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Instant replay: Dowser fails TBS "\$1,000 Challenge" retest

by Gary P. Posner

James D. Moore, Jr., returned to Tampa on December 18, his Y-shaped plastic "Crazy Rod" in tow, to have his claimed dowsing ability retested by Tampa Bay Skeptics. The test was conducted in the auditorium of the Tampa/Hillsborough Library on Ashley Drive, in front of about 20 TBS members and two Moore associates.

This time, unlike in September (see [last TBS Report](#)), Moore preferred not to have us set up the boxes in advance, but to bring his apparatus with him and have the boxes prepared immediately prior to the retest.

After the 23 lead boxes were spread across the auditorium floor, Moore himself placed a layer of sand in each one, and then (with his two associates) left the room while TBS completed the preparation of the boxes. TBS brought 10 one-ounce gold coins and 13 aluminum wafers as the objects to be buried. As was the case last time as well, Moore was not made aware of the exact numbers, only that there was "a good mix." A random drawing of slips of paper (containing a "G" or an "A") determined which boxes received gold vs. aluminum.

At Moore's request, a TBS member then placed an aluminum wafer in each box that was to receive one, and then another TBS member poured a layer of sand on top of all the wafers. After this was done, a third TBS member placed a gold coin in the remaining boxes, and the "sand" person then covered those as well. A videotape record was made so as to insure Mr. Moore that his specified protocol for filling the boxes was carried out precisely as instructed. Moore and his associates were then permitted to return to the room.

Moore took much more time "divining" each box than he had in September, and re-divined all of them one or two more times than he had before. During his final pass he changed three selections from "aluminum" to "gold." But when he was finally done, he expressed confidence that, except for

one of the boxes, he was nearly "100 percent" certain that he had gotten them all correct. At that point, TBS agreed to award Moore \$500 if he got all but that one box correct.

The time had come to divulge the results. Just as last time, Moore was asked to "fish out" the object buried in each box. And just as in September, the first box, in which Moore's "Y" rod had detected the presence of gold, turned out to contain an aluminum wafer -- Moore had, once again, los