

## Hiking Club Presents Seminar on Maps and GPS Fundamentals

On November 11 and 12, twenty six members of the SaddleBrooke Hiking Club participated in a free Maps and GPS Fundamentals Seminar sponsored by the club. Attendees learned how to read topographic maps, how to estimate distance and elevation from such maps, and how to use maps in conjunction with outputs from handheld GPS devices to navigate during hikes.

The two principal coordinate systems in common use, geographic (latitude and longitude) and UTM, were explained and used to determine positions on USGS maps. There were also demonstrations of the Google Earth map and geographical information system and commercially available mapping software packages which included downloading tracks and waypoints from various internet sites and showing that information in a form helpful in determining an individual's location during a hike.

The prime objective of the seminar was to provide Hiking Club members with skills that would enable them to know their location and navigate in unfamiliar terrain. A half dozen club members experienced in the use of maps and GPS devices for hiking helped with scaling, coordinate reading/plotting exercises and answered questions about the use of a GPS. Presentations were made by Mike Schroer, Walt Shields, Cheryl Werstler, and Roy Carter.

The group met for 6 hours over a two-day period, and afterwards participated in a four-point geochaching competition to hone skills developed in the seminar and to gain experience with their GPSs. The competition involved finding several preplaced "caches" armed only with the coordinates and elevation of the locations and a GPS. The competition was won by lottery drawing from the pool of everyone who found all four "cache" by the team of Bob Kolenda and Geary Rise, who took home a \$25.00 gift certificate and braggin' rights as the best navigators in the seminar. Other participants also finding all four locations were, Ken Wong, Dick Krueger, Barb Moreland, Ron Moreland, Phil McNamee, Greg Lindahl, Melissa Simpson, Karen Cusano, Ruth Debruine, Paul Debruine, and Susan Hollis. Bill Leightenheimer conducted the competition.

Saddlebrooke residents interested in the Hiking Club should call Dave Hydeman at 825-7816 for more information or go to the club web site at [www.saddlebrooke.org](http://www.saddlebrooke.org).



Caption: Winners of the Geocaching Competition: Bob Kolenda (left) and Geary Rise (center). Bill Leichtenheimer, competition director, is shown on the right.