

Washington State Geocaching Association May 26th, 2011

Call to Order 7:07pm

Board members in attendance: idajo2 (Jo Dunn), jcar (Jim Bertrand), acfunk (Al Funk), Kidvegas19 (Jim Parkman), pazooter (Bruce Clark), lucymogus (Elaine Edwards), Mc3cats (Chris Brue), hydNSEK (Abby Wolfe), fluteface (Margaret Dunn), steve&renee (Renee Newell).

Not in attendance: mazeracer.

Guests: Dgwphotos, xplore19.

Others mentioned during the meeting: frisbee'r, Lookout Lisa, Terrible T's, psykokiwi, Half-Canadian.

The May 2011 business meeting of the WSGA was called to order by hydNSEK at 7:07PM, with 9 of the 11 board members in attendance at the time the meeting was called to order.

Special welcome to the new NOP Chapter Rep, Steve & Renee!

OLD BUSINESS

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes from the March 24th Board Meeting were approved with updates.

Membership Report – Reported by jcar

Summary:

75 Family

224 Individual

7 Associates affiliated with a Chapter

2 Associates not affiliated with a Chapter.

Chapter Breakdowns

Chapters	Individual	Family	Associate	Total
Puget Sound	126	36	0	162
North Olympic Peninsula	20	9	1	30
48 North	21	7	0	28
Cache-Cadia	8	4	0	12
Inland Empire	24	10	5	39
South Central	12	5	0	17
Southwestern	13	4	1	18

Unaffiliated	2	0	0	2
Totals	226	75	7	308

Hydnsek asked how we are doing compared to last year. Jcar replied that at the end of last year we had 360 members, so we are well ahead of last year with half the year still to go.

It was mentioned that the Wind Farm event generated several new members, and other events coming up soon should generate more memberships.

Also noted by hydnek: The next newsletter will be the last for lapsed members, the mailing list will be scrubbed. Last year this generated a few renewals.

Treasurer's Report – Reported by lucymogus

Balance of all accounts: \$5013.84

Income during the period was primarily from campout reservations and coin sales, along with new members and a few raffles. Major expenses were \$475.00 on WSGA pens for swag, and \$50.00 USPS.

A short discussion followed about the possibility of doing another version of the APE coin for the Block Party/Going Ape weekend. The decision was put off to see what the financial situation looked like and to see if the current WSGA coin sales improved. In addition we still have quite a few of the Silver Ape coins left from last year.

Bank discussion – Reported by lucymogus

We currently have a small business account with Chase, which recently added a \$15 monthly fee. Our activity is currently under 10 transactions per month. Would like to change to a bank offering free checking, if anyone knows of a good statewide one.

Suggestions from various members were BECU, Key, Banner. It was agreed to have more discussion and follow up in the forums/email.

2011 WSGA Suncatcher Coin Update – Reported by Fluteface

There was a serious flaw in the first minting of the suncatcher geocoin. When it arrived, the W was foggy yellow, instead of clear. When held to the light, the orange looked more yellow than orange. After discussion, we refused them. Emma at Oakcoins went back to the mint, asked for changes and samples. We have seen photos of the samples and one of them is very good-looking, but we'll know more when they arrive here in the next day or so.

We're in a holding pattern. If all looks good, we'll wait another 4 weeks for the new coins. The old ones are being destroyed.

Idajo2 asked about the destroying of the coins. Hydnsek replied that we have to

destroy them so we can reuse the tracking numbers on the new batch. We would have to pay \$3 for each bad coin if we did not destroy them.

Jcar reported that 120 coins had been presold.

Hydnsek reported that she had sent an email to all who'd paid to let them know and offer a refund if they wanted, since we are outside the PayPal window for deliveries (30 days). At this point no one has requested their money back, they seemed happy to get the update.

A discussion followed on the slowness of coin sales compared to prior years. Coming up later this year we have three opportunities to sell what we have: the WSGA Campout, Groundspeak Block Party, and Going Ape Event. Also an effort will be made to get more sales at chapter events.

Pathtag sidebar: Fluteface is looking into the possibility of having a custom pathtag back done for the WSGA. No details yet, but it seems that it could be a small fundraiser. When more details are available, they will be posted in the forums.

A side discussion ensued about having a regional pathtag for each chapter, or even a rotation regional tag. Mc3cats suggested Mt St. Helens for SW WSGA pathtag. Rainer for PS. Rocky Reach Dam for CacheCadians.

FluteFace mentioned that one of the prior plans was to have another WSGA tag for WSGA's 10-year Anniversary in 2012.

If we went with a 10 year pathtag, it was discussed that it should be available at the beginning of the year just like the geocoin.

Parks Advocacy – Reported by hydnek

We had a flock of excellent CITO's across the state in April. Thanks to all of you who hosted, and all who attended.

Mc3cats did a nice one with Bellevue Parks that helped with our rocky relationship there, and we got certificates of appreciation afterward.

Our Cougar CITO went well as always, and the rangers said they are always amazed at how much we get done in such a short time - they actually ran out of things for us to do this time!

We were invited to King County Parks first annual Volunteer Appreciation dinner, which honored organizations who contribute significantly to KC Parks. WSGA was honored alongside orgs like Sierra Club, WTA, Friends of Marymoor, et al. Jcar and hydnek attended on behalf of WSGA and received nice award certificates for the club.

WSGA has really come a long way in most of our park relationships - kudos to all who help with that!

Walks for Health (Shoreline) – Reported by Mc3cats

Mc3cats reported on Walks for Health, held in Shoreline on May 7. In April, the WSGA was asked to have a booth at City of Shoreline's "Walks For Health" event, which was held on the Interurban Trail that runs near Shoreline City Hall. Terrible Ts and Mc3cats manned the table. We had geocaching brochures and cache container examples on display as well as several GPS units. Despite the crummy, cold, and windy weather, we had a number of folks stop by our table, including the Mayor of Shoreline. I think we converted a couple of muggles to cachers!

Wind farm event – Reported by pazooter/hydnsek

The Wild Horse Wind & Solar Tour on May 21-22 near Vantage was hugely successful: over 100 in attendance Saturday, and about 50 on Sunday, coming from across the state – Kitsap to Spokane – and even a few from Idaho and Oregon. The staff at Puget Sound Energy's Wind Farm center were most helpful, and everything went smoothly with great feedback.

This event was mazeracers' idea, and Nate and Colleen spent a lot of time planning it and placing new caches, both along the routes to the wind farm and at the wind farm by special permission, and they worked with the PSE folks closely on all aspects. The event was jointly hosted by the South Central and CacheCadian chapters, and mazeracers and pazooter (Bruce and Cathy) were wonderful hosts, so organized and everything you'd want at such an event.

The raffle seemed to be a highlight and was a good money--raiser for the club. Our income was a whopping \$353 for this event! \$116 in memberships, \$204 from the raffle, and \$33 in coin/cachekin sales.

Sidebar: short discussion on a possible Rocky Reach Dam event.

Thompson Brigade – Reported by acfunk

The four co-sponsored events with the David Thompson Columbia Brigade (DTCB) are posted and preparations are underway. The events are June 18 at Kettle Falls (Inland Empire), June 26 at Wenatchee (Cache-Cadia), July 1 at Richland (South Central), and July 11 at Vancouver (Southwest).

A big shout-out to acfunk, who has coordinated this project both within WSGA and with the DTCB folks. Thanks also to idajo2, pazooter, and kidvegas19 for their work on events in their chapters. These events ought to be a lot of fun, with costumed participants reenacting the canoe landings, prizes and free swag, and a chance to meet the river adventurers (some of whom are fellow cachers).

The DTCB events will also be an opportunity to hand out information on WSGA, sign up new members, and sell WSGA swag. I hope all of our board members

will be able to make at least one of these cool events.

2011 WSGA Campout – Reported by kidvegas19

The 8th annual WSGA Campout will be held Aug. 5-7 at Chief Timothy Park outside Clarkston, hosted by quadsinthemudd and the Inland Empire chapter. To date 10 RV spots, 9 tent sites, and 45 dinners have been reserved. A pre-campout CITO took place in April at the campground and was a success. Brad also lined up a sponsor for the campout. The IE Chapter is going to start advertising the campout more to ensure as many people on this side know about it as possible. There was uncertainty about how to advertise to the west side.

Hydnsek mentioned that there was a blurb in each newsletter - if you have something specific you'd like to add, send it to her for the next issue.

Going APE...All Over Again – Reported by hydnek

Great news: The Snoqualmie Tunnel reopens July 5! So, Going APE can be at Hyak, and folks can walk or bike through the tunnel to the APE cache. We are holding the event on Sunday, Aug. 21, the day after Groundspeak's Block Party mega-event, so it's a destination weekend for cachers. Folks are coming from around the world to attend. Not as many as GeoWoodstock last year, but probably 750-1000, many of whom are quite excited to do the tunnel and APE cache – we have several repeaters who didn't get to do the tunnel last time.

Pazooter asked, "You're saying 750-1000 people just for the APE event?"
Hydnsek: "No, total participants for the weekend."

WSGA will host the event at Hyak and will foot the entire bill this time, as the Board previously agreed to host it as a gift to the geocaching community. Last year, the APE event cost us about \$8000, mainly due to the buses and additional parking fee for Annette Lake TH.

This year, the event should be much cheaper. Our primary expenses will be the park fee, portapotties, refreshments, and ape outfits, at a guess (based on last year), so I would expect us to need about \$2000. I believe Elaine has \$1500 budgeted. (Lucymogus mentioned the budget was updated to \$3200.)

Park permit is not in place yet, but it should be in the next few weeks. We will of course need volunteers (thanks xpl0re19) for the event, including folks to play Sasquatch. More on that to come.

This is a marquee event for WSGA. Having the only American APE cache in our territory, we should take advantage of that as well as help fellow cachers achieve it. If this second APE event does well, we might consider doing it annually, in conjunction with the Block Party.

Merchandise – Reported by jcar

We still have a few 2010 WSGA coins available, along with Silver Ape and Ape Cachekinz. Some WSGA GeoWoodstock 8 shirts and WSGA caps, and a few mini-pens.

A new order of mini-pens should be here soon. A portion of those will be reserved for the Ape event. Thompson Columbia Brigade events have asked for some, as well. Acfunk asked to have some merchandise for sale at the South Central Thompson Columbia Brigade event. Any other brigade event that wants to sell what we have, please let jcar know and we will work out the details.

We should have a quote on lanyards within the next week. This will be posted in the Board forum for review, or sent via email.

Two other items we want to follow up on after the APE event: shirts/hoodies and our annual member bonus.

WSGA patches – All new members receive a WSGA patch, and we are down to 21, which will take us through the most current batch of members. We can do one of two things, based on finances: Order new ones now and continue to pass them out, or wait until after the ape event to order, in which case jcar would keep track of those needing patches and mail them out with the member bonus.

The Board agreed to hold the patch reorder until early fall. The style will also be revised to look better, more like prior patches.

Chapter Boundaries – Discussion led by hydnek

We are reviewing all our chapter boundaries, since the original ones were arbitrarily drawn and don't necessarily reflect geographical affiliations. The Board is discussion this in our forum, and we don't have time for a detailed discussion tonight, but wanted to gather comments while we're all together - input?

Idajo2 said her primary concern was the three "orphan" areas (Thurston, Grays Harbor and Mason). She said she couldn't speak for the 18 members of the Southwest chapter but as Chapter Rep, she would be happy to include those areas in the Southwest Chapter and make certain they feel included/welcome.

Mc3cats replied that they had spoken about the southern boundary of the Puget Sound chapter. He also likes the idea of having Thurston, Mason, and Grays Harbor in Southwest. Some input he had received from frisbee'r, who lives in Thurston, is that he tends to align more Southwest. Mc3cats suggested that Puget Sound contain King and Pierce counties only. In conjunction with that, FluteFace mentioned that she would recommend moving 48 North's southern border down to the Snohomish/King county line.

Steve&Renee commented that it makes sense to move Mason County and part of Kitsap to North Olympic Peninsula chapter, splitting Kitsap at the Tacoma Narrows bridge.

Hydnsek said that we have a couple options regarding Mason and Thurston counties, and Grays Harbor could certainly move to Southwest. Based on membership and feedback, she is also proposing forming a new South Sound chapter, possibly composed of Pierce and Thurston counties. Puget Sound chapter possibly could become just to King County, which would still have a large percentage of the overall membership.

Hydnsek wrapped up the discussion by thanking everyone for the great input, and pointing everyone to the forums to discuss this in more detail.

Chapter Reports

SouthWest – Reported by Idajo2

Idajo2 prefaced her report with a personal note that she had been out of town, assisting her daughter who recently had brain surgery.

Because of that, the Vancouver Lake CITO was postponed and will be rescheduled ASAP. The cache page is ready and simply needs a new date. It is hoped to be republished by the end of next week.

The Thompson Columbia Brigade's Vancouver event is on track and, so far, it looks like we have 45-50 folks attending. It's still a ways out, so anticipate that the attendee numbers will increase. We have sufficient attendance for the four DTCB events for the Brigade folks to provide a swag donation of their special DTCB geocoin. Groundspeak, WSGA and DTCB info will be available to attendees, as well as lots of caching available in the general area.

North 48 – Reported by FluteFace

We have a meet-and-greet in Bellingham next month, and have hopes of holding some sort of CITO in Marysville this fall. Also two other events (not WSGA) coming up.

Half-Canadian will host the GeoMonster Ball in Lynden on October 22; she has hopes it may go mega.

Pokey Plodders are hosting Welcome to Wellington near Stevens Pass on August 13, close enough to almost be 48 North.

Inland Empire – Reported by Kidvegas19

We're holding a CITO on June 4 in conjunction with the Girl Scouts. Our Kettle Falls DTCB event will be June 18, and we have the 2011 WSGA Campout coming up in August.

The IE members who attended the Wind Farm event thought it was awesome, and kidvegas19 thanked those who put it on, as well as Lookout Lisa for her Cache Advance donations for the raffle.

South Central – Reported by acfunk for mazeracer

See the earlier report in these minutes for Wind Farm event.

South Central's DTCB Brigade event is July 1.

Puget Sound – Reported by Mc3cats

The PS chapter had a busy April with two events. The first was a co-sponsored event with psykokiwi (I'm a Brat, You're a Brat, We are all Brats), and the location was awesome (not the usual pizza joint). This was the first event where we sold raffle tickets to raise money (rather than giving them away). The raffle was well received, and brought in \$150; we also received \$60 in memberships.

Also in April, Mc3cats hosted our first CITO with City of Bellevue Parks. They have a yearly Arbor Day event where groups help out the parks by rebuilding trails, planting trees, pulling out invasive plants, etc. Our group planted trees along SE 8th in Bellevue. We had a great turnout, and got a T-shirt and lunch for our efforts. Bellevue TV picked our group to film for a show that is running this month. Mc3cats was interviewed along with another cacher.

June is shaping up to be a busy month as well. There is an event on June 4 in Burien (GC2WCQP). Quite a few folks signed up for this event, including some folks from out of state. Should be a good event.

We also have an outreach event with the Burien Library, which has asked WSGA to teach a short geocaching class on June 30 to about 20 teenagers. This will be an internet and practical-application presentation; after a 30-minute indoor class, the kids will go outside to use GPSrs to find caches. One other volunteer is needed to assist; have contacted a couple folks, including Terrible T's.

On the horizon is the WSGA picnic in July. Work will begin on the event page soon as well as the park reservation.

North Olympic Peninsula – Reported by Steve&Renee

The first event for NOP is planned for June 18 at Manchester State Park.

Also in the works is a CITO at Illhee state park to hopefully build good relations with that park.

New Business

Facebook Page – reported by hydnek

Hydnek reported that WSGA now has an official Facebook Page. It's already getting better traffic than our website. Hydnek encouraged Board members to post updates about WSGA activities and general caching news of interest to the community (such as the recent GEICO Travel Bug promotion). Facebook will not replace our website, it's an additional communication outlet. Hydnek and jcar are the administrators for the WSGA Facebook page.

Kidvegas19 added that the Inland Empire chapter also has a Facebook page. All chapters are encouraged to create/maintain Facebook pages with the Chapter Rep being the admin.

Newsletter – Reported by hydnek

General agreement that the newsletter should become bimonthly (from monthly). All Board Members are encouraged to send in contributions for the newsletter, news, announcements, events, etc.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:48pm.