

THE GONIL INK



Spring 2010

3rd Issue

10 Years! A Worldwide Celebration

By: BAT1800

This coming May is a major milestone for the Geocaching Community in that it is the 10 year anniversary for this wonderful pastime of ours. Just as a little history lesson, here are some excerpts from the Geocaching.com website about the history of Geocaching:

☪ On May 2, 2000, at approximately midnight, eastern standard time, the great blue switch controlling selective availability was pressed. Twenty-four satellites around the globe processed their new orders, and instantly the accuracy of GPS technology improved tenfold. Tens of thousands of GPS receivers around the world had an instant upgrade.

The announcement a from day before came as a welcome surprise to everyone who worked with GPS technology. The government had planned to remove selective availability - but had until 2006 to do so. Now, the White House said, anyone could "precisely pinpoint their location or the location of items (such as game pieces) left behind for later recovery." How right they were.

☪ On May 3, Dave Ulmer, a computer consultant, wanted to test the accuracy by hiding a navigational target in the woods. He called the idea the "Great American GPS Stash Hunt" and posted it in an Internet GPS users' group. The idea was simple: Hide a container out in the woods and note the coordinates with a GPS unit. The finder would then have to locate the container with only the use of his or her GPS receiver. The rules for the finder were simple: "Take some stuff, leave some stuff." On May 3rd he placed his own container, a black bucket, in the woods near Beaver Creek, Oregon, near Portland. Along with a logbook and pencil, he left various prize items including videos, books, software, and a slingshot. He shared the waypoint of his "stash" with the online community on sci.geo.satellite-nav: N 45° 17.460 W 122° 24.800.

☪ Within the first month, Mike Teague, the first person to find Ulmer's stash, began gathering the online posts of coordinates around the world and documenting them on his personal home page. The "GPS Stash Hunt" mailing list was created to discuss the emerging activity. Names were even tossed about to replace the name "stash" due to the negative connotations of that name. One such name was "geocaching."

☪ Geocaching, first coined by Matt Stum on the "GPS Stash Hunt" mailing list on May 30, 2000, was the joining of two familiar words. The prefix geo, for Earth, was used to describe the global nature of the activity, but also for its use in familiar topics in gps such as geography. Caching, from the word cache, has two different meanings, which makes it very appropriate for the activity. A French word invented in 1797, the original definition referred to a hiding place someone would use to temporarily store items. The word cache stirs up visions of pioneers, gold miners, and even pirates. Today the word is still even used in the news to describe hidden weapons locations.

☪ The combination of Earth, hiding, and technology made geocaching an excellent term for the activity. However the "GPS Stash Hunt" was the original and most widely used term until Mike Teague passed the torch to Jeremy Irish in September 2000. With Mike Teague's valuable input, the new site was completed and announced to the stash-hunting community on September 2, 2000. At the time the site was launched there were 75 known caches in the world.

And so it all began! Who knew some 10 years ago what a flurry of activity this would create? Who knew the extensive amount of new groups, outings, events and new friendships that would evolve from one man's idea of fun? Who knew that we all would ultimately share in a common interest that would soon create new and lifelong friendships which all began over a buried 5-gallon bucket filled with odds and ends? If someone would have told me 10 years ago that we would be spending our weekends on 10 mile hikes to find a box of trinkets in the woods, a film canister under a lamp skirt (I didn't even know these existed), driving hundreds of miles to get that "one" cache or flying half way across the country for that "milestone hunt" I would have told them they were absolutely crazy. When I look back at how this activity of ours has changed my life I am simply amazed. Not only has it brought us the countless friendships we have today but also has motivated us to do things we would not have otherwise done.

(continued on page 2)

10 Years! A Worldwide Celebration (continued from pg.1)

By: BAT1800

It has changed the way that we enjoy our free time and most of all has taken us to places that we would not have gone before. We have seen some of the most breathe taking sights that we would have not have otherwise sought out and we have an ever growing list of places yet to see.

As we approach this milestone, a concept was born out of the GC forums for a "10 Year Multi Event" which is basically a series of events occurring around the world within the same time frame with a common theme and naming convention. This further developed and Groundspeak has suggested the name of 10 Years! (Location, State), and the event dates of May 1, 2, and 3, 2010. This has even further developed into the creation of a special Geocoin honoring the 10 Years of Geocaching. A group from the Geocaching.com Forums had gotten together and created the base design. Those who are hosting events had the option to customize the coin with their own color schemes and place orders in time for the celebration. We are happy to report that the Land of NIL will have a limited quantity of our own version of the coin which will be available by pre-order or at the events on a first come - first served basis.

So, is this really a worldwide celebration you may ask? Well actually it is! At the time of this article there are currently 66 events planned for this 'Multi-Event' and a total of 34 different variations of the 10 Years of Geocaching Coin are being minted. Here is how the events list breaks out so far:

10 Years of Geocaching events by date:

May 1 – 31

May 2 – 17

May 3 – 10

10 Years of Geocaching events by country:

Canada – 11

Czech Republic – 1

France – 1

Germany – 7

Netherlands – 1

Norway – 2

Portugal – 1

South Africa – 2

Switzerland – 1

United Kingdom – 3

USA – 36

On the local front there appears to be seven anniversary events in the planning stages: 2 on May 1st, 2 on May 2nd , 1 on May 3rd, one on May 14 and 1 being held on both May 15 & 16th. Be sure to check in at Geocaching.com for the latest events in your area as well as all of the details.

We hope you all have an opportunity to join in on at least one of the anniversary festivities by attending an event or perhaps by either hiding or hunting a commemorative 10 Year Anniversary cache. Happy Anniversary everyone and we look forward to celebrating our next milestone(s) with you all

Here are some basic stats (a "nearing 10 year report card" if you will) as of February 24, 2010:

*There are **992,633** active caches and an estimated **3-4 million** geocachers' worldwide. In the last 30 days, there have been **2,059,160** new logs submitted*

A Letter From The New President.

By: Howard Berklund (Badlands)

Spring is in the air

I would like to personally extend my thanks to the many who serve the greater Geocaching Community here in Northeastern Illinois.

In 2005, a group of geocachers came together and formed an organization that they hoped would transcend the individual and become a resource available to all geocachers in Northeastern Illinois. The Mission Statement of the founders was simple and remains the Mission Statement of the "Geocachers of Northeastern Illinois" as an organization today.

The founders of this organization set out to create a community and a resource that is freely available to all, managed by its members and not dependent on any single individual. In February of this year, the dream of the founders was realized when the 2010 GONIL Board of Directors became the first board without the guidance of a founding member. The leadership team of this organization has stepped out of the shadows and is taking flight on fledgling wings.

So, what are we, what do we want to be, where will this organization be in five years? These are some of the questions that the Geocachers of Northeastern Illinois Board of Directors will help this organization shape its answers to over the coming months. The answers however, will depend on what you the community wants this organization to become and on your willingness to participate and make it your organization.

Although I don't know the destination, I am looking forward to the journey and the camaraderie of those who choose to come along.

..... with spring comes a rebirth.

Gonil Board 2010

Meet the new board, each new board member has written a small bio of themselves.

2010 GONIL Board President

Howard Berklund (Badlands) has been geocaching for five years, ever since a co-worker introduced him to the sport. He's been a part of the caching community here in Northern Illinois since 2007, when he attended his first GONIL picnic after moving here from Ohio. He's cached solo, in large groups and every size in-between--he enjoys caching for its own sake and also as time spent in the outdoors and with friends. Howard likes hitting the trails to find ammo cans in the woods, solving puzzles for the coordinates for nanos in the city and most other facets of our hobby (except for logging caches on-line). This year's GONIL Board President, he looks forward to building the organization by encouraging member participation and involvement. A friendly face in the caching community he looks forward to meeting and talking with anyone concerned with the future of the sport.



2010 GONIL Board Vice-President

Caching Name: [BAT1800](#)

Name: Barry Torphy

What County do you live in: Cook

When did you start caching: September 19, 2007

When did you join GONIL: November 4, 2007

Bio: I live in Mt. Prospect IL and am married to my best friend Margie. 2010 is my second full term (1 previous partial term) as a GONIL Board Member and I am employed as a Project Manager working primarily in the Construction industry. Our favorite past time (besides Geocaching of course) is traveling to places we have not been before with the goal to have found a cache in all 50 states and beyond. My life experience has seen service on various non-profit boards and my personal goal is to do my best for the betterment of the Geocaching Community, The GONIL Organization and its membership.

2010 GONIL Board Treasurer

Hi, my name's Larry. I geocache under the name 2 CBR (if you want to know, just ask).
 I live out in the far Western suburbs.
 I've been caching since 2003 and have been a member of GONIL since it was formed in 2005.
 I've found caches in 32 states plus Canada.
 I'm looking forward to a fun, productive year.
 Give a shout if you want to get together and find a few.



2010 GONIL Board Secretary

Team MysticAngel-Tom

Tom

Cook County

Member of GONIL since March 6th, 2006



I started Geocaching by accident. While my wife was surfing the net back in March of 2005. She stumbled on this web page and said this looks like it could be fun but, we need to get one of these GPSr things. I said I have one of those went to the garage and brought it in. Low and behold, Team MysticAngel was born.

I love to geocache (mostly in the summer) I hate the cold weather. Camping and ridding my motorcycle round out my summer activities. We have 4 children, 2 boys and 2 girls (teenangers none the less) and three kitty cats.

We geocache on our off days, I work 24 on and 48 off at the Firehouse and my darling Amy works 12 hour shift as a Police/Fire dispatcher.

2010 GONIL Board- Member at Large

Caching Name: Salz69

First Name: Lee

What County do you live in:

When did you start caching: August 3, 2007

When did you join GONIL: September 17, 2007

Bio: I'm married to Therese, and have three great kids. I'm 46 years old, got my first GPS on my birthday in 2007, and found my first cache the next day. As with a lot of cachers, it snowballed from there into this gargantuan addiction. I mostly enjoy deep woods caches, with long hikes and great scenery, but as the day wears down, there's always room for "just a couple more". I love a challenging puzzle that can be done ahead of time- but not really crazy about many-stage multi's, unless it's in an awesome setting. I'm no stranger to wanting to shoot for a "numbers run", always trying to top my personal best- to date of writing this being 120.



2010 GONIL Board- Member at Large

Teacher Mike

Mike joined this wacky little adventure that we do on January 19, 2007 and then GONIL a little less than seven months later in July. Since then Mike has turned his job experience into a way to help the caching community by going around and educating people on Geocaching and the use of GPS units in education. Mike is a former Computer and Technology teacher but is now a Technology Director for a school district and an adjunct professor at Joliet Junior College. Outside of his job and caching Mike is an avid movie lover and he also likes to gathering as much useless knowledge that he can. Just ask his wife Closet Cacher Katie; she will tell you he is full of useless knowledge

2010 GONIL Board-Member at Large

Caching Name: Macwin1lse

First Name: Bill

What County do you live in: Cook

When did you start caching: September 2004

When did you join GONIL: June 19, 2006

Bio: What can be said about me...I'm with a great girl (Sunshnface) whom I've been dating for about a year and a half, and I'm a video game nerd. I've always loved the outdoors and geocaching gives me a reason to get up on the weekend. Also, I am a member of LEGS (League of Extraordinary Geocachers); if you ever want to join one of our weekly meet-ups, send me a message.



Diaries of a Hound - FTF downsides

by: MGB

FTF Hounds. We're a crazy bunch. It sounds glamorous and we can brag about our oh-so-many FTF's and all that but I often have to ask myself, is it worth it? Here are just a few examples of the downsides to being a hound.

We're called "beta-testers" for a reason. That new hider who doesn't know how to use a GPS? That experienced cacher who transposed two numbers? Guess who's crawling up someone's front lawn at 10:00 at night? Yep. The hounds. My record is currently driving 26 miles from O'Hare to Bolingbrook, only to look for a cache 1.5 miles off the intended final coordinates. Oops. As a matter of fact, most of my DNF's are from FTF attempts. When you're going for a FTF, there are no phone-a-friends.

One FTF, I worked for three days on a puzzle, finally solved it, and headed to the final stage armed with the knowledge I would need to find the cache, only to find out, that was only stage 1. And I had no GPS on me. And I was 40 miles away from home.

FTF's are also disruptive. I'll admit I've taken my toddler son on a couple of FTF trips when he should've been eating/sleeping/enjoying his youth. I've gotten to work late, with muddy knees and no smiley. I've run out in the middle of the night (my latest is 11:30pm - that's when I LEFT the house), I've gotten stopped by police for being in a park after it closes. It can be a little crazy.

FTF's can also be frustrating. Nothing hurts more than opening a new cache 20 minutes after publishing and seeing someone else's signature. Argh! They can also be tough when going to a new area you're not familiar with. Imagine driving circles around a new cache in a park, looking for parking, when a 10 second satellite scan would've shown you a small alley to park in that you're missing.

How often have you seen THIS note published on a cache page "Oops sorry? I didn't know it'd be published that quickly. I'll get it out there tonight." So then the little box marked "is active" didn't set off any alarm bells for you? Thank you very much.

Last, and honestly, most important - a FTF is a bookmark list. It's a mental count. That's it. Groundspeak doesn't track FTF stats, why? Because at the end of the day, they don't really mean anything. The cache will still be there in the morning - most of the time. Often, it'll still be there weeks or months later. It's really no big deal if you're first, or second, or 31st.

So you still wanna go? The next article will detail a few of the perks of being a hound.

Future newsletter deadlines:

- ☞ Spring~submission deadline February 28th
distribution in March
- ☞ Summer~submission deadline May 31st
distribution in June
- ☞ Fall~submission deadline August 31st
distribution in September
- ☞ Winter~submission deadline October 31st
distribution in December

Events list posted is not intended to be all inclusive.

Events listed were the events posted on www.gonil.org at the newsletter deadline. Please visit www.gonil.org for an additional events that may have been posted after the deadline.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

[GONIL's Bike Path Clean-up IV](#)

Saturday, April 24
9:30am - 11:30?

[10 Years! \(Chicago IL\) Breakfast Meet & Greet](#)

Saturday, May 1
7:30-9:30am

[10 Years! \(Chicago\) GeoGolf II Signal's Birthday](#)

Saturday, May 1
4-8pm

[FlashMob: 10 Years! of collecting smiles!](#)

Sunday, May 2
12:00-12:15pm

[10 Years! \(Chicagoland, IL\): Birthday Burgers!](#)

Sunday, May 2
6pm-?

[Chicagoland Cache-apoloosa 2010](#)

Saturday May 15 - Sunday May 16

A Family That Caches Together...

By: *Jeff60523 (Jeff Sidler)*

I discovered geocaching not long after receiving a Garmin Nuvi GPS as a gift. Lumpy77's "I said Pez, not Fez!" cache is less than a mile from our home so on a brisk but sunny Sunday afternoon in February of 2008, we were hooked!

I will admit that I'm the one who is most interested in 'caching, but my family has enjoyed indulging me as we begin our third year of "using billion dollar satellites to find Tupperware in the woods". We've found just over 500 caches in 16 different states. We even had one day when we found at least one cache in each of 5 states on a return trip from Knoxville, TN!

Equipment Upgrade: Our Garmin Nuvi got us through the first 150 or so caches, but then I discovered Trimble's Geocache Navigator for my BlackBerry. That has really helped to increase "our" numbers (okay, it has enabled ME to easily pick up nearby caches wherever I find myself for work.)

Photos Tell the Story: In browsing through my geocaching.com "gallery", I found a few pictures that really tell our family caching story. *See Page 11 for additional photos.*

We have started quite a few friends and relatives in geocaching, including my 85 year old father (who uses his cane to root around and find caches) and my sister-in-law and niece from Iowa (who cache together and are not far behind us in number of finds) and my sister in Colorado. My son just joined the Boy Scouts so we are looking forward to helping many of the Scouts in his Troop earn the soon-to-be-released Geocaching merit badge! That will hopefully help other families start their own geocaching traditions.



3 Generations caching together



Earning "Extra Credit" in Social Studies by visiting historic places.



The game begins! (Fullersburg Woods and one of the first caches we found as a family)

GSAK Tips

by: Panther In the Den

GSAK is a wonderful tool and some of us do not have the abilities of some of the more modern GPS's so the waypoint information can be modified to fit within the capabilities of our older units.

While GSAK has a lot of formatting parameters what follows is a good set to start with...

In the 'Send Waypoints to GPS' dialog box...

> Set 'Waypoint Name' to = `%drop2 %dif1a%ter1a%con1%typ1%last4` (do not forget the space after the %drop2)

This is how it will be displayed on your GPS screen...

1AFWQ 4BRMFNOO

The first 5 characters (1AFWQ) - This is the GC code dropping off the GC at the beginning

A space

Next 2 characters (4B) this is the Difficulty and Terrain (difficulty 4, terrain 2 1/2) as...

1 D&T as 1

1 1/2 D&T as A

2 D&T as 2

2 1/2 D&T as B

Etc (used just one character)

Next two characters (RM) (Regular Size Container, Mystery Cache)

Container type (micro = M, Traditional = T, etc)

Hide Type (Traditional = T, Unknown = U, etc)

The next four characters (FN00) (Found, Not Found, other, other)

The status of the last four logs (Found = F, Not Found = N, other logs (or no logs) listed as = 0, etc.)

> Then set 'Waypoint Description' to = `%smart %hint %datelf`

This is how it will be displayed on your GPS screen...

TowTheLi

09/22/2009

This will display the **smart name** (TowTheLi), **hint** (no hint available) and **date last found** (09/22/2009)

I know this is complicated. Just give it a try and then it will make sense.

Have Fun!

Html - No Problem!

by: Panther in the Den

To start with you need to have Paragraphs...

Put `<p>` at the beginning of the paragraph and `</p>` at the end

If you need a simple line break (no space between lines)...

`
`and`</br>`

You can see how the commands are bracketed by `<command>`

``Text you want to be blue``

Most common colors have common names

``Text you want to be bold``

Photos

``

The link to your photo will be between the quotes. (don't forget to salute! :))

Link

``Panther in the Den``

Notice the link is between the 'single quotes' and the `>`text you want shown`<` between the pointy brackets

I haven't done italics or different fonts but armed with this basic knowledge and a quick Google I think you can figure it out.

Have Fun!

Editor: MGB

Layout: TMA-Amy

A Special Thank You to ALL the people who submitted articles.

This newsletter is a publication of Geocachers of Northeastern Illinois. The Articles and information contained herein is intended for use of the membership.

All submissions are subject to the approval of Geocachers of Northeastern Illinois and the Editorial staff of the newsletter. The editors can accept no responsibility for errors of omissions. Any opinions expressed are solely those of the editorial staff and/or Geocachers of Northeastern Illinois and its members.



300 (Traveling - This time to California/Nevada)



Earning "Extra Credit" in Social Studies by visiting historic places.



500 (and a FTF!) Getting off the couch in the middle of Winter.



200! (and getting our biking exercise!)



400 (A quick stop after visiting relatives in Michigan)



Learning social responsibility (CITO at Moody Grrl's 1000th)