



August 2013

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR—EVENTS

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President's Corner

by Wes Skinner/NorthWes

We've experienced one of the nicest summers on record here in Alaska, setting records for high temperatures and sunny weather all across the state while much of the lower 48 is seeing exactly the reverse. While we're enjoying summer, the Alaskan Air Force (squadrons of our 'state bird') have apparently made caching a challenge for visiting and local geocachers alike. I've always said a \$2 headnet is an essential part of any Alaskan geocaching expedition!

Speaking of challenges, Groundspeak's 31 Days of Geocaching (find a cache a day across the month of August and earn a special specific souvenir for each day) has spawned a slew of event caches designed to help support your effort to find that necessary cache a day. Kudos to our members who've caught the event hosting bug, and are hosting at least a dozen event caches across the state this month! Be sure and read the fine print on these event listings – there's some fun twists with times thrown in to mix.

As the fireweed has nearly bloomed out to the top, I'm reminded summer foliage will soon shift into fall colors. It's a great time to look ahead and plan an event of your own – a CITO event in a local park near your home, or along a section of trail you particularly enjoy. There's a window of opportunity during fall to help clean up our caching playground before winter's snows bury the trash of summer. Notice how meljo and jackcat14's recent "A Small part of Campbell Creek Trail CITO" event drew more than a dozen participants out on one of this summer's only rainy days to clean up the area around the south end of the Campbell Creek Trail. The area is visibly nicer looking now, with a truckload of trash hauled away before it made its way further into the waters of Campbell Creek. You can make a huge difference in your community by inviting fellow geocachers to invest a few hours in a Cache In Trash Out event!

2014 GeocacheAlaska! Board of Directors Nominations

As specified in the GeocacheAlaska! [by-laws](#), nominations for the 2014 GeocacheAlaska! Board of Directors will be accepted between September 15 and October 15. The Nominating Committee was selected at the August 8 Board of Directors meeting and is comprised of Michael Malvick/Ladybug Kids (chair), Cameron Gilchrist (AlaskaCariboozer), Tony Roof (firemanak), and Victoria Noble (blazingpathways). During the next month, the Committee will develop "job descriptions" and attributes for each Board position to help cachers understand the function and expectations of members of the Board. This information will e-mailed directly to all members of GeocacheAlaska! and published in the September 2013 newsletter. A thread will also be opened in the GeocacheAlaska! forums for discussion, nominations, and posting of "Statements of Purpose" in which each candidate explains why they are seeking a position on the Board of Directors.

If you, or know someone who would like to give back to the statewide geocaching community, please contact one of the members of the GeocacheAlaska! Nominating Committee.



Reviewer's Corner – Change to Review Process

by Michael Malvick/Greatland Reviewer

Beginning in August, I am adopting practices used by other reviewers to help manage the cache review queue in a more orderly fashion. This change is necessitated by the fact that during the summer, the queue grew to contain several dozen caches with guideline issues, many of which were never resolved, which left the queue cluttered with “abandoned” caches. Subsequently, new cache submissions intermingled in the queue with those caches and on occasion, I missed the new submissions and delayed publication for a few days.

If a new cache submission is ready to be published when I first look at the cache page, I will publish it, which is not a change to the current process. However, if the cache has a proximity, commercial, permit, or other guideline issue, I will post a Reviewer Note and temporarily disable the cache. Disabling the cache removes it from the queue so it is easier for me to see new caches come into the queue. Once the Cache Owner has remedied the issue, s/he may reenable the cache page which will return it to the queue. The new process doesn't create any additional work for either the Cache Owner or the Reviewer, but it does make the cache review queue easier to manage.

Also, I get requests from cachers to “delete” cache pages. Reviewers do not have sufficient administrative rights to delete a cache page. However, either the Cache Owner and the Reviewer have the ability to “archive” a cache page, if appropriate. An archived cache page will not load into pocket queries and cannot be edited, but the Cache Owner, the Reviewer, Groundspeak staff, prior finders of the cache, and anyone else with the GC code can view the page.

If a cache page was never published, there is no need to archive the page. A Cache Owner can simply “temporarily disable” the cache page so it remains active in their profile as a “draft” cache page, and edit the page with new coordinates, long and short description, and attributes when they find a new location for their cache.

Spruce Up Your Cache Pages

You can spruce up your cache pages and show your support for GeocacheAlaska! by adding GeocacheAlaska! artwork to your listings. GeocacheAlaska! provides several choices of artwork and the required html code on its website at

<http://www.geocachealaska.org/gakartwork.htm>. HTML, or hypertext markup language, is the code that “tells” your web browser how to display text, graphics, tables, and other webpage features.

To add a GeocacheAlaska! logos to your cache pages, follow these simple steps.



1. Navigate to the cache page you want to add the logo to and click “edit listing.”
2. Scroll down to the details section and check the box next to “The descriptions below are in HTML.”
3. Open a new tab on your browser and go to <http://www.geocachealaska.org/gakartwork.htm>
4. Choose the artwork you want to display and copy the html code in the box under the artwork. You can do that by left-clicking the start of the text and dragging over the text while holding down the left mouse button. Once the desired text is highlighted, click the right mouse button and select “copy.”
5. Return to your cache page and paste your artwork into the Long Description box by clicking the right mouse button and selecting “paste.”
6. Scroll to the bottom of the page, click the two boxes about having read and understanding the guidelines and terms of use (you really did, didn't you?), and click “Submit Changes.”
7. Scroll to the top of the page and click “view listing” to see your changes.

E-ID for your GPS by Michael Malvick/Ladybug Kids

My Garmin Nuvi and Oregon GPSs were stolen from my georental when it was parked in my brother's gated community subdivision. I wasn't real hopeful about recovering either GPS, but the evening of the theft I received a phone call from the person who recovered my Oregon next to a walking trail near their home. I never recovered my Nuvi, but ironically, the thieves didn't realize what they had when they discarded the more valuable GPS.

The person who recovered my GPS got my cell phone number from the start-up screen of my Oregon. The information on the start-up screen can be customized by editing the text file named startup.txt, located in the garmin folder of the GPS. You can edit the text file using any text editor including the editor that comes with Windows or Microsoft Word. When you open the file, just follow the instructions contained within the file to set the number of seconds the start-up screen displays and to add your contact information.

The process only takes a couple of minutes, but it could result and recovery of a misplaced, dropped, or stolen device.




3/8 of burtoninAK leads the pack at “[Biking from Johnson to Hope](#).”

Big Doings in the Center of the Universe

The Center of the Universe, also known as Fremont, Washington, located just north of downtown Seattle, is going to be hopping during the third weekend of August.

Things kick off on Thursday night, August 15, with [A pint among friends](#), at Hilliards Beer Taproom, between 5:30 and 9:30 p.m., hosted by Groundspeak Lackey Annie Love. Annie is the Lackey we interface with when purchasing tracking numbers for codes.



 Next up is the fourth annual [2013 Geocaching Block Party](#), held in the square immediately outside Groundspeak's Headquarters in Fremont between 11:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., on Saturday August 17. The event will be bigger than ever with the introduction of a new nine-cache GeoTour, geocaching courses, vendors, and food trucks. The day will wrap up with the [Geocaching International Film Festival \(GIFF\)](#) at 8:00 p.m. with cachers' videos projected on a forty-foot open air big screen along Seattle's Lake Union. Bring your own chairs and blankets. Attendees of the event can also sign the log book for the Lily Pad, [Geocaching Headquarters](#).

Finally, on Sunday, August 18, the third annual [Going APE 2013](#) megaevent happens in Snoqualmie Pass, about an hour east of Seattle, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Walk through a 2.3-mile 100-year-old railroad tunnel where Fen Dweller's [Bloody Fingers, Dirty Diapers](#) can be found and find Washington's second-oldest active cache, [Iron Horse](#) (GC79), placed by Groundspeak founders Jeremy and Elias in October 2000 (a must visit for those aiming to complete the Jasmer Challenge). Nearby is cache [Geocache](#), GCD, placed in June 2000.



Attending any or all of these events is a great way to learn the area, meet cachers from all around the world, and earn a profile full of new icons and souvenirs.

EarthCaching Mega Event Comes to Utah

After a very successful [First International EarthCaching Mega Event](#) in Maine in 2012, the Geological Society of America (GSA) is hosting the [2nd International EarthCache Event](#) in St. George, Utah, on September 7, 2013. The event will feature a CITO event, EarthCaching Workshops, and a Banquet. Workshop topics include Q&A with the Geoaware reviewers, Developing an Earthcache, HTML, Working with State Parks/NPS, History of the EarthCache program and where it is going, Guidelines, Reviewing and the Appeals Process, Geology of the area, Where to get ideas for Earthcaches, GSAK, and EarthCache GeoVentures - the Hawaiian experience.

Visit the [Event website](#) for full details!



Geocruise to Alaska – An After-Visit Report by Wes Skinner/NorthWes

A group of 71 geocachers and their families cruised to Alaska on a week-long trip during the last few days of June and the first days of July. Organized in part by Bermuda geocacher (and president of Bermuda Island Geocaching) DavetecsGirl (Darlene Fortin), this group departed Vancouver, British Columbia, and made stops in Ketchikan, Skagway, Juneau, and Icy Strait before disembarking in Seward AK. Local cachers in Juneau and Ketchikan helped welcome the geocruisers to their cities, and made sure their caches were ready for an influx of visitors.

Darlene Fortin had sent an email to GeocacheAlaska! Inc. president Wes Skinner (NorthWes) in October 2012, asking for some help with planning some of the geocruisers' potential shoreside activities. Oddly enough, the request came just a week before NorthWes & Mrs NW were headed to Bermuda aboard a Royal Caribbean cruiseship. A flurry of emails later, Darlene had arranged to meet Wes and Carol Skinner during their cruise ship visit. Darlene's warm hospitality and tour guide efforts were a delight, as was the report on her efforts to establish a Bermuda GeoTour (which just became a reality in July 2013!). As the cruise planning matured, Wes Skinner contributed advice regarding the land-side activities and caching ideas during the long winter months.

Anyone who lives in Alaska has experienced the challenge of showing off our state to visitors. It's difficult to balance visitors' interests with their physical abilities, with the possible weather variations, and with the amount of time available to fill in their wish list of places to visit. Imagine how that's magnified by trying to figure out how to recommend activities designed to suit the wide variety of talents, intensities and interests found in a 71-person geocaching group! Add in the need to have something for non-geocachers to do as well, and you're facing a big task. Wes Skinner took on this task to sample exactly the challenge described – how do you plan a series of activities to meet most of the interests a large group of geocachers visiting Alaska? The constraints of time

(half of the geocruisers had to fly home within eighteen hours of coming ashore in Seward), travel from Seward to Anchorage, and then traveling about the Anchorage area across a period of two days' organized activities were a logistical challenge which GeocacheAlaska! Inc. will face if it ever chooses to set up a large event drawing many visitors from Outside.

One of the two buses transporting the group had to head straight to Anchorage from Seward, with only a brief stop to visit the Wildlife Conservation center in Portage. This bus was carrying non-cachers and those persons whose flights were taking them home that afternoon and evening. The second bus stopped at Portage for a visit to the Begich-Boggs Visitors Center and a hike along the Trail of Blue Ice to the salmon-viewing platform at Williaw Campground, where the bus then picked them up for the journey to Anchorage hotels. The paved section of the Trail of Blue Ice was a big hit with the visitors, who related the flowers and glacier vistas were every bit as impressive as what they'd encountered on their somewhat rainy Inside Passage cruise. Of course, the variety and density of geocaches found along the easy hike were a big hit too.

GeocacheAlaska! Inc. hosted the geocruisers to an event at Sourdough BBQ that evening, where just over a hundred persons gathered during the course of the event to eat, talk, shop the store, talk some more, and participate in raffle giveaways. Our members and board members did an excellent job making our visitors feel welcome, and the Visit Bermuda gift bags which Darlene brought for every local cacher in attendance were a big hit. Following the event, those cachers still able to stay awake joined in a two-van convoy to sample a variety of cache types and locations across Anchorage – from a Ladybug Kids letterbox hide up on the top of the Hillside, to an Earthcache on Government Hill explaining part of the '64 Earthquake, to Point Woronzof and through the International Airport and Lake Hood back to their hotel in Spenard. At least a half-dozen visitors were delighted to complete the requirements for challenge caches that evening!

The next day found the group headed out to Reflections Lake at Palmer Hay Flats, where AKStafford's 'Cache Across America – Alaska cache is located. This hide topped most of the geocruisers' wish lists, so an effort had been made to make sure the Reflections Lake trail and its resident caches were in good shape for a group visit. The geocruisers were entranced with this site's signature reflective waters, as well as its impressive surrounding mountain scenery. Augmenting NorthWes as tour guide, Polgera and the AlaskaVans came along to drive and provide additional caching support for the entire day's activities. After a midday lunch break, most of the group continued on to Kincaid Park, where NorthWes had arranged to take willing hikers across the Lekisch Trails out to Serenity View, Cook's Nook and down to South Beach Anchorage – a bit of a challenging hike for many of the visitors – along with visits to the many Kincaid caches along that route. They were rewarded with a stunning view across Turnagain Arm to Kenai, and a low-level overflight during the hike along the crest from two eagles who appeared to be posing for pictures.

Uniformly, our visitors reported experiencing real delight with their caching experience in Alaska. Quality of caches encountered were regarded as above-average relative to their home caching grounds, and of course the scenery was over the top. Oddly, many of them seemed to think Alaskans don't know how to properly rate terrain numbers for their caches! Any real frustrations they expressed were related to difficulties associated with trying to balance each others' abilities and expectations during the early part of the cruise. By the time they reached Anchorage, they'd sorted themselves out into smaller groups of like-minded cachers.

Lessons learned are many. Wes Skinner put extensive time into trying to develop routes which would accommodate cachers of varied physical skills and intensity levels. Each route was hiked at least twice with a variety of partners to establish a timeline for travel. Caches were checked for accessibility and suitability. Some cache owners, learning of the impending visit from the newsletter, went out of their way to spruce up their caches. Hosting visitors requires more time than you'd first think if you're planning to succeed at travel logistics and show the 'best face' of geocaching opportunities around Southcentral Alaska. Any effort to host a large event with large numbers of visitors from outside Alaska will require a huge investment of time and resources from a committee of persons dedicated to success for their visitors sake, something to remember when conversations turn to 'wouldn't it be fun to host a mega-event?' Wes Skinner has realized an advance 'short course' in Alaska geocaching expectations is good for visitors, and should include not only good trail behaviors (such as, what if you encounter wildlife up close?), how to cache as part of a group (who puts the cache back?), and what other trail users will be here (and what side of the trail do I use?), but visitors should be encouraged to move beyond 'cookie-cutter' cut and paste posts to describe their experience. We can help with that expectation by hiding caches with a bit of 'wow' factor, and by posting logs of our own on caches we find which go beyond 'tftc' language in describing how we enjoyed that specific find.

An easily-accessible geocaching trail where you can introduce visitors to the world of Alaska geocaching is found at Reflections Lake (located on the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge, just north of the Knik River bridge on the Glenn Highway) where more than a half-dozen caches are available on a relatively easy ¾ mile trail around the lake. Perhaps the best 'accessible' geocaching power trail combining an easy trail, good density of caches, and incredible scenery is found at Chugach National Forest's "Trail of Blue Ice" in Portage Valley, where a route built at a cost of nearly a million dollars a mile winds its way through forests and across streams along the valley floor. Many other options exist for showing visitors a good time caching around Southcentral, but be sure you've checked out the route thoroughly in advance to avoid disappointing your visitors!

A Two-Hour Hike... by Louise Kempker/Freeweez

“StumpScape,” [GC1W0D2](#) ---just about a 2 hour hike? Fairly easy? Maybe. It promised to be a rain-free day, so team WOCM and Jo-Jo 3rd (from Seward) and Freeweez (from Anchorage) set off with two 7 year olds for the multi, a prize and smiley, and a nice hike. The exciting part was...this geocache had not been found in almost 3 years! Wow!! We questioned: ‘would it still be there? If so, would it still be intact? Could we find it?’ Our spirits were high upon the entrance to Ptarmigan Lake trail. The seven of us were armed with walking sticks, bear spray, bug dope, water, snacks and backpacks. We were ready and armed!! The US Forest Service has perfected the groomed path...wood chips neatly packed between wooden borders. The flowers were beautiful, the rock and tree-root formations interesting, and the creek bubbled along beside us for a mile or so. We swatted mosquitos, and swatted some more. There were no mile posts, so difficult to tell how far we actually walked. But we walked...and walked...and walked. Cache description said to take “Ptarmigan Lake trail”...so at the first “Y” we followed that. At this point, there was no more groomed trail, but at least it was packed dirt with stumps and rocks. Lots of tree roots to watch and step over. Lots of uphill climbing; our elevation rose. We walked...and walked...and walked. We swatted, and swatted, and swatted. We stopped for water and to put on bug dope. We saw bear scat...and more bear scat. And gorgeous views! Finally we arrived at GZ. Hooray! Located the new coordinates; although it had gotten very wet and the ink had blurred the new coords. We hoped the new coords were right...but in Geocaching...one never knows...right?



The ‘new’ path showing on our GPS’s did not look like a path. More like an overgrown, narrow, unused trail. So we took it. At this point, I remember thinking of Robert Frosts’ poem: “Two roads diverged in a wood...and I, I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference.” We walked upon what our fearless leader called a ‘game trail’, and he had to use the walking stick to



‘chop’ down Devils Club, hanging tree branches and overgrown bush that was taller than the 7 year olds. The left side of the trail at times ‘dropped off’, so going slowly was the best idea. The mosquitos loved that! 7 people going slowly in their neighborhood? I wondered if the bears knew we were going slowly also!! Fortunately, one of the 7 year olds had a small plastic whistle, which announced our presence with a shrill! The 13 year old boys jabbered loudly in their teenage squeaky voices, and I was singing ‘You are my Sunshine’ very loudly at the back of the pack! It was one 7 year old, who finally said, “I’m ready to go back to the car now”. Bless her soul...I think others of us felt the same way!! But...as true Geocachers...there was

no turning back! Then...lo and behold...the leader said...I think it’s here, Somewhere! My GPS lost signal. Quick! Get out new batteries, juggle that between swatting mosquitos...and singing. But we were at GZ! The kids joined the slashing of Devils Club, stomped the overgrown ferns, and swatted and sang. We just HAD to find the prize, and HAD to let the bears know we were there!!! And guess what? We did it! We found the cache nestled in its’ well hidden and overgrown location. YEA! The kids quickly chose their treasures, (I choose the kazoo...better than singing, huh?) and we loaded the cache back up with more goodies for the next to find, and continued on the trail. Our spirits were buoyed! The narrow trail finally emptied onto a kind of 2-track. At least it was wider. We still swatted, the whistle still blew, the kazoo continued to hum and our car awaited at the terminal end of this 2 track. Satisfaction for cachers is finding a well hidden prize that had not been found in almost 3 years! Amidst the tired, sweaty, (crabby) hikers...there was proudness for the accomplishment for the day! But...Team WOCM will always be teased about promising a 2 hour hike to Freeweez!



5th Annual Kenai River Picnic Event (GC48GP4)

By Scott Aleckson, SSO JOAT

This event has really turned into an annual geocaching “must attend”. It has been an absolute joy to put together and host this event over the last 5 years. I’m always amazed at how many people show up from so many places. This year was no exception as we had Alaskan cachers attending from Homer to Fairbanks and everywhere in between. In addition to the draw of so many locals, we also lured in several “tourist” cachers from places like Minnesota, South Dakota, and Ohio; a couple of them attending this event for their second time.



We also had an amazing mix of geocacher experience ranging from finding their very first cache just a few minutes prior to the event all the way to some bona fide cache addicts who were rapidly approaching 20,000 finds (and will probably have crossed that milestone by the time this article is published). There were a lot of new cachers in the mix, and that is always great to see. Attending an event is a great way to get started in geocaching, as these recently “de-muggled” cachers quickly found out just how friendly and helpful other cachers are as they were shown a variety of things about geocaching, such as how to use different features of their GPS or log a trackable item.

For the second year running, the event was held at the Kenai Municipal Park on South Forest Drive in Kenai. This slightly out of the way city park is well equipped with picnic spots as well as a couple picnic pavilions. With nearly 22 acres, there is plenty of forested land and a network of constructed trails throughout, making it a great park for the day caches. The city has also recently upgraded one end of the park with a very nice playground facility. One end of the park is bound by the beachfront bluffs overlooking the mouth of the famous Kenai River, where just 3 days prior the personal use dipnet salmon fishery was opened. From our vantage point, we could see hundreds of fishermen working on trying to fill their freezers with some fresh sockeye salmon.

As in years past, GeocacheAlaska! has stepped up to purchase all of the main course food for this picnic, which included somewhere around 50 hamburgers and 30 hot dogs (served), plus all the buns and condiments to match. Attending cachers were asked to bring a picnic-ready side dish to share as well as their own beverages. The food tables filled up quickly and ol’ JOAT lit two fires in the double-BBQ to get a start on cooking up all the food.

And so the first couple hours passed with cooking and eating and socializing aplenty. As everyone had their fill, a bit of anticipation began to spread through the crowd, especially with those who have been to previous picnics. They all knew the daycaching game was about to begin. And with the heat of the afternoon sun, we gathered around to review the game rules prior to the start.

Behind the scenes of this picnic, I have assembled a set of over two dozen cache containers that I use just for daycaches at this picnic. They are not containers that would be good for a permanent cache, as most are not waterproof, and many are not even water resistant. They are all, however, painted with a nearly perfect camouflage finish (see my article on painting plastics in the [June 2012](#) Newsletter), and when dropped on the ground in a spruce forest, tend to simply disappear from view. With most of these caches being in the “small” size range, they present a fairly challenging find for even experienced cachers. The night before the picnic, these caches were evenly distributed throughout the park and the waypoints recorded. Each cache contained a set of cards with random and escalating point values. Several caches also contained special action cards. The waypoints were then plugged into my handout template and enough copies printed for each team to have one.

The rules are simple. Form teams and head out to find as many caches as possible in a time limit. This year the teams had 75 minutes to play the field. Upon receipt of the list of caches, teams must pick their cache strategy, enter coordinates and head out to find

caches. When they find a cache, they pick one point card (the highest value) and leave the rest in the cache. Each subsequent finder will get fewer and fewer points for the find. To add a bit of a board game element, some action cards are sprinkled throughout that instruct the first finders to do things such as move the cache a certain distance or even steal the whole cache and bring it back with them.

With instructions and cache listings in hand, the teams took on the park and dashed from one waypoint to another. While most of the caches were traditional, there was also a multi-cache and a puzzle in the mix. Part of the puzzle was recycled from the previous year, so cachers who attended last year were already familiar with the device. It is now retired, so don't expect to see that item again.

As the time ran out, the cachers gathered back at the picnic pavilion and turned in their points cards to be tallied up. Then bonus points were awarded for some of the action cards that were picked up along the way. Each member of the winning team was awarded with a limited edition trackable salmon tag that was made specifically for this event. GeocacheAlaska! produced a single run of 50 of these trackables that were sold to event attendees with a baker's dozen of them awarded as prizes to the game winners and raffled off as door prizes.



Planning for next summer's picnic has already begun. It will be held during the later half of July, so keep an eye out for more info in the GeocacheAlaska! forums and look for the event to publish in the spring.



It All Began at the Lily Pad by Beth VanCouwenberghe/AKVans

It all started on July 5, 2012. Mama Van and Teen Van were in Seattle for the fourth. We decided on our last day there to find a cache. We brought up caches near our hotel and lo and behold what should be across the lake but Geocache Headquarters. So we hopped in our rental car and drove around the lake. When we went in the receptionist said we needed an appointment. I explained we were from Alaska and that our plane was leaving in 3 hours and we just happened to see that HQ was here. So she let us sign the log and look through the many items in the treasure chest. We only took one item - a Darth Vader mask travel bug. We said thanks and headed on our way. Little did we know this would be the first of a year-long venture to get a cache a day.

We found a cache every day of the year,
With smileys here and smileys there.

Papa and Mama Van along with the minivans
Found micros, bisons, and ammo cans.

When accompanied by Ollie the caching dog,
Many times it was difficult to sign the log.

Our streak of 365-plus days in a row
Brought us to many a ground zero.

Scratches and bruises, broken bones and bee stings,
Muggles, DNFs and a lost GPS did this time bring.

From six feet of snow, to rain and sun
Boy are we glad this feat is done. (not really because we are still going and going....)

Alaska geocachers wanted... By Ed and Nancy Irving/TheView (Canton, Ohio)

... for exciting teamwork caches! Meet geocachers from elsewhere around the country, and even around the world!

Alaska geocachers are in demand to partner with cachers from Ohio, Oregon, and even Denmark! There may be other teamwork caches out there, but these are the ones we've discovered. All examples of these caches we've become aware of are variants of multi-stage caches, although they may not be listed as such. They do use the "teamwork" attribute. Here's the scoop on each one:

OHIO – "O...HI 'O THERE Alaska!," [GC1VX77](#), is a multi-state multi-stage geocache. An Ohio cacher will find the stage one cache near Dayton, and have coords in hand for stage two near Wasilla. Stage two is an easy park & grab, and the Alaska cacher will find coords for the final stage back in Ohio. Rules allow both the Ohio and Alaska cacher to log the find of the final stage. We partnered with coloReido on this one over the span of two days due to the time difference.

OREGON – Alaska cacher will go find cache at coords provided for "North to Alaska," [GC20A77](#) near Wasilla. In container are coords for final stage of cache in Oregon. Meanwhile, an Oregon cacher will be finding a cache at coords provided for "Oregon or Bust," [GC2089W](#) near Portland, and inside this container are coords for the final stage of GC20A77. Teaming with an Oregon cacher will allow the Alaska cacher to log a find on both GC20A77 and GC2089W after both final stages are found. Sounds a little complicated, but cachers are waiting in Oregon for Alaska partners! If you are interested, go find GC20A77 and post a note on both GC20A77 and GC2089W that you have the coords for an available Oregon cacher. The rules will allow the Alaska & Oregon cachers to claim a finds on both the Alaska and Oregon caches. Several cachers in Oregon are waiting! We teamed with an Oregon cacher who'd been waiting almost a year. We hope to meet him when we head back to the Lower 48.

DENMARK – In researching these teamwork caches, we stumbled across another one involving Denmark. "DK - AK - DK Step 2," [GC49HPF](#) is a "?" cache for which the coords will be provided by a Denmark cacher, who will have found them in "DK - AK - DK," [GC3W5AA](#). The Alaska cacher will find coords in GC49HPF for the final stage of GC3W5AA for the Denmark cacher. The Alaska end sounds like it may require waders which we didn't bring with us from Ohio! At least one Denmark cacher is waiting.

Separately, we would like to pass along our thanks for the friendship and hospitality of the Alaska geocaching community for the second time (first in 2011). By the time this article is published, we'll be well on our way back to the Lower 48. We made many friends here. We met and teamed with ColoReido in 2011 at the Caching on the Kenai event, and won the challenge! He is following in our footsteps on the Cache Across America series, though taking a break for a year while in South Korea. We also want to recognize that rough-and-ready band of cachers in Fairbanks. What a great group of folks! And during our visit, we even got an Alaskan started geocaching. Look for exciting things from PolarPalmTree who is a teacher in Point Hope. We plan to return for a winter visit in January, 2015. One of those bucket list things!

One more thing. If your travels take you to Haines, Alaska, don't forget to find our geocache at the Hammer Museum – [GC31JX7](#).

Editor's Note: Stats purists may choose not to log the cache outside Alaska until they have visited the "Outside" location and signed the log. A "found it" log on the Outside cache also results in the Groundspeak souvenir being awarded to one's profile and one's profile maps being updated to reflect a cache found in the location without physically visiting it.

Kodiak Explorations by Suki Patterson/BerrySeekers3



The first picture was taken as part of the BerrySeekers3 team and AKbirder were searching for Pillar Mountain cache ([GC2AW6R](#)). No one was hurt while trying to walk and stare at their GPS's and the cache WAS found eventually! Kodiak caching is fun and challenging with plenty of super caches on the island to keep visitors busy for at least a few days! While in Kodiak, we met BurtonsInAK from Anchorage along the trail near Ft Ambercrombe and swapped geo-stories. We had spied them at a cache on a different trail and were very amused and surprised to cross paths with them in such a remote area!



The second picture is AKbirder who was exploring a remote WWII pillbox after finding the cache at Cape Chiniak.

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STATE PARKS PERMITS

Remember, if you want to hide a cache in a State Park, you may need a permit number for your cache page and the geocache. The 2013 permit number for the Chugach State Park is **13-KA-1289** and it must be on the cache container and the cache page. The 2013 permit number for the Mat-Su State Parks is **S12-061** and it must be on the cache container. Downloadable copies of the permits can be obtained from the GeocacheAlaska! [Land Manager webpage](#) or the GeocacheAlaska! [Land Use Forums](#).

ONLINE ARCHIVES

Previous editions of "Around the State" are now on our website. If you have missed previous newsletters, check out the series (including previous Trail Reports) [here](#).

*The editors of "Around the State" would like to hear from you. Submit articles or suggestions to scobey@geocachealaska.org
Subject: Around the State.*