



## Geocaching

Are you looking for a new diversion? Or maybe you are looking for an excuse to buy a new toy like a GPS (Global Positioning System). This just might be the activity for you. Geocaching!

Now you might be saying “Geo-what?” Geocaching is an activity where, by using a GPS, you find a hidden cache (defined as a hiding place for storing provisions). It’s an activity that is gaining in popularity around the world.

Here’s how it works. Someone with a GPS goes out and hides a cache somewhere, usually a container with a logbook, pencil and maybe a reward. The cache owner notes the latitude and longitude of the hidden location on their GPS. This location data, along with details and clues about the cache are put on a wonderful website called [www.geocache.com](http://www.geocache.com) for everyone to see.

Next, the cache hunter, that would be you, pulls up [www.geocache.com](http://www.geocache.com) and enters your general location. The zip code of where you are at works well. A list of all locally hidden caches and their latitude and longitudes comes up.

Now comes the fun part. Take your GPS, enter the latitude and longitude, and travel to that location. Using the clues provided and your GPS, locate the cache. Once you have found it, you can record your find in the log that’s usually in the cache. Some people take a little trinket left in the cache and leave behind their own trinket. Then, if you like, you can enter your discovery and the date back at [www.geocache.com](http://www.geocache.com).

Sounds easy, right? Don’t be deceived. Sometimes the caches aren’t always obvious. They have been found in trees and half buried. You really have to use the clues to find the cache. For those that are fit and have a handheld GPS unit, you can pick a cache with a higher difficulty rating. This can result in a fun hike. Or if your GPS is on your laptop or built into your car, pick a cache that is easy. Typically you can get close to these in your vehicle.

The website has 15 caches located within ten miles of Green Valley. And the caches are where you would never think of them! Are you familiar with the pecan groves? There’s one in the vicinity. See if you can find it, and join the growing sport of Geocaching.

Written for:

The Green Bytes

Newsletter of The Computer Club of Green Valley, Arizona

January 2006