

EXPANDING HORIZONS

—by Gary M Gervelis, P.L.S.

Last November, Gwen Roy, Washington State Surveyor, and Julie Cisisek, Renton Technical College Instructor, presented three, one-hour sessions on the surveying profession at South Sound Community College, Washington State. The sessions were part of Expanding Your Horizons (EYH), a conference organized annually for middle school girls (grades 6 through 8). This was the 3rd consecutive year Gwen Roy participated in the event, and the first year to feature geocaching.

The girls used hand-held GPS units provided by the College's two-year Land Surveying Program to find four plastic containers with rubber stamps that were hidden on campus. Their enthusiasm and confidence visibly increased as they found each successive geocache and stamped their field books (donated by the J. L. Darling Corporation of Tacoma, Washington). After successfully finding all four geocaches, they returned to the classroom to talk about what they had learned and receive prizes.

"I believe the hands-on exercises with the GPS units really captured the girl's imagination and helped them understand the basic principles behind locating things and people," said Roy. "Several of the girls who had participated in the exercises expressed interest in becoming land surveyors. We are recruiting our future surveyors here."



Julie Cisisek (on the left) and Gwen Roy (on the right) with students.



Roy and Cisisek, both of whom are professional surveyors, showed a video on land surveying and made sure everybody had fun while participating in the lecture and hands-on exercises. Yet, even though they put on a well received program of fact- and-fun, the greatest contribution of the surveyor-cum-instructor team was to be role models for the girls who are beginning their career search.

"I strongly encourage any woman in the surveying profession to visit the EYH web site and get

involved," said Gary Gervelis, a professional surveyor involved in the Expanding Your Horizons event. "There are several EYH events in Washington State but only one that has participation by the surveying community."

Expanding Your Horizons (<http://www.expandingyourhorizons.org>) is a non-profit membership organization of educators, scientists, mathematicians, parents, community leaders, and government and corporate representatives. Their mission is to encourage young women to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. Currently there are 30 states that have EYH events aimed at introducing girls to these careers.

