

The magic directional box

I've been using my GPS in a rather mundane way recently. I know the route I want to take, but I turn the GPS on anyway. Even though it never takes me the route or direction I normally go, it does keep very good track of my arrival time. That way I know if I have time to make a stop before I get to wherever I am going. Neat trick that.

This morning on my way into work, I noticed that I wasn't getting yelled at as often. Wow, did this thing learn my pattern overnight? Then I noticed it wasn't telling me when the turns were coming up. The only thing I heard from it, was "re-calculating" every time I deviated from its intended route. The route would show up mapped, but I would only "hear" about it when I made at least a 90 degree turn from the intended route. Something strange was happening.

Then I noticed something odd. My little blue truck on the screen was not driving on the mapped road. In fact, it looked to be about 0.2 miles off the road. If the GPS was correct, I was driving through fields, houses, trees and over creeks (all at 55 or so). No wonder it didn't talk much, it didn't really know where I was.

Apparently, I'm having some trouble getting satellite reception. This is the second time this happened in a week. I can't find any news articles on GPS disruptions, so it may just be a local thing. I wonder....

Talking maps

After the wonderful drive back from Florida, I went out and purchased a GPS system. My good friends take theirs with them everywhere they go (just about) and use it to find hotels, restaurants, and other fun places. Further adventures with "Jill" can be found [here](#). I haven't used mine long enough yet for the voice to be accepted, but right now she is called Samantha. That's the name the voice came with, but I do find it slightly annoying (the voice, not the name).

My daughter and son-in-law (one of three pairs, take your guess), took me to a place called [The Blarney](#). It was a great little place. I'm not sure how authentic it keeps to real pubs in Ireland, but it was a fun time. I had hoped my talking map would get me there, but we didn't have the address, and it wasn't in the restaurant list, we made our best guess. Lucky for us there was no ball game, the Blarney is just a short walk away from the Muddens stadium. This is going to be on my list of places to go. I'm not a bar scene person but this was a lot of fun. The Bangers and Mash was fantastic. I have to add this place to my talking map.

I'm hoping I can find some downloads for places like this on the GPS site. I'm wondering now if there are other Irish or English pubs in the area. Or maybe a coffee shop or two? Other places I may want to see. Who knows.

The funny thing is, I picked the GPS up because I wanted to make a side trip on my way back from Florida. I didn't have a map, and I didn't use Google Maps or Mapquest to plan my trip back. By the time I got an Atlas, I was passed any good way of getting to where I wanted to be. That may have been a blessing, since my truck battery decided to give out, but that was the cause of me getting more tech stuff. Really, it wasn't because I wanted another toy. I'm a very good map reader, and I like plotting my own course. I've tested the GPS already and

it mapped the same travel routes that I did. So do I think like a computer? You don't have to answer that one.

So be on the lookout for more adventures with my talking map. I hope I don't get sent directions to turn into a lake... ☐