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CACHE YOUR DREAMS IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS Geocaching Marries Technology and Recreation

Want to be a modern-day treasure hunter? Geocaching is for you! These days, just about any kind of outdoor adventure can be planned and tracked via smartphone. An added benefit of this is being able to partake in an activity many outdoor enthusiasts have never heard of: geocaching. Now, you can spend your afternoons hunting for hidden trinkets, and all you need is a GPS.



Geocaching has its roots in the 150-year-old game of letterboxing, in which people hid boxes containing small handwritten letters in outdoor locations.

Once exclusively a tool of the U.S. Military, Global

Positioning Systems are essential to geocaching. The hobby officially began in 2000, when accurate GPS readings became available to the masses due to the military's removal of Selective Availability, a program intended to limit non-military use of the system.

It didn't take long for people to begin concealing and hunting caches throughout the world. Geocaching originally required the purchase of an expensive handheld GPS unit, but can now be done with a smartphone.

Everything you need to get started can be found on Geocaching.com. Simply create an account and follow the instructions.

One really cool aspect of geocaching is how it marries technology with the great outdoors. It's every parent's solution to getting their child out from in front of the TV. Plus, it can be a fun side activity to add to any outdoor adventure. Most importantly, geocaching is an inexpensive way to spend quality time in nature, alone or with others.

FROM 1 CRIB TO 4,000 **The Remarkable Story of Sharing Connections**

"At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, or how many great things we have done. We will be judged by 'I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was naked, and you clothed me; I was homeless, and you took me in.'" -St. Teresa of Calcutta

Our news coverage is dominated by violence, sadness, greed, and political strife. It makes me not want to watch the news at all. I want to tell you a concrete, great, inspiring story that has been going on for over 30 years and will likely live on for many years to come. In our past letters, we've highlighted people who are making a positive difference in the lives of others. This month, we are shining the spotlight on Leeanne and Tom McGrath and Sharing Connections. Tom and Leeanne have been married for 55 years. They raised 3 children and have 10 grandchildren. However, the McGraths recognized a long time ago that their "family" extended a lot farther than blood lines.

In 1986, Leeanne met a young woman who couldn't afford a crib for her soon-to-be-born baby.

Leeanne reached out to her friends, asking if anyone had a crib they'd be willing to donate. As soon as Leeanne made this first connection, she knew that she had stumbled onto something powerful. From that one experience, Sharing Connections was born. The charity started out of Tom and Leeanne's garage at 600 Jonquil Street in Lisle. Thirty-one years later, Sharing Connections has grown to the size of two warehouses full of furniture, clothing, and household goods, along with great volunteers who work long hours to serve their clients.



Though the scale of the organization has changed, their mission is still the same as it was on day one. All of the furniture comes from local people and businesses, and Sharing Connections still works directly with families in need. It's grassroots in every sense of the word — no federal grants,

local staff, volunteers, and a connection with over 500 local social workers that direct families in need to Sharing Connections.

Starting with that one crib, Sharing Connections now serves over 6,000 families annually. That number is stunning. That's 16 families per day for a 365-day year. Since its inception, Sharing Connections has provided 4,000 cribs to babies who would otherwise sleep on the floor, and thousands of mattresses for children in need.

After 30 years of Sharing Connections, Leeanne is still restless and feels called to serve those in need. When I met with Leeanne recently, she had just finished sewing hundreds of baby blankets, bibs, children's fleece blankets, and other items for folks who need them. Somehow I think the McGraths got the message that they are here to serve rather than to be served. This begs the question: If this couple can create such a service juggernaut, what can we do to help? For the McGraths, it all started with Leeanne's sensitivity to listen to that expectant mother who needed a crib ... and then responding to the need. Who reading this will start the next Sharing Connections?

Want to help out? Leeanne is hosting a Trunk Show. For the details, see below ...

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?

On Friday, May 19, from 6-8 p.m. and on Saturday, May 20, from noon to 4 p.m., Sharing Connections will host a springtime handmade "Trunk Show" of gifts for yourself and others, where it all started at the McGrath home at 600 Jonquil in Lisle, Illinois. Come out and see where Sharing Connections started, buy some great items, or donate to a great cause and meet Leeanne and Tom. Your generous donations will benefit Sharing Connections, Marillac House, St. Ethelreda School and Hope Jr. Program (all of Chicago), the Roosevelt Center in East St. Louis, Akron Children's Hospital in Akron, Ohio, and homebound elderly and nursing home residents.

If you can't attend, consider a contribution at sharingconnections.org. Sharing Connections is an Illinois-registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

- Joe Shannon

April showers bring May deals! This month, and thanks in part to Memorial Day sales, you'll be able to save big at a number of different retailers. But scattered among all of these sales, you'll be able to find a few hidden gems that will save you hundreds, if not more. Take a look:

MATTRESSES

Mattress stores always seem to be having sales. If you've ever driven past a mattress store (or 12) on your way to work or while running errands, you've probably noticed the trend. But despite these endless sales, May is one of the best months to buy a mattress, and it all comes down to one day: Memorial Day. You may still need to shop around to find the perfect mattress for your needs, but with every mattress store running sales, that affordably priced pillow top won't be hard to find.

REFRIGERATORS

Like mattresses, many kitchen appliances go on sale during Memorial Day weekend. But when it comes to May deals, not all appliances are created equal. Fridge manufacturers start rolling out new models in June, which means retailers need to get rid of last year's stock. If you need to upgrade other major appliances in your home (dishwasher, stove, oven, etc.), you'll want to hold off until late summer/early fall, but be sure to pick up your refrigerator now.

OFFICE FURNITURE

Right around the end of tax season in April, office furniture sellers try to get the attention of small businesses and home businesses. Like most retailers around this time, they want a piece of your tax return. Instead of jumping on Tax Day sales, wait a month and you'll be greeted by steep end-of-season discounts. Plus, with school ending in May and June, demand for office furniture is exceptionally low, giving you the chance to upgrade your office for less.

WHAT NOT TO BUY

There are two big categories where you aren't going to find any deals: laptops and Mother's Day gifts. You'll end up paying close to full price for these items. Laptop deals ramp up mid- to late-summer, during the back-to-school season. And, well, when it comes to Mother's Day, if you wanted to save on a gift for your mom, you shouldn't have waited until the last minute.



HIGH TRAFFIC, HIGH RISK

Stay Safe During Memorial Day Weekend

Memorial Day weekend is one of the busiest travel times of the year, which means the roads will be packed with anxious drivers rushing to their family cookouts. When traffic is at its busiest, the risk of an accident increases. You need to stay vigilant in order to avoid having your holiday plans delayed or derailed. If you can schedule your travel to avoid the Memorial Day rush, that's awesome. If not, here are some tips to safe on the roads.

Smart planning will make your driving experience much more comfortable. Don't drive when you're tired or especially after

you've had a few beers at your barbecue. Leave time to take breaks during long trips and don't let yourself get frustrated with the traffic. When you are stuck in traffic, don't try to power through it using



aggressive driving tactics. Try to leave a safe distance between yourself and other vehicles, so you have ample time to adjust to the unwise decisions other drivers may make.

It can be easy to get distracted when you're crawling through busy highways, but don't let your guard down. A traffic jam is not the time to check your email or send off a few text messages. Keeping your eyes on the road and practicing defensive driving could be the difference between making your it to your cookout and spending your weekend in the hospital.

If you end up in a fender bender or worse, make sure you gather all the relevant information at the scene. Injuries that occur through no fault of your own should be especially well-documented. In the event that you need to make a claim against an insurance company, the more evidence you have, the better chance you stand of winning.

If you are injured in an auto or trucking accident through no fault of your own, call Shannon Law Group to enlist the help of an experienced attorney. We will help you get what is rightfully yours.

Client Testimonials

"In 2004, I was a passenger in a car that was hit by another car; my left arm was severely broken. Even though both cars had medical liability insurance, neither insurance company covered my medical expenses. Seeking legal representation to press my case for coverage, I was turned away by several lawyers who described my case as 'not being worth their time.' Fortunately for me, Joseph Shannon saw past his own professional and personal gain and agreed to represent me, so I could receive the proper care and move on with my life. Throughout the legal process, Joe and his staff were kind and attentive, even in the face of my procrastination. I am happy to report that Joe was able to win a favorable ruling for me. Perhaps as important as this ruling, Joe made me feel important, as if the law is not written just for the gain of lawyers and those whom they represent,

but also for the protection of people who have been wronged. I will always be very grateful for his work on my behalf."

- Colin, Chicago, Illinois

"It is not very often that you come across a professional who goes so above and beyond; Joe Shannon is such a person. It was, of course, in unfortunate circumstances that I met Joe Shannon, but I will forever be grateful for his expertise and dedication. He is not only an excellent attorney handling a case, but he is a caring human. Joe took such an interest in my son (who was injured), but didn't just handle the case and walk away. He is an extraordinary attorney and person. It was a pleasure to work with both Joe and his staff."

- Karen, North Riverside, Illinois

CONGRATULATIONS to our NCAA Basketball Bracket Winners!

- 1st: Larry Lucas
- 2nd: Mike Walsh
- 3rd: Jayne Durham
- 4th: Charlene Recio



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7	5	4	1	9	3	8	6	2
6	2	7	3	5	4	1	9	8
5	1	8	6	9	7	3	2	4

We'd really love for you to "like" us on Facebook and leave us a review on Google or Avvo.com!

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Easiest Chickpea Curry

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 (3-inch) cinnamon stick
- Pinch of ground cloves
- 2 (15-ounce) cans no-salt-added chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 3 tablespoons ketchup
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Chopped cilantro (optional)
- Lemon wedges (optional)

Directions

1. In a large straight-sided skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat.
2. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until dark brown around edges, for about 6 minutes.
3. Add garlic, curry, cinnamon, and cloves and cook, stirring, until fragrant, for 30 seconds.
4. Add chickpeas, ketchup, 1 teaspoon salt, 1/4
5. Uncover and increase heat to medium-high; cook until sauce is slightly reduced, for 5 minutes.
6. Serve with chopped cilantro and lemon wedges, if desired.

Recipe inspired by MarthaStewart.com.