

Washington State Geocaching Association

January 27, 2011 Board Meeting

Board members in attendance: idajo (Jo Dunn), jcar (Jim Bertrand), acfunk(Al Funk), LLCOOL(Lauretta Noll), pazooter(Bruce Clark), lucymogus(Elaine Edwards), Mc3cats(Chris Brue), hydNSEK(Abby Wolfe), mazeracer(Nate Canfield). Guests: mtngoat50, PaneledZero, xplore19, Dgwphotos

Board members not in attendance: fluteface(Margaret Dunn), ezzel(Ben Ezzell)

Others mentioned during the meeting listed here for reference: Right Wing Wacko(Paul West), Ambrosia (Amber Barber), quadsinthemudd (Brad Jordan)

The Winter 2011 business meeting of the WSGA was called to order by hydNSEK with 8 of the 11 board members in attendance at the time the meeting was called to order.

Election Recap - lucymogus

The VP heads up the nominating committee and tabulates the votes.

Nominating committee for 2011 elections was lucymogus, jcar, and ambrosia.

Most nominations come from board members who have already talked with their nominee.

Three notifications were sent out -- one for nominations, one with the slate, one to remind folks to vote.

VP receives copies of all votes, but automatically tabulated

Turnout was about 40% of membership. Turnout for 2009 was 25%.

Concerns:

The VP knowing everyone's vote is something the MUST be changed. It's been in the bylaws but could

open us up to lots of complaints if the VP office was ever contested..

HydNSEK mentioned that this would be addressed during the bylaw changes this year. In addition to suggesting a blind email so that if there were issues the votes could be checked. Site admin was also suggested to check the emails as long as they are not on the ballot. These items will be addressed more during the bylaw changes later this year.

Membership Report - jcar

At the end of 2010 the WSGA had a total of 360 members, 100 over the 2009 year end.

16 of those had recently joined or renewed at the family membership level.

119 members were paid through 12/31/2011 or further.

16 of those had recently joined or renewed at the family membership level.

Chapter Breakdowns as of 12/31/2010 Total members

Puget Sound: 178

N. Olympic: 43

North 48: 34

Inland Empire: 34

Southwest: 15

Cache-Cadian: 15

South Central: 14

As of 01/25/2011 - 169 members -- 131 individual, 4 associate, 34 family

Chapter Breakdown Chapter Name: Total Count (Family Members included in Total)

Puget Sound: 97 (21)

N. Olympic: 16 (4)

North 48: 16 (3)

Inland Empire: 12 (1)

Southwest: 12 (2)

South Central: 7 (1)

Cache-Cadian: 5 (2)

Family memberships have far exceeded expectations with 34 current family members.

A reminder will be sent out very soon to members who lapsed on 12/31/2010. The list is built in Constant Contact, and will be kept up to date until the reminder note is sent. This will boost membership, the coin will get a few more to join or renew.

Pazooter asked: I see that major catchers in my area have not yet renewed. Is that common?

The answer is yes, and hydnek encouraged chapter reps to hold an event early in year and encourage renewals.

Hydnek added: The board voted to convert the newsletter to a membership benefit in September, which has been very successful. I'm not sure how much it impacted our unusual influx of new members this fall, but we had 30+ new members within a couple months after that. We normally get almost no new members the last part of the year, going forward, the newsletter will remain a members-only benefit. Lapsed members will be retained on the newsletter through May.

Treasurer Report - lucymogus

Combined accounts have a current balance of \$5547.71

No official treasurer's report yet but hope to get that accomplished by next board meeting.

Known upcoming expenses: WSGA coin (~\$3500) and campout reservations. Income starts up in force around May.

LLCOOL mentioned that the campout would need a couple thousand dollars.

mazeracer515: Would recover a good portion of those expenses though?

The reply was yes, but everything will be paid for before hand. Campout usually breaks even, last year we came out on the plus side, coin will pay for itself and fund other activities. Coin sales start as soon as we have a delivery date for the coin, sales cannot start too early as paypal requires goods to be delivered within 30 days of payment.

LLCOOL suggested early campout registrations. The reply was that we usually try to get this done as soon as we can. In 2010 the reservations started shortly after the site was reserved last February with prize drawings for those that reserved by May 31st.

Hydnsek: Yes, we do have ways to recover, but that's after we have to pay for both up front, this is one key reason chapter allocations don't go out first of year

Lucymogus also mentioned that Paypal takes close to 5% of all income. Would like to explore taking credit cards on our site this year if possible.

Discussion on taking credit cards, checks, and paypal.

Acfunk: Credit cards also charge a fee.

Hydnsek: That would create more problems than it solves, I suspect. For one thing, it would likely break our automated membership updates, which would be a big deal.

LLCOOL: Have checks been a problem in the past? We could suggest them to people based on fees???

Jcar: Checks are taken, and have not had any bounces last year.

Lucymogus: People are slow to send checks. Would love to have auto renewal. Another Paul topic.

Pazooter: Auto renewal is good.

Hydnsek: The challenge with checks is they require more manual work on our part and also more prone to human error.

mazeracer515: Another option is to have an adder to the fee if you have to use a card/paypal

hydnsek: Paul really should be our consultant first before we discuss too much, as he's probably looked at it before. For those who don't know - we use Paypal for everything sold on our site. Memberships, coins, shirts,

registrations. Paypal also has a setup to streamline payment transfers, and we have a back end that automatically updates. Membership status within an hour of a payment. This saves secretary and treasurer lots of work. And Paypal takes credit cards, online checks, etc. so it handles all the input payment streams. We should explore, and I agree with automatic renewals - we should work that out at least.

LLCOOL: Yes to all the above. And, we do need to make it as simple as possible or people won't bother. I really do like Paypal, even if expensive.

Mc3cats: Isn't there a way that we can just build in 5% into the memberships so that we can recoup that lost money?

Jcar: The postage is always calculated at a worse case scenario.

mazeracer515: I know the free accounts - paypal charges 3% extra for credit card is that the same for business accounts?

Hydnsek: We sure could if we want to raise dues, Chris. That's something to consider.

Jcar: But we cannot outright pass the fees on in the postage and handling.

Pazooter: Or consider the 5% part of it.

LLCOOL: Maybe a committee could explore the options????

Hydnsek: Yes, we consider the fees when we figure cost of coins and other stuff. just not the dues, which have been stable for years. Elaine, want to head that up?

Lucymogus: Like it. Sure.

Non-Profit Status - jcar

A summary of what we started to look into last year.

One of our goals last year was to investigate and pursue non-profit status for the WSGA. Early in the year I consulted with a lawyer about what needed to be done. Unfortunately 501c with the IRS is a costly process (upwards of 10K, which we have never had) and would be more than the WSGA has ever had even last year after GW8. From the discussion even though he didn't come out and say it, but that we were still pretty small. He did recommend that we hire an accountant to make sure our books were in order. One item we were going to follow up on was at least filling as a non-profit with the State of Washington. GW8 and later other activities pushed this to the back burner.

One item we would like to pursue this year, is filling with the state. (Some other advantages would be some hall rentals have a different rate for non-profits, even if only filed with the state, the ability to hold raffles, etc.)

Acfunk: What are the downsides to not doing the non-profit?

Jcar: Possible audits by the state.

LLCOOL: Do we have a member who is an attorney? Or an accountant?

Hydnsek: Al - we could be liable for fees and penalties for not registering.

Hydnsek: State nonprofit is cheap, easy, and gives us some benefits as Jim mentioned. I checked with other clubs like us and they recommended it as the right route.

Lucymogus: Filing for state non-profit seems to be \$50.00.

Acfunk: If we are state non-profit, are we still liable for federal audits etc?

Pazooter: From what I've heard, it's not hard, just time consuming.

Coin Update - Hydnsek (reporting for fluteface)

Previously, the coin has come out in the spring / early summer. Last year, we agreed to move production to the fall, so the coin could come out in Jan/Feb and help drive membership and finances. Those of you who've visited the private Geocoin forum already have seen the thread for the 2011 coin. If not, please add your thoughts.

Flutey, who agreed to be our geocoin manager again this year, solicited designs as part of a contest. As you can see in the thread, she got several entries. We are currently deciding which one(s) to focus on, it appears to be between two. Flutey has also posted preliminary costs to mint each of the two main choices and then we ground to a halt for a couple months, due to Real Life.

So, we are now a bit behind schedule, but I promised Flutey I'd help get things back on track.

I'd like to get closure on the design in the next few days. The designers are eager to find out who won and we will announce the winning design once we finalize it and go to mint. No preannouncements, please - in case something happens during the final design phase with minter. Sound good?

OK, here's my radical suggestion and rationale. Since we have two designs that are clearly favored, and both are well liked I propose that we mint one this year and use the other for our 2012 coin. That way, we have a huge leg up on next year's coin, and can indeed produce it in the fall, so the next board has it out in winter.

Acfunk: Do we have a deadline for making the decision?

Hydnsek: I'm going with Feb. 1.

2011 Campout update - acfunk

We began by deciding IE should host back in the Fall. Brad(quadsinthemudd) volunteered to lead the effort. The campout committee looked at sites and picked Chief Timothy. It's a really nice park on the Snake. The board approved the site and Brad had a kickoff meeting about 3 weeks ago with some volunteers. He is rolling pretty steady. An update of current details is on the campout thread,

including how he is close to making reservations, and what he wants to charge for fees.

Hydnsek: Next immediate step seems to be the reservations and payment. LLCOOL was asked to let the Board know soon when that is worked out so funding can be approved and the reservation moved forward.

Merchandise Update - jcar

Beyond a few WSGA shirts and WSGA GW shirts we have depleted our stock from prior years. We currently have plenty of Silver Ape coins and Ape Cachkinz.

Plans for 2011.

Last year we got requests for hoodies and requests for a new shirt (or sweatshirts). While we still have some WSGA GW shirts left we have just a handful of the WSGA shirts with the huge WSGA logo and name, and not in the two popular sizes, L and XL. Some of the requests we receive were for a small logo on the shirt/sweatshirts/hoodies. After the expenses for the 2011 WSGA coins, the Campout down payment, and Going Ape Again expenses are determined I propose that we work on some new clothing with a smaller logo. We will probably also need to have some more baseball caps made, a steady seller, and finally probably our most popular item that we give away the WSGA mini-pens, we will need to order some more soon. Other items have been tried in the past, like water bottles. They were never very popular and eventually were given away. Any and all additional ideas are welcome.

Lucymogus: What about selling the pens instead of giving them away.

Jcar: Yes we can sell them, 5 packs could be sold for between \$7 – \$8, they have been used as a giveaway as they are inexpensive, and an easy way to get our logo on something and into the hands of others, plus they are easy to send out to the Chapters.

There was also discussion on including other items as a membership giveaway, it was pointed out that last year a patch was given away, and as a member a name badge, WSGA patch, newsletters and discounts are given to members.

Some reorders of current stuff in spring (pens) in addition to another swag item to be sold and given away, depending on budget. Shirts/hoodies later in the summer/fall. And possibly longer lanyards during the year. The Board will be polled before any major purchases.

Mc3cats suggested a bison tube with the WSGA logo on it, and pazooter suggested a wooden token/coin that could be etched with the WSGA logo.

A thread is open in the private forums for further discussion.

Chapter Reports

Puget Sound - Mc3cats.

The 2010 Holiday Party event that occurred on 1/15/11 was a huge success! This time around, we had the event at a different venue from previous years which I think played a part in the event turning out the way it did. We had 6 of the 7 chapters represented at the event. The outgoing Puget Sound Chapter rep, The Jester (Craig), put on a wonderful magic show that wowed the audience and had Hydnek about to lose her right hand! Overall it was a very successful event.

Events -Scheduled - Currently, the chapter has two events scheduled. My official WSGA event as chapter rep is the "Feeling the Geo Love" (2/5/11) in South Tacoma. My second event is the "Do You Feel Lucky" event (3/19/11) in Bonney Lake.

Events -in the works "GSAK Clinic" - I have posted a GSAK thread in the PS forum to see if there is interest in a GSAK clinic. I would like to have a GSAK clinic as I would like to learn more about the program I use and know very little about and suspect there are folks out there that would want to attend such a clinic.

Southwest - idajo2

My primary focus, in the next few months, will be increased Chapter involvement and I hope to see the 22 lapsed memberships (per the membership list on the website) in the SW Chapter reactivated and new members join the ranks. I also plan to hold Southwest Chapter events outlying areas in order to revive and expand interest in WSGA activities.

The first 2011 SW Chapter event is on the GC.com calendar. Centralia Meet 'n' Greet <http://coord.info/GC2MX8X>

I held three personal events during the last three months of 2010; several lapsed members said they would rejoin if events and activities increased. For that reason, I'm going to give it a shot. I have a tentative schedule of events I'm looking at – this is an overview of what I hope to see happen:

February 19 (confirmed) Meet 'n' Greet in Centralia

April 23 – received a call today – CITO at the Ridgefield Nat'l Wildlife Request WON'T be possible – timing doesn't work for them will need to find another location.

June 18 – tentative – Long Beach

July 12 – confirmed – Ft. Vancouver – Thompson Columbia
Brigade
August - confirmed - Campout
September 8 – tentative – WSGA Day
October ? – personal event - Ridgefield (to coincide with BirdFest
& Bluegrass - I hoped to make this an annual event)
November – tentative - late Fall CITO in Stevenson

Hydnsek: This is great for SW chapter - they've sort of languished until now.

Inland Empire - LLCOOL

We are planning our Spring event on Feb 26th, election of officers:
PaneledZero has consented to lead us.

Following the chapter reports there was discussion of several items summarized below.

Hydnsek mentioned that Mc3cats has started a Chapter Rep thread in the forums for cross sharing of ideas.

There was a discussion of having combined Chapter Events, possibly a Puget Sound, Cache-Cadian, South Central Event maybe in Ellensburg. A Puget Sound – South West Washington event.

Mazeracer mentioned a possible wind farm tour this spring.

GSAK classes were mentioned. Mazeracer has hosted GSAK classes prior and will share material and tips.

Hydnsek: I did two classes when I was chapter rep with Jester and TotemLake. I'd be glad to share, as well. My old threads are still in the PS forum somewhere. As well as the syllabus for the GSAK and Going Paperless classes

CITO

Hydnsek: Just wanted to encourage everyone to plan a CITO event or two in your chapter areas this spring.

Mc3cats: Will there be a Cougar CITO?

Hydnsek: We try to do that every year for Earth Day and the Groundspeak CITO weekend.

mazeracer515: Working with meandbrea to get an area scheduled for South Central

There is a thread in the forums for CITO discussion.

Going Ape...All Over Again update

Hydnsek: If you haven't read the thread in the forums the previous board agreed we should host a repeat of our wildly popular Going APE event. It will be called "Going APE...All Over Again" and will be at Hyak on Sunday, Aug. 21. The day after Groundspeak's mega event, so it's a geocaching destination weekend. The great thing is that the Tunnel of Light is supposed to reopen in early summer, so instead of fees and buses, etc., we can just host a party at Hyak and folks can walk or bike through the tunnel to the APE cache, as originally intended when it was placed, a spooky 2-mile tunnel if you haven't done it. Hydnsek has agreed to direct the event again.

We are also considering a smaller event in early summer for the locals if the tunnel reopens in, say, early June, to satisfy their eagerness to have a tunnel-warming event. It might be a Riding the Iron Horse bike event, e.g. If the clubs supports that and having two APE events.

Thompson Brigade - Acfunk

There is a thread in the forum so if you haven't looked at that yet, please review. This is about a reenactment of explorer David Thompson's 1200 mile journey down the Columbia. They are making four stops and will have geocaching events at each. The booths will pass out info on WSGA. Volunteers will be needed to put out caches beforehand. We have idajo working SW and Nate & I will cover SC. But we need leads for IE and Cach-cadian. One of the events is scheduled for Wenatchee, Inland Empire's would be in Kettle Falls.

Pazooter: I have a good friend who will be a chaser for the entire trip. I will try and tie that in on the forums. Along with getting something going in Wenatchee, and at least, some new caches.

idajo2: They've asked that the caches be themed.

LLCOOL: Maybe we can coordinate with Wenatchee?

Further discussion was encouraged in the already existing forums and in emails.

Chapter Boundaries and Bylaw changes - hydnek

Chapter boundaries are crucial to discuss early this year, well ahead of elections, and some Bylaws changes are also needed and overdue.

Topics will be started in the Board of Directors forum to further discuss these two items.

WSGA Day - jcar

Propose to have a WSGA day/weekend to celebrate the 9th Anniversary of the WSGA. Create more visibility for the club. Even after all that time there are still many cachers that either have never heard of the WSGA or are only vaguely aware. To further promote the WSGA and get the word out, it is proposed that we have a WSGA day/weekend. Each chapter could host a meet and greet, provide information about the WSGA, we would also have WSGA swag for door prizes. September 8th is the day that the WSGA was founded. Further discussion to take place in the Board of Directors forum in existing topic.

Initial comments were in support of the idea.

There was an informal discussion on GSAK classes and presentation material. Presentation to be posted in the forums.

mazeracer515: For next meeting I'd like to discuss the ideas for our plan of doing a wind farm tour, can that get added to agenda?

Hydnsek: Absolutely. If you don't see it on next proposed agenda, remind me to add it. Anything else?

WSGA January 28th Meeting adjourned!

End of official discussion.
