

# NEWMONT NOTES

Community news provided by Newmont Mining Corporation

## CHEATING WHITE DEATH



As we experience these unusually warm temperatures across Northern Nevada we can't help but think that the end of winter is near, well what little winter we have experienced this year. We want to remind you of a few things to keep in mind as you head out to break the cabin fever. With the warm temps, rain and little snow we have had recently it has made conditions in the higher elevations unstable at best. If you are planning to head to the hills for some winter style recreation please be mindful and safe, you never know when "white death" is going to come knocking. Next are two different accounts of cheating the same avalanche in Lamoille Canyon from Newmont employees, Scott Faiman and Josh Linder.

According to Ruby Mountains-Jarvis-Mountain City Ranger Districts Recreation and Wilderness Program Manager, Nancy Taylor, "Our Great Basin snowpack is very unique and is different from the nearest forecasting centers in Salt Lake and Sun Valley, but it is a good idea for people to check the forecasts in Utah and Idaho to at least get a starting point of what the conditions are as reported by the experts at the forecasting centers." Taylor suggests it is also helpful for local folks to talk amongst themselves and communicate what they are seeing up in the mountains and recommends enthusiast enroll in an avalanche class to get educated in safe travel in avalanche terrain. One of the resources she recommended is <http://www.avalanche.net.nz/education/Online-Avalanche-Course/Route-Finding-Exercises.asp>, which provides an exercise regarding safe travel in avalanche terrain. "The right equipment, and what to look out for when they are in the mountains is key. At the very least, folks should travel with a partner, cross or high mark on avalanche prone slopes one at a time with their partner watching from a safe place and always at a minimum carry a beacon, shovel, and probe pole in your pack", stated Taylor. If you are planning an outing you can also check the NRCS snotel sites <http://www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/snotel/Nevada/nevada.html> for updated information regarding how much new snow has fallen and of course check the weather before your trip.

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### Scott Faiman's account:

The day began as another great snowmobile ride in the Rubies - three feet of fresh snow and "shredding the gnarly pow," as the young guns say. It was a day of extreme avalanche danger, as many are at this time of year, but experienced sledders know to ride near the trees and shy away from the avalanche-prone slopes. After I'd had my share of fun for the day, I began my descent down the trail to the end of the road in Lamoille Canyon. I had stopped at my usual spot in order to put my scratches down in preparation for my run down the icy road to the trailer, when I heard another group of sledders approaching from behind. Two in the group decided that one more, good mountain pull would be a great way to end their day. The slope they pulled, nicknamed "Water Fall

### Josh Linder's account:

white, snowy cloud. While waiting for the air to settle, I pulled out my avy beacon and switched to receive mode, expecting to use it for finding buried riders. Upslope, it appeared as though Armageddon had struck. Trees were uprooted and snow was piled up to 10 feet high near the toe of the slide. I felt deep in my heart that of the five young men above me, someone more than likely had paid the ultimate price. A frantic search revealed one young man who had been bucked off his sled but was not covered. Another rider was buried under a couple of feet of snow, with arms and legs exposed. The two sledders who were on the mountain when the slide began miraculously rode it out and were not buried. However, the searchers were quickly becoming concerned that one individual was not accounted

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## Did You Know?

The Mainline of Newmont's Mining Fleet Heavy Duty Equipment for a Heavy Duty Job



The day to day operations at Newmont's mines across the state rely on a large fleet of earth moving equipment. Each hour, thousands of tons of ore are moved from the dig face to various places on the mine site, such as the mill, roaster or leach pad. There are numerous CAT 793 haul trucks currently in operation at each surface mine in Nevada, although they are all 793's each is a different series. A single 793 haul truck weighs over 423 tons, and can haul approximately 240 tons of ore. These haul trucks sport a massive 2,415 horsepower, and can reach speeds of 33 miles per hour. The fuel tank holds over 1,100 gallons of diesel, and it is more than 18 feet from the ground to the cab of the driver and extends to around 42 feet long. As you can tell, the 793 is an impressive vehicle that is the mainstay of Newmont's mining fleet. Its reliability and dependability mean that our operations continue 24 hours

a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. It is the trusty workhorse that accomplishes our goal of mining safely and effectively. However impressive the haul trucks may be, they can't do anything unless they have something to haul, and that's where the loading fleet comes in. The most impressive of this fleet is the Hitachi EX5500 hydraulic shovel. This piece of mining equipment weighs over 1.1 million pounds, and has a ground to cab height of over 25 feet. The bucket scoop capacity is 40 cubic yards and the engine puts down a whopping 2,600 horsepower. It only takes a few full scoops for this massive shovel to fill the dump bed of a CAT 793. These shovels are the titans of the mining progress at the pit.

As you can imagine, with the numerous haul trucks in operation at anytime, and several shovels operating at different locations in the pits, millions of tons of ore are moved around the mine site every day. Each haul truck is loaded with a certain grade of ore, which means that every time they drive out of the pit, they may be going to a different location on site. If it is high grade ore, then it will go to the mill or roaster. If it is low grade ore, it will go to the leach pad. High grade ore at the mills can produce an ounce of gold anywhere from four to nine tons of ore, whereas the leach pad, where the low grade ore is, may take up to 50 tons of ore to produce an ounce of gold.

Chute," really is a prime adrenaline rush for true adrenaline junkies like me. Upon seeing the two sleds on the slope, I fired up my sled in anticipation of what I thought might happen, considering that I was near the potential path of a big avalanche. Behind me were three others prepping for the trip down the road, and all were below the highmarkers (sledders who had ridden high up the slope). What happened next was one of those life-changing experiences that makes you appreciate being alive and well to the fullest. As the highmarkers began their decent, "White Death" decided it would give those young men a run. The mountain craked and began to move, going from 0 to 50 MPH in an instant. Watching an "avy" come alive really is an amazing experience. The quiet and peaceful slope suddenly explodes with an anger and fury worthy of the name "White Death."

With my attention quickly focused on the rider closest to my position, I began waving and yelling in an effort to get him to look around. Fortunately, he saw the slide and hit the throttle, attempting to outrun the advancing tsunami of snow. The valuable seconds I gave up trying to get others attention nearly cost me my life, though, as I began to accelerate my own sled but was caught in a pocket in the slide, with the snow boiling ahead of me on each side, and more roaring after me from behind. I had only one second and one choice left before it may very well have claimed my life. I pointed my sled downhill towards the creek, hoping the crossing at roughly 70 MPH wouldn't do me in. I took the hit and ran upslope to a safe zone on the off side. The roan subsided, the wind began to blow, and the entire valley became consumed in a

for and was nowhere to be seen. But a short while later, someone spotted a boot sticking out of the snow off in the distance. The rider had already been buried for quite some time - far too long by avalanche rescue standards. Upon excavation, he was found still sitting on his machine but nearly upside down and with his head buried 3 - 4 ft. under the snow. When the snow was brushed from his face, we expected to see a blue, lifeless body. Instead, we were greeted by a thoroughly shook-up, but smiling, young man, who was wondering why it took us so long to find him. I am going to call this experience "The Miracle of February 9th," because if I were to receive it, I have a gut feeling that the outcome would be different. The avalanche was massive, with approximately 1,500 vertical feet of the mountain coming down in a 3-ft.-thick slab over a horizontal distance of 3,000 ft. and moving 500,000 cubic yards of snow to the valley floor in seconds.

The moral of the story: Don't ever let your guard down! Had I not been attentive to the potential hazards and the actions of others, I would not be around to live and ride another day. I've had a few life-changing experiences in my life that temporarily changed my outlook of the world. Everything was a little more wonderful this morning. Getting up so early wasn't all that bad; I hugged the pets a little longer than usual; and that cup of coffee was the best I've ever made. I'm going to make an effort not to let the change be temporary, but instead to let it be a new beginning. There's no telling what might happen the next time "White Death" knocks on the door.

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