**Introducing…**

Rebranded, ***Lithium-ion Bull (Forest Hills)***

I had no great idea when I wrote my first Lithium Bull in January what I was aiming to achieve with it. Nine months since, I still don't, really. I hope you find it informative and entertaining. The writing process is actually quite a good discipline. Sharpens and focuses the mind in a world of transformative disruption well beyond lithium and battery raw materials. Auto/Transportation industries; Utility/Fossil Fuel industries. Geopolitics also at play: China vs. non-China.

Youtube movie, comedy and music references have enabled therapeutic strolls down memory lane of formative MTV-generation years in a Long Island suburb experiencing 1980's Reagan Boom.

1987: Greed is Good. 2017: **Green is Good.**

Resist as I might, I have given in to expanding and allocating my mind a bit beyond lithium, given the upwards trajectory of so many more metals this past quarter, and market appreciation that battery thematic is driving much of it.

**Clean TeQ**: Cobalt Sulphate and Nickel Sulphate from **NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA.**

**Glencore** and **Ivanhoe Mines:** The shrewdest mining gurus on the planet - Ivan Glasenberg and Robert Friedland -- playing a bit of catch up, but still early adopters, embracing their megaphones to espouse the EV-thematic. Both are probably excellent plays on that old fogie orange metal with a Phd.

Manganese and Vanadium - the "new cobalt?" or "new lithium?" Watching **South 32** for the former.

I remain very much a Lithium Bull and, outside the still tiny group of investors who watch energy metals closely, I see a large universe of institutional investors and self-directed "Joe Battery-pack" investors who are coming to understand very simply that, however misnamed by material content, the lithium-ion battery is good for the super high margin, upstream lithium stock narrative.

A lot of distractions in lithium land have continued to conspire to keep valuations lower for a lot longer than one might expect. Which has provided sufficient time to get smart and provided ample entry points. This theme is a marathon, not a race.

Outside the Big 5 Producers, which are priced to perfection, but will likely still rise with strong tailwinds in an aggressive growth stock market mindset, I see a virtually one-way bet with a portfolio of quality Emerging Producers and select advanced exploration and development stories. There is deep value and substantial re-rating potential as those with good projects and credible management navigate strategic partnerships and financial investor funding along the path to becoming lithium cash flow machines. Active managers who allocate time and investment dollars in this thematic should outperform and achieve substantial alpha. Self-directed speculators can make individual fortunes, if they choose wisely. I anticipate the summer rallies we've witnessed with select names down the market cap chain are just the beginning.

Lastly, I don't have much of a view on iron ore, but **FMG's** results were stunning last month:

http://fmgl.com.au/media/3059/fy2017-corporate-presentation.pdf

Simply spectacular cash flow generation. But most impressive is how what I recall to have been a relatively higher cost operation than BHP and Rio, has brought opex down below theirs from the low $40's to $11/12/ton! 6% Dividend Yield. Greater than 50% EBITDA margins.

Yes, in a number of ways, lithium will be like iron ore in spawning a number of highly profitable and successful companies like AUD 18B Fortescue. Consolidation is likely - perhaps one or more of the new Western Australian lithium producers will seek to be the NEW FORCE IN LITHIUM.

I have created the new logo atop this page (hope you like it) for a re-branded **Lithium-ion Bull** because I am bullish the ubiquitous, safe, ever cheaper, ever long lasting **Lithium-ion battery** itself. I am unworried that it will be displaced over the next 7-10 years. "Forest Hills" is my home, and a great place all of you should visit for summer rock concerts and more!

For reinforcement on LIB, Elon Musk's comments on TSLA's most recent quarterly call:

> ***Rod Avraham Lache Deutsche Bank AG, Research Division***: *...secondly, there've been a fair number of battery announcements, solid-state battery technology, Toyota and a few others. Can you -- what's your general assessment. Are we getting close to some kind of break-throughs here or just what's your thoughts?*
>
> ***Elon R. Musk Co-Founder, Chairman, Chief Executive Officer and Product Architect:*** *Oh, God. Okay, here's my opinion of the battery break-through of the week -- battery break-through du jour. When somebody has like some great claim that they've got this awesome battery, you know what? Send us a sample. Or if you don't trust us, send it to an independent lab where the parameters can be verified. Otherwise, STF. Yes. So everything works on PowerPoint. Like -- I'll give you a PowerPoint presentation about teleportation to the Andromeda Galaxy. That doesn't mean it works. So Tesla is the biggest buyer of lithium-ion batteries on earth. You know who people come to first when they've got a lithium-ion battery? Us. Because we're the biggest customers. I would love it if we could have some break-through. It'd be awesome. I think there are some interesting things on the horizon, but then the time it takes from something working in the lab to working at moderate production levels to working at high production levels to optimizing the cost is several years. So it's not like it suddenly pops out of nowhere. J.B., do you want to add to that?*
>
> ***Jeffrey B. Straubel Chief Technology Officer:*** *I totally agree with the sort of cautious skepticism on all these announcements. And just more specifically on the solid-state batteries, Rod. I mean, we do -- we've talked to a number of different groups that are researching this. We actually have tested a number of those different prototype -- very early prototype, single cells. But it's -- we don't yet see anything that changes our strategy, and we don't see anything there that's...*
>
> ***Elon R. Musk:*** *However, we'd love it if it did. Pretty please. Can someone please come up with a battery break-through. We'd love it.*

***Jeffrey B. Straubel:*** *We would be the first ones  to implement it.*

***Elon R. Musk:*** *Yes. Totally. I mean, there are some break-throughs that I think are achievable. I -- they're confidential, so I can't talk about them on this call. But there's one particular avenue that I am confident could be made to work that would be not -- from a -- the most significant one -- break-through in a while. But again, you've got to make it work in the lab. It doesn't yet work in the lab. It's promising in the lab. You go from the lab to small production, then you go to large production, then you get to cost optimization. These are several years, okay. I wish it was shorter, but that's the way goes. So don't worry about that.*

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End August, like End of Year holidays, is a great time to reflect on the year to date and forward plan.

Like a **Benchmark Minerals World Tour** listing – see you at October Cathodes! - my initial reflections are seen through the prism of Live Entertainment – and a Mines & Money Speaking Engagement in Toronto Oct 2:

| **Lithium-ion Bull** | **Benchmark Minerals** |
|---|---|
| ✓ Jan 20 - **21 Pilots**, Barclays Arena | ✓ April 21 – Vancouver |
| ✓ Feb 6 - **Budapest Festival Orchestra**, Lincoln Center | ✓ April 24 – Toronto |
| ✓ May 18 - **Ground Hog Day**, Broadway, NY | ✓ April 26 – Washington, DC |
| ✓ May 26 – **Oslo**, Lincoln Center | ✓ April 28 – New York |
| ✓ June **– Chainsmokers**, Forest Hills Stadium | ✓ June 5 – London |
| ✓ June 27 – **1984,** Broadway, NY | ✓ June 7 – Stuttgart |
| ✓ June 28 - **U2 – 30-year The Joshua Tree,** Met Life Stadium | ✓ June 9 – Zurich |
| ✓ July 11 – **John Mellencamp,** Forest Hills Stadium | • August 31 – Beijing |
| ✓ July 19 **- Sir Rod Stewart/Cyndi Lauper**, Bethel Woods | • September 4 – Hong Kong |
| ✓ July 20 **– Chicago/Doobie Brothers**, Bethel Woods | • Sept 6 – Seoul |
| ✓ July 21 – **Woodstock Museum,** Bethel Woods | • Sept 8 – Tokyo |
| ✓ July 27 - **Tom Petty & Heartbreakers, 40-yrs,** F. Hills Stadium | • Sept 11 – Perth |
| ✓ Aug 17 – **Natasha, Pierre & the Great Comet**, Broadway, NY | • Sept 13 – Melbourne |
| ✓ Aug 26 – **Pink Floyd @ V&A Museum**, London | • Sept 15 – Sydney |
| • Sept 12 - **Roger Waters - US & Them**, Barclays Arena | |
| • **October 2 – Lithium Bull Speaks @ Mines & Money Toronto** | • **Oct 5th – Newport Beach - CATHODES** |

**Introducing Piedmont Lithium (PLL)**

Like many of you, I'm a bit ashamed to admit to have watched a few seasons of Sex and the City. Also like many of you, my favorite, among the four ladies, was Charlotte:

A proto-typical American Girl. Would fit easily into video commemorating Tom Petty's rock anthem:

**American Girl (Live in Forest Hills!): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ABDv4Jj3mw**

**Piedmont Lithium** (formerly WCP Resources), in the Charlotte Quadrangle – the historic Tin-Spodumene belt – has the potential to be America's answer to Australia's gorgeous superstar **Kidman**.

*"The Charlotte quadrangle contains* ***virtually all the reserves of pegmatitic lithium in the United States and a large part of the world's reserves.*** *The* ***proved and probable reserves of nearly 70 million short tons*** *of spodumene pegmatite, grading about 20 percent spodumene or* ***1.5% Li20,*** *probably* ***can be increased substantially by an extensive exploration program****." – US Geological Survey*

**NC vs. DRC?** A certain ninja on Twitter posted several weeks ago a USGS report from Keith Evans in 2008 when **AVZ Minerals** stock was about four times cheaper than it is today. Making the case for the potential for Zaire/DRC - Manono. Well how about North Carolina? USA, USA, USA!

| Pegmatites: | Tonnes Li |
|---|---|
| North Carolina Former operations | 230,000 |
| North Carolina Undeveloped | 2,600,000 * |
| Barraute, Quebec | 90,000 |
| Bernic Lake, Manitoba | 18,600 |
| Others, Canada | 147,000 |
| Bikita, Zimbabwe | 56,700 * |
| Manono, Zaire | 2,300,000 * |
| Greenbushes, Western Australia | 223,000 |
| Mount Marion, Western Australia | 19,800 |
| Mount Catlin, Western Australia | 20,000 |
| Koralpa, Austria | 100,000 |
| Larritta, Finland | 14,000 |
| Various, Russia | 1,000,000 |
| Brazil, Minas Gerais & Ceara | 85,000 |
| China | 750,000 |

* Tonnages in the 1976 report reduced by 25% for open pit and 50% for underground mining

PLL (Déjà vu PLS?!) is unique. It is the only company, other than Albemarle, drilling in the region that produced all the world's lithium for forty years through the late 80's/early 1990's. Plain vanilla spodumene pegmatites. Proven metallurgy.

The Charlotte business area – 90-minute flight from NYC - is filled with skilled ALB and FMC employees with relatively high paying jobs. Many sleep well knowing they and their $12B market cap employers are helping save and feed the planet. Charlotte is a beautiful place to live and work and raise a family. Low-cost power, inexpensive labor, mining and permit friendly, gorgeous year-round weather, though a bit tropical hot in the summer.

With two of the five largest lithium producers, Charlotte is ground zero for American lithium processing skills, facilities and other knowhow. Corporate decision-making in Charlotte affects the lithium market globally. Charlotte is the US headquarters in a multi-polar lithium oligopoly world.

Piedmont Lithium (PLL), founded by proven resource entrepreneurs within the world class corporate infrastructure of Ian Middlemas' Apollo Group out of Perth, has a new name, website, ticker and CEO.

Keith Phillips, a seasoned, 30-year mining banker, made first rounds through Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane last month. A flurry of news flow expected over the next few months - drill results, potential land acquisitions, maiden resource and listing on US markets.

**New PLL Presentation:**

http://ir.piedmontlithium.com/presentations

Forest Hills

## Key Investment Considerations

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Strategic Location | • Only independent spodumene project in the United States<br>• Located in business-friendly Gaston County, North Carolina |
| 2 | Historical Producing Region | • The world's primary source for lithium from 1950s – 1980s<br>• Home of Albemarle and FMC's lithium operations |
| 3 | Proven Metallurgy | • Long history of production and processing in the region<br>• Sony commercialized the lithium-ion battery using local ore |
| 4 | World Class Infrastructure | • Low capital and operating costs anticipated due to:<br>  ▪ Low cost power and labor<br>  ▪ Advanced transportation network |
| 5 | Abundant Lithium Potential | • 4+ kilometers of strike length identified in Phase 1 drilling<br>• Phase 2 drilling underway with assay results pending |
| 6 | Uniquely Positioned for US Capital Market | • US asset, US management and (soon) a US listing |
| 7 | Experienced Leadership | • Board and management focused on shareholder value |

PIEDMONT

## Important Milestones

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ✓ | 1st Qtr 2017 | Secured Core Land Position |
| ✓ | 2nd Qtr 2017 | Completion of Phase 1 Drilling Campaign |
| ✓ | 2nd Qtr 2017 | Commencement of Phase 2 Drilling Campaign |
| ✓ | 3rd Qtr 2017 | Appointment of CEO and Key Strategic Advisors |
| ✓ | 3rd Qtr 2017 | Appointment of Key Geology, Engineering and Permitting Consultants |
| ✓ | 3rd Qtr 2017 | Acquire Additional Land Options to Expand Footprint |
| ✓ | 3rd Qtr 2017 | Commence trading on the OTCQX in the United States |
| ✓ | 4th Qtr 2017 | Completion of Phase 2 Drilling Campaign |
| ✓ | 4th Qtr 2017 | Maiden JORC Resource Estimate |
| ✓ | 4th Qtr 2017 | Commencement of Preliminary Economic Assessment |
| ✓ | 1st Qtr 2018 | Achieve full North American share listing |

Looking forward to reporting on further PLL developments over the coming months.


Lithium Bulls & Piedmont Lithium and their Hungarian, American and Australian Girls

*Disclaimer*

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