Introduction to Geocaching
A guide to Geocaching with your Pack, Troop or Crew

Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunting game played throughout the world by adventure seekers equipped with GPS devices. The basic idea is to locate hidden containers, called geocaches, outdoors and then share your experiences online. Geocaching is enjoyed by people from all age groups, with a strong sense of community and support for the environment.

How does Geocaching work?
1. A geocache (or “cache”) is placed at an interesting location. It’s hidden from view, but NEVER buried.
2. The cache’s exact latitude and longitude are then determined with a GPS unit.
3. The cache is submitted to Geocaching.com. Once approved, the cache’s description and coordinates are listed on the web where those with a sense of adventure are invited to seek it out.
4. Geocachers review the listings on the website looking for caches that appeal to them. When they find an interesting cache listed, they enter the coordinates into their GPS and use it to find the cache.

What’s in a Geocache?
- Visitor’s log and pencil.
- A “welcome” note.
- Prizes, or “swag”
- Travelers (geocoins and travel bugs)

What do I do when I find one?
- Sign the logbook.
- Trade swag if you want to.
- Replace the cache just as you found it for the next geocacher to find.
- Log online and tell the story of your hunt.

Anything else?
Yes! Most geocachers also practice a “Cache In/Trash Out” policy and principles of Leave No Trace. When geocaching they bring along trash bags and pick up litter while walking to and from the cache. They also monitor the cache through the web site and through regular visits to ensure no damage is being done to the area.

Why now?
- GPS receivers are getting more common, and many smart phones have GPS built in.
- The Council has 10 GPS units donated by Garmin available for checkout.
- Geocaching Merit Badge is available.

With nearly 5,000 caches within 100 miles of Topeka and more than 1 million caches worldwide, there are plenty of opportunities to get your Scouts motivated and out on a hike. Find a cache near your campsite, use caching to teach GPS navigation, or find hikes with a fun search at the end.