

Minutes of WSGA Board Meeting

March 26, 2015

Hydnsek called WSGA's 6th Business Meeting of the 2014 board term to order at 6:33 PM on March 26, 2015.

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), tumbleweedpirates (Mike Lowery) and ClayArtist (Patti Stoll)

Board Members absent: Mr. Gadget #2 (Gene Reed), NepoKama (Mitch Eatough, GeoCoin Manager)

Proxies: MC3Cats for Mr. Gadget #2 (Gene Reed),

Also in attendance: (Peach&Pete) Annette Bailes

Visitors: Mizdirection (Toni Westgarth), KD7IEM (Melissa), and SirKarp (Rob Norenburg)

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

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the January 29, 2015 Board Meeting were approved unanimously.

Comments

None

Financial Report

Report by HippyChick1620

January 1, 2015 Starting balance: \$8,400.72

Income:

- Memberships: \$996.00
- Misc. sales: \$756.00
- Refund of Chapter alloc overpayment: \$10.00
- (Total: \$1,762.00)

Expenses:

- PayPal fees: \$41.57
- Order shipping: \$16.96
- USPS: \$103.50
- Supplies: \$87.85
- Chapter alloc: \$325.00
- (Total: \$574.88)

January 31, 2015 ending balance: \$9,587.84 (\$1,187.12 gain)

January 31, 2014 ending balance: \$15,869.03 (1 year comparison)

January 31, 2012 ending balance: \$6,832.44 (3 year comparison)

January 1, 2010 ending balance: \$5,100.00 (5 year comparison, closest # I could find to compare)

February 1, 2015 Starting balance: \$9,587.84

Income:

- Memberships: \$386.00
- Misc. sales: \$887.00
- Coin Sales: \$1,072.50
- Campout: \$1,060.00
- Order shipping refund: \$2.50
- (Total: \$3,408.00)

Expenses:

- PayPal fees: \$96.56
- Order shipping: \$105.23
- USPS: \$20.39
- Supplies: \$26.57
- (Total: \$248.75)

February 28, 2015 ending balance: \$12,747.09 (\$3,159.25 gain)

February 28, 2014 ending balance: \$15,652.17 (1 year comparison)

February 29, 2012 ending balance: \$6,332.54 (3 year comparison)

No 5 year comparison found, closest is January 2010 figure, see above.

March has been a slow month, but we are currently running about \$250 ahead of expenses.

Comments

Hippycheck1620 indicated that since the report was finalized, she has paid out the Small Grant checks and reimbursed for a chapter allocation so expences are running ahead of income by approximately \$950.

The board thanked Hippychick1620 for the yearly comparisons as they are a large help in comparing our financial status.

Small Grant Program

Report by AndrewRJ

Congratulations to this year's recipients of grants through the WSGA Small Grant Program: Pend Oreille County and the Spokane GeoTour. Both submitted applications for new projects that will expand geocaching in their areas and foster partnerships with local governments, parks, and businesses.

Pend Oreille County Community Development received \$600 for its geotourism program, which will bring more families to this less-visited area of Washington State and show them the recreational opportunities in Pend Oreille county parks. This geotourism project kicks off July 18, and is supported by WSGA's Inland Empire Chapter and Washington State University's Pend Oreille County Extension (which is also planning geocaching classes and events).

The Spokane GeoTour received \$500. This program is a collaboration between WSGA's Inland Empire Chapter (lead role) and the City of Spokane and its parks, with support from Visit Spokane and local organizations and businesses. The GeoTour theme for the first year is "Spokane Area History," and cache locations will highlight historical places, parks, and landmarks. The GeoTour launches on Aug. 8, aligning with Spokane Parks' Kids Day to draw new families into geocaching.

Kudos to our Inland Empire Chapter for supporting both of these worthy projects. Last year, our grant recipients were Mount Vernon Parks (48 North Chapter) and Auburn Parks (Puget Sound Chapter). We're thrilled that communities across the state are interested in using geocaching to expand recreational opportunities in their localities, and that our chapters are supporting their efforts.

This is the second year of the WSGA Small Grant Program, which provides annual funding of up to \$2,000 to support geocaching-related projects in Washington. Small Grants are available to individuals, groups, park systems, and nonprofit organizations working on geocaching-related activities that will positively impact the Washington geocaching community and further the club's goals.

Both recipients have been contacted and checks should be sent out shortly.

Comments

AndrewRJ clarified some of the feedback received and planned changes to the Grant Program. The Grant committee is thinking of having the Chapter Representatives vet the applications to catch any issues that might crop up prior to final decision making and there were also many clarifications that needed to be made concerning the intent of the grants.

A few of the Chapter Representatives wondered what their duties would be if the above changes were implemented, however no final decisions have been made at this time.

AndrewRJ was thanked by Hydnek for performing a difficult task this year as the Grant Program is only in its second year.

Ape Mega-Event

Report by AndrewRJ

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

The event page is up, with 292 Will Attends so far. We just mailed the check & application to Karen at Helfrich Insurance, it usually takes about 2 weeks from this point. After receiving the binder I will apply for the park permit.

Notification has gone out to the new porta potty vendor to insure we will get what we need.

After the announcement of the cessation of the Block Party our attendance numbers are up and significantly above what they were this time last year. Due to this I have decided that we will be utilizing the forest service lot as it seems that we will potentially need the extra parking.

I have received several offers of help at the event and have begun developing a list of offers. Many previous volunteers have asked to help again.

Comments

AndrewRJ clarified that as the APE Event Director, he plans on having at least one additional event in 2016 to gauge the drop-off in attendance.

Mr. Gadget #2 and Mc3cats both discussed their willingness to help as they did last year on the Lab caches (Geocaching Adventures).

A discussion was held concerning vendors and the issues that would be involved if they were at the event as they relate to having Groundspeak have a booth next year the support the event.

2015 Summer Campout

Report by LadyCosmic

Things are progressing with the planning of the campout. Event page and registration page are up and running. As of 3/24/15, 8 of our 14 RV spots (6 left) are taken and we have 8 tents registered so far. In the number of people we have registered so far we have 42 Adults and 26 Children (under the age of 10).

I am looking for people to help me with the campout and to get donations for the door prizes and raffle. I will be posting on Facebook and the WSGA board. If anyone has any suggestions on people to contact for help, please send me their name and contact information.

John (CaptCosmic) and myself (along with the CosmicKids) went to Manchester State Park a few weeks ago to look around. Our main goal was to find something that could be used on the path tag. We really didn't see anything that stood out other than what is already on the mock up of the path tag. I like the current mock up of the path tag. I am thinking of maybe just changing the color of the building. I will be contacting NepoKama to talk about what else he can do with the path tag.

Comments

AndrewRJ indicated that he has communicated with LadyCosmic and informed her that we have given NepoKama a list of ideas for the path tag.

HippyChick1620 has indicated that she has submitted donation request forms for various businesses.

Appointed Positions

Report by hydnek

We have a few appointed roles that are vacant and need warm bodies. Since these roles are appointed by the President and approved by the Board, I have been working to fill them, with Andrew's awareness, to lessen the burden on him as he transitions to his new role.

Park Liaison Manager. I'm thrilled to report that Annette Bailes (Peach&Pete) has agreed to fill the role, and I think she'll do a great job, based on her proactive work with Auburn parks and gung-ho volunteer spirit. If approved, I will help her get up to speed in the next few weeks.

At this time, I move that the Board approve the appointment of Annette Bailes as the new Park Liaison Manager.

Webmaster. A few weeks ago, Jim Carson resigned as Webmaster, effective March 31. I'm sad to see Jim go, as he was the most experienced Webmaster we've had, and his tenure was brief. Fortunately, Kevin Norton (Shark166, aka Kristine's husband) has been somewhat involved and has agreed to take over as primary Webmaster. If approved, he will work with Jim on transition in the next week. Kevin will also be responsible for the technology side of the site overhaul when we tackle it later this year.

At this time, I move that the Board approve the appointment of Kevin Norton as the new Webmaster.

Outreach Coordinator. Jenn Holland (Snowflake24) has made a great start in this new role, but as predicted, she did get the job in Japan and is leaving in the next week for two years. However, she still feels she can do much of the role remotely (requests and planning are largely email), and really wants to. I say: wow, that's dedication. I sure wouldn't want an entanglement like that if I were abroad for two years.

To harness this enthusiasm yet address our local needs, I have a proposed solution. Chris Brue (mc3cats), our about-to-retire Puget Sound Chapter Rep, is an extroverted guy who has done numerous outreach events over the past three years. I propose pairing Chris and Jenn and have them share the role, as they have complementary skills. Chris is great with public interaction and presentation, and Jenn is good with organization and record-keeping (we want to start tracking outreach requests). I have talked to Chris, and he has agreed – and handled an event last weekend (Norwegian Heritage Day). If approved, Jenn would manage Outreach overall (tracking requests, managing assignments, keeping records, maintaining our presentation files), with Chris managing it locally (helping find volunteers to fulfill requests or doing it himself, storing the outreach supplies – GPSrs and projector, e.g.). If Jenn becomes unable to fulfill her responsibilities in a timely fashion, then Chris could take the role over completely, using the groundwork laid by Jenn. Note that neither Chris nor Jenn are expected to fulfill all requests themselves; much of it is about finding members to handle them (and we do have a list, and always looking for more volunteers).

At this time, I move the Board approve the appointment of Chris Brue as joint Outreach Coordinator alongside Jenn Holland.

Comments

No discussion was held and motions were made to approve the appointments to their respective positions. The motion was approved unanimously.

Elections

Report by Lizzy

Nominations were accepted/verified during this last reporting period for all board positions. With a few nominees deciding not to run, each position had only one confirmed nominee. No comments were received during this period regarding the slate, so all nominees were deemed approved & elected into their positions by member acclamation.

Hydnsek made the announcement and these officers & board members will begin or continue their roles on April 1st. I want to offer thanks to those that are leaving and wish them luck. We appreciate all you have done for the WSGA and look forward to your active membership & support continuing in the future. Please support those that are newly elected and give grace where it is needed as they adjust to their new roles.

Taken from Hydnsek's report on the WSGA Website: Slate as elected

Officers

President: Andrew Johnson / AndrewRJ

Vice President: Lisa Wasser / Lizzy*

Secretary: Fen Eatough / FenchurchE

Treasurer: Kristine Norton / hippychick1620*

Chapter Representatives

Puget Sound: Rob Norenberg / SirKarp

48 North: Toni Westgarth / Mizdirection

Inland Empire: Jerry Martin / Martin 5*

South Central: Mike Lowery / Tumbleweedpirates*

Cache-cadian: Gene Reed / Mr. Gadget #2*

Southwest: Debbi Patton / Verano*

Olympic Peninsula: Patti Stoll / ClayArtist*

* Incumbent

Comments

Departing board members GrievousAngel, Hydnsek and Mc3cats were thanked for all their hard work and the incoming board members Sir Karp, FenchurchE and Mizdirection were welcomed. AndrewRJ slowly planned his take over.

Membership Report

Report by Lizzy

We have had a steady stream of renewals & a sprinkling of new memberships come through. We have gained 55 accounts this reporting period that include 97 members. We are looking very health.

I have a new chapter breakdown column in this report, showing New memberships and Renewals for each Chapter for the year.

Each chapter has exceeded its minimum required membership to stay active. Cache-cadia Chapter has doubled its membership over last years numbers. Awesome!! Once again, they lead in membership growth, with Southwest Chapter coming in second.

Our membership now reflects the split of Associate Accounts into Individual and Family categories, so take that in consideration when comparing numbers to last years and when comparing to last meeting's report. The family members numbers are still skewed a bit when comparing to last year.

Next reporting period will show the shift over to exact family numbers from last year

Membership Counts and Chapter Breakdowns

as of 3/23/2015

Chapters	Current Accounts				Current TOTALS	
	Individual	Family	Assoc/Ind	Assoc/Fam	Accounts	Members
Puget Sound	65	43	0	0	108	195
48 North	24	21	1	0	46	86
Inland Empire	11	10	7	1	29	50
South Central	11	10	0	0	21	35
Olympic Peninsula	10	7	0	0	17	25
Southwest	6	5	2	1	14	27
Cache-Cadia	12	6	0	0	18	24
Unaffiliated	0	0	4	0	4	4
CHAPTER TOTALS	139	102	14	2	257	446
LAST REPORTED	108	80	14	0	202	349
Net Gains	31	22	0	2	55	97

Chapters	Totals at 1/27/2015		Gains This Period		Totals a Year Ago		This Year compare to Last Year	
	Accounts	Members	Accounts	Members	Accounts	Members	Trend	Percent
Puget Sound	94	170	14	25	104	144	↗	3.85%
48 North	33	63	13	23	36	52	↗	27.78%
Inland Empire	27	44	2	6	24	34	↗	20.83%
South Central	10	20	11	15	15	24	↗	40.00%
Olympic Peninsula	12	17	5	8	13	18	↗	30.77%
Southwest	7	11	7	16	9	13	↗	55.56%
Cache-Cadia	16	21	2	3	9	12	↗	100.00%
Unaffiliated	3	3	1	1	4	4	=	0.00%
TOTALS:					214	301	↗	20.09%

Chapters	New this Year	Renewals
Puget Sound	7	101
48 North	6	40
Inland Empire	2	27
South Central	1	20
Olympic Peninsula	0	17
Southwest	7	7
Cache-Cadia	4	14
Unaffiliated	0	4
TOTAL	27	230

Comments

Hydnek commented that this was the highest membership that the club has had in March and was pleased to see how involved all the chapter reps were.

Chapter Reports

Southwest Chapter report by verano

We are finally back up to enough new members/renewals to be viable! It was iffy back in January! WSGA SW now also has several associate members and families. A lot of Oregon folks come up to SW Washington events.

The Camas Good Fortune event on Feb 16 drew more than 50 people and I almost ran out of the felt fortune cookies I had made with special geocaching fortunes. The kids colored dragon masks, and all seemed to have a great time.

Pi Day breakfast event (on March 14, of course) had 38 Will Attends, but over 100 people showed up at Burgerville in Salmon Creek to sign the pie-slice log sheet, try Pi

(special stickers were awarded to all how figured out a diameter or circumference) and count down to 3.141592653. Everyone also got a Pie "zine" and I gave away one of those nice two-piece Pi geocoins in a raffle (as well as a couple of pies and some dollar store calculators!). I did run out of name tags, but other than that, we just flexed to accommodate the crowd. I was honored that Geek&Gopher attended! And the Burgerville staff were totally on board, hoping we will do it again.

I will attend and support WSGA member bearsandme in Longview at her CITO on April 25. WSGA SW is hosting an ivy pull CITO on April 26 in Ridgefield. Mtribe, also a WSGA member, is teaching an Intro to Geocaching class by request of member cjbargon, program coordinator at the Stevenson Library on April 4, that WSGA Southwest and I are co-hosting with him. The powerpoint presentation we use will include the WSGA logo.

Future events will be a Meet and Greet in Morton, likely in May, given by WSGA SW, and an outdoor event in Wahkiakum County (likely given by a cacher friend and sponsored by WSGA SW), checking off the last County in my area for at-least-one-WSGA-sponsored-event-in-each-of-my-Counties. I have in mind two other unique types of events on the southern border here, one of which will, I hope, be a cooperative event with GEOregon this summer. Stay tuned!

South Central Chapter report by tumbleweedpirates

Right now we are getting ready for a CITO on Saturday where one of my assistance will be hosting while I visited some of my money in Vegas and leave some new money behind.

We hosted a Pi day event where we had Pie

On the 15th Pacificbluebird hosted a breakfast at her Travel Park and we will be helping her with a ice cream social next month.

Saws are spinning and paint is getting spread as we build TB's for the Tri-City Geocoin event they will be interactive and reuse able as we plan two other events at Sacajewea State Park. Dead Sailor, Aguyotta and I are on this.

I started working with Friends of Sacajewea the first year they started some years ago, and now we have a good bond with them in our state park here. Unfortunately they asked me to attend their board meeting this month on the same night ours is so I am trying to find a fill in for that. Currently I have a coin design for each person that attends all three TriCity events we have on our coin weekend (no Tracking numbers) and for the kids with the Friends of Sacajewea logo. But I am worried about the outcome. The coin is a new style I have never seen before called a Sigmarx? Anybody? It is cheap.

We had a Presidential Day Breakfast well attended given the early morning time with so few off work. Then some of us attended the Presidential Hike in Spokane later that day, it was a very nice hike. But when we got back to the parking lot everyone was gone, so we must have gone the scenic route.

We also enjoyed the Cache Machine last weekend and had a new member take the thrill ride with us named Mcushla, she almost doubled her finds in one day and we learned she is a puzzle genius having solved several non-geo related puzzles worth 500 to 5000 dollars over the last three years.

Cache-Cadia Chapter report by Mr. Gadget #2

Spring is upon us and things are starting to happen in the area. As I mention on our last report I am going to move around events to be held in other places rather than having them all held in Wenatchee.

We had a great turnout for our Pi Day event on March 14th which was held in Ephrata. Afterwards I had a new Pi puzzle cache they went to, to collect the second icon for their personal profile page. We did have one renewal made during the Pi day event; slowly we are getting our membership up bit by bit.

Our next event will be a CITO event on April 25th to clean up around a Park in West Wenatchee. Plans are in the works to have an event in May to celebrate 15 years of geocaching. The place is yet to be determined but it should be somewhere in the northern area of our Chapter.

48 North Chapter report by GrievousAngel

At the end of January, the chapter supported mizdirection's successful Golden Ground Frog event with a swag donation.

At the beginning of February, WSGA supported Rey del Robles' Great Balls of Fire event with a donation of swag for the raffle and lots of personal support. Mizdirection held a CITO at Camano Island State Park the same weekend, Ranger Tina led a Geocaching 101 walk, jcar offered a travel bug workshop, and I led a puzzle-solving workshop.

Two weeks ago, we had a very well-attended (over sixty people) Pi Day event that included a new puzzle cache for those who wanted both Pi Day souvenirs.

In the works--both mizdirection and I have CITO's on the calendar, mizdirection has a Meet & Greet scheduled for May, HippyChick1620 and I are working on a Day of Science presentation for Machias Elementary School, Mizdirection is working with Cabela's on a Ladies' Day Out presentation, and I'm working with Logan5 on a family geocaching group for her church's summer program.

Puget Sound Chapter report by Mc3cats

The chapter has been pretty busy with events that have either taken place or is going to place since our last meeting in January.

In February, I held an event in the Greenwood Neighborhood of north Seattle at Razzies Pizzeria. We had a nice turn out for that "city" event and I took the opportunity to introduce folks to SirKarp as the incoming Puget Sound Chapter Rep. A few Lackeys were in attendance at this event which allowed to me to meet some Lackeys I did not know. All in all, a wonderful event at an outstanding location.

Just two weeks ago, the chapter hosted a "Pi" event, called "Get Your Pi-th on". This was held at a Shari's Restaurant in Renton. We over ran the place with geocachers! I am sure they sold out of a lot of pies thanks to our group. This event brought cachers out of the woods which was nice as I got to visit with some cachers I have not seen in a very long time. We had a couple incoming as well as outgoing board members at this event as well. Overall, a good event other than some parking challenges a lack of space in the restaurant.

This past weekend, I attended an outreach event in Ballard. The Sons of Norway were putting on a "Taste of Norway" event which was on Saturday March 21st. Christine with the Sons of Norway, reached out to the WSGA to have a class on Waymarking and Geocaching which was going on during the Taste of Norway at Leif Erikson Lodge. A Lab Adventure was also going on during the event. Terrible Ts assisted me during the short class which was sparsely attended, though we had a few geocachers that showed up towards the end of the class. All in all, a fun event.

My final event as Chapter Rep is coming up this weekend. My "Going Out With A Bang" event (GC5N3CQ) is on Saturday March 28th at the Round Table Pizza in South Tacoma. This location is where it all started for me as my first event as Puget Sound Chapter Rep was held at this very location on February 5th, 2011. If you have an open schedule this Saturday, come on down to Tacoma for the event. I would love to see you there.

One final note since this is my last meeting as Chapter Rep. I want to say that I have thoroughly enjoyed representing the Puget Sound Chapter over the last 4 years. As I played an active role in the evolution of this organization, I have worked with some dedicated geocachers who volunteered their time to help make the WSGA what it is today. A good number of those dedicated geocachers remain on this board for another term. I want to thank all of you returning board members for your volunteering efforts in the WSGA. I has been an absolute pleasure serving with all of you. I will leave the Puget Sound Chapter in the capable hands of Rob (SirKarp), who will do an outstanding job taking over the Puget Sound Chapter. I plan to assist him wherever I can while the

transition takes place. I wish Rob the best of luck in his new role as chapter rep. I hope that the new board will have a prosperous upcoming term.

Olympic Peninsula Chapter Report by ClayArtist

Not much has been happening in the Olympic Peninsula geocaching world, but a little has. There was a Pi Day Pie Exchange event, hosted by a local Kitsap cacher, discgolferbirdie, who (unfortunately) is not a WSGA member...yet. I was hoping to attend, and schmooze some of our local gang a bit more, but was unable. They did have a great time, I heard through the grapevine.

Coming up, there is a CITO planned in Sequim, on April 25, organized by yellow1961. I am planning to attend, fill a bag or two, and get some good visiting in, with the cachers there.

I don't have any concrete plans for events yet, but my brain is churning out a few ideas. There are a couple of places here in Kitsap that really need a CITO and I'm thinking about posting a WSGA CITO, for early May. I still need to make contact with the OP Chapter Members, seeking an volunteer assistant, and that will happen this week.

Inland Empire Chapter report by Martin 5

PAST CHAPTER EVENTS:

Mardi Gras 2015 Worldwide Flash Mob- Spokane
by IE Chapter WSGA | GC5K025 | 02/17/2015 | 18 Attended logs

9th Annual WSGA Winter Party
by IE Chapter WSGA | GC5J51B | 02/21/2015 | 40 Attended logs

International Pi Day - 2015
by IE Chapter WSGA | GC5J5BV | 03/14/2015 | 43 Attended logs

WSGA: Inland Empire Chapter - Meet and Greet LUNCH
by IE Chapter WSGA | GC5NBA6 | 03/21/2015 | 62 Attended logs

UPCOMING CHAPTER EVENTS:

Crazy for Cookies!
by BookwormBadger + Rocketpianoman | GC5P0QF | 03/28/2015

Only Fools Meet @ Midnight
by Martin 5 | GC5PKKC | 04/01/2015

FTF Friday: Off the Beaten Path
by mineral2 | GC5JXT1 | 04/03/2015

Impossible Event
by CacheDFish | GC5J8Y1 | 04/23/2015

CDA CITO 2015
by TheGreatOz & Rocketpianoman | GC5P654| 04/25/2015

MAY THE FOURTH BE WITH YOU
by Martin 5 | GC5PFJQ | 05/04/2015

51515151515
by KC7DQM | GC5PCWT | 05/15/2015

PADDLE AND CACHE II
by the tc life | GC5NYF1 | 06/06/2015

"Spokache" Spokane Geo Tour Kick Off Event
by Lookout Lisa | GC5NVJ6 | 08/08/2015

As you can see the Inland Empire Chapter is always a busy place to be. Even if the chapter doesn't host a lot of events, there are always lots of events going on. A big thank you to President-Elect AndrewRJ for making it to the dry side of the state and attend two IE Chapter events in the past two months. Andrew set up a table of WSGA swag at our winter party, which was really nice and I believe a first in 5 years I have been involved with the chapter. He also stopped by during the Spokane Valley Cache Machine and had a burger on us.

We are very excited to have two upcoming county geo-tours in our area this summer. The Pend Oreille County Geo-Tour will kick off in July and the Spokane County Geo-Tour in August. Thank you to the Small Grant Committee for awarding grants to both of these events. Both are still a work in progress with Lookout Lisa heading up Spokane County and The TC Life heading up Pend Oreille County. Many of our chapter members are also assisting with these projects.

The chapter had its annual board election at our Winter Party last month. As one of only two chapters (so I am told) to have its own internal board, I am very thankful that we are one that does. Why? Because then the Chapter Rep doesn't have to do it all. The two main positions for 2015 are; the IE Chapter President is Tim Turner of the Blue Meanies and returning as the IE Chapter Vice-President is Rich Bain of The TC Life.

Comments

The Chapter Reports were accepted on mass.

NEW BUSINESS

TriCities Geocoin Challenge

Report by hydnek

The TriCities Geocoin Challenge (TGC) is now a mega-event! Yay! Major props to Jen Davis (enjoydmoment) and her crew – including much of WSGA's South Central Chapter – for creating and growing such a wonderful regional event in central Washington over the past six years.

As this is Washington State's only other mega-event besides Going APE, the Board has agreed that we'd like to enhance our support. While TGC did not qualify for the recent round of Small Grants under the program guidelines, the Executive Committee (officers) recommend that we propose a sponsorship arrangement to Jen, details to be determined in discussion between her and Andrew (our new prez). At a high level, this might involve a financial contribution from WSGA in return for acknowledgment of our sponsorship in event materials (banners, printed material, the event page).

Jen is currently working on the logistics of having an outside sponsor with her park partners (the three city governments). She will also be discussing a possible WSGA sponsorship with her planning committee on April 7. After that, she will get back to Andrew on possible options and requests for our support. My guess is that this could be an ongoing arrangement for the years that the TGC continues.

Does this sound good to everyone, esp. Mike?

Comments

The board had a brief discussion over the need to move ahead and sponsor the TGC. It was agreed that this should be a funding priority for the club.

A motion was made to approve perusing an official sponsorship of the Tricities Geocoin Challenge (financially), and authorize Andrew to pursue specifics with Jen Davis, the director. The motion was approved unanimously.

Washington State Park GeoTour

Report by hydnek

The Washington State Parks GeoTour continues to be popular and successful – so much so that WaSP ordered 250 more prize coins (200 Silver and 50 Gold) last fall, and wants to continue it for a third year.

Rambudo (Russ Bendel) just ran some updated statistics for me, and 880+ people have

found at least five State Park GeoTour caches, indicating they're active participants. More than 540 folks have found 10+, and 340 have found 20+ caches. These are not just Washington cachers – folks from British Columbia, Idaho, Oregon, and other states are also participating, which enhances awareness of our state and state parks, and contributes to the economy.

At the prize level, 190+ folks have found 50+ caches (Silver coin) and 34 folks have logged 100+ (Gold coin). Comparing this with the previous numbers, you can see we have lots of geocachers still working toward the achievement levels.

This is a great promotion for both the parks and WSGA, and my project partner, Ranger Tina Dinzi-Pederson, and I have talked to Groundspeak and they've agreed to extend the GeoTour a third year at the discounted price of \$1500 (same as last year).

As you know, last year we split the cost with WaSP, so I am requesting that the Board approve another \$750 for this year's share of the GeoTour. WaSP has approved their half of the cost, and they are ready to sign the Groundspeak paperwork once we confirm our participation. Our share would be remitted to the State Parks, as Kristine did last year, and the Parks pays the full amount to Groundspeak.

Therefore, I move that the Board approve funding of \$750 for the third year of the Washington State Parks GeoTour.

Comments

A motion was made to approve funding of \$750 for the third year of the Washington State Parks GeoTour. The motion was approved unanimously.

Andrewrj asked if the State Parks had any data on how much the GeoTour was cited as bringing people into the Parks. No metrics are known to exist. Hydnek indicated that a survey was discussed but nothing ever came of it. Martin5 suggested holding another round of events in the parks to revitalize interest.

Visit Rainier Centennial GeoTour - Support

Report by hydnek

I'm excited to report that VisitRainier, the nonprofit tourism bureau for Mount Rainier and surrounding communities, is planning a GeoTour for the 2016 centennial of the National Park Service. 100 caches for 100 years of the NPS. Sweet!

The GeoTour should kick off on June 6 (National Trails Day), hopefully as a 1-2 weekend punch with Mount Rainier's annual CITO. The plan is to launch 25 caches every six months – spring and fall of 2015 and 2016. I'm encouraging them to have a separate passport and (trackable) prize for each set of caches, so it's really four GeoTours in one – similar to the four-part Eugene, Cascades, & Coast GeoTour. A

geocoin is definitely one of the prizes; other options are pathtags, custom TBs, patches, and local artisan-crafted items.

I'm consulting with Julie Johnson of VisitRainier on the project – really more partnering, as I'll be helping manage the geocacher recruitment and cache placement. Mount Rainier NP is also involved, led by Kevin Bacher, cacher (K2D2) and Rainier volunteer manager (and CITO host).

VisitRainier is enthused to have WSGA involved, and has already put our logo on their cache stickers. They are requesting \$750 to help fund the two-year program; they currently have \$600, and the additional financial support will allow VisitRainier to fully cover supplies (caches, etc.) needed for the two-year rollout.

This is another great program that, like the State Parks GeoTour, will bring additional awareness, visitation, and revenue to Washington State, esp. the Mount Rainier area. WSGA has plenty of money right now, and I can't think of a better way of using some of our funds than supporting major geocaching projects being hosted by our parks and municipalities.

Therefore, I move that the Board approve a one-time grant of \$750 to VisitRainier for the specific purpose of supporting the new Rainier Centennial GeoTour.

Comments

A significant discussion was held on this issue. The conversation revolved around the amount of time allotted to discuss this request prior to the meeting, details of the request including budget, scope, participation, what role Visit Rainier has with the Nation Parks, and what the WSGAs role moving forward should be in relation to the significant upswing in financial requests.

A motion was made to approve a one-time grant of \$750 to VisitRainier for the specific purpose of supporting the new Rainier Centennial GeoTour. The motion failed by a vote of 6 Nay and 4 Aye.

Follow up discussing indicated that many board members voted Nay as a result of insufficient time to discuss the motion and insufficient clarity of the request. it was decided to table the request and discuss in the Forums pending a revote in approximately 1 week.

Other New Geocache Series

Report by hydnek

As they've become aware of how geocaching can drive awareness, education, visitation,

and revenue, Washington government entities are busting geocache series out all over. Just a quick FYI on some new ones:

US Fish & Wildlife Service – Has launched the Pacific Lamprey Geocaching Challenge in the Chehalis Basin to connect people with nature and teach them about the lamprey. The prize is a pathtag. Ohjoy! was the consulting geocacher for this project.

King County Parks – Wants to launch a geocaching program to encourage folks to learn more about recovering salmon species and see the returning salmon in the Lake Sammamish and Lake Washington areas this coming fall and winter. They have reached out to me for advice (and to the USFWS folks above), and I'll be meeting with them in the next couple weeks. (This is a much more promising start than KCP's last geocaching series, the ill-fated KCP GeoTour.)

City of Newcastle – Plans to hold a caching event on June 6 (National Trails Day) to encourage exploration of Newcastle trail system. They have contacted me for support, but I may need to find another cacher to help (at least on June 6), as I'm committed to the VisitRainier GeoTour launch.

Comments

Lizzy asked about the Mt. Vernon Geocoin Challenge which is being held for the second year in association with 125th anniversary of the founding of Mt. Vernon. HippyChick1620 will reach out to Tom Wenzl to see if he would like us to have a booth again this year.

Cache of the Month

Report by hydnek

Jim Carson is retiring as COTM Manager as well as Webmaster, and we don't know yet if Kevin Norton will do this as part of becoming Webmaster (I've not received a reply, although Jim has passed along the COTM management doc).

But before recruiting a new COTM manager, this is a good time to review this program and decide whether to continue or retire it.

History: COTM was started in June 2005 as a monthly attempt to highlight the best new caches in Washington State – so it's 10 years old. At that time, Favorites didn't exist, and we wanted to help cachers discover the best caches in the area. How it works: Anyone can nominate a cache they found that month, and WSGA members vote to decide which cache becomes COTM. Caches are eligible during their first year.

After 10 years, some of us feel COTM has run its course and has been supplanted by Favorites on geocaching.com. While cache owners of course love winning COTM and putting the icon on their cache pages (I speak from personal experience ;)), the fact is:

- Despite ongoing promotion on our Facebook page, website, and newsletter, there's little interest.
- Only a few caches are nominated each month (sometimes only 1 or 2).
- The same few people nominate and vote each time.
- A hot contest is 20 votes. Most months, it's more like 10 votes (or less).
- It doesn't reflect great caches across Washington, as most areas don't participate. 95% (or more) of nominated caches (and voters) are in Puget Sound and 48 North, with occasional bids from Olympic Peninsula (mainly goblindust caches).
- Someone has to manage the program, both technology and promotion.

What are your thoughts? If you want to continue it, then we need a new COTM manager; if you agree it's time to retire COTM, then we could make the March contest the last one and announce its retirement. Either way, this should be a Board vote.

Comments

AndrewRJ felt that it had run its course and was time to retire it. Tumbleweedpirates felt that it might be better if one cache per region was chosen. The suggestion was made that each chapter rep should nominate a COTM and has it on the quarterly newsletter.

No formal decision was made and the discussion was tabled for further discussion in the forums.

The new Webmaster (Skark166) has agreed to continue with the COTM in its current form for the immediate future.

The Board was reminded that the next years board meetings will be on Wednesdays due to the incoming President being unable to make Thursday meeting moving forward.

The meeting was adjourned by HydNSEK at 9:03 PM.