

# Ohio Pedologist

[Http://www3.uakron.edu/geology/aop/](http://www3.uakron.edu/geology/aop/)

## President's Message

I really noticed at the Soil Scientists' Workshop last week how rapidly our jobs are changing. The goals and the products are basically the same, but the nature of the work has changed. Everything is becoming more related to data analysis, and less to data gathering. More refinement, less collection. Kind of like it is with my kids: now I'm just doing quality control, and I don't have to worry about production.

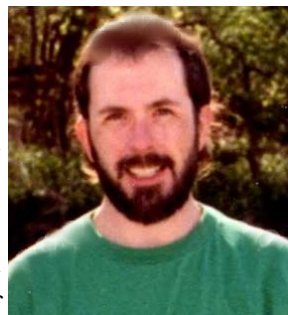
Now the challenge is to find time to do all the analyses, and to learn the new technologies that we could use to analyze even more data. I remember when we used to yearn for lab data and GIS software. Now, with digital soil maps and a spreadsheet full of data, we can analyze stuff all day. And, of course, we never stop collecting data. We just collect more detailed data. I think we've all heard someone say "Be careful what you wish for. You just might get it."

I started in my new position as Ohio soil database manager July 31. I wasn't sure exactly what to expect when I started. For now I'm spending at least half of my time in a production capacity, helping the resource soil scientists get county data sets edited in NASIS. So for now there will be some reportable items. I guess nobody can get away from goals and numbers.

So now I've done a lot more than I ever thought when I started mapping in Coshocton County 15 years ago. At the time it seemed like I would be mapping in the hills until I retired. I never imagined I would be transecting Hoytville units all day, or editing data on a computer in another part of the country.

I honestly have enjoyed everything I've done so far. Even acre counting. Well, I've enjoyed some things more than others. Of course, mapping was the best. When we

started doing updates, we were still outside doing fieldwork a lot, but I didn't enjoy that as much, because it was somewhat repetitive. I never really got tired of mapping, because if I wasn't seeing new map units every day, at least I was seeing them in a different area. But I only mapped for 4 years. Maybe I would be tired of mapping if I had been doing that for 15 years.



The Prez

I've always liked organizing things. Sports cards when I was a kid. You can sort them by team, position, or card number. Another boyhood hobby was untangling kite string that somebody had thrown down. Out of chaos, order. And for a while, I slept with 3 stuffed toys. The frog had to be farthest away from me, then the bunny, and the bear was closest. Or was it bunny-frog-bear? Well, you get the picture. Does all this say anything about me? No, it doesn't say that I should be in counseling. Hopefully, it says that my natural attention to organization and detail will help me do well in my new job.

Anyway, enough about me. I hope you all are doing good. Hopefully none of you got burned too bad by the drought. But it's going to be a great fall, and we can be thankful that football has returned.

And don't forget to send in your applications for certification!

*Jeff Glanville*

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## 2002 Directory of Officers

*Jeff Glanville, President*  
*Dan Lemaster, President-elect*  
*Frank Gibbs, Past President*  
*Kathy Sasowsky, Secretary*  
*George Derringer, Treasurer*  
*Steve Miller, Newsletter editor*  
*Tom Zimmerman, Academic Rep.*  
*Jon Reedstrom, Federal Rep.*  
*Bill Brug, Private Rep.*  
*Steve Prebonick, State Rep.*

# Association News

## Calendar of Events

September 27th, Friday—Ohio Fracture Flow Working Group, Wooster, Ohio  
October 15th-17th—Forest Soils Workshop, Northwest Ohio  
January 23, 2003—AOP Winter Meeting

## Last Call for Alcohol

Now that I have your attention I would like to remind anyone considering AOP certification that the application deadline for inclusion under the grandfather clause is December 31, 2002. You must have been an AOP member listed as a Soils Professional or a Pedologist on December 31, 2001 to qualify.

Members listed as Pedologists are likely to meet qualifications for certification after the deadline but will not be able to take advantage of the streamlined application form. Also, official transcripts will be required for applicants after December 31, as proof of 15 semester hours or 23 quarter hours of course work in soil science. Members listed as Soils Professionals may not meet field experience qualifications for certification but can be grandfathered in, up until the 2002 deadline.

The Certification Committee will meet again on October 19. Any member who wants to be considered for certification this year should keep this in mind. The committee will not meet again until January, 2003.

Well it is not "Old Grandad" but it is grandfather clause. Last call.

*Steve Prebenick*



## From the Editor's Desk

The *Ohio Pedologist* is published quarterly. Please have your articles submitted by Dec. 1 for timely distribution of the newsletter. Please note:

- 1) The deadline for submitting articles to the newsletter is 2 weeks before issue date.
- 2) The editor reserves the right to condense letters, make routine changes in grammar, and decline articles due to incriminating or offensive content.
- 3) Newsletter items should be brief, legible, and in good taste.
- 4) Articles submitted for publication in the *Ohio Pedologist* should be sent to: Steve Miller, 1974 N. 3 B's and K Rd, Sunbury, OH, FAX (614) 262-2064, or e-mail [steven.miller@dnr.state.oh.us](mailto:steven.miller@dnr.state.oh.us)



## Award Nominations

The Awards Committee reminds you that now is the time to nominate candidates for recognition by AOP. So far this year no nominations have been received. The deadline for receiving nominations is November 15<sup>th</sup> but nominations can be submitted anytime. Award nominations should be submitted to Larry Milliron, Awards Committee Chairman. (Note: Awards Nomination form attached)

The attempt to restore the record for past awardees has failed. The archive of newsletters, minutes, etc. has been searched with meager additional findings. No one has volunteered photocopies of past award certificates, written accounts of merit that secured the award (especially the Golden Clod recognition), or lent anything else that was particularly helpful to better establish the record. So it appears that the best that can be done is to maintain a better record from this point forward.

## New Members

James D. O'Brien—Soils Professional  
Jean Caudill—Affiliate Member  
Alex Dado—Affiliate Member



## Summer Picnic

Submitted by Jeff Glanville

The Association of Ohio Pedologists held their summer meeting and picnic August 10, 2002, at Old Man's Cave, at Hocking Hills State Park. We had a catered lunch at the shelter house at Old Man's Cave. After lunch, we drove a short distance to Conkles Hollow State Nature Preserve. Our own Gordon Gilmore gave us a brief description of the soils mapped in the area. Then we split into 2 groups. Naturalists Mark Howes and Jeff Johnson of ODNR's Division of Natural Areas and Preserves each led 1 group. Mark and Jeff pointed out the tree and plant species, microclimate variations, and geologic features, and how all are interrelated, on a walk from the flood plain up to the ridge.

We had about 30 in attendance, including AOP members and family. The weather was perfect. Maybe a little warm. Also, the hike up to the ridge was a little too hard for my kids, and they kept telling me so. I think they were worn out from hiking already. We arrived about 9:30, and went through Old Man's Cave, before the executive council meeting at 10:00. The hike through Old Man's Cave was the highlight for my family, even though we never saw the Old Man. But the kids think they found the Old Man's stick.

Thanks again to Frank Gibbs for making the arrangements.

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# A Strange Religion

## An "Outsiders" View of Soil Scientists

The exact number of followers in this cult is unknown: however, it is believed that the number is not large as compared with some other cults. One of the first strange things about this sect, and this alone makes it unique among sects, is that its members can be found in virtually every county in the U.S. Ordinarily, cults tend to be regional in character, but then this is a strange cult. As a whole, its members seem to be of at least average intelligence and are not striking in appearance in any way. Their mode of dress is quite ordinary; it might even seem that they consciously dress to appear unobtrusive. They do carry about their persons some strange objects. Might we call them fetishes! Knives, bottles containing acid or water, small magnifying lenses and other unique bits of paraphernalia are seen, but more about this later.

The general appearance of the rites they perform suggest some pagan worship. One might happen onto a group of these quaint folk in a pasture or field or forest, sometimes in remote vastness and even sometimes near towns or dwellings. The rites are nearly unbelievable when first observed. It seems that a hole in the ground, varying in diameter from a few inches to a few feet and in depth again from a few inches to a few feet, forms a kind of altar. Generally, this is roughly round in outline but oblong ones have been observed, particularly when the worshippers are searching for a sacred entity called Krotivina. At the beginning of the rites, one or two of the group (the group may be of any size but seldom over 12) begin by digging the hole. High priests, called correlators, designate the spot at which the altar is to be made. This hole is made with talking, laughing, and joking; however, when it comes time to remove the object of worship from the hole, the group usually falls silent and stands in reverent awe. This Deity is, of all things, a slab of earth about eight inches long, four inches wide and one foot or more deep. The greatest dimension is nearly always from the vertical. This is gently removed from the hole and gently laid upon the ground. Quite frequently this is done by one of the high priests. Usually, a few moments of respectfully silent awe follow the placing of the Deity. This object is called the Profile; however, sometimes these are preserved for future worship and are then called Monoliths.

After placing the Deity beside the altar and the moment of silent meditation, the worshippers fall upon this object of worship and literally tear it to pieces. They take bits of earth from this holy body and crush it into their hands. They prod it with knives, measure it with tapes, treat it with acid, crush it and expectorate in it or wet it with water and rub it gently between their fingers. Is this saliva-soil combination some strange communion? It is at this stage of the rite that talking in tongues is observed or at least it seems that it is completely incomprehensible to the uninitiated. Some say that they understand each other but this seems unlikely to casual observer. Sometimes they say names of rivers or towns or counties that may be hundreds of miles away. From this it might seem that the beholding of the Deity brings on visions, for some of the worshippers have never been to the towns and counties they are heard to mention. Sometimes they seem to disagree about certain phases of the religious experience. Two might be on their knees, rubbing this moistened dirt between their fingers and be heard to say,

First, "Loam"

Second, "Nope, very fine sandy loam"

Third, "That's not very fine sand. That's angular silts"

Then at times it seems as if they're talking in a strange geometry, as one might be heard to say, "weak subangular blocky," or "strong prisms." And at times it seems that architecture has contributed something as one hears something about "strong columnar structure." Then they can be heard talking in algebra or so it seems, when they talk of A1, B1r, Ao, or Ced. And sometimes something might be said that resembles Russian, German, Latin, or Greek (it probably wouldn't be recognized by Russians, Germans, Latins, or Greeks, however). One of the high priests was heard to frequently say something that resembled "mollic epipedon." This incantation seems to have some particularly reverent significance as the lesser members always seemed to gaze upon him with awe when the time came when these words could be used.

The high priests seem to be prophesying the coming of some incomprehensible entity that is already worshipped by lesser members, even though they don't understand it or even know who, what or how it is or what it will do when it arrives. It is called Soil Taxonomy.

After Profile is treated, spat upon, gouged, crushed, and discussed the high priests begin questioning one who is called Party Chief and they may talk about this thing for 15 minutes to four hours and it seems as if they are always talking about something it (profile) isn't. The true religious nature of this group is proven by its mystic characteristics. The mystery being that the high priests do not know what "it" is, but always know what "it" isn't. Lesser members who haven't yet attained the mystic insight of the high priests or even the Party Chief usually say what "it" is but not what "it" isn't.

Following the discussion of what "it" isn't is a short social period in which members talk about other members (not present, of course), of how hard it was to get funds from administrators, the relative merits of various types of spades and of hunting and fishing trips.

The hole is always filled but this cannot be done until sanctioned by one of the high priests. This is done quite subtly. The lesser members, who usually do the filling, may stand for some time waiting for the "that's all" nod of the head, or the high priest may sanction it by kicking a clod into the hole. Lesser members never begin filling an unsanctioned hole. Once begun, the filling is completed with vigorous dispatch, as many as a half a dozen may gather around and shovel and kick dirt into the hole.

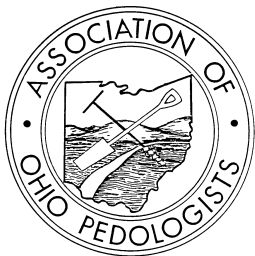
It might be mentioned that, as in all religious groups, there are usually one or two nonbelievers. They usually stand around telling jokes at the most inappropriate times, sometimes openly heckling the worshippers and sometimes picking up bits of plants and looking at them with an air of boredom or, rarely, interest. Sometimes cows and what cows eat and other mundane things are talked about.

Clayton W. Stephens, Range Conservationist, BIA

9/28/62

## Ohio Pedologist

The Ohio State University  
School of Natural Resources  
Columbus, OH 43210



Mailing label

held this fall by ODNR, NRCS, and ODH staff is to demonstrate that non-pedologists cannot be taught how to prepare accurate soil descriptions in a one-day workshop. All of those efforts will be for naught if when sanitarians converse at regional and statewide conferences, some of them question our professionalism. The future of soils consulting in the currently "under-served" parts of the state may depend less on what soil scientists know about soils than on how they adhere to the ARCPACS Code of Ethics.

## Happy Birthday, Soil Inventory Board!

The Ohio Soil Inventory Board was created on October 27, 1952, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio Department of Agriculture. The Board originally consisted of four members, representing the Ohio Division of Lands and Soil, the Natural Resources Commission, the Agronomy Department of Ohio State University, and the Agricultural Experiment Station. One of the "understandings" was that "there will be only one state program on the state level to inventory the soil resources of Ohio, and every cooperative effort will be made to complete this inventory and release the factual information to the public in a relatively short period of time." The Soil Conservation Service was added to the Soil Inventory Board on June 1, 1953, through another Memorandum of Understanding, signed by SCS and the parties in the first one.

For me, the most difficult part of completing reference forms for ARCPACS certification applicants has been to "comment on the applicant's professional growth and development, ability to analyze and solve problems, resourcefulness, professionalism, and knowledge in the area of application. And, of the five characteristics listed, professionalism is by far the most difficult for me to assess objectively.

I don't know how to measure professionalism, but I suspect that non-pedologists can recognize it when they see it. At a soils training workshop held recently for sanitarians, at least one county sanitarian described less-than-positive experiences with consulting soil scientists. Two concerns expressed were 1) that consulting soil scientists do not report soil characteristics that would hurt their clients' chances of having their site approved, and 2) that consulting soil scientists offer opinions about whether household treatment systems would work, without being qualified or authorized to do so. Whether the observations were fair or not, the other sanitarians present at the workshop who do not already rely on consulting soil scientists are probably less likely to do so in the future. Over the past several years, Ohio Dept. of Health (ODH) staff members have been encouraging local health districts to have household treatment systems designed on the basis of soil characteristics described on-site by soil scientists. In fact, one of the objectives of the series of workshops being

## Professionalism

Submitted by Tim Gerber.