

Geocaching for Noobs by a Noob

Ryan M. Suenaga, M.S.W., L.C.S.W.

KansasFest 2009

Rockhurst University

July 22, 2009

What is Geocaching?

□ From, where else, Wikipedia:

- Geocaching is an outdoor activity in which the participants use a Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver or other navigational techniques to hide and seek containers (called "geocaches" or "caches") anywhere in the world. A typical cache is a small waterproof container (usually a tupperware or ammo box) containing a logbook. Larger containers can also contain items for trading, usually toys or trinkets of little value. Geocaching is most often described as a "game of high-tech hide and seek", sharing many aspects with orienteering, treasure-hunting, and waymarking.

Again, in Non-Geek

- ☐ Geocaching is like a high tech scavenger hunt
- ☐ Check a site like Geocaching.com to find a cache local to you
- ☐ Use your global positioning system device or other navigational skills to find the cache
- ☐ Once you've found it, log it at the site and in the cache log

An Example: Bob's Big Boy

- Apologies to anyone who may be traveling to Honolulu for this cache

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the address bar displaying the URL: http://www.geocaching.com/seek/cache_details.aspx?guid=dfb4b5e6-a9e0-4cb0-9644-20aeda57e. The browser's address bar also shows the search term "geocaching".

The page title is "GC16RHM Bob's Big Boy Honolulu (Traditional Cache) in Hawaii, United States created by Kailua AI".

The page content includes:

- Navigation:** log your visit, view gallery, watch listing, ignore listing, bookmark listing.
- Cache Information:**
 - Bob's Big Boy Honolulu**
 - A cache by **Kailua AI** Hidden: 10/19/2007
 - Size: (Small) Difficulty: ★★★★★ (1 is easiest, 5 is hardest) Terrain: ★★★★★ (1 is easiest, 5 is hardest)
- Coordinates:** N 21° 20.707 W 157° 53.666 [Other Conversions]
- UTM:** 4Q E 614639 N 2360746
- Location:** In Hawaii, United States [View Map]
- Print:** Simple [No Logs] [5 Logs] [10 Logs] | Driving Directions NEW!
- Download:** [Read About Waypoint Downloads]
- Buttons:** LOC Waypoint File | GPX eXchange File | Send to GPS | Send to Phone

A warning message states: "Please note: To use the services of geocaching.com, you must agree to the terms and conditions in our disclaimer."

The page also features a sidebar with "GETTING STARTED", "HIDE & SEEK A CACHE", "FIND A BENCHMARK", "TRACKABLE ITEMS", "MY PROFILE", "FORUMS", "SHOP FOR GEAR", and "RESOURCES".

At the bottom, there is a section titled "Bob's Big Boy" with a photo of a restaurant interior and text: "From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia 'Big Boy is a restaurant chain started in 1936 by Bob Wian in Glendale, California as Bob's Big Boy. The chain is best-known for its trademark chubby boy in..."

The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Find: bob" and "Done".

Using your GPS gets you close

- ❑ In my experience, the low end GPS I have (Garmin Nuvi 200) gets me within about 10 meters of the coordinates
- ❑ Even if you're right there, you still have to find something you've never seen before.

Let's look at Bob's



Unfortunately, Bob's burned

- ❑ There was a fire recently which has it closed for renovation
- ❑ Fortunately, the cache itself was safe
- ❑ I found this one earlier but went back to take pictures for this session
- ❑ Coordinates: N 21° 20.707 W 157° 53.666
- ❑ Hint: Make like a 6 year old who looks for bugs and slugs under a

An Island on an Island



Now You Don't See it...



...Now You Do



A Closer Look



Another Urban Cache



What is this?

- It's a public recreation center; it is actually part of the complex where I go swimming every Thursday night
- Coordinates: N 21° 21.223 W 157° 54.627
- Hint: Count Seven...As you walk n/w/e on the sidewalk...MAGNETIC!!!

Under a Metal Plate



Even More Urban (Shopping Center Parking Lot?)



Semi-Urban, Semi-Rural

□ And really clever to boot...



That was Before... this is After



What's Missing?



Make Sure You Log In Online and in the Cache Logbook

- ❑ This is one that's easy to forget if you have to go home and get on your computer to do it
- ❑ Fortunately, smartphones, many with GPS <ken>inbuilt</ken> make this easier

A Contest

- Yes, you can win a prize, right here at KansasFest 2009, from AZUnplugged!

Find the Cache Closest to Rockhurst

- ☐ This is Geocaching.com's cache identifier: GC1GNHE
- ☐ I have not tried to find this myself
- ☐ It's the closest non-virtual cache (1.1 miles)
- ☐ To win, please bring back a picture of the cache

Have Fun!

- ☐ Geocaching is a fun activity that can be done by individuals or families
- ☐ Aside from the cost of equipment, monetary investment is non-existent
- ☐ It can be both addicting and frustrating
- ☐ Most of all, have a great time!