



Threshold



March 12, 2026

**Newsletter for the Historical Recovery Association of North Florida
Dedicated to the Hobbies of Metal Detecting and Treasure Hunting**

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 9, 2026 Time: 6:30 PM

Location: Holiday Hill Church, 730 Mandalay Road, Jacksonville, Florida 32216

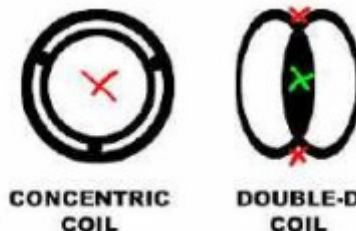
Pinpointing Targets - The million-mile stare

By Jim Fielding

One of the most difficult skills to master in metal detecting is accurately targeting signals under the coil. Some of this is due more to the lousy targeting abilities of less costly detectors, than the operator, Now, with small, handheld pulse detectors, many just assume digging a 12" wide, pizza-sized hole will suffice. Then waving the small electronic magic wand over the area, it will quickly and easily locate the target. We quickly remove and marvel at the gold coin we just pinpointed, then head for home. It's Miller time! No, sorry, just no.

Pinpointing a target with a VLF metal detector is dependent on two things, well really one thing, the search coil, but in two flavors; concentric or the wide-scan (also known as a double-D) coil. When you find a likely target you would like to dig, with a concentric coil, you swing the coil back and forth above the target until the signal is either the loudest or the highest tone, or both, the detected target location will usually be, visually, at the center of the concentric coil. Usually I look for an item at the target point under the coil...a leaf, a small stone, twig...and stare at it as you swing the coil away ("The Million-Mile Stare") and you prepare to dig. When I first started out

detecting, my technique after locating the target center in the concentric coil, I would do "themillion-mile-stare" at that location, swing the coil away, and push a coin-probe in the target center. It worked well as a visual-aid when digging, until I got the technique down pat.



concentric target center on the left is usually where the red x is indicated wide-scan (double-d) target center in green X is punching the "pinpoint control Wide-scan (double-d) target locations red X front and back using "wiggle" method

You will find more expensive detectors will come with a wide-scan or "double-d" coil that pinpoints somewhat differently, When I switched from a concentric coil to a wide-scan coil, I found it somewhat difficult to pinpoint very well with the double-d, and had a few choice words with the %\$#!&%\$!& thing while out hunting the beach! Metal detector

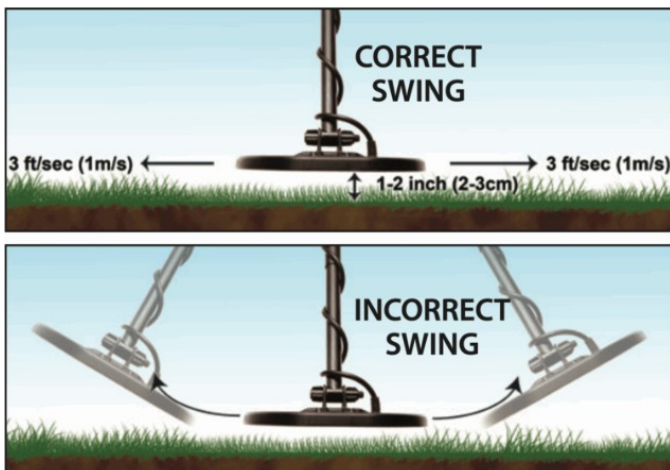
manufacturers, thanks to computerization, have electronically "forced" the circuits to simulate a pinpointed target physically at the center of the double-d coil. And there is nothing wrong with this, as machines using the double-d coil get more technically advanced, pinpointing gets more accurate. BUT, and its a big BUT, understanding and using this coil to best advantage means using it as it was designed. I don't want to launch into another explanation on coils and how they work, just how they pin-point.

The solid strip down the center of the coil is called "the hot-shoe" on a double-d. When you are pinpointing a target, you don't have to use (although you can) the "pinpoint" button, but use a technique called the "wiggle" method. Upon gaining a target, in any mode you choose, you narrowly wiggle the coil back and forth while moving forward slowly, maintaining the target signal. When the target signal suddenly drops off, the target is directly behind the back edge of the coil. And this ability is what make water hunting possible with this type coil. Hunting in chest deep muddy water? Can't see the coil? Use this technique, and once target is pinpointed, put your toe touching the back of the coil, swing the coil away, then move your toe back a few inches, put the long-handled beach scoop at a 45 degree angle just in front of your toe and dig, Chances are good you will dig the target on the first try, and you never even saw the bottom, you did it all by practice and feel. Don't try this with a concentric coil, though.

Another method in detector pinpointing techniques, using either type coil, is called "de-tuning," which increases the physical accuracy of the coil. As you swing over the target, as soon as you swing slightly away from the target center, punch the pinpoint button off and then punch it back on, and keep swinging, narrowing your sweep each time you de-tune. It takes some practice, but you will be making surgical recoveries of targets as your skills improve.

Still another technique we used back in the day, before electronic hand-held pinpointing devices were available, and still useful today if you cannot yet afford a pin-pointer, we called poor man's pinpointing. The fact was we were not poor, we were just underequipped. You managed to isolate the target using the detector's pinpointing feature, but the target is small, and hard to see or feel in dirt of the hole you dug, especially if you were wearing gloves. Frustrating though it is, the fact that a search coil, no matter what the type, will detect on both sides of the coil saves the day! Grab a handful of dirt from the dig and wave it over the top of your search coil until one handful sounds off, then poke carefully through the dirt in your palm until the target is located. It's Miller Time!

The really important aspect of all this, to you, and the hobby in general, is to master pinpointing, so you can excavate detected targets with surgical precision, and leave the 12" wide digs to the prairie dogs, keeping our hobby safe for coming generations.



March finds of the month table.

Coins



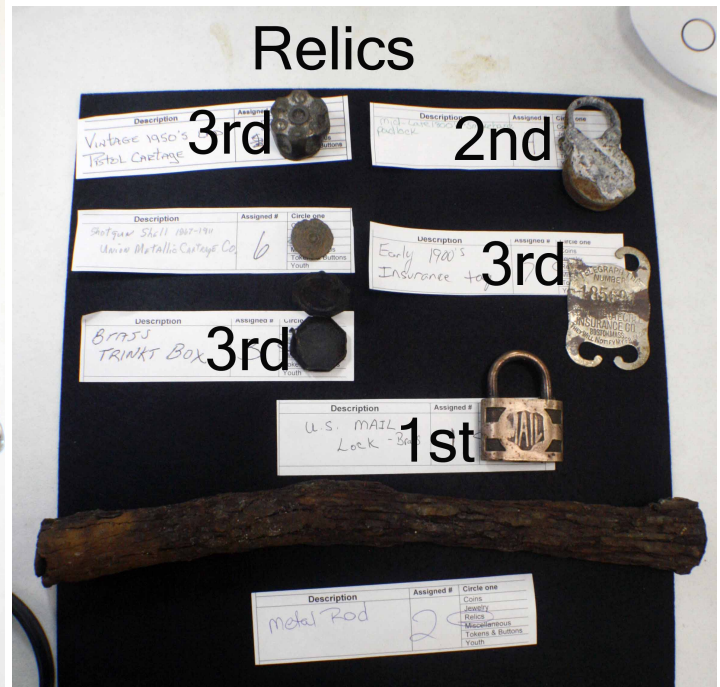
Jewelry



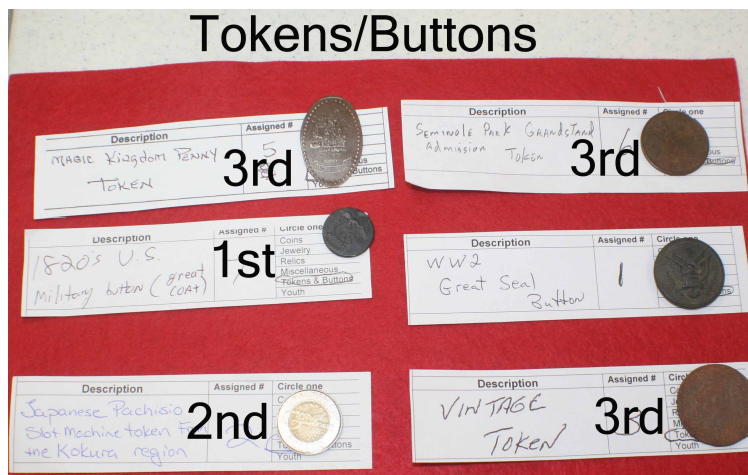
Misc



Relics



Tokens/Buttons



March Finds Competition

March	Coins		Jewelry		Relics		Misc		Tokens/Buttons	
1st	Filippi, Jim	5	Filippi, Jim	5	Terwilliger, Ray	5	Terwilliger, Ray	5	Filippi, Jim	5
2nd	Combs, Pete	4	Mule, Philip	4	Bonella, Karianne	4	Herzog, Jamie	4	Mule, Philip	4
3rd	Mule, Philip	4	Simmons, Dale	4	Combs, Pete	3	Combs, Pete	3	Combs, Pete	3
4th	Simmons, Dale	4	Terwilliger, Ray	4	Filippi, Jim	3	Filippi, Jim	3	Sayre, Terry	3
5th	Terwilliger, Ray	4	Combs, Pete	3	Simmons, Dale	3	Simmons, Dale	3	Simmons, Dale	3

2026 Finds Competition Standings

Category and Overall Best Hunter

Coins		Jewelry		Relics		Misc	
Filippi, Jim	14	Simmons, Dale	13	Filippi, Jim	13	Filippi, Jim	11
Combs, Pete	10	Terwilliger, Ray	13	Terwilliger, Ray	12	Simmons, Dale	11
Terwilliger, Ray	9	Sayre, Terry	9	Combs, Pete	11	Terwilliger, Ray	11
Mule, Philip	8	Filippi, Jim	6	Simmons, Dale	8	Herzog, Jamie	9
Bonella, Karianne	7	Mule, Philip	6	Bonella, Karianne	7	Combs, Pete	7
Tokens				Overall			
Filippi, Jim	14			Filippi, Jim	58		
Simmons, Dale	12			Simmons, Dale	50		
Mule, Philip	8			Terwilliger, Ray	48		
Sayre, Terry	6			Combs, Pete	38		
Combs, Pete	5			Sayre, Terry	29		
				Mule, Philip	28		
				Bonella, Karianne	19		
				Herzog, Jamie	13		
				Lewis, Tyler	7		
				Kapustka, Steve	1		

HRANF Secretary Report for _____ March 12th 2026 _____

Meeting was held on the above date at Holiday Hills Baptist Church 730 Mandalay Rd, Jacksonville, Florida. Meeting was called to order at 6:30 by President Dale who led the Pledge of Allegiance. President Dale distributed an Agenda. There were 18 guests.

Monthly Reports:

- (1) Vice President _____ – _____ Present _____ not present. Report:
- (2) **Web Master/Secretary John Silling – Present;**
- (3) **Treasurer Ray. Report:**
- (4) **Newsletter Editor Terry – present. Report:**

Next, general business:

- (1) Birthdays and anniversaries recognized **None**
 - (2) Returns – (name of member and item) **None**
 - (3) Name Badge Drawing – **Did not do**
 - (4) For Sale – (name of member and item) **None**
 - (5) Permissions – **None**
 - (6) Questions about detectors – **New member Mark Schroeder had questions regarding finding natural Copper nuggets in Michigan.**
 - (7) Scavenger Hunt-ongoing – Show _____ your finds either in person or phone picture.
 - (8) Monthly contest – (item, member name and amount) Tokens - ? - ?
 - (9) This month's contest is **Ear Rings** _____
 - (10) Winner of the 50/50 drawing Jim amount 43.00(?) _____
 - (11) Social time and finds table.
- Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 _____.