I finally got around to go geocatching in the Princeton area this last weekend. Although I had a bunch of miss-haps along the way. I explored the site for a good cache that hadn’t been done and had been found recently, so that I would know that it was there. I chose to do Carol Ann’s Mother’s Day Cache (from Ryan). This cache was located along one of the canals on the other side of Lake Carnegie, so it wasn’t that far. My friend has a car from the basketball team, so I dragged him a long with me, which in the end wasn’t the best of ideas because he had just gotten surgery on his groin. We drove down Washington Road until we crossed Lake Carnegie and parked our car in a small dirt parking lot. At this time I hadn’t plugged in the coordinates into my GPS, so we just began to walk along the Canal. This is at about 3:30 in the afternoon might I say as well. So we start to walk along the canal and our coordinates are getting closer and closer but still are very far away. It is getting close by the hundredth but after walking down the canal and over the train tracks and a bridge we still aren’t very close. We then come across Alexander Street and I am thinking, Ok we need to drive our car here and then go from there again. Meanwhile my friend is huffing and puffing, complaining and asking me what I had gotten him into as I thought it was going to be pretty easy to find it. We hiked it back to our car, which is now about a mile away. Once we get back to the car I sit and play around with the GPS a little and remember that I should have plugged the coordinates into receiver to get good and fast results. So I figured out how to do this and it gave us a direction in where to travel and time and distance to the cache. We fire up the car and start heading toward Alexander Street from Washington Road. Once we got on Alexander I still noticed that we had to go farther west so I tried looking for a turnoff near the canal that might be able to take me farther west and down the canal. We ended up pulling into the Wildlife Reserve Estuary (or something like this) right off Alexander and followed a dirt road for about a mile until we came to these ram shackled buildings. It is now 5:15 and I’m thinking I have to find this thing soon. We park the car and I get out and my GPS devices says that’s its about a .9 miles away from our car. I figure this is the closest I am going to get to it, so we start to walk through the estuary to find the canal. We find the canal, (or we suppose) but I realized we still needed to go south so this meant over the canal. Although crossing it wasn’t the easiest of things, we couldn’t swim it, nor did we have a boat, so we had walk about a half mile down the canal to where we first crossed a rickety footbridge and then across a log that had been knocked down. At this point we had been walking in the estuary for about an hour and its now 6:15ish. I am starting to get worried that we won’t make it back before dark. Meanwhile when we were back at the footbridge my friend dared me first to cross it, as it didn’t look sturdy at all. So he takes out his digital camera that we had been planning to use to take a picture and realizes that he left the battery back in the room. Great, so we didn’t have a camera to take a picture and we realize this an hour into the estuary and were about .25 miles from the cache according to my receiver. So I just say screw it, we have to find this thing. So as we got to the canal that we were supposed to be at, I realized that we still needed to go south and that meant back over this canal. We start to
walk down the canal and my receiver is saying that were about 250 feet away from the cache but its pointing over the canal. So now were stuck again. So we walk and walk and walk and finally run into the people on a hike and ask if there is a bridge down the way. They say there is one about 15 minutes down. Now we are starting to walk in the opposite direction of where we should be going all because we need to cross this canal. We finally find the bridge, which is a bridge for golf carts, (for which course I don’t know). We cross it and start walking back the same way we came on the other side of the canal. Meanwhile there is no path on this side so we are using sticks that we found to clear our way as we walk. It is now starting to get dark as well and I am getting a little scared and nervous. At about 7:30 we finally reach the area in which the geocache is in. My friend thought it was going to be like a landmark and I told him that we were going to have to explore for it. So we split up in the area and looked for it. On the site it said that it was located in some poison ivy but at this time I didn’t really see any poison ivy so we were kind of lost. After a while I found it and was simply amazed and happy. It was now 7:45 and I barely could make out my friend in the dark. I figured I at least new where it was located now. So I set the box back down that was filled with little trinkets and stone and rock shaped hearts and told myself I would come back and take a picture tomorrow now that I knew where it was located. Remember this was a Mother’s Day cache so it was filled with stoned hearts and rocks for a reason. Now, it was a race for light and there was no way we were making it back to our car. So we looked around and threw the trees we could see houses and apartments complexes. So we started to walk that way and right as it got dark we made it into this housing project. We still didn’t know where we were so we just followed the exit signs out of the development. It lead us onto the road that lies parallel to Route 1 that runs in the back of Market Fair. I called up my buddy and told him to come and pick us up and that we would be walking along the road. He ended up coming at 8:30.

So all in all I don’t think that my geocaching experience was great or all that fun, but at least I accomplished it, but with no evidence. I planned on going back to it today with the camera to take a picture, but it rained really hard all day. The coordinates for the cache were: Latitude 40.322883 and Longitude -74.660600. The coordinates that I used to plug into my receiver were: N 40 degrees 19.373 / W 074 degrees 39.636. I plugged those into the waypoint hunt and it took me right there, roughly. I am planning to go back and take a picture for proof, but I wanted to talk about it in class tomorrow. It was a fun experience but I don’t think that geocacheing is the thing for me.