



### **Hobbyists check in, clean up**

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Members of the Eastern Ontario Geocachers — hobbyists who use GPS devices to search for hidden treasures or “caches” left all over the world by other geocaching enthusiasts — turned their attention to plain old garbage at a number of spots around Chesterville and Berwick last Saturday. Several members of the group spent the morning collecting quite a haul on the bank of the South Nation River off Forward Rd., outside Chesterville. Above, with an old Sears stove, from left, Lloyd Baker of Brockville, Mark Lauterbach of Green Valley, Pierre Dugas of Ottawa, Jean-Louis Tremblay of Ottawa, Rick and Will Morrison of Ottawa and Eastern Ontario Geocachers chair Ian Mitchell of Hawkesbury. They also hauled the carcass of a VW Beetle from the site, piling everything into Lauterbach’s flatbed truck. Coinciding with Earth Week, they called the cleanup a “Cache In Trash Out” event — or CITO. See the story on page 6.

Zandbergen photo.

## **Treasure troves, trash for geocachers**

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Record Staff

CASS BRIDGE — Some good old TLC came to the South Nation River courtesy of folks with a thing for GPS.

Global Positioning Satellite technology has become commonplace in the last decade - and right along with it, a related pastime known as “geocaching” is marking its tenth anniversary this year.

GPS-toting enthusiasts search for discreetly hidden caches left behind by other geocachers, using the coordinates disseminated by that other key technology of fairly recent times, the World Wide Web. A million caches have been left around the world, each delivering a sense of accomplishment when added to a geocacher’s list of places visited.

In concert with Earth Week, geocachers around the world

organized Cache In Trash Out (CITO) events, descending upon spots in the natural environment to clean them up.

For the approximately 80 members of the Eastern Ontario Geocachers — formed in January — Saturday’s effort culminated with a triumphant pile of refuse temporarily delivered to South Nation Conservation’s Cass Bridge park. They hauled the material from spots along the banks of the river, at Forward Rd., Berwick Rd., and along Water St., upstream of the Chesterville Dam.

South Nation Conservation Geographic Information Systems technician Tim Jackson helped spearhead the local CITO. “Once I began working at SNC, I told the administration about the idea, and they thought it was an interesting idea, a great way to get people exploring our conservation area and parks.”

The collected pile included an old chicken coop, the rust-

ing carcass of a Volkswagen Beetle and an old woodstove.

Beyond the good deed of gathering trash, the SNC watershed contains another attraction for geocachers — 40 caches just waiting to be found, many of them newly placed. The little canisters or boxes are never taken; upon discovery, the geocacher simply leaves behind something of his or her own, perhaps even just a name, for the next explorer.

Mark Lauterbach of Green Valley said he became hooked on the hobby when his family bought him a GPS unit for Christmas two years ago. He noticed a software application that revealed the coordinates of local caches. He was skeptical, but “I went to Cooper’s Marsh, and sure enough, everything was there, and we were hooked.... We call it treasure hunting for the kids.”

“I like it because it takes me to places I wouldn’t otherwise see,” said Ron Porteous of South Mountain, also lauding the activity as family friendly, economical, and something the kids don’t get bored with.