



November 2013

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR—EVENTS

[Geocaching in Space Celebration](#), Homer, November 6

["Geocaching in Space"](#), Fairbanks, November 6

[To Infinity and Beyond!](#), Anchorage, November 6

[Ninth Annual Geofest](#), Anchorage, December 13

RECENT EVENT HAPPENINGS

[2013 Fall HOBO CITO - Girdwood Adopt-A-Highway \(3\)](#),
Girdwood, October 5

[2013 Fall HOBO CITO - Turnagain Pass Leap Frog](#),
Turnagain Pass, October 5

[2013 Fall HOBO CITO - Russian River Campout Social](#), 10/5

[2013 Fall HOBO CITO - Russian River Camp Breakfast](#), 10/6

[2013 Fall HOBO CITO - Russian River Campground](#), 10/6

[Halloween Geocache Survivor Style: Last Meal](#), Anchorage,
October 17

[GeocacheAlaska! FUNdamentals EduVent - Anchorage](#), 10/24

[GeocacheAlaska! FUNdamentals EduVent - Fairbanks](#), 10/24

Geofest Is Coming...

...only if someone steps up to chair the event so here is your opportunity to help coordinate a fun event but not have to do it alone!

The BP Energy Center is reserved for GeocacheAlaska!'s 9th Annual Geofest is December 13 and an event coordinator is needed. The GeocacheAlaska! Board will provide support, but members are needed to make the event happen.

If you are interested, contact Roberta Bromlow (Polgera) at polgera77@hotmail.com or any one of the board members.

Let's keep this annual event alive!



President's Corner

by Wes Skinner/NorthWes

As I write this article I'm flying somewhere above Texas, heading back to Anchorage (with an overnight stop in San Diego) via Alaska Airlines. A much-anticipated vacation cruising to new ports around the Western Caribbean coupled with a visit to the Magical Kingdom (and forays into all the other Realms of the Mouse too) has left me with a thinner pocketbook, some great memories, and a few new caches and countries added to my personal statistics. The caching done on this trip certainly wasn't about big numbers, but about the excitement of seeing my grandsons 'connect the dots' at select caches. The object lesson taught by an earthcache along the east-central Florida coast's Indian River was sealed forever in their minds by the dozen-member 'pack' of curious manatees which hung around as close as three feet away while we completed our observations. Hunting down a virtual cache in the heart of a national park on Cozumel dedicated to telling the history of the Aztecs gave an extra purpose to our visit and sharpened young eyes to imagine how the area looked 1500 years ago. Explaining to the captain of our little chartered sailboat about why they were using a GPS to 'navigate' themselves aboard his boat (as if he didn't know where to take us...) out to swim with stingrays at Grand Cayman introduced a dozen other adults to the 'get outdoors' aspect of geocaching as a family – and made sure the little guys received an extra bit of special time learning about the stingrays and the coral reef from our guide. And of course they were delighted to learn they could geocache right inside Walt Disney World (and look for those special WDW benchmarks too) without having to worry about muggles – since the caches there are all virtuals! Geocaching wasn't the main purpose of the vacation, but it's sure fun to hear the boys ask 'where are we geocaching today' during breakfast just as matter of fact as they ask about what else we're doing for the day. One of the main benefits for families who geocache is the mandate to 'get outdoors' and there's no doubt the game teaches many lessons beyond the physical enjoyment of being outdoors too. Next time you plan a caching jaunt, invite someone new along so they can learn why you like this game so much!

All this vacation fun brings me to the real point of this

month's article – Elections are here for the 2014 Board of Directors. While I was off playing in the sun, our Nominations Committee wrapped up recruiting candidates, hosted an open-microphone 'Meet the Candidate' night (beamed to locations around the state), and finalized the election slate you'll be voting on very soon. I have a tremendous appreciation for the outstanding effort our GeocacheAlaska! Inc. Nominating Committee has put forth this year. As you look at the roster of candidates, please consider what they've said about themselves in their statements of purpose (on our Forum), and examine their experience or desire to work in building up the Geocaching game in our state. GeocacheAlaska! Inc. exists to advocate with land managers for the privilege to play on public lands, to educate geocachers and the public about the geocaching game, and to provide opportunities to socialize with like-minded geocachers as well. The board's work is mostly accomplished by committees which each focus on a particular aspect of the organization's work, coupled with good communications amongst board members to keep the organization effective in meeting its goals. Don't vote for prestige or acclaim – vote for persons whom you feel will work to build up the geocaching game here in Alaska. And next time you see a board member, ask them how you can become involved in your organization's efforts to advocate, educate, and recreate together!



Reviewer's Corner –

by Michael Malvick/Greatland Reviewer

Sometimes cachers have a dispute over caching style, first to find (FTF) chase, a negative log, or another issue. Some cachers take a perceived or real slight in stride and keep right on caching, letting the issue roll right off like water off a duck's back. Others will reply privately and work things out behind the scenes. A third group will take the spat public via cache log rants, cache page edits, or forum posts. It's this final group that is the subject of this month's column.

Groundspeak operates the geocaching.com listing service to offer a fun and light game of finding cool locations with a GPS. It is not Groundspeak's intent for cache pages or their e-mail system via a cacher's profile page to be used to publically humiliate, ridicule, or otherwise disparage a cacher. The site's [Terms of Use](#) state that a cacher may not “*upload, post, transmit or otherwise distribute (including by emailing us) any content that is unlawful, harmful, threatening, abusive, harassing, tortious, defamatory, vulgar, profane, obscene, libelous, invasive of another's privacy, hateful, embarrassing, harmful to minors, or racially, ethnically or otherwise objectionable to any other person or entity.*”

If a violation of the Terms of Use is egregious enough, Groundspeak will suspend, or, in the most severe cases, terminate, a cacher's account.

Occasionally, a cacher violates the Terms of Use with a public post. When the post brought to my attention, I endeavor to work the issue privately with the offending party and give that cacher a chance to

correct things on their own. If I am unable to resolve matters, I elevate the matter to Groundspeak's Lackeys (paid professionals). Any cacher who is aware of a Terms of Use violation is encouraged to report it to either me through my profile or directly to Groundspeak at the new [Help Center](#) so the game can be kept light and fun for all. All resolution efforts are maintained confidential.

As with anything anyone posts on the internet or in e-mail, once it leaves your computer, it is in the public record forever, so think before you type. All cache logs, even when deleted, are permanently archived and retrievable. All cache page edits are tracked after the page is published using a revision history tool, making it easy to recreate a cache page's history. Therefore, if you want to vent, take it out on the forest during a cache hunt, talk to your dog (s/he'll love the conversation), confide in trusted friends, but don't use Groundspeak's resources to do so.

Compared to other regions, Alaska has a very congenial caching community. Let's keep it that way!!!

2013 Geocoins Now Available!

The 2013 GeocacheAlaska! Orca Geocoin is now available online and at select events around the state. The coins come in shiny gold and shiny nickel finish and cost \$9 for Sourdough members of GeocacheAlaska! and \$10 for all other cachers. Supplies are limited, so [click here](#) to order yours now!



Geocaching in Space [The Geocaching Blog](#)

Alaska features three “event pins on Groundspeak's [interactive map](#) featuring more than 1,100 Geocaching in Space Event Caches will dot the globe on November 6 and 7.

Each event commemorates the launch of a Geocaching Travel Bug® as it journeys to the International Space Station. Astronaut Rick Mastracchio will use the Travel Bug as a tool to teach students back on Earth about geography and science. He's scheduled to launch from Kazakhstan in the early morning of November 7, which will be November 6 in much of the rest of the world.

GeocacheAlaska! 2014 Board Member Elections

The GeocacheAlaska! 2014 Nominating Committee of [Michael Malvick](#)/Ladybug Kids (chair), [Victoria Noble](#)/Blazingpathways, [Tony Roof](#)/firemanak, and [Cameron Gilchrist](#)/AlaskaCariboozer are happy to announce the slate of candidates for the GeocacheAlaska! 2014 Board of Directors. The voting period will be November 1-November 15, 2013 and votes will be tabulated by electric ballot hosted on Surveymonkey.com.

The 2014 election will be conducted to create the stagger by electing a full Board. The President, Secretary and Webmaster and two Members at Large will be elected for two-year terms and are up for election again for the term beginning in 2016. The Vice President, Treasurer, and two Members at Large will be elected for one-year terms and are up for election again for the term beginning in 2015.

Candidates for the 2014 GeocacheAlaska! Board of Directors are:



President, Wes Skinner/NorthWes

I'm Wes Skinner (NorthWes), and I'm running for the office of President. My purpose in running for President of GeocacheAlaska! Inc. is to support the Board of Directors of Alaska's only statewide geocaching organization in meeting the organization's goals and objectives. The organization exists for three primary reasons: to build up positive relationships with land managers (opening public lands to use by geocachers), to educate both the public and geocachers alike about the game (how it's played, and refinements in style of play), as well as developing social interaction between interested cachers (through sponsored events and activities). The President is to facilitate successful completion of these goals and objectives by linking together board members and GeocacheAlaska! Inc. Sourdough members into committees to accomplish the organization's work. These past two years have seen a steady improvement in most areas of work, with outstanding success in some specific committees. Our elected Board of Directors are the key to our organization's success, and our voting membership must choose board members committed to investing time and energy to meet these goals.



Vice President. Cameron Gilchrist/AlaskaCariboozer

The need for a vital intermediary organization between geocachers and land-owners is very important in Alaska. GeocacheAlaska! provides the education, support, and advocacy not only to cachers but to the many entities that we seek to hide and seek caches on. In order for geocaching to grow and thrive throughout Alaska, we need to have an organization that understands its role.

As Vice-President, I hope to bring organization, professionalism and a positive team-based approach to the organization, seeking to utilize the gifts and talents of each member of the board to achieve its goals.

On a personal note, SnowySwan and I started geocaching this past January and have enjoyed this new shared outdoor activity together. Our three boys, ReidRio, Cheese&Sprinkles, and the 3rdWLD, also enjoy caching (as long as the cache is big, boxy, and full of swag!) We have enjoyed building our Favorite Restaurant series, and the boys and I like the challenge of the woody and mountain caches!



Treasurer, Roberta Bromlow/Polgera

I am Roberta (Polgera). I am running for the position of Treasurer for GeocacheAlaska! I have been on the board since 2009 and helped the organization acquire its non-profit (501c3) designation. My background and education are in accounting and I have helped the organization establish a PayPal account and the ability to take credit card transactions for membership and bling.

I started caching in 2008 and was very quickly addicted. Although my ability to get out and cache has slowed in the past year, I am never more excited than when a newby comes to a meeting or an eduvent and I get to explain what GeocacheAlaska! and geocaching is all about. This excitement is what made me decide to run for the treasurer's position another year.

I would like to continue my efforts to support the organization in 2014.



Secretary, Michael Malvick/Ladybug Kids

I began geocaching in 2004 and have been involved at various levels in the communities of Fairbanks, Valdez and Anchorage. I was a member of the steering committee that drafted the original by-laws for GeocacheAlaska! and have been on the Board of Directors since 2009 holding positions of Webmaster (2009-2010), Vice-President (2011, 2013), and Secretary (2012).

I have brokered Land Manager agreements in Fairbanks and Anchorage to keep geocaching alive on public lands in those communities. I am also the Groundspeak Volunteer Cache Reviewer for Alaska and the EarthCache Reviewer for

Alaska, Hawaii, and other areas as required.

I have coordinated [twelve geocoin projects, the 2013 annual pathtag set](#), and several other geobling projects on behalf of Alaska geocachers. Those efforts include the first Alaska geocoin in 2005, the first trackable Alaska geocoin in 2006, the first (and to my knowledge, only, anywhere) solid gold geocoin in 2008, and the 2011 jade/gold nugget geocoin. I also set up the Groundspeak Distributorship for GeocacheAlaska! and initiated the business relationship with GxProxy.

In 2014, I will work with the Board of Directors to grow the GeocacheAlaska! membership, offer a quality program of educational events, expand the number and types of geofellowship events (Indian Summer, Geofest, Campouts, etc.), offer unique quality bling to members, and foster relationships with a broader array of Land Managers across Alaska. In addition to developing geocaching friendly land use policies, my goal is to encourage additional Land Manager caching programs such as the USFWS Blue Goose GeoTour, which GeocacheAlaska! helped launch in October 2012 and would have been repeated in 2013 except for the US Government shutdown.

Specifically, as Secretary, I will meet my duties as defined in the GeocacheAlaska! by-laws that include but are not limited to maintaining an accurate and timely written record of business conducted by the GeocacheAlaska! Board of Directors, publish the newsletter, maintain GeocacheAlaska!'s files of critical documents (permits, contracts, etc.), carry out written correspondence with third parties as required, and serve as the registered agent for GeocacheAlaska!.

I look forward to continuing to serve Alaskan geocachers.



Webmaster, Scott Aleckson/SSO JOAT

I, Scott Aleckson, better known in the geocaching community as SSO JOAT, am running for the BoD for re-election as Webmaster. Previously, I served in 2010 on the Education Committee and then on the BoD in 2011 as a Member At Large. I moved to the WebMaster position at the end of 2011 and have served through 2012 & 2013 as WebMaster. I've also been the sitting Chairman of the Education committee for 2011, 2012 & 2013.

Though a resident of Soldotna, I work a two-week rotation out of town. I've been able to attend every BoD meeting by remote and occasionally make it to Anchorage to attend meetings in person when my schedule allows it. Due to great advances in technology and communications, remote service on the BoD has become a proven concept and helps spread the GeocacheAlaska! roots around the state, making it a truly state-wide organization. I'm honored to be a part of that.

On the Education committee, I've pushed forward with the monthly EduVent program on the timetable set back in 2010 that we used throughout 2011, 2012 & 2013. The program has been extremely successful in fulfilling GeocacheAlaska's goal of delivering geocaching education to the membership as well as the community at large. This year we further expanded our audience and picked up geocachers in Cordova and Fairbanks with some Sourdough Members dropping in individually from all over the state and during their travels around the country. I am currently stepping down as the Education Committee Chair and moving to the Fundraising Committee Chair. I am hopeful that we can find an Anchorage-based member on the BoD who will accept the Education Chair with some new energy.

Since taking the Webmaster position, the updates to these forums and the GeocacheAlaska! website continue. Ongoing maintenance updates continue with regularity to keep the website information as current as possible. In the background, a lot of work is ongoing into a complete redesign of the entire website to make it more functional, user-friendly, and to bring the old FrontPage-based HTML coding standards up to current XHTML and CSS web standards. It is a large job that still has many long hours of work left to do. Since I'm already up to my elbows in the redesign process, I'd like to continue with it for another term in this BoD position.

In addition to maintaining the "face" of Geocache Alaska! on the internet, I look forward to continued service to the BoD as a whole as well as the various committees that work behind the scenes to maintain land access and host events for the education and enjoyment of all. I also look forward to providing many contributions to the monthly Newsletter that the organization publishes.

Members at Large (4 will be elected)



Robert Burton/burtonsinak

I'm Robert Burton, DCA Burtonsinak, also known as the 5/8th (my wife Patti is the 3/8th) part of Burtonsinak. I have been caching since 2010. I'm running as member at large. I look forward to helping the board when and where directed. I love all aspects of geocaching, meeting up with friends to hike or bike a trail to laying down a bunch of new caches to bring people to some of my favorite places in and around Anchorage. Many people know me as a good "go to" person -- I have the tools, the resources, the experience and the flexibility to help solve problems and get

the task or the job done. I take commitments seriously.



Lyle Brown/shotgunsgm

I have the time and enthusiasm to serve as your board member when I am in Alaska. If elected my goal will be to support the Committee the Geo Cache Community, and increase Sourdough membership in GeocacheAlaska. I will be attending the meeting on 24 October.



Louise Kempker/freeweez

My caching name is 'freeweez'; but my given name is Louise -and I was born into geo-caching in 2010. My fam-cachers are team WOCM from Seward, who gifted me with a GPS in March of 2011. They coached, prodded and encouraged me until finally- I was ready to try it on my own! Even though I still consider myself a 'newbie'...I was able to complete the 31 day challenge in August! I am willing to delve in and lend whatever help is needed to GeocacheAlaska!

There was a bit of chit-chat about GeocacheAlaska! being represented at the Anchorage Downtown Market next summer. I think this might be a great opportunity to create awareness of our organization. Also,I have attended the August geocaching picnic in Kenai for the past 2 years, and would like to begin a conversation about having something similar in Anchorage. That is always a very fun, exciting family event!

Geocaching appeals to all levels of search-ability, which gives the cache owner the opportunity to be creative, sneaky, clever and fun with the ability to provide hours of entertainment for the seeker. Cache on!!!



Sean McErlane/Mac_5115

My name is Sean McErlane and I came to Alaska in 2011 when I was in the Army. After 7 years in the Army, I decided to get out of the military after a couple of deployments to Iraq. I was in Baghdad, Iraq from 2006-2008 for the Iraqi Surge Campaign and Kirkuk, Iraq in 2009-2010 for the rebuilding and conversion into Operation New Dawn. My wife and I have fallen in love with everything about Alaska and didn't even have to think twice about settling down here. After the military, I started working in Valdez as Security Officer and worked with Scott aka SSO JOAT, who introduced me to GeocacheAlaska!. Currently, I have accepted a position as a correctional officer which will get me closer to home and more time with the family. Also, I am attending the University of Alaska Anchorage so that I can obtain my B.A. in Justice with a minor in Psychology. Go Seawolves!

I have become addicted to geocaching and will continue to strive for the next find. Geocaching gives me the opportunity to go to places that I would have never thought to go and meet great folks that I might have never met. For that, I am grateful. I know that I am new to the GeocacheAlaska! organization but I will commit to the demands of the board. I am motivated and dedicated to new ideas that will only improve the organization for its members and future members. I have already showed interest into the fundraising committee and have come up with a couple of ideas that I am currently working on. I am always willing to lend a helping hand for the organization as well. I would be honored and privileged to serve as a member of the board. Thank you for your consideration.



Anthony Roof/firemanak

I started caching in 2011, just bored one day and hanging with a friend. It started slow, 3 DNFs but then things changed. Here in 2013 I am about 750 caches found, over 30 some hidden or adopted. There are rumors of me being an evil cache hider, which isn't true...lol just cause I like Nanos and camo doesn't mean I am a bad person.

I am big on promoting and teaching others about caching, liquidearth and myself and akdragonflyd just finished up with an UAF OLLI class teaching 13 cachers ages ranging from 50-75 years old how to cache. They loved it.

I bring to the table my willingness to problem solve, Like working with Eielson Airforce base on cache placement on their rec area, work with others, trying to help them with planning, promoting, and getting support on events, and the passion of geocaching. I have served on the board of Directors with the Fairbanks paddling Association, have volunteered for many other causes.

What I see for 2014, is the state group, growing, More public awareness of geocaching, volunteering more with home school programs, boy scouts, girl scouts, sharing geocaching.

I would like to help make GCA better known in the outlying communities and get more cachers involved. Please vote for me for Member at Large in Fairbanks.



Dana Rosso/DR-AK

I am Dana Rosso DR-AK. I have been caching since 2008. I have been a member of Geocaching Alaska from day one. I served as one of the first Members at Large as we were originally setting up our organization. I have been nominated to serve on the board again as a Member at Large. For the past few years geocaching has been a way for me to get out and enjoy the great state of Alaska, as well as a number of other states throughout the country. The state of Alaska has an amazing group of geocachers that respect the sport, sadly geocaching in other

states has slowly been declining. We are very lucky to have Geocache Alaska to represent us as an organization to the land managers through out the state.

One of my favorite parts of geocaching is sharing our sport with new cachers. I believe that being able to be a part of Geocache Alaska as a member at large would allow me the opportunity to share my passion for the sport with new cachers and to try to keep the organization moving in the direction that we originally had planned years ago.



John Scoblic/Scobey

Since retiring, I have a lot of time on my hands. It's time to give back again to a hobby I've enjoyed for years. As a board member I will fully support five GeocacheAlaska endeavors: events, geocoins and pathtags, the newsletter, the webpage and the forum. I started the later two and I feel they are important means of bringing our community together.



Joel Vos/Neversummer

My name is Joel Vos, better known as "NeverSummer". I grew up in the miniature great land of Minnesota, where I cut my teeth on GPS and GIS in 2001. I had a very enthusiastic professor who got me started on the game of "GPS Stash Hunting" while I was taking his GIS course in college. I graduated in 2002 with a degree in Environmental Studies. I helped to place a handful of caches around campus, and let the game fade in my memory until a fateful day in 2005.

My aunt, username ohjoy!, lives in Washington, near the heart of Geocaching.com HQ. She's been at the game for a long time, and when I moved to Oregon in May, 2005, she asked me if I had heard of geocaching. When I said, "Yes!", the fun really started. We went out that day, found 3 official geocaching.com caches, made me an account, and I logged them online. I was hooked!

Living in Portland from 2005-2009, I learned a lot about the game from the local, then-"old timers" and early adopters of the game. In 2009 I moved back to Minnesota to work on a Master of Education, Environmental Education degree, and brought my geocaching gameplay along for the trip. From 2009-2012 I lived in two different areas of that state, which had major differences in how they played the game from Oregon. I learned a lot, and worked with the city of Duluth, MN, to come up with geocaching policies for their park system. That was when I realized the difference we can each make in relationships with land managers.

I moved to Homer, Alaska with my wife in early May, 2012, and have been working for the US Fish and Wildlife Service at the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge. My position began as a Park Ranger, where I was providing educational programs for visitors to the Islands And Ocean Visitor Center. During that time, I have helped create some clarity on USFWS policy for geocaching, as well as develop protocol for allowing Earthcaches on USFWS lands. By partnering with GreatlandReviewer and representatives from Groundspeak and the USFWS, I feel proud to have put Alaska on the map as a knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and dedicated set of geocachers in the United States. I have been a proud Sourdough GeocacheAlaska! member since I learned about membership in 2012.

For my most recent geocaching-related activity, I put on a "GPS Learning Lab" at Islands and Ocean visitor center in Homer, conducted a "Geocaching 101" event for the public, created an updated PowerPoint presentation for the Geocaching 101 events put on by GeocacheAlaska!, assisted the local Girl Scout troop in completing their Geocaching badge, partnered with The_Firefly and the Homer Library for a youth reading program geocaching event, developed the caches for the Islands and Ocean visitor center and Alaska Maritime Refuge, assisted in planning the "Hobo CITO" event series with SSO Joat and The_Firefly, and continue to be active with networking geocaching programs with area youth groups such as 4H, Girl and Boy Scouts, and the Homer Library. (I can't take full credit for this whole list, as SSO and Firefly have been very, very important cogs in many of those machines!) In addition, I have developed relationships with local land managers such as the Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, Kachemak Bay Research Reserve, and have been working with the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge on outdoor education plans which include GPS and possible geocaches. I

have developed a library of GPS units which can be used for events and other needs in partnership with the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge and GeocacheAlaska!. I also coordinate efforts of geocachers to create Earthcaches within the Alaska Maritime jurisdiction as the land manager contact for the Refuge.

I can now bring to the table my enthusiasm for the game, my understanding of how the game is played in many locations in the US, and my ability to partner real-time with Federal agencies in Alaska. I also maintain the "IslandsAndOcean" land manager account for our Refuge, and continue to assist in partnerships with the city, state, and federal interests. I am trained academically and professionally for teaching, interpretation, and outreach, as well as public presentations and web site development.

I would be honored to have the opportunity to use my enthusiasm and skill set to continue developing educational programming, and facilitating outreach programs with local, state and federal agencies to promote GeocacheAlaska! with safe, legal and enjoyable geocaching gameplay. By bringing a voice to the end of the road here in Homer, I am excited about the opportunity to work with others in the Alaskan geocaching community, and to bring more attention to the wonderful outdoor areas ripe for more geocaches here on the Kenai Peninsula.

I can commit to the 2 year term, and would be happy to continue serving on the Education Committee, and working on the Advocacy Committee if elected to an At-Large directorship.

Geocaching in the Golden Years in the Golden Heart City by Hal Meyer/liquidearth

Beginning on September 11 through October 9, 13 members of OLLI (Osher LifeLong Learning Institute) got together to learn Geocaching 101 - "Alaska Style". OLLI is a program of the University of Alaska Fairbanks offering a rich array of learning opportunities for adults who are 50 or older.

Taught by 4 members of "Those Who Cache In The Banks" (Tony & Danelle Roof and Hal & Carol Meyer), the program was held for 2 hours a day, once a week, for 5 weeks. Using skill sets and 8 GPS's provided by Geocache Alaska!, students got a solid understanding of what Geocaching is then proceeded to have an ever-loving blast practicing their newly found skills. Two days were spent inside using the Geocaching.com website to show videos and cover how to research and download caches, then log them in. The weather gods gave us the other 3 spectacular days to be outside finding those caches in perfect fall colors.

Each cacher was excited to establish their own identity by creating handles that reflected who they are or their past history traveling the world. Once they had their handles they began to log the several caches we found during class. It was so great because we could hardly restrain these folks from taking off "into the woods" to find pre-assigned caches. One student was so excited he started hiding caches before the class was over (Wow!). It is important to note that this class was scheduled for 4 weeks yet the students "demanded" we extend it a week because the weather was so great and they were having so much fun.

At graduation the students were awarded with a Diploma, a Travel Bug, a Bison Tube, a Path Tag and a "Fairbanks Fiesta" of good food and good times! Each member of the class signed inside a "camouflaged" ammo can created by the instructors which will be placed on the University Park school grounds and dedicated to this class for use in future classes. During the "Fiesta", several folks mentioned they wanted to create a SIG (Special Interest Group) through OLLI for Geocaching so they can get together with each other more often to go caching.



As instructors we loved the fact this sector of the population got so excited about having an activity that was really fun, helped their fitness, got them outdoors, challenged their minds and yet allowed them to participate at their own level. Everyone said this was something they were definitely going to use in the future and take home and share with their friends and family.

The most important thing by far was to see the sparkle in their eyes and the broad smiles on their faces as they spent time together - enjoying each other's company! All because of Geocaching!

Recognition Corner – Celebrating Alaskan Caching Hallmark Experiences

by the C.A.C.H.E. Committee

On September 28th, thirty-six cachers attended an event at Joe’s pizzeria in South Anchorage. The idea for the event started when Cohofive saw her daughter’s delight when the Alabama caching community celebrated her 1000th find. Therese suggested Alaska have something similar. GeocacheAlaska loved the idea of recognizing its members’ accomplishments and the Celebrating Alaskan Caching Hallmark Experiences (C.A.C.H.E.) Committee was created.

After everyone was satiated by one or more trips to the salad/pizza bar, the tag team duo of tomanoble and Cohofive began the “official” segment of the evening’s program with a bit of humor, an explanation of the Golden Ammo Can Award Program, and the unveiling of a mountain of shiny golden ammo cans, personalized and emblazoned with award badges.

Geocaching flourishes in Alaska because of the diverse skills, personalities, and ways we contribute to the game. The recognition program seeks to honor not only those who enjoy the hunt, but also those who find joy in cache development and in bringing the community together for events, and those that enjoy CITO, advocacy, and Board work. The C.A.C.H.E. Committee recognized 25 cachers for their contributions to Alaska caching at this inaugural event and 14 were present to accept. The initial criteria were that a cacher must reside in Alaska, be a GeocacheAlaska! Sourdough member for at least two years, and meet at least one of the badge categories.

Advocacy Badge:	<i>Active in Land manager interactions or permitting processes</i>
Board Member Badge:	<i>Serve as a GeocacheAlaska Board Member for at least one term</i>
CITO Host Badge:	<i>Host one or more CITO events</i>
Events Host Badge:	<i>Host 5 or more events (personal and/or for GeocacheAlaska!)</i>
Edu Presenter Badge:	<i>Present at least one Eduvent or community educational event</i>
100 Hides Badge:	<i>At least 50 hides must be in Alaska</i>
1959 Finds Badge:	<i>At least 500 finds in Alaska</i>
4900 Finds Badge:	<i>At least 500 finds in Alaska</i>
10000 Finds Badge:	<i>At least 500 finds in Alaska</i>

Congratulations to the 2013 Fall Event Awardees:

- ✓ akgh519 - Board Member, 1959 finds
- ✓ Baradora - 1959 finds
- ✓ Burtonsinak - 1959 finds
- ✓ Capra Hircus - Board Member, 1959 finds, Presenter
- ✓ coloReido - 1959 finds
- ✓ davidaknz -1959 finds
- ✓ glenn.fish - 1959 finds
- ✓ km67rph - 1959 finds
- ✓ Malcore - 1959 finds
- ✓ Miss Polly Prissy Pants -1959 finds
- ✓ NorthWes - 100 hides, 1959 finds, Board Member, Event Host, CITO host, Advocacy
- ✓ Omonra - 1959 finds
- ✓ Polgera - Board Member, 1959 finds, Event Host, Presenter
- ✓ Shotgunsgm - 1959 finds
- ✓ Southeastalaska - 1959 finds
- ✓ Wasillian - 1959 finds
- ✓ Karma! - 100 hides, 4900 finds, Event Host
- ✓ Ladybug Kids - 4900 finds, Board Member, Presenter, Events Host, Advocacy, 100 hides, CITO host
- ✓ Meljo - 4900 finds, CITO host
- ✓ Tomanoble - 4900 finds, Board Member, Events Host, Advocacy
- ✓ cavyguy - 10000 finds, Board Member, Presenter, Events Host, Advocacy, 100 hides
- ✓ li1gray - 10000 finds, Presenter, Events Host
- ✓ Scobey - 100 hides, CITO host

- ✓ StoweAK - Board Member
- ✓ Fuzzybelly - Board Member, CITO host

Look for our next Celebrating Alaskan Cachers Hallmark Experiences events in the spring, throughout the year, and around the State. We'll unveil new badges in 2014 as well.



The C.A.C.H.E. committee welcomes assistance in identifying the areas such as presenter and events and advocacy and welcomes new members if someone would like to join us in crafting the cans and developing events.

Open Microphone Night

GeocacheAlaska! held an open microphone night via two physical events ([GeocacheAlaska! FUNDamentals EduVent - Anchorage](#) and [GeocacheAlaska! FUNDamentals EduVent - Fairbanks](#)) and remote participation from Homer via simulcast over WebEx. Most of the candidates for the 2014 Board of Directors spoke about why they were running for office and then participants were queried about what they would like the Board to do during 2014. That feedback is presented below:

Flip Chart Notes from Open Microphone Session

GeocacheAlaska!'s mission in three easy words:

- educate
- advocate
- socialize (recreate/associate)

Event Ideas/Requests

- Mo' Pi IV and 2Pi (Pie events on 3/24 and 6/28)
- Southeast Alaska Ferry Ride
- Cordova Ferry Ride
- H.E.L.P. II (Eklutna Lake Power Trail)
- Anchorage Picnic like the Annual Kenai Peninsula Picnic - When asked if he would do it, Scott correctly eminded folks in the room there are plenty of Anchorage cachers who could pull off a similar event.
- More Camping Events

Communication Feedback (tallies are unofficial quick counts, but are provided to show relative interest in each medium)

- Forums, including the news banner - 8
- Facebook - 10
- Twitter - 2
- Website - 8
- Newsletter - A lot (keep it monthly)
- Direct E-mail - A lot
- Suggestion from the floor - GeocacheAlaska! stickers for cache containers
- Joel Vos recommended using [Mailchimp](#) to coordinate/integrate e-mail/Facebook/Twitter/etc. communications

Outreach Idea

Identify cachers who are willing to serve as community hosts for visiting cachers. Links to their profile or direct e-mail (with individual approval) could be provided in GeocacheAlaska! and Geocaching.com forums as well as the Website.

The Hobos Strike Again to Clean up the Kenai *By Scott Aleckson/SSO JOAT*

For the second time this year, a group of GeocacheAlaska! members packed their sleeping bags and rolled up their sleeves to travel along a section of the Kenai Peninsula to pick up trash. This Fall the road trip started out in [Girdwood](#) on Saturday morning, October 5th to complete the third and final Adopt-A-Highway cleanup of our two-mile section of the Seward Highway. About a dozen cachers from around Southcentral Alaska kicked off this Hobo event on a beautiful Fall morning. In addition to many of the regulars from the Anchorage area, we even had barnacle9 all the way over from Cordova to help out. Even though lighter than usual on bodies, we still made good time and picked up a significant quantity of trash.



GeocacheAlaska! donated some CITO prizes which were raffled off to attendees. As with the previous running of the Hobo CITO series last Spring, the raffle can retained all attendee's tickets throughout the series. The more events attended the more tickets each person had in the can for subsequent

drawings. A couple truckloads of trash were dropped at the transfer site on the way south to Turnagain Pass.

Most picked up some lunch to go in Girdwood before heading up to the Pass and we regrouped at the pullouts at the top of [Turnagain Pass](#) to come up with a strategy for conducting a "leap frog" style cleanup of as many pullouts, campgrounds, and trail heads that we could on the way south to the Y at the Sterling highway at Tern Lake. There were 7 Hobos who continued on after the Girdwood event including SSO JOAT, barnacle9, Ladybug Kids, li1gray, Mrs. CohoFive and the pair of RCWard.

The group divided up by their five vehicles with a plan to have one or two stop at each pullout along the way depending on the size of the area to be cleaned. We started by breaking up and cleaning the two large pullouts at the top of the Pass, then started heading south. The first ones to the next spot pulled out to make a quick trash sweep while the rest moved along to the next site. Upon arrival at Bertha Creek campground, we all stopped and made quick work of walking the entire campground loop. A few of us broke off for a quick cache find adjacent to the campground before we regrouped and headed over to Johnson Pass trailhead as a group to clean up that site.



Again we started leap frogging to hit multiple pullouts simultaneously as we worked down to the Canyon Creek Bridge at the Hope Junction. At this point, four of our group needed to call it a day and get back to Anchorage. The remaining three continued on to Summit Lake and made a sweep of the Tenderfoot Campground while making a cache find and allowing one to perform some cache maintenance at the campground. As the hour was getting late and our numbers had dwindled, we decided to skip the smaller pullouts and went straight to Devil's Pass trailhead to make a trash sweep and log a couple more cache finds in that area. Finally, we rolled down to Tern Lake and completed our final trash sweep of the lakeside highway pullout while gazing upon a dozen swans and a few ducks that were still lingering ahead of their winter's journey.



As the three were finishing up our mission at Tern Lake, others were already gathering at the [Russian River Campground](#) for the evening campfire social event. Early arrivals, AKLoisandClark had selected a prime group of campsites, set up a dining area and got the campfire started. The Firefly and her daughter from Homer joined in and we three soon arrived to setup our tents in a nearly empty campground. As darkness settled, our group had swelled back to seven and we spent the next several hours gathered around the campfire telling stories and roasting various stick-worthy food items over the flames.

As the night lingered on, the Hobos gradually wandered off to their sleeping arrangements until it was well after midnight when the last couple retired. After a good night's sleep, the process reversed itself as cachers began stirring in the early morning hours, packing up their camping gear and returning to the community fire pit where the cooking was already starting.



Like there was an army soon to arrive, [the cooking rolled on with vigor](#), spearheaded by AKLoisandClark. Bacon, sausages, eggs, pancakes, and the Dutch oven was in full tilt churning out cinnamon rolls that were quickly devoured. It didn't take long before everyone had their fill, and then some. With food still warming by the fire, the rumble of an approaching engine soon pierced through the dawn. Moments later, like cousin Eddy showing up for Christmas Vacation, a big RV came thundering into the campground and out jumped our favorite Fuzzybelly, clearly drawn by the scent of bacon cooking over an open campfire. Soon after, the RCWard pair made an appearance, bolstering our Hobo cleaning force up to ten full bellies.

As the final effort of this shortened Hobo CITO series, we grabbed our gloves and our bags to disperse into the

[Russian River Campground](#) to pick up trash. While we had been thinking that we might be cleaning fire pits, it turned out that the fire pits had already been taken care of prior to our arrival. Overall, the campground was in pretty good shape, but we still managed to pick up several bags of mostly small litter during our walks about most of the camping loop and adjacent parking and road areas.

I'd like to extend a great big Thank You to all who participated in any portion of this weekend event series. It has been successful, and a lot of fun. I expect this event to continue next Spring with a clean & camping weekend somewhere on one side or the other of Memorial Day weekend in an area and along a route that is yet to be determined. Hope to see you there!



The Adventures of the Four Hucklebucks *by Tony Roof/Firemanak*



friendly cachers on one side, and two "evil" cachers on the right. The two evil cachers were already looking for mischief and ways to hide more evil caches for fellow cachers to find.

On an abnormally crisp October Alaskan morning, 4 friends headed out on an adventure. Liquidearth, Aktrekster, Akdragonflyd and Firemanak went caching to Chena Hot Springs Resort. They figured they would start about 23 miles, and cache every other cache on the way up, leaving caches for the trip back.

The forces inside the car were about equal with two nice,





We found caches like **Flat Creek** by Mamanook, **Changing Chena** by Tunda Quad, and many caches by other cachers. We ended up in Chena Hot Springs Resort area where we decided to grab **Far Mountain Trail** by Patty. Aktrekster and Akdragonflyd went one way looking for a more gradual trail, Liquidearth and Firemanak went the other more direct way as they were only 500 feet away from the cache. Well if you've never been there, the mountains are tall and paths are not as visible. Firemanak decided to go **STRAIGHT** up and over! He turned on his mountain goat personality and started climbing. Liquidearth decided to go find the other cachers. Firemanak went 150 feet up in elevation, and found the cache. About that time Akdragonflyd and Aktrekster come up and point out a 4wheeler trail about 20 feet south of Firemanak, which no one had taken up!

We came down and went for the **Crash cache**. We found the site without any problems, so we decided to get more; **Chena Cache** and **Beginner trail** were in our sights!

What a beautiful fun day, we marked off cache after cache hiking around laughing and teasing each other. Akdragonflyd was a great sport hanging out with three crazy, funny guys. She laughed all day long either at or with us, I couldn't tell.

On the way back to Fairbanks, we cached, but I had to be evil for our good friend **N'oreasters**, who we love to tease about nanos. So we pulled over, and in the middle of a huge wind and rain storm, I placed another nano for all to find! Putting a spin on the name from N'oreasters caches called **Satan's Brothers**; I called mine, "**Satan's Brothers 1&2a**



N'oreasters ur turn"

As the rain storm finished we grabbed a few more caches by alaskagrown and family and enjoyed the beauty of the sunset, the rain soaked roads reflecting the beautiful fall trees.

Thank you to everyone who has placed caches for us in Fairbanks to find. I look forward to my next adventure with more of our fellow cachers!

Remember if you are in Fairbanks, please contact us so we can go caching with you.





JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!

Join GeocacheAlaska! Inc. on [Facebook!](#) Stay in touch and share your activities with fellow members of the geocaching community by visiting our [Group](#) and clicking 'Join'. This is where GeocacheAlaska! members can plan caching adventures, post photos, and pass messages within the membership ranks. This Facebook Group is designed to be yet another member benefit for Sourdoughs and Cheechakos alike.

[@GeocacheAlaska](#) Follow GeocacheAlaska! Inc. on Twitter!

GEOCACHEALASKA! MEMBERSHIP

There are two membership levels at GeocacheAlaska! Inc.

Sourdough Membership (formerly known as Premium Membership) affords you discounts in the GeocacheAlaska! online and traveling stores and events that have an entrance fee (Geofest, etc.), voting rights in Board of Directors elections and a warm fuzzy feeling for helping underwrite the organization's operating expenses that include web hosting, printing, banners, post office box fees, event prizes and lots of other things that are required to make things happen. Because GeocacheAlaska! is an incorporated 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, your membership dues are tax deductible.

If you cannot join as a Sourdough at this time, you may support GeocacheAlaska! by joining as a Cheechako (formerly known as Associate) Member. This will allow you to receive the monthly newsletter and e-mail announcements. More members at any level gives GeocacheAlaska!'s more clout and credibility during land manager conversations, so sign up today!

There are four ways you can join GeocacheAlaska! at the Sourdough level for \$20/year.

1. Navigate to the GeocacheAlaska! [webpage](#) and click on the "Subscribe" button to set up an automatic subscription which will renew annually. Please enter your caching name in the provided box.
2. Navigate to the GeocacheAlaska! [webpage](#) and click on "Add to Cart" to purchase an annual membership that will run through December 31, 2013.
3. Navigate to the GeocacheAlaska! [webpage](#) to download a membership form you can print and mail with your payment.
4. Attend one of the upcoming GeocacheAlaska! events and speak to any Board Member.

Find us online at:

1. GeocacheAlaska! Website: <http://www.geocachealaska.org>
2. GeocacheAlaska! Forums: <http://geocachealaska.proboards.com/index.cgi>
3. GeocacheAlaska! on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/geocachealaska/>
4. E-mail to contact@geocachealaska.org
5. Interior Alaska Geocachers: <http://alaskageocachers.org/>

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 newsletter@geocachealaska.org
Subject: Around the State.*