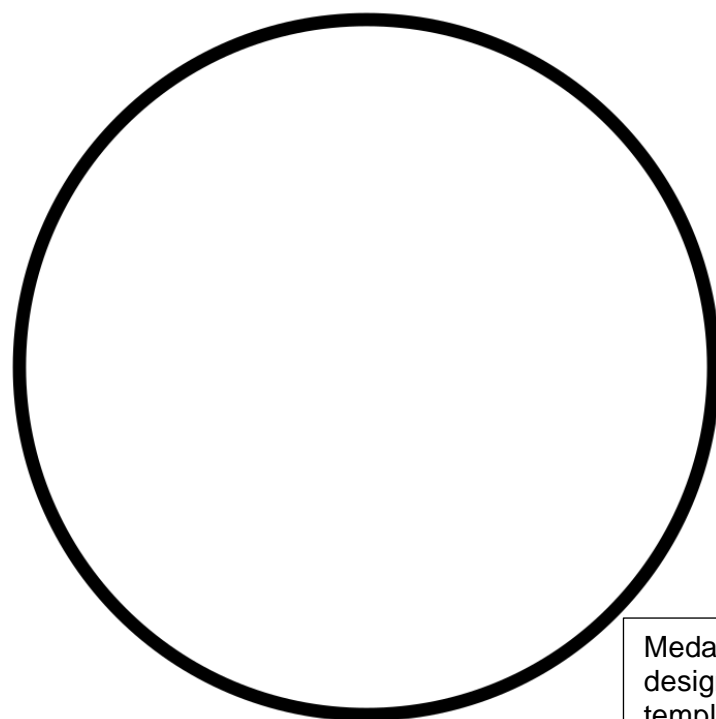
## BEAUTIES, AND ONE BEAST

While beauty may be in the eye of the beholder, it may be safe to say that most of the show and tell items were indeed beautiful- more on that later. First you need to get ready for the October meeting....

Next month we will hold our **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Lee Gong Memorial Club Benefit Auction**. It is hard to believe Lee has been gone five years already. He left such a legacy with the club- which is carried on in part with the educational talk for juniors at the beginning of each meeting. We have a benefit auction in his memory each year, with proceeds benefitting the club- for room rental, beverages, printing/postage, etc. Last year we set a record of over \$900 in proceeds, let's see if we can top that. If you can, please bring in a **numismatic** item to donate to the club for the auction. [There will **NOT** be a regular auction at the end of the meeting]. We **will** provide some kind of light dinner, to be determined. And there will be beverages, of course.

David S is our newest life member, LM-115. And he didn't pay a cent for it. He earned it the hard way by attaining the highest rank in Boy Scouts- becoming an Eagle Scout. For his effort, he was given a life membership to the club- along with a certificate- and he thanked the club while showing the certificate to everyone.

We are still looking for design entries for our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Club Medal. This is your chance to design a medal and get your initials on it- think of Victor David Brenner (VDB). The template here is good or make one of your own. You may send it to [newsletter@redwoodempirecoinclub.com](mailto:newsletter@redwoodempirecoinclub.com), or just bring it to the October meeting. Hopefully we can make a decision then to get working on the medal production. Your design does not need to be uber-detailed and perfect, unless you are able to do that. We are looking for a great original design to represent our club for this eventful anniversary.



Medal  
design  
template

### MOST BEAUTIFUL (AND UGLIEST) COINS

- Glenn M: His most beautiful coin is a 1934 silver Panama 1 Balboa. On the obverse is an image of a standing Lady Liberty holding fasces in one hand and an oak sprig in the other- resting on a Panamanian shield. The reverse features an image of Vasco Nunez de Balboa. Glen thinks the coin has a beautiful design.





- Phil A thought a lot about the subject of what makes a coin beautiful. Is it a bigger size? The metal (particularly gold)? The subject matter? Perhaps all of these. While he thinks the Buffalo nickel is a gorgeous coin..... this gold version is even better! The obverse portrait is a combination of three American Indians: one was Iron Tail, who fought Custer at Little Big Horn; the others were Two Moons and John Big Tree. The reverse features an American bison (*not* a buffalo) modeled after Black Diamond, a bison living in New York Central Park Zoo at the time. As far as foreign coins, the Mexico 20 peso gold coin featuring an Aztec calendar is also a gorgeous coin.

- Paul C brought in the one 'beast' to show us. He had purchased a large lot of Peace dollars considered 'junk' that was sold at about the silver melt price, and this one was in it. The worn obverse had a date punched on it and a name scratched on as well; the reverse was mutilated. It had every redeeming quality of an 'ugliest coin'.



- For Ember, the Morgan dollar is one of the most beautiful coin designs- with the way that the hair ringlets just seem to flow, how light brings out the beauty of the design. This particular coin has special significance as her father was born in 1921, and three of these coins were purchased by her brother for each of her sibs. Her dad passed away three months shy of 100, when the coins were going to be presented, but they still hold a special memory.

- Rich H talked about a 9/11 faux dollar bill with conspiracy theory mottoes, his contribution to ugliest (I think) item. He was also wearing a pendant made from a Walking Liberty half dollar that had the background cut out. It is still a beautiful design in that form.



- Mike M likes the designs of the Peace dollar, with his example shown here. He remembers when he was 3 or 4 years old, and he would go to the city to have lunch with relatives. Aunts and uncles gave him one of these. He was impressed waaaay back then and is still impressed with the design. He feels both sides have beautiful designs, and that all our coins should have Liberty on them.



- Gift of God O: there are a lot of coins that he loves for their artistic value, and there are coins that have meaning beyond just the visual appearance. It is hard for him to put his finger on *the* most beautiful coin, because it is hard to qualify that. He does agree that the Morgan dollar is one of the most beautiful of the dollar series.

- Merle likes Liberty Seated coins. This particular 1877 twenty cent piece in PR65CAM is special. Only 510 were made. The surfaces of the coin are pristine, and the photo does not do it justice- hopefully you saw it at the meeting, it was a beauty.



- Merle's other most beautiful coin is this 1907 St. Gaudens \$20 high relief, wire rim gold piece. Hopefully you were able to see this at the meeting as well because the photo does not do it justice. 1907 was the only year his coin was minted in high relief, with a mintage of 12,367. He bought it over 40 years ago, and it took a *lot* of money back then to buy one. The high relief detail is amazing. They are currently not easy to get and not easy to find in a higher grade. Merle still likes it and is glad he bought it long ago.



- Charlie C (that's me!) had two coins to show. Not being much of a collector of modern coins, I started with my most beautiful ancient coin. These tetradrachms from Athens in ancient Greece are common- there are tens of thousands of them around. They were minted from 454-404 BC and feature Athena on the obverse and an owl (the Athens city symbol) on the reverse. What is remarkable is the incredible high relief of these coins. Nothing made today comes near it, but those coins also could not be stacked in a pile. Even though these are commonly available, this particular example has full detail, including many of the feather's on Athena's helmet as well as the design going down her neck- often missing from other examples.



- My other example is my most beautiful Medieval/Renaissance coin. This is a sixpence from the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, dated 1561. Up until this time, coins were 'hammered'- individual planchets were placed between two dies and smacked with a hammer to make an impression. Those tended to be thinner and a bit cruder. This is one of the first coins to be 'milled' using a screw press which could exert more pressure and allow more elaborate designs. The detail of Elizabeth's crown, hair, clothing, and even the Tudor Rose behind her are far superior to what was possible with hammered coinage.



October meeting Zoom Information:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86313751847?pwd=L2RzZlUyczd6UmFXK0Q3bXRyZjJRdz09>

Meeting ID: 863 1375 1847

Passcode: 102023

One tap mobile

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+16694449171,,86313751847#,,,,\*102023# US

## Remembering Lee Gong

Lee Gong, Life Member #7, was the Vice President of the club for as long as I can remember until his untimely passing- now five years ago. We used to meet in a funky old building in Coddington center, one building over from where the post office currently is. Merle was president back then, hasn't changed much (that is a good thing). Helen Roberts was our treasurer and a penny pincher. I used to refer to her with the motto "In God we trust, and in Helen we save". Her husband Roy ran the auction from the back of the room. Helen and Roy were older and always reliable until too old to participate. It seemed like there would be a dozen two people at those meetings, maybe more. And there was Lee.

Lee was always promoting the education of our junior members. Who knows how many countless 'kids' learned from Lee. But us 'older' kids also learned from him, because he was among the top collectors of mint errors in the *country*, and loved to talk about how coins and currency were made. He loved to show off some of his collection. One particular special coin I remember was the weakest struck Morgan Dollar known- pictured in the VAM (Van Allen and Mallis) book with only the denticles visible!

Many of his examples were on display each year at our coin shows. He used to store all our supplies for the coin shows and would still have time to bring his own displays of errors to display at our shows as well.

Lee was one of the owners of G&G Markets. Safeway now occupies the location on College Avenue where his first store was. So he had the resources to help us any time there was a need for food. We had some fabulous barbeque dinners thanks to Lee and his staff. Did we need a cake for a celebration? Lee could arrange for a huge, decorated sheet cake. And a few of us were fortunate to be able to join Lee for a meal in San Francisco's Chinatown where he knew the owners of a restaurant and could have special dishes prepared just for us.

Lee was generous to a fault. He gave so much to the club, to the community, and especially to his family- which was so important to him. His son Devin is Life Member #8 and was often with his dad and us at meetings. But there were siblings, cousins, friends, and colleagues that were a big part of his life. He demanded respect, and in return was highly respected by us all.

I feel fortunate that Lee was a friend of mine and am grateful for the years I knew him. Many people like me still miss him. And we are glad to remember him with our benefit auction next month. The proceeds will help the club financially with our rising costs.

If you can, please help remember Lee and his generosity with your donation to next month's benefit auction. And don't forget your pocketbook- there should be a lot of nice items available!



## JUNIORS

Speaking of Juniors, I wish I had a photo of this month's talk by Ember. Five kids were sitting perfectly still listening to every word as she taught them. Thanks to both her and Rich W for carrying on the Junior Member education. There will be another Junior talk in October starting at 6:15. And adults are welcome to listen in!

## DRAWING WINNERS

**Membership:** John B, Bill Van V, Deanna J, Guilliano M, Gift of God O

**50:50** pot of \$60 was split with Bill R

**Raffle:** Gift of God O (twice), guest, Bill R (twice), Glenn M, Joel M (Guilliano)- twice

**September Attendance:** 43+

**New Members:** Karl Hoppe (#1014); Gift of God O (#960) rejoined after several years' absence; Love B (#1015), Gift of God's sister); Ogden S, #1016J; and Tiffany W (#1017), Ogden's mom! **WELCOME!**


**Guests:** Yes

**Auction:** 31 exciting items.

**Adjournment** was at 8:40 p.m. sharp!



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#### UPCOMING SHOWS AND EVENTS

**October 13-15, 2023. Contra Costa Coin and Collectibles Show.** Elk's Lodge, 1475 Creekside Drive, Walnut Creek

**October 21, 2023. Delta Coin Club's 57<sup>th</sup> Annual Coin Show.** Eagles Hall, 1492 Bourbon Street, Stockton

**November 10-11, 2023. South Bay/Sunnyvale Coin Show.** Domain Hotel, 1085 East El Camino Real, Sunnyvale

**November 18, 2023. CSNA and NCNA Joint Forum "Ancients Plus Much More".** Opens 8:30, starts 9:30, four guest speakers. Vallejo Naval and Historical Museum, 734 Marin (at Capital), Vallejo

**February 16-17, 2024. Redwood Empire Coin Club's 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Coin Show.**  
E. L. Finley Building, Sonoma County Fairgrounds, 1350 Bennett Valley Road, Santa Rosa

**March 3, 2024. Livermore Valley Coin Club Show.** Livermore Elks Lodge, 940 Larkspur Drive, Larkspur

The Redwood Empire Coin Club meets on the second Wednesday of each month. The Club's meeting location is the **Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa** (opposite the County Fairgrounds across from Highway 12), in the "**Dinner Room**" on the east side of the building, at 7:00 p.m. sharp.

Check out our newsletter at: **[Redwoodempirecoinclub.com](http://Redwoodempirecoinclub.com)**

Thanks for reading. Corrections? Additions? Questions? E-mail us at:

[newsletter@Redwoodempirecoinclub.com](mailto:newsletter@Redwoodempirecoinclub.com). See you **in person at the Vets Building "Dinner Room"**

October 11, 2023— Charlie