What You Can Do About Mining

Pick one (or more) of the exercises below.

1) Rechargeable Batteries

Purchase new alkaline batteries, record the price, place them in an electronic device (such as an Ipod, Walkman, flashlight, clock, etc.), leave the device on and record how long the batteries last.

Then purchase rechargeable batteries and a charger (record the price), charge the batteries, place them in the same electronic device, leave it on and record how long the batteries last.

- Compare how long each lasted and the cost of the two and estimate what the difference would be in terms of the cost and number of batteries used over a year.
- How long would it take to payback the cost of the charger by itself?

Describe your experience and what was/would be the biggest challenge and the best part.

2) Metal Recycling

Recycle all of your recyclable metal cans and beverage containers for a week.

Then go to the food court of a typical mall and ask a maintenance person for permission to look at several trash containers. Ask the maintenance person how many trash containers are removed daily. Examine the containers and count how many aluminum cans are inside.

Estimate the number of cans thrown away daily and their value if there were a $.05 deposit/can.

Describe your experience and what was/would be the biggest challenge and the best part.
3) Consumer Electronics Recycling

Ask a computer or cell phone retailer if they will take back the product they sell at the end of its useful life and then recycle it.

- If they do, ask who handles their recycling and contact that organization to ask if they receive recycled products from the retailer, and what they then do with the product.
- If they don’t, write them a letter saying you won’t purchase similar products from them in the future until they do, and that they should let you know when that will happen.

Contact your city or county recycling head and ask them for estimates on how much consumer electronics (numbers and pounds) is and isn’t recycled and what the value of that is in dollars.

Describe your experience and what was/would be the biggest challenge and the best part.