

YOUR *BEST KEPT* SECRET...

By AGWire™
April 20, 2019



You just scored a prize ingot and you can't wait to post it on Instagram as well as your favorite blog sites, boasting the details of your recent score to your hundreds of blog buddies! You attach photos, and also include much of your other stash in the background. Why not! We all love to see the depth of each other's collections and everyone loves to comment and sarcastically banter each other in the dialogue chains. And, of course, there's the well-deserved bragging rights and the envy in this ultra-competitive hobby, as we proudly salivate the opportunity to be the first to say "It's MINE!" This is all fine and good, that is, if you are ok with sharing this highly personal and truly vulnerable information with others who you probably don't really know very well at all. Question – How many of your blog buddies have you actually met in person? Have you looked them in the eyes and shook their hand? Have you ever considered that some of those 'buddies' may have very dark and diabolical intentions? As we've said before, What you Own, Who you Inform, and Where you Store your goods SHOULD be **YOUR BEST KEPT SECRET**. Are you concerned at all about the information you have permanently put out there for *all* to see? Have you leaked your information to your friends and family, maybe an occasional postal worker, UPS delivery person, or office mate? We know Dads and Moms who have shared their passion for bullion with their kids in effort to incite their interest in the hobby. Can your kids keep your secret? Will they do so 100%? Or might they carelessly tell their friends at school? Who knows who knows, really, as you've told so many people in sheer excitement of your hobby? And then they talk to others in casual conversation, maybe over a beer or three. "Yeah, my neighbor collects those silver bars. Says he has a lot of them. Some gold too. It's their retirement." Do you really want that dialogue floating around? Are you concerned with the possibility of losing your collection to theft, or heaven forbid, the ultimate danger of risking your life and your immediate family to someone who is deceitfully after your collection? You should be concerned.

We can't tell you how many alarming stories we've learned over the years -- coin dealers packing up their show inventory, walking out to the parking lot and securely storing their goods in the trunk of their car, safe and out of sight, only to be followed by a predator who either breaks into their car while they stop at the supermarket for a gallon of milk on the way home, or the local tavern for a quick pop, or someone car-jacks them at gunpoint at a stop sign, or worse, follows them home, stealing not only their entire coin show contents but everything else of value they could get their hands on, while putting their family's lives at risk at the same time. This happens **OFTEN**, and if you think it won't happen to you, then you better seriously consider how you posture yourself in this hobby, and whom you have informed over the many years you have been collecting.

Remember all those movies we used to watch where someone came upon an old treasure map, and it took an adventure team literally months to find the buried treasure, only to realize it was a decoy treasure with no value at all? THAT's how secure and secretive our collections *should* be, but people have become so careless, innocently perhaps, but ignorantly for sure. When you hear your neighbor say, "You should talk to Larry next door. He's got a huge coin collection." We hate to say that something bad will eventually happen.

We have written about [BULLION STORAGE](#), and we highly encourage you to refresh yourself with that informative article. You might also make a habit of going to your LCS or local bullion store and selling some of your less-favorite goods (hopefully when the market is up a bit), and dropping the hint in conversation that you're getting out of the market and just can't stomach it any longer, or whatever excuse fits you best. After all, they've seen you come in for years to buy, never selling anything, so they undoubtedly know the type of goods you own, and the approximate size and value of your collection. And, you know they talk to people all day... "Yeah, there's this guy Charles who comes in every week and only buys Engelhard poured bars..." Word travels fast in small towns no doubt, but word also travels fast in small markets like ours. Any way that you can 'untell' the stories you've told, or reverse the actions you've made from time to time, might suit you well, with the intent to dis-inform even the people you trust most, as they may from time to time innocently talk to the wrong people. Doesn't this make sense? Think about dropping a comment on Instagram that you need to substantially liquidate your collection to pay some heavy medical expenses (don't all do it at once!), or for a kitchen remodel, and that you've already sold over half of your inventory. Think it through, and follow through. In our core group we have shared a few images and bullion counts with each other, and occasionally online over the years, but that was before the horrific boating accident in a Southern alligator infested swamp where we lost *everything* but our shorts. Now we just make it a point to provide accurate information for the site.

And those photos you post online? Do you make sure that you turn **off** "Location Services" on your phone camera before you take the photos and post them to the world? Otherwise you're effectively giving everyone GPS coordinates to your home and/or exact location of your stash. How convenient would THAT be for the wrong person to get their hands on? Are you prepared for when a stranger shows up at your door to steal your goods? Use caution when posting bullion advertisements on sites like Craigslist, where there are numerous villains scouring every entry looking for the highest stake prey. Never post your location or address in your advertisement. State in your description that you will only respond to inquiries that include their full name and phone number for you to even consider responding to their inquiry, and IF someone properly replies, Google their name to make sure they exist and are a known citizen, and *then* call them. Don't text or email. HEAR their voice, and listen to them so you can personally qualify them. And then arrange a meeting in the lobby of your local police station to take care of your transaction. Our local department actually encourages that!

Please, be cautious and proactive in EVERY aspect of how you address your collection, your contacts, your responses, and your conversations, as it is not only for your benefit, but also for the safety of our hobby itself. Many of us have CCW permits and we carry concealed firearms with us at all times, and we're ready for whatever might come into play. While our hope is that we never have to face a situation of defense of our lives, our families and our collections, we consciously and routinely rehearse and prepare for that very moment. You must seriously consider doing this as well. Raise your guard up, and then you must NEVER let it down. Let's work together to keep our hobby fun and safe!

Defensively,

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