

## Viking Nordic Geocache

By Jonathon Wiesel

Looking back over the this winter's XC columns, I see a lot involved doings at New Hampshire's **Bretton Woods Nordic Center** and just about the same number centered around **Viking Nordic** (802-824-3933, info@vikingnordic.com) in Vermont. And here's another of that genre.

First, you have to understand "geocaching." It's an adventure game for GPS users, whether just adults or a whole family. "Geo" stands for "geography" and "caching" refers to hiding a cache of stuff.

You set up a cache of goodies (anything that's small, portable, preferably legal, and strikes the imagination) and share the location. Then other geocachers set out to find the loot, leaving something in its place.

Your GPS unit (cost is between \$100 and \$1,000) can determine a location within something like six to 20 feet. You navigate from site to site, taking an item, leaving another item, and writing about it in a logbook. It's kind of like finding buried treasure except you're a generous pirate who both gives and takes.

If I get this right, Viking's cache is at N 43° 13.998 W 072° 47.248 (WGS84) UTM: 18T E 679659 N 4789100. A recent player wrote, " Found this one with my dad (Eltee1) while we were up in the area skiing all weekend. We can't go anywhere without doing at least one cache. We tried two but only had luck on this one. Had lots of fun snowshoeing here and doing the 5 part multi Cookie Cache too. Shared the reward of that one with my dad. No problem finding the regular cache here. Took foot warmers and left Mardi Gras coin and a pin. Thanks!"

Sounds like a great way to have fun, learn a new skill, and make friends. Viking was brought into the geocaching world by a staffer who loves the game. So far Viking is the only XC area I've heard of with geocaching, but I'd bet we'll se a bunch next year.

### About The Author

Jonathan Wiesel is a nordic guide, instructor, and ski area planner, who has written for over 120 magazines and newspapers on three continents. He wrote *Cross-Country Ski Vacations*, a guide to the great destinations of North America. He lives near Boulder, Colorado. For



Southern Vermont Cross Country Skiing