

Message in a bottle survives epic journey



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Last year, a high school student named Corey Swearingen put a letter in a bottle, sealed it up, and dropped it in the Atlantic Ocean, off the Florida coast. It was kind of an experiment for school. In the letter, he appealed to whomever came across the bottle to contact him and let him know where in the world it showed up. Amazingly, someone did. About 16 months after the bottle was dropped, Swearingen's marine science teacher heard from someone in Ireland. The letter had made its way across the Atlantic Ocean and washed up on the shores of the Emerald Isle, found by a 17-year-old and his Dad while out for a stroll.

In an interview with Florida Today, Swearingen said he never expected the message to be found. Can't blame him for pessimism. After all, the wine bottle, which, according to Swearingen, is being put up on display in an Irish pub, did face long odds. But it's hardly the first message in a bottle to survive a perilous journey. In 2009, a message in a bottle washed up on the shores of England. It had been tossed into the waters near the Bahamas nearly five years previous. Incredible, but that pales in comparison to a bottle sent by Emily Hwang.

True, Hwang's bottle traveled "only" 1, 735 miles from Seattle to Alaska, but it took an amazing 21 years to do so. There's even a case of a message in a bottle helping a family find a new life. In 1979, Dorothy and John Henry Peckham dropped a message in a bottle in the Pacific Ocean while on a cruise. Amazingly, the bottle found its way to Southeast Asia where it was picked up by 31-year-old Hoa Van Nguyen. Nguyen wrote back and began a correspondence that eventually led to the Peckhams helping to sponsor

Nguyen and his family's immigration to the United States. Eat your heart out, email.