

# Foreword

If it wasn't for several happy coincidences, my chapter in geocaching may have never been written.

It was only by chance that a coworker stopped by my office one day with a yellow Garmin eTrex GPS unit in his hands. Being the kind of guy that would ooh and ahh over anything running on a battery, I gleefully snatched the device and ran outside. I watched in awe as the little guy drawn on the screen would move when I moved, and little tracks would appear along the path I traveled. I was in technology heaven!

It wasn't that I was new to GPS. I had used it several times before in rental cars. But now, watching the little guy on the screen follow my movements, I realized that I was holding the same technology in the palm of my hand. With two AA batteries and this device, I could command 24 satellites in space to do my bidding. It was a powerful feeling.

So what did I do with this incredible power? I created a listing service on the Internet to help people locate plastic containers in the woods.

The science fiction writer and scientist Arthur C. Clarke once said that any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable

from magic. Although I understand the fundamental concept behind GPS, I am still amazed when I turn it on and within seconds it can pinpoint my location on the planet.

Beyond technology there is also a certain magic in the players, like a shiny star in the eyes of many who go out and find their first cache or their thousandth. The metal box, mint tin, or plastic container becomes a quest for the treasures of the ancients, the holy grail, and the ark of the lost covenant. Every adult and child are wide-eyed and excited about what's hidden behind that stump over the hill.

I've been traveling down the geocaching path for six years now. The geocaching community has helped build the path over the years, but I have been fortunate to have the chance to build the occasional footbridge or stepping stone to guide it along. I'm still honored to be part of the journey. I hope you will find geocaching as enjoyable as I have.

Just make sure to mark the location of your vehicle. This comes from experience.

Jeremy Irish  
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