

# THE GONIL INK

Summer Issue

June 2010



## Ten Years! Celebrations in Chicagoland Style

Written by **ValliG**, with thanks to the many event hosts, hostesses, and creative logs of area geocachers

Chicago is proud to party, especially on its lakeside front porch where the best parties happen. Geocachers love to party too, for any occasion involving food and caches. Chicagoland is the home of the Big Ten Conference. Here is the story of the Ten Years! Parties held in true Chicago style, here in GONILland.

The 10 Years! celebration started early and went late, 72+ hours worth of party time. Several Chicago area geocaching groups collaborated on events, activities and fellowship, including GONIL, League of Extraordinary GeocacherS, and GoGeocaching.com . The illustrious events below demonstrate the joy, fellowship and party spirit that area geocachers revel in.

**Saturday, May 1, 2010**

**10 Years! (Chicago IL) Breakfast Meet & Greet (GC24578)** - BAT1800 and Princess Margie kicked the party season off with breakfast bright 'n early at Old Country Buffet in Rolling Meadows. Some came just as the rooster crowed, others wandered in a bit later, all in search of caffeine and caches. The logs say it all ...” What a great way to kick off the 10-year anniversary events and two fun-filled days of geocaching”... Attended the event and fueled up for a full day of caching ahead. Thanks for all your hard work.”... “Got here early and left early, which is kinda opposite the way these breakfast events usually go for me”...” grabbed some coffee while saying "hi/bye" to a mixture of old caching friends and new acquaintances” .

**10 Years! (Chicago IL) GeoGolf II Signal's Birthday (GC23WW6)** – The birthday bash continued rolling down the green at Harry Semrow Mini Golf and Driving Range, thanks to more hard work of BAT1800 and Princess Margie. The fun just putt-putted on all afternoon, with folks coming and going, hoping to be on par with the hunt for the multitudinous caches placed for the 10 Years! Celebration. (cont'd on p. 7)

## Upcoming Event

### 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Chicagoland Geocachers Picnic and Pig Roast

(GC2A9RT)

Saturday September 11, 2010

## Future newsletter deadlines

~Fall~

submission deadline August 31st  
distribution in September

~Winter~

submission deadline October 31st  
distribution in December

~Spring~

submission deadline February 28th  
distribution in March

~Summer~

submission deadline  
May 31<sup>st</sup>  
distribution in June

## Gathering a Way Point When Placing a Cache

Written by **Panther in the Den**

### No Averaging on GPS

When I first started caching and using my beloved Garmin Geko, to get accurate coordinates I would...

- 1) Once at the spot I would allow the GPS to settle and gather as many satellites as it could (check the satellite screen).
- 2) Mark a waypoint
- 3) Walk about 100 feet away
- 4) Walk back
- 5) Allow the GPS to settle (count to 5)
- 6) Go back to steps 2) through 5) and repeat until I had 10 waypoints (walking away in a different direction each time).
- 7) Once back at home I would enter the waypoints collected into a spreadsheet and get an average of all 10 waypoints.

It was a rare occasion that the averaged coordinates would be more than 20 feet off.

### GPS With Averaging

Now with my 60CSx the procedure is...

- 1) Once at the spot I would allow the GPS to settle and gather as many satellites as it could.
- 2) Mark a waypoint
- 3) Select 'Avg' (average) on the screen and allow it to run until the 'Estimated Accuracy' appears to settle (not going down any longer).

It was a rare occasion that the averaged coordinates would be more than 10 feet off.

Every time I revisit a cache I will set the goto to see how accurate my previously collected coordinate is and if it appears to be off I will rerun another set of coordinates.

### Apparent Inaccuracy?

One other thing I have noticed is when first arriving at a cache site after driving my 60CSx will appear to have a high level of inaccuracy (IE: When marking a waypoint the waypoint being 20 to 50 feet away). It appears to be a quirk in the unit and the collected waypoint is accurate but it still bothers me. Right after driving I will turn the unit off and on before collecting the unit so it will display the accuracy correctly.

It does take some patience but you are rewarded with happy hunters. :)

## Diaries of a FTF Hound – One Long Night

Written by **-MGb**

The night before Bat1800's 10 Years! Geogolf celebration, 100 new caches were set to be released. This is a dream for any self-respecting hound, so naturally I prepared. Here's a rough outline of the night.

**8:00 p.m.** - Meet fellow hounds at McDonalds with Dianworks, ShazamMan, and Fishnic. Why? McDonalds has free Wi-Fi. Meeting the hounds had two purposes. First and foremost, if you can't beat 'em, join 'em. Second, caching is always more fun with company.

**8:15 p.m.** - Wi-Fi not working. Relocate to Panera Bread.

**9:00 p.m.** - Panera Bread closes. We are politely asked to pack up our stuff and leave.

**9:20 p.m.** - Relocate to Chasers Bar - Free Wi-Fi. Fish buys us a round.

**9:45 p.m.** - We start to realize this isn't going to happen soon. Dinaworks leaves. She's needs to find 10 caches today to qualify for a challenge. She had been saving them for FTF's, but it's getting late.

**10:30 p.m.** - We accept the fact that this is not happening, Cubs game replay and highlights are over. We disperse.

Dinaworks meets me at her house. I volunteer to go with to get the 10 caches since it was my failed idea that got her in this situation. We head to Elk Grove Village.

Why Elk Grove Village at this hour? This is a planned move.

We know TomEagle55 put out a lot of caches for this event.

TomEagle55 tends to have urban, non-forest-preserve hides.

He also usually hides in the Elk Grove Village area. There also happen to be a lot of caches in the area that Dinaworks and I both need.

**11:45 p.m.** - First notification arrives. GPS points out the nearest McDonalds. We pull up outside, Netbook gets the Wi-Fi. PQ gets run and delivered. GPSr has been emptied of all caches except 106 new caches in the PQ. Off we go.

**11:50 p.m.** - First FTF.

**11:50 p.m.** - 3:30 a.m. - 7 FTF's, 4 - 2TF's. (cont'd on p. 3)

## Letter From The President

by **Howard Berklund**, GONIL President

Wow! It's been a fun and busy spring!

Earth Day CITO's, 10th Anniversary Celebrations, socials and Cache-Apolooza with appearances by the Groundspeak Lackeys, there were lots of great events these last couple of months!

Coming up we have the 10th Annual Chicagoland Geocachers Picnic, with an expected record attendance of geocachers from around the Mid-West.

And more! GONIL Shirts, Geocoins and maybe even an Educational Event or two!

Behind the scenes there were Board Meetings (scheduled for two hours but always running longer), the newsletter preparation and all the daily work that goes into keeping the website running smoothly.

All of this takes time, dedication and volunteers. With that, I'd like to make a quick shout out to GBI and MGB for the substantial amount of their time spent in support of GONIL.

GeekBoy.from.Illinois: Jerry keeps the systems humming and provides invaluable advice to the board. Jerry is truly the unsung hero working daily in the background to ensure that the systems are performing at a high level.

MGBMusic: Adam is the Managing Editor of this Newsletter. Adam and the Newsletter Team, (pegasus133, RheS, TeacherMike, Team Mysticangel-Amy, Team mysticangel-Tom, ValliG) volunteer their talents to bring you this quarterly epistle.

There are opportunities big and small, so no matter how much time you have, or your area of interest, there is something you can do. If you've been wondering how you can get involved, contact us at [board@gonil.org](mailto:board@gonil.org), the opportunities are endless. Public Relations, Web Design, Systems Support, Photographer, Educational Event Hosting and Fund Raising are just some on of the areas of need.

This is your organization, join the fun, get involved! See you on the trail.

## Diaries of a FTF Hound

(cont'd from p. 2)

**3:30 a.m.** - Arrive home. Tired. Wife is awake, not feeling well. I deliver Sudafed. Wife goes back to bed.

**3:30 - 4:30 a.m.** - Requisite stay at home period. At this point, I'm planning on going to the 10 Years! Breakfast at 7:30. If I sleep, it'd only for a couple of hours. I watch Stargate:Atlantis.

**4:30 a.m. - 7:30 a.m.** - 4 FTF's, 2 DNF's

Grand total for the night/day - 12 FTF's (there was one more at the Breakfast). A new personal best.

The point of all this is FTF's are hard. They're not meant to be easy. Some folks probably go to extremes to find them, and that night was no exception. When all is said and done, it's a fun story to talk about and 12 more caches on the FTF list. A good night had by all.



## An "Outsiders" Story

Written by **Dutchlandian**

In July 2008 our friends "White Dane & Irish Setter" sent me a newspaper article in which they were talking about their favourite sport: "Geocaching". I had never even heard of the word but I became curious so went to geocaching.com, made an account and called myself "Dutchlandian". All I meant to do was take a quick look at that site. At this moment that name is in 1776 logfiles. Our first 40 caches were found with the car navigation system "TomTom". Since even our civilized woods have no real roads to navigate on, "TomTom" did not understand why people would take him out of the car to walk into the woods, so he didn't show us all the way towards the caches.

No problem. Chicago has a Garmin shop, and I have friends over there.

Dollar exchange rate were still in our favour so within two months after my first find, I was getting some geocaching lessons and my very own Oregon GPS. I logged my first Illinois caches and found my 100th cache in Chicago. I was there together with "White Dane & Irish Setter" when they logged "the Bean" as their 3000th. cache.

Less than a year later, September 2009, I went together with them to do their 5K cache over here in Europe. They had choosen to go for GC40 one of the oldest European caches. Also because the coordinates of that cache

were that apposite for number 5000.

October 31, 2009 was also a day to remember. Together with relatives who also caught the geocaching fever I went for my 1K cache. We drove all the way to Calais, France. Took the ferry to Dover, England and logged the earthcache "White Cliffs of Dover" as number 1000.

Just recently on our Illinois trip, we logged cache 1500. Of course that one had to be "Beverly"..

In Holland we are also celebrating 10 years of Geocaching. So a cache this old would be the ultimate one.

So how exactly did I end up on your GONIL forum?

Curiosity I think, the same thing which got me into geocaching. Just following my overseas friends caching trips by reading their logs. Also reading the logs people wrote on their caches. I saw the "member of GONIL" logo's very often. And realized this was a way to keep me updated on any news from over there. That's how I became one of your "outsider" members.

Many of the names and faces have become so familiar to me I think I would recognize them within a minute if I would meet them. It already happened some weeks ago when I met cubdad7 and G.O. John and Carol in real.

So a part of my "geocaching heart" will always be in Illinois. That's why I am also very happy there are now two

Dutchlandian caches over there. Special thanks goes to two great cachers who will maintain them for me. If you happen to be near them, find them, log them. Looking forward to see all your names over there!

Seven more Dutchlandian caches are waiting for you in Holland. There even is a "GOJAC" one over here!

So with the dollar rate at this moment. You're Welcome!

Because geocaching is great, An(n)ytime, An(n)ywhere....

See ya!

Dutchlandian



## Milestone Caches

Written by **John Trilik** (Panther in the Den)

While there are no formal rules for placing milestone caches. I do remember when Special Ed and FallenFaery started the tradition.

I think their original vision was Silver for 1,000 caches and Gold for 2,000 caches. Numbers like 5,000 (Crystal?) or 10,000 were never even imagined at the time. Guidelines for placing a milestone cache include -

- Placed by someone close to the honoree
- The theme and contents reflecting the honoree's personality
- Cache placed and submitted in advance of the milestone
- Location pre-approved by the reviewer
- Cache placed on hold until the honoree makes the FTF
- The honoree get an token FTF (in the honor of his milestone.
- Be sure to honor Special Ed and FallenFaery for starting the tradition by noting them in the description.

There has also been an escalation of the difficulty of the caches. The original vision was...

- A forest preserve (or nicely wooded area) as close to the honoree's home as possible
- About a 500 foot walk along a nice trail from parking
- About 100 feet off of said trail
- Hidden in a fallen tree or hole in a base of a tree big enough to camo'ed
- A good location not likely to get mugged (take some time and find that 'perfect' spot)

There has also been an escalation of the 'event of the honoree finding the cache'. Traditionally:

- The honoree will receive an email or a note (if the placers are along when the milestone is reached) with the coordinates after finding the milestone
- The honoree would go out alone or with their best caching buddy and/or family to make the find
- Photo of the honoree making the FTF optional but nice

Now there are special cachers who specialize in certain aspects of the sport (a part of their personality) that sometimes comes into play in the spirit of the cache. For example:

- The adventurous types that enjoy terrain and bushwhacking

- The Puzzlers that enjoy a good puzzle
- The Urban cachers (make it a urban multi.

The final should still be an ammo can in a wooded area)

If the honoree's personality is so strong in this area by all means include it in the theme of the cache.

With some cachers finding over 4,000 a year it is difficult to keep up with the honoring and becomes a burden to the community. When milestone caches first started it took over a year to find 1000. Just my 2¢



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The editors 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.

## **Ten Years!** (cont'd from p. 1)

**Robert Reindl** has a special place in local geocaching history as Illinois' first Geocacher, and owner of the historical geocache Beverly (GC28). He joined the event, was received with a very warm welcome and shared his reminiscences all about how Geocaching was in the very beginning! Thanks to Mr. Reindl for lending his special touch to this very special day.

### ***Sunday, May 2, 2010***

**FlashMob: 10 Years! of collecting smiles!** (GC23XMZ) – On Sunday, celebrations moved from northwest Chicagoland down to the southeast side at 159th and Torrence Ave. Thanks to salz69, who so aptly stated - “We are celebrating 10 years geocaching in a BIG way!” and “You know the drill....swoop in at EXACTLY 12 noon, sign the log book, and take a few group pictures near the HUGE smiley, and disperse by 12:15pm.” What more can be said about this event “Decided to attend this one at the last minute and glad I did!” ... “what better spot could you ask for? A smiling flash mob, with a giant smiley über-mascot in the background.?” And, true geocacher style ... “Happy Birthday Signal and Happy 1st anniversary to me - working to get #500.”

**10 Years! (Chicagoland, IL): Birthday Burgers!** (GC23XMB) - Continued the party, the food, and the good times had by all on Signal's birthday, again thanks to salz69. Where geocachers be, there food be too, in case this isn't clear. Fuddruckers has become a traditional geocache event venue in Chicagoland, and local geocachers “Really looked forward to a burger and a cold one.” A long day out on the hunt might make one ask “hitting Indiana on Geocaching's Birthday weekend. ... or is this still Illinois?” All in all, “always nice to visit with friends old and new over food & drinks. Especially nice to do so on a day celebrating the 10th Anniversary of this strange little activity we all do.”

### ***Monday, May 3, 2010***

**10 Years! (Chicago IL) - Dave's Chinese Dinner** (GC24QC6) – Another day, another reason to celebrate. Thanks to Panther in the Den and GoGeocaching.com, area cachers dined and learned indeed, “Chef Tony served some of the most authentic Chinese food in Chicago.” Can't keep a good geocacher down, even 2+ days into the 10 Years! celebrations ... “What a perfect ending to the day!! After visiting Beverly and then clearing out that park, I was ready for some good food.” ... “Glad I was able to attend an event on the actual day the first cache was placed 10 years ago. Thanks for the hard work in setting this up.” And, for those days when a LPS seems trivial, or one more lock'n'lock is mugged, remember ... “I feel like my caching friends are part of my extended family because we all share something... thanks again for bringing us all together for such a great occasion” .

If reading about these great times hasn't thoroughly exhausted you, keep the hunts going this summer and fall.

## **Going Rail Fanning and Geocaching**

Written by **ValliG**

I am a lady of many enthusiasms, interests, causes and opinions. I am a pretty good librarian, amateur writer, and an editor for several hobby publications. But a web geek, or web jockette, I am not. GONIL and friends definitely make up for that.

**Go RailFanning** [<http://www.gogeocaching.com/gorailfanning/home.html>] is my personal hobby site that blends several of my fondest enthusiasms – rail history, events and clubs, and geocaching. There is a fair amount of cross-over between railfans and geoachers, as with other hobbies. In GONIL alone, we find science fiction fans, fantasy fans, architecture fans, Route 66 fans, and more. Add into that mix my love of history, libraries and writing, and that's the story of Go RailFanning.

Launched with the help of a talented, kind friend, Go RailFanning emphasizes the rail enthusiast community and provides a central collection of rail club newsletters. Those archives tell the story of rail adventures, excursions and activities of those who love rails and trains. Geocaching is there too – take a quick look at the home page which shows MattsGrandad and me in our railfanning finery, along with our latest geostats from Grand Pootbah.

Discover something new about the causes I love – nurturing communities, sharing rail history and heritage, and geocaching. Stop on by, visit Go RailFanning, and learn a bit more about those of us who seek out caches and forgotten rails with equal devotion. News, events, stories, tall tales about railroading, chasing rail caches, or just plain riding the rails are always welcome. you have a railfanning story to tell, or a perfect cache about railroads, rail trips, model or prototype trains? Please share it with us all through Go RailFanning. Just email me, ValliG, via [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com) or PM me through the GONIL.