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The Trade Shows or What Happens in Vegas...

A Monday Morning Musing from Mickey, the Mercenary Geologist

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It's ten o'clock on a Monday night before the Hard Assets Investment Conference in Las Vegas. I should be *out and about, eh?* trying to make time with some sheila from Fort Wayne, Indiana who just might have stashed her wedding ring before she got off the plane Friday afternoon and has been drinking Sapphire martinis at the bar since two this afternoon. You know the saying: "*What happens in Vegas...*"

Instead I'm writing furiously to get this off to my webmaster for posting *manana en la manana* before I go to said bar and said sheila and before it gets too late. Whoa, wait a minute; I'm in Las Vegas; this town never sleeps!

No worries mate.

The dozen or so North American trade shows I attend every year are not about junior resource companies selling stock or increasing trading volume or promoting a company's attributes to potential retail investors. Trust me; one of these two day shows is not a cheap gig for a company. With travel, hotel, exhibitor fees, meals and entertainment, and a few professional salaries, the cost is probably \$15-20,000 per show. Any CEO who tries to justify an exorbitant investor relations budget with the above excuses about selling shares is just blowing smoke up his BODs' arses.

In my opinion these shows are vehicles for networking among those of us who make our livings in the junior resource exploration sector. It's as simple as this: We all get together about once a month and talk amongst ourselves.

Periodic trade shows are an efficient way to get hundreds of companies together in one very big room to exhibit their wares, update their stories, attract the various newsletter and website writers, explore potential deals and synergies with other promoters, investors and companies, listen to pundits' stock picks and macroeconomists' predictions of commodity and stock market trends, find out what is hot (besides the bought and paid for booth babes) and what is not, who's doing what and those doing naught, and have a few free drinks at a sponsored party every evening after the show is over.

This is followed by dinner and a few more drinks with some company big shots who are seeking media and analyst attention, a positive evaluation, and newsletter or website coverage. They pick up the tab with investor dollars.

Then it's back to the hotel for a round of hospitality suites and a few more free drinks from other companies picking up the tab. Get up early the next morning and do it all over again. Sometimes I get a question such as, "Did you have a hard night? My standard answer is: "The nights aren't hard but sometimes the mornings are... after *A Hard Day's Night*."

For an analyst like me, the trade shows are invaluable. I can take an in-depth look at 20-25 companies in two days of hard work and in one fell swoop. Peer comparisons become much easier when I can chat with a small gold producer then walk down the aisle a few meters and talk to another small gold producer.

It's all kind of like a big college fraternity rush party, except the male to female ratio is *way off* kilter. There just aren't that many sorority girls who want to show up and hang out with a bunch of middle age men no matter how rich they are.

Sheila is probably no sorority girl either but I gotta go.

"...*Stays in Vegas.*"

Ciao for now,

Mickey Fulp
Mercenary Geologist



The [**Mercenary Geologist Michael S. "Mickey" Fulp**](#) is a Certified Professional Geologist with a B.Sc. Earth Sciences with honor from the University of Tulsa, and M.Sc. Geology from the University of New Mexico. Mickey has over 29 years experience as an exploration geologist searching for economic deposits of base and precious metals, industrial minerals, coal, uranium, and water in North and South America and China.

Mickey has worked for junior explorers, major mining companies, private companies, and investors as a consulting economic geologist for the past 20 years, specializing in geological mapping and property evaluation. In addition to Mickey's professional credentials and experience, he is high-altitude proficient, and is bilingual in English and Spanish. From 2003 to 2006, he made four outcrop ore discoveries in Peru, Nevada, Chile, and British Columbia. These discoveries have led to two economic deposits for companies that are now raising debt and equity financing for mine development.

Mickey is respected throughout the mining and exploration community due to his ongoing work as an analyst for public and private companies, investment funds, newsletter and website writers, private investors, and investment brokers.

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