



More Adventures in Geo-Caching

by Chuck Bagheera

In this second and final instalment on Geo-caching, Scouter Chuck sends a travel bug on a cross-country journey just in time for CJ'07.

Since the first geo-caching article, I'm sure all the Cub and Scout groups in Canada have run out and bought GPS units; spending their weekends hunting down geo-caches in their favourite neck of the woods. Perhaps not, but response from the first geo-caching article last October was very positive. This article covers some ideas to expand your geo-caching experience, and also to bring more novices into the activity. So fire up your GPS and get ready to explore the concepts of event geo-caches and travel bugs.

Event Caches

First, there are many different types of geo-caches. Traditional caches consist of boxes full of goodies; multiple caches consist of clues that lead to boxes full of goodies; virtual caches lead to a point of interest (perhaps historical, cultural or geographical), but no actual goodies; then there are also mailbox caches, webcam caches, reverse caches and event caches.

Event caches are like geo-caching jamborees. Organizers post the event cache on the web site (www.geocaching.com) showing a specific date and location. Event caches can take many forms, including information sessions or general meetings, but most often the event consists of many caches and many geo-cachers all in friendly competition. This is a great opportunity to get a lot of caching done in a short period of time, meet lots of people and get some tips and techniques. While an event cache may not be best suited for youth (check with the organizers first), it is a good way for leaders to learn about and experience geo-caching quickly. Check for event caches in your area at <http://www.geocaching.com/calendar/>.



Photographer: Steve Redshaw

Travel Bugs

One of the coolest ways geo-caching connects people around the world is through travel bugs. For about \$7, you get a dog-tag-like bug plus a spare and a computer code to activate the bug. Activation takes a few seconds on the Internet and allows the bug to be tracked through the geo-caching web site. When you activate the bug, you can also assign a goal. There are some interesting bugs out there, with goals like "Take a picture of the attached moo cow at the 18th hole of every golf course in North America and post the pictures on the web site". When geo-cachers find a bug and are able to carry out the goal, they do so and return the bug to a different cache on their next hunt. Some bugs have travelled a long way and have many photos posted on the web site.

The CJ'07 Bug

As you read this article, a travel bug is working its way slowly around Canada, collecting crests from Scouting groups in every Area. I've attached a bag and included 50 Dartmouth Region crests if anybody wants to trade. In the late spring of 2007, the

bug will be returned to the 2nd Cole Harbour group. Plans are to attach all the crests to a large blanket and/or map, and gather the group information collected by the bug. We will then head to Tamaracouta, Quebec and display the blanket/map at CJ'07.

To find out where the travel bug is right now, go to the geocaching.com web site and click on "Track Travel Bugs" in the menu on the left-hand side. Then enter the code TBMR8E in the tracking search box on the right. If the CJ'07 travel bug passes you by and you want to get in on the national blanket/map, e-mail Scouter Chuck (address below) to make arrangements.

So get out there and enjoy the outdoors. And don't forget to take a small garbage bag with you so you can "cache in and trash out". Happy Hunting! \X

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Linking to Strategic Direction #1.