

Minutes of WSGA Board Meeting

December 18, 2014

Hydnsek called WSGA's 4th Business Meeting of the 2014 board term to order at 6:36 PM on December 18, 2014.

Board Members in attendance: hydnek (Abby Wolfe), HippyChick1620 (Kristine Norton), Martin 5 (Jerry Martin), mc3cats (Chris Brue), Lizzy (Lisa Wasser), AndrewRJ (Andrew Johnson), GrievousAngel, (Kathy McCormack), Verano (Debbie Patton), Mr. Gadget #2 (Gene Reed), tumbleweedpirates (Mike Lowery) and Patti Stoll (ClayArtist)

Board Members absent: None

Proxies: None

Also in attendance: NepoKama (Mitch Eatough, GeoCoin Manager), and LadyCosmic (Karin Haagar, Campout Manager)

Visitors: Trevor and Kate (Trevor), ZagMomnDad (Mark & Cathy Sackmann)

Hydnsek welcomed the board members, appointees and visitors in attendance.

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the December 18, 2014 Board Meeting were approved unanimously.

Comments

None

Financial Report

Report by HippyChick1620

September 1, 2014 Starting balance: \$21,878.77

Income:

- Memberships: \$89.50
- Coin Sales: \$8.00
- Merch. Sales: 144.00
- (Total: \$241.50)

Expenses:

- PayPal fees: \$24.29
- Order shipping: \$4.02
- USPS: \$21.82
- Internet fees: \$167.52
- Chargeback: \$0.86
- Chapter allocations: \$121.26
- Office supplies: \$29.31
- GeoTour: \$39.18
- Petty cash adjustment: \$132.00
- (Total: \$540.26)

September 30, 2014 ending balance: \$21,580.01 (\$298.76 loss)

October 1, 2014 Starting balance: \$21,580.01

Income:

- Memberships: \$37.50
- Coin Sales: \$9.00
- Merch. Sales: 19.00
- Campout refund: \$69.51
- (Total: \$135.01)

Expenses:

- PayPal fees: \$3.10
- USPS: \$15.35
- Campout reservation: \$566.64
- Chapter alloc: \$379.47
- APE costumes: \$588.09
- (Total: \$1,558.20)

October 31, 2014 ending balance: \$20,162.37 (\$1,417.64 loss)

October 31, 2013 ending balance: \$15,992.05

October 31, 2011 ending balance: \$6,229.39

November 1, 2014 Starting balance: \$20,162.37

Income:

- Memberships: \$302.00
- (Total: \$302.00)

Expenses:

- PayPal fees: \$13.28
- Misc. expense: \$105.00
- Campout reservation: \$163.00
- Chapter alloc: \$295.70
- Cachekinz order: \$2,504.03
- TB order: \$750.00
- Nametag order: \$53.00
- Order shipping: \$36.26
- (Total: \$3,920.27)

November 30, 2014 ending balance: \$16,544.10 (\$3,618.27 loss)

November 30, 2013 ending balance: \$15,501.86

November 30, 2011 ending balance: \$5,981.93

Comments

Hydnsek requested context on our financial picture. Hippychick1620 indicated we were slightly over budget on merchandise, but that we have plenty to spend and we are in excellent financial health.

Hippychick1620 was again thanked for her excellent job in keeping track of the club's finances.

Merchandise Report

Report by Hippychick1620 and hydnsek

For Merchandise, the club ordered, paid for & received the Cachekinz for the member bonus. As of 12/18/14 they have been mailed out. We also ordered, paid for, and received our shirts & hooded zip up sweatshirts. As of 12/11/14 the shirts are listed for sale on our website and our hooded sweatshirts will be up there soon. Upon arrival a printing error was discovered on the trackable shirts, with the tracking number being preceded by the letters TB on each shirt. As a result the trackable shirts were reprinted and orders for the trackable shirts will be shipped both the correct shirt and the corresponding incorrect shirt as a bonus. Our 2015 coin design has been ordered and paid for. NepoKama will update as to the minting and shipping status.

Trackable nametags have been on the wish list since 2011. Previously, the Board hasn't supported them (on three separate occasions) due to cost and uncertainty about demand (cachers have a lot of trackable badges these days). However, this fall NepoKama talked to GXProxy, and they were willing to work with us to create trackable badges on an on-demand basis, meaning we would not be out-of-pocket for expenses.

We decided to do a trial run with a prefab acrylic they had in stock, which had layers of hunter green, gray, and yellow, as getting a green/white in exact club colors would incur extra cost. GXProxy did six nametags for the four officers, NepoKama, and mc3cats. Cost was \$53 - \$8 per tag plus \$5 shipping. The tags arrived, and look great. The gray is pale enough that it's a reasonable substitute for our white, and the yellow behind the geonic actually helps it stand out.

NepoKama is working out final details with Beverly at GXProxy on how we would handle orders. GXProxy is assuming we will sell the tags on our site and event and then place an order, and they will ship to a single address, and then we'll reship them individually. They can provide a recommended form for us to take orders. Suggested sale price is \$10 (what they sell them for), and we send them \$8 per badge.

However, this adds work and overhead for us, and we are foremost a recreational club run by volunteers, not a business. Hydnek's recommendation was to convince GXProxy to sell them directly, and we provide a link to an order page on their site. They can set the price, and we get a cut of \$1 per tag, since they are using our logo and we are sending them the business. NepoKama can work with Beverly on the details.

At this juncture, the officers are recommending that we approve this badge scenario as an addition to WSGA merchandise, assuming we get the sale logistics worked out, with a goal of having them available to order in January.

Comments

The board held a brief discussion and agreed that the club would rather have GXProxy handle direct sales of the nametags.

Hydnek made a motion to authorize NepoKama to arrange a deal that has GXProxy taking orders and shipping them, and rebating us a small amount. Final approval pending results of the discussion. The motion was carried by a unanimous vote.

AndrewRJ indicated that the supply of member pathtags is very low and we need to reorder them. The club has previously agreed to continue to use the Seattle pathtags as a new member bonus and as an ongoing expense. HippyChick1620 and NepoKama will get them ordered.

AndrewRJ questioned the chapter reps on the level of allotments provided this year. The chapter reps mentioned that they were very happy with the added allocations and that they were able to hold added events this year as a result.

Member Bonus

Report by hydNSEK and AndrewRJ

Each fall since 2010, we've surprised our members with a Member Bonus - free swag to thank them for supporting WSGA and geocaching in Washington. In previous years, we've done pathtags and a lanyard. This year, it's our first TB tag (Cachekinz), featuring the WSGA logo. At our October meeting, the Board approved ordering 850 tags (later revised to 750). Approximately 500 of these will be used for the Member Bonus; the rest will be sold for \$5 each online and at events.

The tags arrived in early November, and look great. In early December, AndrewRJ and Lizzy packaged and mailed all the tags to members – one for Individual and Associate accounts, two for Family accounts. Most members have received theirs, and we're receiving positive feedback.

The TB tags were not as easy to mail as previous pathtags – the key chain gives them added bulk not unlike the lanyards a few years ago. Initial inquiry into postage for the mailings indicated that each would need \$2.32 in postage or a total of \$812 for the approximately 350 memberships. This was due to a combination of the Cachekinz (and also member name tag where applicable) causing the letter to be classified as both rigid and over ¼ inch thick. The thickness issue was due to the flexible metal chain pre-strung thru the eyelet on the Cachekinz. The designation of "overly thick" causes the package to be classified as a thick envelope or package, which has the same postage applied and precluded the use of bubble mailers for cost savings. Use of our PayPal account could be used to lower the mailing cost to \$1.93 or \$675.50 for the approximately 350 memberships.

As a result, the metal chain was removed from each Cachekinz, allowing it to lay flat and remove the over-thick surcharge. A test mailing was sent to the WSGA officers to test the feasibility of an inner envelope to protect the Cachekinz and determine if the post office would reject the mailing. No damage or rejections were reported. Based on the test mailing were still required to pay a surcharge for the rigid status but no longer needed to pay an over thick surcharge. This also reclassified our mailers to standard weight based rates. As a result the postage drops to \$0.70 depending on weight. In addition international postage to our Canadian member similarly dropped to \$1.36. This on average reduces the shipping costs from \$675.50 to \$245 for postage, a difference of \$430.5 or 64%.

Comments

AndrewRJ updated the report to indicate that three cachekinz have been returned by the postal service due to old addresses. We are in the process of ensuring that they make it to the correct cachers. Lizzy has updated the addresses in the database. AndrewRJ also indicated he was pleased with how few were returned but wondered if it would be possible to order them without the chains pre-strung in the future.

Officers commented on the positive remarks they have received.

2015 Summer Campout

Report by LadyCosmic

Summary

We have reservations for Manchester State Park's Group Campsite for Friday, July 31 through Aug 2, 2015. The WSGA has paid \$295.07 for this reservation. We have created an updated Campout Budget based on estimated attendance and costs provided by the Park Ranger.

Background

We have successfully reserved the Manchester State Park group campsite and 2 additional RV sites for the 2015 WSGA Campout. In order to ensure we got the group site for the time period we made the reservation on Wednesday, October 29, 2014 for 4 days, Wednesday, July 29 through Sunday, Aug 2, 2015. The reservation cost was \$566.64.

On November 29, 2014, we modified the reservation and changed the dates for the reservation of the campsite to Friday, July 31 through Sunday, August 2, 2015. With the change, we were given a refund of \$271.57, the cost of two days, minus the reservation change fee of \$8.50. The total cost so far for reserving the group site at Manchester State Park is \$295.07.

On November 29, 2014, We also reserved two extra RV sites located near the group campsite to have a total of 14 to offer to our attendees. The cost for these two extra RV sites was \$76.50 and \$86.50.

The total spent so far is \$458.07.

Charges for Group Site and Extra RV Sites

The group site at Manchester State Park charges on a per RV or per camper basis. The projected 2015 costs for each RV and tent camper is shown in the following table.

	1 Night	2 Nights
RV at the Group Site	\$36	\$72
Person Tent Camping	\$3	\$6
RV #1 (short walk from group site)	\$35	\$70
RV #2 (short walk from group site)	\$40	\$80
Day Visitors (Need a Discovery Pass)	\$0 or \$10	
	Day Pass	

We will know the exact price after the start of the new year.

Est. Budget

The original proposal for the 2015 WSGA Campout included the following rough budget for the campout at Manchester State Park.

Camp Sites	\$1600
Path Tags	\$250
Food/Supplies	\$600
<hr/>	
Est. Total Budget	\$2450

Based on previous campout attendance data provided by Abby, we have reworked the budget using the following attendance information: 14 RVs, 21 tents (average of 4 people per tent), and 100 adults for the Saturday night dinner (campers and day attendees). Combining this with estimated 2015 fees for the campsite, along with the budget for gift bags, food and supplies, we recommend setting the campout prices as follows:

Cost for Attending the Campout

	Member	Non Member
Tent Camping	\$30	\$40
RV Camping	\$75	\$85
Dinner & Gift Bag	\$8	\$10
Kids (under 10)	Free	Free

A revised budget using these prices and estimated attendance numbers is provided below.

Income	Attendees	Reservation	Total
RVs	14	\$75	\$1050
Tents	21	\$30	\$630
Dinner (Adults)	100	\$8	\$800
<hr/>			
Total Income			\$2480

Expenses

Group RV Sites	12	\$72	\$864
Private RV Site #1	1	\$70	\$70
Private RV Site #2	1	\$80	\$80
Tent Campers	21	\$24	\$504

Path Tags	\$250
Food & Supplies	\$600
Misc. Charges	\$28
Total Expenses	\$2396

Comments

The board asked for clarification on several aspects of the pricing which were answered.

A motion was made to approve the campout registration fees as proposed in the report. The motion was carried unanimously.

Ape Mega-Event

Report by AndrewRJ

The 2015 Ape mega-event is Sunday, Aug. 16, at Hyak in Iron Horse State Park.

AndrewRJ has been chosen as the new Ape Event Director and is running the event this year with strong support from HippyChick1620 who has agreed to return as the assistant Ape Director.

The event page is up, with 30 Will Attends so far. AndrewRJ has signed the Mega-event agreement, and Groundspeak is cross-promoting it from the Block Party page.

Following the New Year we will obtain our insurance binder, and AndrewRJ will apply for the park permit. In addition, notification will go out to the new porta potty vendor to insure we will get what we need. AndrewRJ will begin working with Mitch and the board to develop new ideas for the Ape Coin.

The current event format is working well, so we won't be making big changes from the attendee's point of view

Below are a summary of many of the changes we made this last year and possible areas for improvement:

- We had six weeks of online swag preorders this year (mid-June to end of July), and that seemed to work better than an earlier two-week window. We sold more Ape Swag Bags beforehand, and lines at the event Sales table were much shorter and we didn't run out of coins early (alho we still sold out of T-shirts - even after doubling our order!). Well done, Lizzy, FugeFinders (Lynette), and hippychick1620!
- The new line setup and clearly marked Cash vs. Credit staff at the Swag Sales table made that area go much more smoothly. Kudos to hippychick1620 and FugeFinders (Lynette).
- We finally seem to have a handle on parking, thanks to AndrewRJ. He got

permission to use the Snoqualmie Summit overflow ski lot (free!), which is a short walk from Hyak and plenty large enough to handle our overflow. The small Forest Service lot is no longer necessary, so next year, the plan is to use only the Hyak and Ski lots, which will also save us buying NWF passes (for the FS lot). The new vests we got for parking volunteers worked great for identifying them with attendees.

- Although the event starts at 10:00 am, many attendees arrive earlier to do the tunnel and caches. The parking crew started at 8:30 this year, which was a huge plus in managing traffic, and next year we may open the Welcome and Swag Preorders booths earlier. The only booth we need to hold till event start is Swag Sales, so it's a level buying field for all attendees.
- The event officially ends at 2:00 pm, but this year we kept the Refreshments and Sales booth open till 3:00 or so, since many folks are still returning from the tunnel at that point. This seemed to work well and was much appreciated by attendees.
- The six Lab Caches (Adventures) were a huge hit, especially Mr. Gadget #2's birdhouses. Jcar and mc3cats did an outstanding job of setting them up, and we should do them again next year (hopefully with Gene and his birdhouses as one station).
- Oversight on name tags this year - next year, we'll be sure everyone wears one.
- We set aside nine handicapped parking spots at Hyak, and eight were used, which is a good number for next year. (In previous years, we didn't designate spots beyond the four that Hyak has marked.)
- We had to change porta potty vendors this year, and AndrewRJ found us a new supplier, and he has a lead on a closer and cheaper one for next year. The park's lone toilet beyond the tunnel was inadequate to the needs - long lines and it ran out of TP (we sent more out), so we'll be adding a fourth potty on the west side of the tunnel next year, and the park will help us with the logistics.
- We refined our refreshment supply so that we didn't have lots of apples and water left over; more granola bar flavors were appreciated. Bananas were a great addition (we ran out), and we'll have more next year. Great job, Peach&Pete!
- We had larger, more prominent signage at the tunnel entrances to warn non-participants of the tunnel traffic and monster, as well as proactive tunnel monitors talking to folks. Well done, FenchurchE and team!
- The Welcome table was a bit squished this year; last year's separate tables for welcome vs. club info vs. TB trades seemed to work better, so we'll be returning to that model next year, possibly with the three areas more physically separated in the venue. Thanks to Louie Bliss and team for ably handling this area and making our guests feel welcome.
- We need to acquire sandbags to hold down canopies if the wind picks up - a problem this year.

I would like to take the time to thank Hydnsek who has developed and managed this event for many years. Without her dedication we wouldn't have reached the level it is today.

Comments

The board thanked AndrewRJ for becoming the new Ape Director.

Hydnsek informed the board that Groundspeak has chosen to cease the Block Party after this year due to the outlay of staff time and money.

The board was saddened at this turn of events. The board discussed the ramifications of this announcement for the Going Ape Event. Without the added attendance of the many cachers that come to the area due to the Block Party, the Ape Event will likely no longer maintain Mega status. In addition the club finances will likely be diminished as a result of lost sales.

Tumbleweedpirates questioned the possibility of teaming up with Groundspeak in one fashion or another. Hydnsek indicated she would be willing to discuss the idea with Groundspeak and introduce tumbleweedpirates if he wanted to pitch some ideas to them.

Small Grant Program

Report by hydnsek

At our October meeting, I recapped the first year of our new Small Grant Program, which proved quite successful. Since then, both recipients – Auburn and Mount Vernon city parks – submitted final reports on their grant activities, which are publicly available on our website. If you haven't reviewed them yet, I hope you will; they did a great job with their grants.

The application period for the second year begins in January, and based on our initial experience, I recommended four amendments to the Small Grant Proposal, including raising the total grant pool to \$2,000 for 2015. The Board unanimously accepted the changes, and we appointed AndrewRJ as the new program manager. The grant committee is again the Executive Committee (officers).

Afterward, I finalized the Small Grant Proposal document, and posted it along with the announcement of the new grant period on our website and Facebook page in early November. The proposal has been downloaded 12 times so far (no idea how many are applicants vs. curious cachers).

I again encourage all of you to spread the word and encourage qualified parties to submit a proposal. The application period is Jan. 1-31, and the 2015 grants will be announced March 16.

Comments

AndrewRJ is looking forward to reviewing the grant proposals and commented that one of the first grant recipients was holding another event in conjunction with the city's anniversary based in large part to the success of the preceding year.

Hydnsek asked all of us to help get the word out about the grant and application period.

2015-16 Club Geocoins

Report by NepoKama

2015 coin: Following the last Board meeting, we got busy with the design and settled on the state bird (willow goldfinch) and state insect (green darnier dragonfly) in black nickel. We've now signed off on the blueprints, selected the goldfinch as the icon, ordered tracking codes, paid the minter, and the coin is in production. Cache Advance expects to receive them Jan. 9, so we should have them in hand the week of Jan. 12. If so, that will be the earliest the club has ever our geocoin, and will be a great renewal incentive.

2016 coin: I'm working on the overall design for the separate chapter pieces that will fit into the WSGA puzzle coin set planned for next year. The coins will fit together into the WSGA logo, with each chapter having a coin shaped more-or-less like their chapter outlines. Once I have the details on sizing and shape worked out I'll be looking to each chapter for what they'd like to do on their coin. Please be thinking about what you want for your chapter's coin.

Comments

Hydnsek was pleased that we will be receiving the coin so early in the year.

Unlicensed Use of Ape Image by Oakcoins

Report by hydnek

At our October meeting, I debriefed the Board on the situation, my due diligence, and options for next steps (see the October 2014 meeting minutes). The Board agreed that I should talk to Hans Nielsen, Oakcoins owner, and see what he says.

I procrastinated on this and only sent the email inquiry this week, and am awaiting a response. However, this delay may prove fortuitous. Avroair told me a couple days ago that Oakcoins recently fired Michael, the manager who had been using copyrighted images from several customers without permission, and that Hans is aware these transgressions have occurred and is dealing with them. So, I'm not breaking new ground in letting him know there are image-licensing issues, and we are more likely to get a quick resolution without a defensive response. I will let the Board know what transpires

when I hear back from Hans.

Comments

The board was pleased to see that the situation is being addressed and saddened that Oakcoins has needed to deal with this situation.

Membership Report

Report by Lizzy

While pulling information for this report, Lizzy realized that last year's comparison numbers were all too familiar. Upon checking the old meeting minutes from last year, it was discovered that she had mistakenly pulled the incorrect numbers and compared these to the Sept 2014 totals. Lizzy sent a corrected year-to-year comparison to AndrewRJ to include with the September meeting minutes.

As of December 15, we have 350 Accounts, which include 190 Individual, 141 Family and 19 Associate Accounts. There are 591 people total. We gained 15 accounts since September, with 31 persons added.

The membership totals for this time last year were estimates - based on counting 2 members per family. This year's totals include actual numbers. This will skew comparisons between this year & last year.

We've had many renewals come through in the past 3 months and we have a strong start to the 2015 membership rolls, with 89 accounts (160 people). Lizzy will present those 2015 chapter breakdowns at our next meeting in January.

Membership Counts and Chapter Breakdowns as of 12/15/2014

Chapters	Current Accounts			Current TOTALS	
	Individual	Family	Associate	Accounts	Members
Puget Sound	98	70	1	169	286
48 North	29	22	2	53	99
Inland Empire	15	18	7	40	73
South Central	13	11	1	25	43
Olympic Peninsula	15	7	0	22	31
Southwest	9	7	1	17	28
Cache-Cadia	11	6	0	17	24
Unaffiliated	0	0	7	7	7
ALL CHAPTER TOTALS	190	141	19	350	591
LAST REPORTED	187	135	13	335	560
Net Gains	3	6	6	15	31

Chapters	Totals at 12/15/2014		Added This Period		Totals a Year Ago		This Year compare to Last Year	
	Accounts	Members	Accounts	Members	Accounts	Members	Trend	Percent
	Puget Sound	166	280	3	6	?	230	↗
48 North	48	85	5	14	?	88	↗	12.50%
Inland Empire	37	68	3	5	?	52	↗	40.38%
South Central	25	43	0	0	?	31	↗	37.71%
Olympic Peninsula	21	29	1	2	?	32	↘	-3.13%
Southwest	15	26	2	2	?	26	↗	7.69%
Cache-Cadia	16	22	1	2	?	15	↗	60.00%
Unaffiliated	7	7	0	0	?	15	↘	-53.33%
TOTALS:					?	489	↗	20.86%

Comments

Hydnsek indicated that she was very happy with the number of renewals we have already received and reminded the board that all board members must be renewed by the end of the year to continue serving on the board.

Chapter Reports

Southwest Chapter report by verano

On November 1, I held a Stevenson, WA Meet and Greet. About twelve people attended.

The WSGA Southwest 2014 winter event was held in Longview, WA on December 6 at Papa Pete's Pizza. More than 30 people attended. In addition to socializing, attendees had the opportunity to make and keep fancy ribbon bows from "kits" I had prepared for them. Bearsandme (Freda Westnedge) ran a gift exchange, and most of the people who attended participated both in the craft activity and the exchange. Afterward, Freda was awarded the WSGA Southwest volunteer award (coin) for 2014. I provided some raffle prizes for this event, and quite a few prizes were donated, too. One of the prizes I offered was a gift of WSGA membership which will be processed after the 1st of the year, won by Princesse Mais (Colette) Volunteers and I had also made 40+ paracord buddies and paracord angels ahead of time, which decorated some light-up winter trees on the gift table. At the end of the event everyone took one (or more) of the paracord figures home. Most of the attendees had pictures taken with a giant stuffed snowman I had borrowed for the occasion. Poinsettias which had been purchased for table decorations were given away at the end of the event. Though we could not, of course, request donations for charitable organizations on the geocaching event page, I was able

to communicate with everyone via email and Facebook (at the suggestion of the reviewer) about bringing food and pet food donations for CAP, and food enough to overload the box I had brought was donated. You can see photos of the event, including the pile of donated food and the framed volunteer award, on the WSGA Southwest Chapter Facebook page.

The next scheduled southwest Washington events will be a meet and greet held in Woodland on January 16, and a Geocaching 101 class at the library in Stevenson on April 4. I hope to get two area cachers to host events in the months ahead in the Camas/Washougal areas, too. And I will host an event in Centralia in the spring.

Thank you to various board members who guide me through WSGA things I still do not know how to do!

South Central Chapter report by tumbleweedpirates

We held a costume party in Oct and it was very successful. We took November off for events and started working on meeting and organizing for our Tri-City Geocoin event. Many things are in process so it is still too early to explain details. Please watch the tricitygeocoin.com web page for more info. Event coordinators are using member's suggestions and moving the event to Sacajawea State park this year. We have all had good communications with the Ranger there and we are looking forward to highlighting that parks culture significant with our coin event. We are also using WSGA members to again design the coin which should be another unique piece of art for everyone's collection. Members are making a Pathtag for completing a multi and most likely giving the back side of it to the WSGA for the donation program the Pathtag company features.

We just finished a 12/13/14 Christmas party event where all the folks who were at the party and completed all the Geo HoHoHo caches for this year each got a small coin. Those that attended received Cachekinz. The party gets more popular each year and I think this is WSGA's fourth year in a row to help set it up.

We have an early coin meeting in January and I am in the last minute race to get a News Years day Geo hike set up. But I am working on another party for the same day as my 2 week deadline to get a event posted for News Year day.

Cache-Cadia Chapter report by Mr. Gadget #2

Being I was not able to attend the fall meeting due to harvest, I did not submit a chapter report then, So with the December report I will bring everyone up to date for the activities that have occurred since late August. Several locals set goals to achieve the seven souvenirs for August for their personal profiles. To get the Socializer souvenir, there were three different events held at Sun Lakes Interpretive Center, along the Columbia

River at East Wenatchee, to Ellensburg. All within three consecutive days in late August.

Bruce and Cathy Clark (The Pazooters) held their 7th annual "Waterville to Wheat to Eat" event in September.

One of our new cachers wanted to have a Halloween event cache on 10/31. This was his first time to submit an event and it was turned down by a volunteer reviewer. He requested my help and tried to submit the second time. It stayed in queue for +several days and never got published. So we went ahead and had our own spooky event with two night caches anyway.

December is off to a busy month as there are two events scheduled on 12-13-14 Multi World Event Meet & Greet in Quincy and "Twelve Days til Christmas" is our holiday Christmas party. Thanks to WSGA and doubling all Chapter allotments this year, we are giving away some really nice geocaching related items to the attendees. Both events were well attended beyond expectations.

Membership(s): We had a good response for WSGA memberships. There were 3 new member join WSGA and two renewals for next year collected at our Holiday party. A few more took applications to either renewal or join WSGA.

48 North Chapter report by GrievousAngel

We've had a lot of events and activities in 48North, but I'll just report on the ones that were sponsored or co-sponsored by the chapter.

In November we had an extremely popular breakfast event at the Skagit airport. (The café there has a nice view over the landing field.) After the event, many cachers headed out to the nearby airport trail system to find some caches, and I was really glad to see that some people were out caching with new friends they had met at the breakfast.

On the first weekend in December, Cache the Planet and WSGA 48 North co-sponsored a cookie-decorating event for kids at the Jennings Park Barn in Marysville. This will hopefully become an annual tradition, especially if we move it to a Saturday morning. There were cookies, prizes, cookies, gingerbread houses (and a gingerbread ammo can) and cookies.

Our holiday party was last Friday--even with a smaller turnout and a last-minute venue change to a less-festive location, we had a great time. I think we'll have to move it to a Sunday afternoon, though--traffic was just brutal!

The chapter will be co-sponsoring a meet & greet in Marysville next month and a CITO on Camano in February. We'll also be helping with Rey del Roble's Great Balls of Fire event in February.

I'll be teaching a geocaching class as part of the Mill Creek Elementary School's 4th-grade Science Day at the end of January. (Wish me luck!)

Puget Sound Chapter report by Mc3cats

Since our last meeting, the PS Chapter had its first ever Halloween Event (Nightmare @ Kennydale GC5AQT) co-hosted by SirKarp and NW Stinkerbella and crew. This was on 11/2 and we had a pretty good turnout despite the Seahawks game and bad weather. SirKarp and crew did a fantastic job with decorating including a pretty sweet 1978 Cadillac Hurst sporting a coffin with Seymore inside. We also had a costume contest with prizes. We had quite a few folks dressing up for the event with team Frisky Biscuits winning top honors with their "Ghost Busters" costumes. All in all, a fantastic event.

Our next big shindig is coming up in January which will be our annual holiday party which is on Sunday January 11th, 2015 (GC5G0ZJ). This will be at our location of choice for our larger events which is at Kennydale Memorial Hall just off 405 in north Renton. All are invited! We will be handing out our volunteer awards at this event which I have several to hand out. Beyond that, I do not have anything planned but will be working that after the holidays.

As "non-club" events, McKitten and I did a geocaching class for a daycare coop group in Burien a couple weeks back. The group had reached out to the WSGA and wanted someone to come out to their meeting to talk about geocaching. McKitten and I were more than happy to do so. I think we converted a couple of muggles to cachers after that event.

Olympic Peninsula Chapter Report by ClayArtist

Following the busy-ness of the summer events, the OP took a little break after September. I spent part of October helping with the selection of the next WSGA group campout site. We have a Holiday Party Event scheduled for January 4 and I am looking forward to giving out a special award at that event. We will be at the Roundtable Pizza in Silverdale and I have some fun activities planned for the group. I am also working on planning out the event schedule for the rest of 2015, as well, so I will be able to get events posted as far ahead as possible. I'm still learning, even though I learned an awful lot this past year, about what works and what doesn't. I am really looking forward to a busy year for WSGA, between events and helping with the WSGA Campout.

Inland Empire Chapter report by Martin 5

Past Chapter Events:

Cheney Cache Machine Breakfast GC5BXNK 10/04/14

CORNy aMAZEing event #3 GC4PZEH 10/10/14

IEC - WSGA Goes to the Dogs GC5E2XC 11/15/14

Holiday Movie Event GC5FV9H 11/22/14

Upcoming Chapter Events:

3rd Annual IE Chapter WSGA Christmas Party GC5H1E3 12/20/14

Annual Winter Party..... actual date to be determined.....02/2015

Numerous Upcoming Local Events:

Christmas Lights of Spokane 12/18/14 by shrimala | GC5H5F0

Boxing Day Ice Cream Meet & Greet 12/26/14 by Martin 5 | GC5HQAV

October was a busy month for events. The Chapter hosted two and there were at least two other non-chapter events. The Chapter had submitted a third event in October which would have been our 2nd annual zombie hike event; however, this year the assigned reviewer wouldn't approve it. We did; however, host our 3rd annual corn maze event. Sadly the same evening as our event, but after our group had already left the corn maze, an 18 year old volunteer staff member was killed at the corn maze when he was run over by a bus. This touched a lot of us considering we had just departed the corn maze about an hour earlier. I received several concerned calls the next morning from cachers who were not in attendance when word of a death was first announced on the news, with concern that it was a fellow cacher. Two weeks later one of our local cachers, AntiqueMan (aka PizzaMan), hosted an unofficial geo-event / fundraiser at his pizza shop to raise money for the young man's family. It was well attended by our local caching community.

November we hosted another two events. One with a dog theme at a local dog park and one with more of a kid theme with his G rated Christmas movie on the big screen.

The Chapter was going to host a 12/13/14 event the past weekend; however, two of our local members submitted events for this date, so we opted to attend theirs verse having too many events for the same day. Our holiday movie event on 11/22/14 actually replaced the event we were going to have for 12/13/14. Our 3rd annual Christmas party event is this coming Saturday in downtown Spokane. We will be reminding folks to

renew their memberships and hope to have a computer or two on site so they can renew while they are there.

Our annual winter party / awards event is also still in the planning stages with a tentative date about the 3rd weekend in February. This year's theme will be Mardi Gras.

Lookout Lisa is working with the City of Spokane Valley to see about bringing a geo-tour to our area next year. It is still in the planning stages at this point in time. I have been encouraging Lisa to have the city apply for a WSGA grant to help fund this endeavor.

Comments

The Chapter Reports were accepted on mass.

NEW BUSINESS

Outreach Activities

Report by Hydnek

For the 4th year in a row, King County Parks has recognized WSGA as a key partner at its annual Volunteer Program Appreciation Dinner on Dec. 4. AndrewRJ and hydnek attended to represent the club and receive the award, presented by Kevin Brown, Director of King County Parks. It's great to be recognized alongside organizations such as The Sierra Club, Washington Trails Association, and Friends of the parks groups.

WSGA was the featured topic on the "Caching in the Northwest" podcast on Dec. 11. The Bad Cop (Chris Umphenour, the co-host) interviewed me and did a great job of promoting the club on his show.

WSGA will be featured in an upcoming article in FTF Magazine. I was interviewed by the writer, Alex James, who's doing a piece on starting/maintaining geocaching clubs on college campuses. She interviewed me to find out how WSGA keep the mojo going and how that might translate to a college atmosphere. If anyone gets the magazine, I'd love to get a copy of the article when it comes out.

In addition Snowflake24 (Jenn Holland) has approached me about the position of Outreach Coordinator.

Comments

The board was pleased that someone has approached the club concerning the Outreach Coordinator position and looks forward to tearing how the discussion goes.

Volunteer Awards 2014

Report by Hydnek

Thanks to WSGA's growth and health, we've expanded our ability to recognize our wonderful volunteers over the past couple years. We've minted special coins for club volunteers, Ape volunteers, and GeoTour volunteers. For club volunteers, we've even had two coins – the annual volunteer coin, and the President's White Ape (club-wide recipients).

Since 2010, we've recognized each year's key club supporters with a Volunteer of the Year coin (a special version of the annual club coin) and an announcement on the club website and Facebook page. The chapter reps choose the recipients in their chapters, and club-wide recipients are chosen by the President with input from the officers.

For 2014, we have 30 volunteer coins to present. Each Board member receives one for all their hard work (that's 11), and the chapter reps nominate members for the rest. The number each chapter has to award is based on membership and chapter activity. For instance, Inland Empire received additional coins this year as they had several folks who went above-and-beyond for the clubwide Summer Campout.

All the chapter reps have submitted their nominations and write-ups, and I have compiled the awards list for announcement later in December. The award coins have been mailed to each chapter rep for presentation at their holiday parties. (Southwest was the first to present theirs, and verano made a great plaque for her recipient, bearsandme. 48 North has also presented theirs.)

In addition to the chapter awards, I am presenting club-wide President's White Ape coins to a score of folks, who will be recognized by their chapters and in the public announcement. Since this is my final year as President, I am taking this opportunity to recognize not only major contributors this year, like Sunshine Geo, rambudo, and Peach&Pete, but long-term stars such as jcar, acfunk, and pazooter. (FYI, this is the last of the White Ape coins.) I have already mailed most of the coins to the recipients with my thanks, and the full list will be posted as part of the public announcement. I am sending chapter reps the recipients in your area along with write-ups, and ask that you announce them along with your own awards at your events. (Some of these have already gone out.)

Finally, we had Ape volunteer coins this year – the first time we've done this. (As you know, all event staff receive a special volunteer shirt as a thank-you.) There were 20 coins made as special rewards for volunteers who went above-and-beyond for the event. As event director, I awarded the coins to the assistant directors, crew chiefs, those who worked two shifts (all day), and a few special contributors (e.g., Mr. Gadget #2 with his lab-cache birdhouses, Sproutter for doing Apezilla for three years). I also gave coins to the best friend and family of ECM41, the cacher who died of a heart attack en route to GCD before the event. Interesting quirk: Most recipients actually got three trackables

(same number), as the first batch of volunteer coins had an error and had to be remade; so recipients got an error coin, a good coin, and the trackable tag.

In short, I've spent the past few weeks pretending to be AndrewRJ, mailing out piles of padded envelopes with various coins. Great that we can recognize so many great members, which in turn increases member support and club loyalty.

Comments

Verano asked about the differences between the coin types. Hydnek and NepoKama said that the regular and volunteer versions were different metals.

A discussion was held discussing the volunteer coin allotments. Tumbleweedpirates requested additional coins be minted next year.

GPS Units for Outreach

Report by Hydnek

For the past few years, Board members have tossed around the idea of acquiring some GPS units to have on hand for outreach activities with various groups – schools, scouts, parks, outdoors orgs, etc. Now that the club is on sound financial footing, we have a merchandise manager and inventory records, and a bench of members willing to do outreach activities, I propose that we act on this idea.

My proposal is as follows:

- Acquire a dozen units of similar style, so they are easy to set up and use by any presenter. Garmin GPSmap and eTrex units are my recommendation.
- Have six units available in Western and Eastern Washington, for access by most chapters. Six units would reside with our Merchandise Manager in Western WA, and six would be held by the Cache Cave in IE chapter (care of Lookout Lisa).
- We can call for donations first (of the preferred units), and then purchase more as needed to fill out our inventory. To start things off, I will donate my two older GPSmap units (CSx and CS) rather than selling them on eBay. Who will match my donation? ;)
- The units will be tracked in our inventory spreadsheet, so they can be accounted for.

Thoughts on this proposal?

Comments

A lengthy discussion was held to discuss this issue. The board generally agrees with the proposal.

AndrewRJ felt that it would be better to vote after pricing information was decided.

It was decided to explore the purchase of 12 eTrex 20 GPS units. A motion was made that the WSGA buy 12 Garmin 20 GPS units for use in classes and outreach. Pricing to be approved by the Board before purchase. The motion was carried by a unanimous vote.

Tumbleweedpirates discussed the need to have hard cases to act as protection and carrying cases. Hippychick1620 indicated that she would research case prices.

Hydnsek suggested that the merchandise manager keep them in the west, and Cache Advance keep them in the east (they store other of our inventory, like the projector).

The meeting was adjourned by Hydnsek at 9:22 PM.