

Around The State



August 2014



*Photo credit: Bill Van Couwenberghe / AlaskaVans
GC1E482 – Tour Guide Cache
Anthony and Annemarie Van Couwenberghe (the 2 kids)*

IN THIS ISSUE

[GeocacheAlaska! Updates](#)

[Caching Tricks, Tips, & Tools](#)

[Recent Events](#)

[Caching Travelogues](#)

[GeocacheAlaska! Information](#)



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Saturday, August 9: [Alaska Cachers Fun and Frolic at Jonesville](#)
10am, Sutton

Sunday, August 10: [Alaska Cachers Fun and Frolic at Jonesville II](#)
10am, Sutton

Saturday, August 16: [Cup'a Joe with Puzzlemaster JOAT](#)
11:00 am, Soldotna

Sunday, August 17: [Kenai Municipal Park CITO](#)
2:00 pm, Kenai

Sunday, August 17: [Going for HELP with Mystery Inc.](#)
9:30am, Anchorage

Saturday, August, 30: [lets pick up things at Russian Jack Springs CITO](#) Noon, Anchorage

Saturday, Sept 13: [Fairbanks Cachaplooza 2014](#)
4pm, Fairbanks.

GeocacheAlaska! Updates

President's Corner

By Wes Skinner / NorthWes



July was a stupendous month for events! We began the month meeting Geocruisers at the 4th of July Sourdough BBQ event, performed two CITO events (Girdwood 7/12 and Spencer Glacier WhistleStop 7/20), met up for a long weekend at Spencer Glacier Whistlestop (7/18, 19, 20), screened (and voted on) the 2014 Geocaching International Film Festival – GIFF – Finalists, and celebrated summer at the 6th Annual Caching on the Kenai Picnic. All these events are connected by a distinctive thread – they are the result of relationships and/or hard work on the part of your GeocacheAlaska! Inc. board of director members. The Geocruisers and the GIFF events grew from singular contacts made by board members in other places while caching. Spencer Glacier's Whistlestop on the Alaska Railroad combines backwood wilderness adventure, distinctive Alaskan scenery, and a ride on the Alaska Railroad – features which our Event Committee combined into a weekend of group fun. And for the sixth year, our webmaster and king of puzzles on the Kenai put together a picnic event that gave us no excuse for missing a sunny day gathering at the Kenai River's meetup with Cook Inlet.

Your board works hard to make caching in Alaska a real delight, and the events hosted or cooperatively sponsored by GeocacheAlaska! Inc. (GCAK) are only one facet of membership benefits. As an example, the \$200 reservation fee for the group campground at Spencer Glacier was covered by GCAK, with no cover charges for the weekend's three events there. The Caching on the Kenai picnic, with its fabulous food and 28 daycaches, is completely covered by GCAK – meaning no entry fees for the event. What work GCAK Board members perform behind the scenes, however, is even more beneficial to GCAK members. The Fundraising Committee develops bling concepts unique to Alaska, as well as maintaining a store with everything from Groundspeak products to geocaching containers specially upgraded for Alaska weather conditions. The Advocacy Committee works tirelessly to develop and maintain positive relationships with Alaska land managers, including permits and CITO opportunities, as well as providing members website-based



information on where to place caches and download map information. Many administrative and website/forum maintenance activities occur out of sight, yet provide significant benefits to our members.

Please take time to consider serving as a board member, or as a volunteer on one of the Board's committees. Recruitment of candidates for this year's elections begins in August, and your board would like to hear from you about your desire to be involved.

Top Tens: Alaskan Cacher's Caching Achievements

By Scott Aleckson / SSO JOAT

This month's Top Ten list of Alaskan Cacher's Caching Achievements goes to the Alaskan Cachers with the highest find count on Alaskan Caches during one calendar year. As with all our Top Ten lists, only Alaskan cachers and only Alaskan caches are counted here.

- #1 [cavyguy](#) = 1,316
- #2 [Polgera](#) = 1,310
- #3 [Capra Hircus](#) = 1,239
- #4 [glenn.fish](#) = 1,113
- #5 [Boradora](#) = 1,065
- #6 [fyshstyx](#) = 1,038
- #7 [coloReido](#) = 959
- #8 [capsheldon](#) = 942
- #9 [southeastalaska](#) = 933
- #10 [FlightRiskAK](#) = 859



How many Alaskan caches can you log in one year?

Look for another Top Ten list next month.

GeocacheAlaska! Updates

Your Next Mission: Earn the 7 Souvenirs of August

By Dana Russo / DR-AK



Traditional geocaches are the delicious bread and butter of geocaching. You look it up, go to the coordinates and — Boom! It's there. Everyone high fives and it's on to the next one.

This August, your mission is to explore more of the geocaching universe. Find specific geocache types and earn six unique souvenirs for your geocaching profile.

Find a Traditional geocache, earn the Explorer Souvenir; find a Mystery Cache, earn the Puzzler Souvenir; find a Multi-Cache, earn the Sightseer Souvenir; attend a CITO event or find an EarthCache, earn the Nature Lover Souvenir; attend an Event Cache, Mega-Event or Giga-Event, unlock the Socializer Souvenir; find a Virtual Cache, Wherigo, Letterbox Hybrid or Webcam Cache, earn the Collector Souvenir.

Then if you have successfully found each of the different cache types and earned the six unique souvenirs you unlock the special Achiever Souvenir.

August will be a busy month filled with new cache finds, maybe new cache types for some and unique souvenirs for everyone. Work together, have some fun and complete the mission together!

GeocacheAlaska! 2015 Calendar Photo Contest

By Scott Aleckson / SSO JOAT

Once again, you have the chance to be the envy of geocachers all over Alaska and have your favorite photograph grace our 2015 GeocacheAlaska! calendar. Calendars will be published on Zazzle shortly after the winning photos are selected at the end of October and the club will purchase a very small number of calendars to have at events in December. People will be able to order calendars directly from Zazzle as soon as the format is completed. Entry into the contest is limited to Sourdough and Cheechako members of GeocacheAlaska! (joining as a Cheechako member is free).

The Photo Contest categories are:

- Adventure (extreme)
- Children
- Containers
- Flora
- People
- Places
- Whimsy (fun)
- Wildlife
- Winter



You may enter up to THREE photographs in each category. To be eligible for inclusion in the Calendar Contest the photographs must be taken in Alaska. Thirteen photos will be displayed full-size on the calendar with at least one picture chosen from each category. The photo garnering the most overall votes will be placed on the cover. Entries will be accepted through October 19, 2014, with the voting taking place during the next week. The Fundraising Committee reserves the right to review all submissions prior to opening public voting to accept or reject any photo entry for any reason.

Continued on Page 4

GeocacheAlaska! Updates

GeocacheAlaska! 2015 Calendar Photo Contest con't.

By submitting your photo to this contest you grant GeocacheAlaska! Inc. the right to use and reprint the image in the Calendar, the Newsletter and on the GeocacheAlaska! website. Photo credit will be given to the photographer. There is no compensation awarded to the contest winners. Winners get the honor of having their picture grace a monthly page or the cover of the calendar and the happiness in knowing that their photograph was chosen to receive this honor.

Photographs may be submitted by emailing a **high resolution** copy to PhotoContest@GeocacheAlaska.org. Please use the tag **[PHOTO CONTEST]** as the Subject Line of your message to help our email system sort your entries directly to our inbox instead of junking them to the SPAM box where they could get lost in the clutter.

In the body of the message, please state which category the photo is being submitted to, the names and/or geonickname of any recognizable people appearing in the photo as well as the geocache the photo is associated with. Please provide the GC number and the cache name, or link directly to the cache page using the url format coord.info/GCxxxxx. Include the photographer's real name and their geonickname. Please include a title or caption for the image if you have one.

All photos submitted to the Calendar Photo Contest will be posted on the GeocacheAlaska! website and will appear in the GeoFest Slide Show in December. Some photos may be selected and published in the GeocacheAlaska! Newsletter.

All photo submissions must be sent to the official photo contest email account AND include all the requested information above in order to be included in the contest. Rejected entries will receive one notice of missing information, inadequate photo size or resolution, or inappropriate content. The submitter will have until the close of the contest to correct any issues and resubmit their photo for further consideration.

If you have geocaching photos from your vacation or from outside of Alaska, these may also be submitted for inclusion in the GeoFest slide show by sending them to the same email account as above, but using the tag **[SLIDE SHOW]** in the subject line of your email. We still request that you include the info listed

above, excluding the category. There is no limit to the number of photos you may enter into the slide show pool, so any and all geocaching-related photos are welcome. Rejected photo contest entries may be moved to the slide show at the discretion of GeocacheAlaska!

Note that ALL photo contest entries will automatically appear in the slide show at GeoFest. Other Alaskan sites that wish to show the slide show at their December or January events may request a copy of the slide show DVD at the conclusion of the photo contest.

If you have any questions, send an email to the photocontest email account.

Thank you for participating!

Editor's Note

By Cathy Wilmeth / The_Firefly

Thank you to everyone who contributes to this monthly publication! Your articles and photos are what make the newsletter interesting. Keep up the good work! And if you haven't submitted something before, why not make the September issue your first one? Tell us about your first cache find, or your first FTF, or maybe your first DNF. How about a favorite cache experience? Or event? Or just a photograph with a note about it? Short or long, share with us! Don't know what to say? No problem - I'll happily work with you. Send me your idea, or your first draft, or your photo, and we can work together to make it ready for publication.

Send your submissions to editor@geocachealaska.org by August 25th, 2014. As always, everyone is also encouraged to send photos, caching tips, travel reports, newsletter suggestions, etc. This is your newsletter, let's hear what you have to share!

Reviewer's Corner

By Michael Malvick / Greatland Reviewer

Estate Planning

What in the world does estate planning have to do with geocaching? While it's true that estate planning usually involves wills, trusts, and attorneys, it's also true that cachers should consider what will happen to their caches after they depart to the land of perpetual smiles.

Groundspeak considers caches placed by a recently deceased cacher to be part of the deceased cacher's estate. This means caches and trackables (including activated geocoins) owned by the deceased can only be adopted to another player with the express permission of a family member. This [Groundspeak Knowledge Book article](#) has additional information.

There are several options for caches that are part of the estate:

1. A family member takes over the account holding the caches (be sure family members know your log in credentials)
2. A family member adopts the caches (a family member must know your log in credentials in order to process the adoptions through www.geocaching.com/adopt).
3. Members of the local caching community can take over community maintenance. Someone with the account log in credentials will still be required to clear any "Needs Maintenance" logs which get posted.
4. The caches may be picked up and archived by family members (who could also post a "Needs Archived" log so the local Reviewer can perform the archival) to open an area to other community members.

If none of the above steps are taken, the caches become subject to routine Reviewer checks when DNF strings begin or "Needs Archived" logs are written to cache pages. Eventually, caches that disappear or develop chronic issues will get archived, just as any other cache would be

When you become aware of a cacher who has passed, please contact your local Reviewer with the news, providing the cacher's player name, real name, and any links to online obituaries or similar information. The Reviewer will forward the information to Groundspeak so a note may be added to the cacher's profile.



Commander CacheAK (L) and Captain Americache (R).JPGCommander CacheAK (L) and Captain Americache (R) (Grandsons of Northwes) do some caching during the Spencer Glacier weekend.

Friday, July 18: [Spencer Glacier Whistle Stop Camping Kick-Off](#), 2pm, Spencer Glacier.

Saturday, July 19: [Spencer Glacier Whistle Stop Camping Day Two](#), 3pm., Spencer Glacier.

Sunday July 20: [Spencer Glacier Whistle Stop CITO](#), 2pm, Spencer Glacier.

Tuesday, July 22,
[Alaska Screens the 2014 GIFF Film Finalists](#), 6:30pm,
BP Energy Center,
Anchorage



Friday, July 4: [GeoCruise 4th of July Meet N Greet](#), 6pm, Anchorage

Saturday, July 5: [Pizza Hut Meet & Greet!](#), 6:30pm, Fairbanks

Recent Events



Girdwood CITO

By Wes Skinner / NorthWes

Saturday, July 12

[GeocacheAlaska! 2014 Adopt-A-Highway Summer CITO,](#)

The weather forecast was grim for the weekend – calling for rain and wind from Friday through Saturday at the east end of Turnagain Arm and the Girdwood area. Not many persons had signed up for the midsummer Seward Highway CITO event, the second of the year to be held at our sponsored location just outside of Girdwood heading back towards Anchorage. I had committed to setting up and running the Saturday Morning CITO event since other Event Committee members had work in the way. I was to be back in Anchorage for a 2pm celebration of my father in law's 93rd birthday, so I set the event up to begin at 9:30am Saturday. One last check of the weather on Friday night confirmed my worst fears about how bad the weather was to be, so I packed my heavy gear as I headed off to sleep.

I rolled out of Anchorage early Saturday morning to set up the 'SHOULDER WORK' signs and get ready for the event's startup. As I got closer to Girdwood the most fantastic sunbeams were drilling down through the dark clouds, and Turnagain Arm was smooth as glass thanks to no wind – and there wasn't a bit of rain along our CITO Zone! I set up the signs, found two caches along the highway on the other side of Girdwood which had eluded me for years, and came back to the Event Site for the Safety Briefing and event kickoff. I was there at 9:10am – and no one else was there! It was strange, because



Alaskan cachers will flood a flash mob site a half-hour early just to get good parking. Where was everyone? A few minutes later Karma! dashed into the parking lot to claim the FTF, briefed out and got busy collecting. Over the next few minutes the rest of the event's nine attendees pulled in and got started. Within two hours we had completed the cleanup, and trusty li1gray performed the trash haul/dump duties for us once again (thanks, Leroy – I really appreciate your help with that task!)



What I had feared was going to be our first swimming CITO turned out to be a breezy sunny stroll along one of America's premier scenic highways. Best of all, we had several folks stop and ask if we were volunteers, wanting to thank us for keeping this stretch of highway about the cleanest they'd ever seen anywhere in Alaska or outside. As I headed back to town, those compliments validated outwardly all the satisfaction I get internally from participating in 'Cache In Trash Out' activities! I urge you to attend the next CITO Event you see on the 'coming events' schedule – it's good fun in good company, doing something real to make our community look nice for everyone! And – it's one way to earn the "Nature Lover" souvenir in Groundspeak's "7 Souvenirs of August" caching promo during August!



Recent Events

Caching on the Kenai – 6th Annual Picnic Event

By Scott Aleckson / SSO JOAT



On Saturday, July 26, about 42 geocachers converged on the Kenai Municipal Park for the annual [Caching on the Kenai](#) picnic event (GC4DACE). While we had a bit of rain on Thursday and Friday, Saturday turned into a blue bird day with plenty of sun to make perfect picnic weather.

GeocacheAlaska! bought the burgers and hot dogs, which were cooked up by SSO JOAT on his BBQ. Attendees brought a wide variety of picnic side dishes. No one went away hungry.



At the end of the feast, we formed folks up into 6 teams and gave them about 1 hour and 45 minutes to go find as many of the 28 daycaches as they could and be back at the picnic shelter on time. There were three virtual caches, two multi-caches, and a

puzzle included in the mix. It was a tight race, but the Ninja team of li1gray, Karma!, and some AlaskaVans managed to pull ahead of the pack for the win. In addition to various FTF prizes in every cache, including a number of GeocacheAlaska! pathtags, the members of the winning team each picked up a GeocacheAlaska! trackable license plate tag.

It is a busy week of work to set this picnic up every year, but seeing dozens of people come in from all over the state to socialize and have a fun-filled day of power caching makes it all worthwhile. Thanks to GeocacheAlaska! for sponsoring this event every year. Looking forward to next year and the new twists and turns that the next running of the daycache game will take on. Expecting either an early July or a late July to early August scheduling for 2015.



Caching Travelogues

Dashing Across West Texas

By Michael Malvick/Ladybug Kids

Due to business trips regularly taking me to Houston, Texas, and Tulsa, Oklahoma, I am learning how to blend itineraries in and out of Alaska on Alaska Air, United, USAir, and Delta with low cost hops on Southwest Airlines to explore the more “remote” regions of Texas in an effort to complete the [Texas County Challenge](#). Houston cachers Rich and Lola and Kirbydox introduced me to the Challenge and we have subsequently met in Austin, San Antonio, and most recently, El Paso, to chip away at finding at least one cache in each of Texas’ 254 counties. Along the way, I am also working on a pair of Texas Cemetery Challenges (find caches in [100](#) and [250](#) Texas Cemeteries) and the [I’ve Been Everywhere Challenge](#) (find a cache in or near each of the 90 towns mentioned in the Brian Burns adaptation of Johnny Cash’s song, “I’ve Been Everywhere (In Texas).”

In early May, I hopped a USAir flight direct from Anchorage to Phoenix and then continued west to El Paso, for a roadtrip to find caches in sixteen to nineteen West Texas Counties and two New Mexico counties. When I landed in Phoenix, I learned that Rich and Lola did not make their desired flight from Houston to El Paso due to being bumped by paying passengers (Rich works for an airline so he and his wife Lola fly free). Kirbydox did get on the flight and was waiting for me when I arrived in El Paso. I rented the georig and Kirbydox and I headed into town to buy groceries for the next two days



of road trip while we waited for Rich and Lola to catch up. We made quick work of the shopping list and returned to the airport just as a text from Rich lit up my phone telling me Rich and Lola had arrived. Kirbydox and I pulled into the “cell phone” parking lot to await the next message telling us they were curbside for pick up. Fortuitously, the [“World’s Largest Equestrian”](#)

cache was here, so Kirbydox and I hunted down the cache and snapped photos of the Texas-sized bronze statue on site and logged our El Paso County cache to get a running start on the trip. By then, Rich and Lola were ready to be picked up and away we went to the next county to the east, Hudspeth.



Once in Hudspeth County, we stopped for a traditional cache, [“Just Stick It,”](#) with more than a dozen favorite points and weren’t disappointed. We smiled at the whimsical execution of the hide and

continued east to log the [“Guadalupe Mountains: West”](#) and [“Texas Salt Flats”](#) EarthCaches. West Texas had experienced a relatively wet winter, so the desert was alive with blooming wildflowers which caused us to pause and appreciate the splashes of color mixed in with the tans, browns, and greys of the desert. We were buzzed by a Border Patrol light plane while working on the Texas Salt Flats EarthCache and got quite a show as the pilot swooped low, pulled near vertical climbs, and repeated the cycle. I was glad I wasn’t on that plane because I’m sure I would have completely consumed the airsick bag supply.

Our next stop was Culbertson County where we logged three caches and enjoyed the vistas of the Guadalupe Mountains as we drew closer to the limestone and sandstone peaks. [“I’m Just Stumped”](#) was a fun find in the county with its incorporation of the Lone Star of Texas and Guadalupe Peak looming overhead. One rest stop and two more cache finds later, we were on our way to New Mexico’s Eddy County.

We crossed the border into New Mexico and pulled a u-turn across the median of the divided highway to find [“Guadalupe Mnts GeoTour: Castle Varves”](#) EarthCache. In retrospect, the EarthCache



Caching Travelogues



could be worked from either side of the highway cut negating the need for north-bound cachers to double back and I sent the Cache Owner an e-mail making the suggestion to provide alternative coordinates. The varves are expressed as alternating light and dark bands indicating cyclical flooding and drying of a shallow lake over many years and made for some interesting measuring and photography.

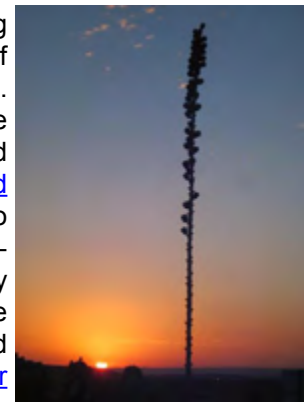
This cache find was extra special for me because it was my first New Mexico find and completed my United States map of a cache find all fifty states plus Washington D.C. I'd forgotten to print a sign to commemorate the occasion, but quickly applied a Sharpie to paper to create one. We found a few more caches in New Mexico including "[Man's Best Friend](#)" near an old railroad trestle at a creek crossing before turning south to drop back into Texas to pay a visit to Reeves County. Along the way, we stopped to chase a five foot long bull snake off the road to keep that beautiful reptile from becoming road kill.

We looked for and found only one cache in Reeves County, "[3:10 to Orla](#)" and it was a good one with a large container placed next to an abandoned railroad right of way. The old rails were left across the road crossing and one could see the lava rock that was used as ballast for the railroad ties. I could almost hear the train whistle blow as the engineer



warned us that we were too close to the tracks. Our next stops were in Loving County, featured in National Geographic's ZIPUSA series, one of the least populous counties (70) in the United States. It might also have the fewest number of caches in a county and I found both of them; "[Good Ole' Butterfield](#)" placed at a rest stop and "[79754](#)," a virtual at the historic county courthouse.

Kirbydox, Rich and Lola and I continued heading northwest to just south of Kermit to log a couple of caches placed at historic markers in Winkler County. One hide was placed on a fence that appeared to be old oil well pipe. Then we turned south to enter Ward County and found "[Don't Mess with Texas \(Ward County\)](#)," a cache series paying tribute to Texas' no littering campaign. Sadly, even though there are garbage cans provided, the desert around the site is badly in need of CITO. A few caches later along Interstate 20 with a signed speed limit of 80 mph, we just nicked the corner of Crane County with "[Crane County Corner \(CCC\)](#)" and then turned south toward Fort Stockton and our hotel. Even though they had already visited the "Sand Dunes of Crane



County" EarthCache, my hosts stopped so I could run up and down the sand dunes at sunset, record the required measurements, and study the tracks left behind by a most interesting assortment of insect, bird, and reptilian wildlife. Before reaching Ft. Stockton, we sprang a cache free from a jailhouse at "[Hokey Pokey](#)" and imagined the environmental torture inflicted by the intense Texas sun on the inmates housed in the small building with even smaller windows.

As we rolled toward Ft. Stockton, we scrolled through the Nuvi's list of available restaurants and started placing calls to find one that would still be open at 2130. We were so focused on that task that Rich missed a speed limit reduction sign and caught the attention of the local constable. A cordial conversation led to Rich being let off with a warning and local intel that about the only open restaurant was Burger King and the surprising fact that IHOP wouldn't open until 1000 in the morning. Good thing we provisioned up in El Paso because we wanted to be 200 miles up the road with a couple of counties cached by that time following a predawn wakeup alarm. We ended up closing down the Burger King at 2200, found our hotel, and crashed for the night.



Caching Travelogues



Kirbydox, Rich and Lola and I regrouped in the lobby the next morning and wandered outside into the predawn light. Before hopping on eastbound I-10, we found a couple of cemetery caches in Ft. Stockton's "old" and "new" cemeteries at "[Old Ft. Stockton Cemetery](#)" and "No Bebe La Agua Part Dos," which translates to "[Don't Drink the Water Part Two](#)" to

color in Pecos County. We caught a beautiful desert sunrise at "[Winey](#)" and continued to Ozona, the Crockett County seat. Once in Ozona, we headed for the town center and completed the Virtual "[Davy Who?](#)" found a benchmark on the courthouse steps, and paid our respects to the departed at "[A Look 2 the Past](#)" to rack up another cemetery find. We then had a most enjoyable drive through the Devil's River valley, stopping at several caches placed by historical markers. Along the way, I was puzzled by the ten-foot tall fences festooned with surveillance cameras until we found "[Dead Man's Pass](#)" at one of the gates to the Deadman's Pass Ranch which offered luxury accomodations for folks wishing to hunt captive deer.



Once we reached Comstock, we logged a cache in a cemetery that featured a strong emphasis on La Virgen de Guadalupe due to its proximity to Mexico and then turned west to begin our run to El Paso. We stopped at golden oldie (GC537 placed in March 2001) "[Old Roy Bean's Stash](#)" on the rim of the the spectacular Pecos River Gorge. We spent some extra time taking in the views from below the the Highway 90 Bridge from the remnants of the old road which features stonework retaining walls that are pracally works of art. Upon closer inspection, we noticed the limestone in the area is chock full of marine fossils, so we spent as much time looking at the ground around our feet as we did peering into the gorge. Next, we stopped at "[Canyon of Eagles.](#)" From near the



cache, we could see the railroad bridge and the original highway bridge and when we crossed under the new highway bridge, we could see the sandstone version of the canyon's namesake peering into the abyss. The canyon is just west of Langtry, where Judge Roy Bean served as the "[Law West of the Pecos.](#)" There is a virtual cache located at the visitor center outside the Judge's preserved saloon and Opera House. Also on site are interpretive displays that verify or dispell various myths about the man. Before departing Langtry, we drove down to the Rio Grande gorge for a dose of lush green before returning to the



much drier desert. Back on Highway 90, we noticed the Border Patrol "grooming" the fenceline using truck tires towed behind a vehicle using a method not too different from how snow trails are groomed here in Alaska. The road is groom to create a smooth surface to make it easier to detect when illegal aliens cross the border, leaving their footprints for the patrols to track.

Following those stops, we left Val Verde County behind and found caches in Terrell, Brewster and Presidio Counties. The highlight of that stretch of Highway 90 was the time we spent in Marathon, a jumping off point for Big Bend National Park and home of the world famous [Gage Hotel](#). "[Marathon Oasis](#)" was placed in Gage Gardens, which is a botanical garden. Rich took time off from caching to practice his putting on the adjacent putting green, putters and golf balls provided free of charge. We found a couple more cemetery caches as well, before tracking down a late lunch/early dinner at a terrific Mexican Restaurant in Alpine. We closed out Presidio Country with "[Satellite View M2V,](#)" that features a view of a large tethered reconnaissance blimp that shows up on GoogleEarth and nearby [N 1109](#) benchmark. Jeff Davis County was next and we almost had all our eggs in one basket (the alternative was a five mile drive toward the Mexican border into territory



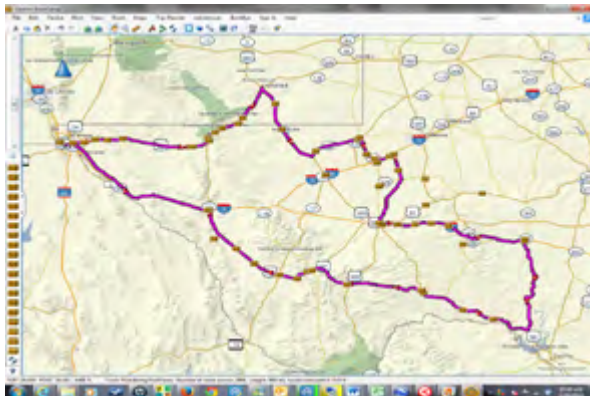
Caching Travelogues



crawling with Border Patrol) with ["Prada Y'all,"](#) a cache placed at a whimsical piece of desert artwork featuring a glassed in display of Prada goods. Perhaps of even greater interest around us was the big duststorm blowing up to our left that we managed to stay just ahead of.

We returned to Culberson County at Van Horn and logged a few caches there to check the box for another

"I've Been Everywhere" location and then jumped onto I-10 for a final sprint to El Paso and New Mexico's Dona Ana County. We had to work our way around a construction-caused traffic jam just before the New Mexico border, crossed the Rio Grande, and quickly found ["Sunland Saguaro,"](#) which clearly didn't belong this far from the Sonoran Desert. With that find, we concluded our targeted run of Texas and New Mexico counties and headed for our El Paso hotel for some sleep before flying to Houston first thing in the morning. Statistics for the trip included 61 finds with more than 260 favorite points, spread across nearly 1000 miles of West Texas and New Mexico desert. The trip filled in some geographical blind spots and left a favorable impression of that part of the country and its wide open spaces. But, most importantly, with proper planning and mutual focus, Kirbydox, Rich and Lola and I finished the trip even better friends and look forward to our next dash around a region of Texas in our quest to "have been everywhere."



Almost Skunked In Haines

By Cathy Wilmeth / The_Firefly

Days after returning from Outside, I headed to Haines for a convention. I'd never been to Haines and had no idea how troublesome it was to get there! 3+ days by car (from Homer) if you're traveling by car (including 2 border crossings) or 2 days, 2 flights, 1 ferry, and lots of hours at the airport. Given that our car had not yet arrived, I took the 2 day option. There are not many caches in Haines! I had a few hours free when I first arrived, so I headed for an in-town cache, ["If I had a hammer..."](#) Kind of a bummer to not find it at all. A few days later, I was strolling around town with another convention goer, and chatting about geocaching. I pointed out the location and mentioned I didn't find it. She suggested we try again. So, to show her how it worked, I fired up the GPSr. Wouldn't you know, it led me to the other side of the building, right to where the cache was! Success with a newbie! The museum owner saw us and came out to chat (busted - but in a good way).



We decide to try for another one, since she had a car! We headed out to the ferry terminal to look for [Down the Tubes](#). We looked and looked and looked. Deciding to give it up for the night, we started back for the car. My friend flipped a piece of plastic as she strolled back. I was walking behind her and realized she had exposed the cache. How we missed that spot, I have no idea. She signed the log excitedly, planning to sign up for an account when she got home.

Thank goodness for a second set of eyes, or I would have been skunked. I hope to go back soon - with a vehicle- to reach some of the farther out caches. What a spectacular place to cache.



Around The State

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.
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. Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/geocachealaska/>
4. GeocacheAlaska! Facebook Page: [GeocacheAlaska! Page](#)
5. E-mail to contact@geocachealaska.org

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK & Twitter!

Like our official [GeocacheAlaska! Page](#) on Facebook to keep up to date on things happening with GeocacheAlaska!

Also, join the official [GeocacheAlaska! Group](#) on Facebook to stay in touch and share your activities with fellow members of the geocaching community. 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. Visit our Group and request to Join so you can start viewing and participating with GeocacheAlaska! and your fellow geocachers.

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

STATE PARKS PERMITS

Caches may again be published within Alaska State Parks in Southcentral Alaska! The permit number is **14-KA-973**. The permit number must appear on the cache container and the cache page. Before submitting a cache listing within one of the parks, please thoroughly read the complete list of stipulations in the permit, which may be [downloaded](#) from the GeocacheAlaska! website.

NEWSLETTER INFORMATION

The editors of *Around the State* would like to hear from you. Submit articles or suggestions to editor@geocachealaska.org Subject: Around the State. 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 Cache In Trash Out Logo is a trademark of Groundspeak, Inc. The Geocaching Logo is a registered trademark of Groundspeak, Inc. Each is used with permission.