

Spring 2005

Mountain Profiles

A newsletter of the West Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists

A Note from the Prez ...

WVAPSS Members,

We did it! WVAPSS has exceeded the goal of \$10,000 dollars needed to ensure the inclusion of the WV Monolith in the Smithsonian Institute's, "Soils Sustain Life" exhibit.



Many people have dedicated a lot of personal time to the success of this project. I owe many thanks to many people. I must first begin at home and thank my husband, Joe, for all of the support during the past year.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Skip and Sue Bell. Skip was gracious enough to accept the responsibilities of Smithsonian Project Chairman. He was the money man and backbone of the fundraising effort. I know he was not in it alone. His wife, Sue, was right there also. Sue used her many talents to develop and design the beautiful stained glass window.

I want to thank all the members who gave of their personal time to speak to the fourteen WV Conservation Districts. Kudos to Norm Bailey of the WV Conservation Agency, Greenbrier Valley District Supervisor Nora Workman, Capitol District Supervisor Doris Asbury and West Fork District Supervisor Jim Foster for championing our cause and encouraging support from all 14 districts.

Words can't express my gratitude to Darlene, Matt and Robin Pyle. When Roy passed away, they decided to, in lieu of flowers, have donations be made in Roy's memory to WVAPSS' Smithsonian fund raising efforts. The response was overwhelming. Roy would be proud.

Thank you to Peg Reese for issuing your challenge grant, and to Doug and Susan Boyer for maintain the webpage. Executive council members (Doc, Mary Beth, Mark, Jared and Stephanie), you were invaluable. You were willing to do what ever was asked of you.

Finally, I want to thank the WVAPSS general membership for your support during my term as president. You sold raffle tickets, you donated items for fundraising baskets and you gave of your time. You should be quite proud of all this organization, your organization, has accomplished.

When I was appointed President in June 2003, I had no idea what to expect. Looking back, we accomplished a lot. Now that my term is almost over, I can definitely say, "These past two years have been quite an adventure". I am honored that you put your trust in me and allowed me the opportunity to serve as your president. It's been a blast.

-Wendy Noll, (soon-to-be past) President

2005 Northeastern Forest Soils Conference

First Announcement

The WVAPSS 2005 annual meeting will be held in conjunction with the 2005 Northeastern Forest Soils Conference. The conference will be held July 18-21, 2005 in Logan County. The annual WVAPSS dinner meeting will be held on Tuesday evening, July 19. More details will be forthcoming, but I hope you will put these dates on your calendar and plan to attend. All WVAPSS members and guests are welcome to attend any or all of the Forest Soil Conference. If you have questions, please contact John Sencindiver (Telephone 304-293-6256; email jsencind@wvu.edu), Mary Beth Adams (mbadams@fs.fed.us; 304-478-2000) or Stephanie Connolly (sconnolly@fs.fed.us; 304-636-1800). Information regarding the conference is presented below.

You are invited to southern West Virginia for the 2005 Northeastern Forest Soils Conference, held in conjunction with the annual summer meeting of the West Virginia Association of Professional Soil Scientists (WVAPSS). Come visit us July 18-21, 2005 in Logan County, WV, and spend time in the lovely forests and hills of southern West Virginia while meeting with your colleagues. You'll learn about the role of soils in mine land reclamation, and about soil development and important processes as affected by mountaintop removal and reforestation. In addition, we'll be looking at the effects of repeated fires on forest soils and the relationship of soils to productivity and various forest management uses. Finally, WVAPSS will host a hands-on workshop on collecting and preparing soil monoliths.

The Conference will be based in Logan County, West Virginia. The meeting will start on Monday, July 18, with a dinner, and an introduction to West Virginia's history and natural resources. Two and a half days in the field, with lots of soil pits, will follow, and the 2005 conference will adjourn on Thursday, July 21 at noon. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Best Western Logan Inn, in Chapmanville, West Virginia. Camping is available at near-by Chief Logan State Park, and there are other lodging opportunities available. More details about lodging and registration will be forthcoming shortly.

Please mark your calendars now for this exciting opportunity!

Dues Reminder

Just in case you have forgotten... Please pay your 2004-2005 dues. As in the past, dues are \$15.00 for the year and can be sent to Mary Beth Adams, USDA Forest Service, Timber and Watershed Laboratory, Parsons, WV 26287

WVAPSS Meets \$10,000 Smithsonian Soils Fund Goal

Alleluia brothers and sisters.....we made it! You'll remember that back in June of 2004 we started our campaign to raise \$10,000 for the Smithsonian Soils Sustain Life Exhibit. The \$10,000 contribution is required by SSSA to ensure that a monolith of West Virginia's State Soil is included in the exhibit. Well, as of February 22, WVAPSS has raised \$10,570! In fact, when outstanding pledges are added to the total, we've actually raised about \$11,400. Let me hear a big AMEN!

Here's how we did it. We raised about \$3200 from our hunting rifle and gift basket raffles. Over \$1400 has been donated to the Roy E. Pyle Memorial Fund. Peg Reese's challenge grant brought in about \$1010. To date, we have received approximately \$690 in direct donations. And finally, West Virginia's Soil Conservation Districts really came through for us by donating \$5100!

This project has truly been a team effort. From selling raffle tickets to donating gift basket items, from manning our booth at the Hunting and Fishing Day Expo at Stonewall Jackson State Park to making presentations at the Soil Conservation District meetings, almost every WVAPSS member has contributed in some way. I thank all of you. I think we can all be proud of what we have accomplished.

Some WVAPSS members and friends went above and beyond the call to duty and deserve special thanks. They include:

- Wendy Noll-for her direction, devotion, and unbridled enthusiasm for this project.
- Steve Carpenter-for representing WVAPSS and presenting the project to the WV Association of Conservation Districts
- John Sencindiver, Rob Pate, Don Flegel, Carlos Cole, Tim Dilliplane, Charles Delp, Scott Hoover, and Katy McBride-for representing WVAPSS and presenting the project to individual SCD Boards.
- The late Roy Pyle and family-for their generosity.
- Peg Reese-for challenging us to give.
- Doug Boyer, Susan Boyer, and Mark Van Lear- for the excellent work setting up the stained glass window raffle on the WVAPSS website
- Sue Bell, Jack Byrd, and Joe Noll-for designing and crafting the stained glass window.

BUT WE ARE NOT THROUGH YET! The stained glass window raffle is still in progress. The drawing is scheduled to take place on Earth Day; April 22. So far, we have only sold about \$200 worth of tickets. If we can sell enough tickets to reach \$12,000, West Virginia would have the 3rd highest donation total in the nation, behind only California and Colorado.

Skip Bell, Smithsonian Project Chair

And the Winners are...

Tim Lilly of Beaver, WV was the winner of the Remington 700 Rifle. **Katy McBride** was the seller of the winning ticket and will receive a year's free membership for her effort.

Debbie Murphy of Summersville, WV was the winner of the Basket of West Virginia products raffled off at the Northeast Co-operative Soil Survey Conference in Canaan Valley in June.

Roy Jacobs of Mt. Clare, WV was the winner of the basket of hunting items raffled off at the WV Hunting and Fishing Day's in September at Stone Wall Jackson State Park.

Welcome New Members

We are pleased to introduce you to the individuals who have joined our ranks since the last newsletter:

Jacqueline Ann Daughtry joined WVAPSS as a full member in September 2004. Born in Circleville, WV, she graduated from WVU with a degree in Agronomy. She has worked with the NRCS in West Virginia and Collegeville, PA.

Henry J. Ferguson, another new full member, is employed with USDA - NRCS in Morgantown, where he works as a soil scientist at the National Geospatial Development Center. Henry has worked for the NRCS since 1977, in Vermont, Missouri, and Indiana

James A. Thompson originally hails from Pittsburgh, PA, and is an assistant professor with West Virginia University in the Division of Plant and Soil Sciences. At WVU, Jim teaches courses on soil genesis and classification, soil survey and land use, and environmental soil management; advises the Soil Judging Team; and conducts research on soil-landscape analysis and hillslope hydrology. Previously, he worked at North Carolina State University and the University of Kentucky.

Now lets welcome back two past members who have rejoined the WVAPSS family;

Debby Cunningham is an NRCS Soil Scientist at the Huntington Service Center. She is a WVU graduate, and loves hiking, reading, and doing volunteer work. Debby lives in Hurricane with her husband John and their three daughters.

Ron Taylor is the State Soil Scientist of New Jersey and a native of Arnett (Raleigh Co.), WV. He is a charter member of WVAPSS, a WVU alumnus (BS – 1970; MS 1977) and a Navy veteran. Ron began his career with the SCS (now the NRCS) as a student in 1967. Prior to moving to New Jersey to assume the duties of Assistant State Soil Scientist, he was the Area Soil Scientist in Philippi, WV from 1979 until 1987.

Other news about members...

Michael Jones is the new Soil Data Quality Specialist at the USDA-NRCS MO-13 Office, in Morgantown, WV. Michael, his wife Michelle and his daughter Sarah come to Morgantown from Princeton, WV, where Michael was the NRCS District Conservationist.

Jason and Sigrid Teets are the proud parents of a new baby boy, Camlyn Joseph Teets. Camlyn was born Dec. 16th, 2005 and joins big brother, Liam at home.

Anthony Jenkins and Pamela Schmidt welcomed baby Anasuya in July, 2004. She has her big brother Hayden at home.

Smithsonian Monolith Exhibit Design Debut

The Smithsonian Institution has released the final design for the monolith panels for the Museum of Natural History's "Soil Sustains Life" exhibit. The panels will be customized for each participating state. These look pretty impressive. The artist's renderings have been posted to the WVAPSS webpage.

Wear Your WVAPSS Colors

There is still a nice selection of the new style WVAPSS t-shirts left. These shirts are high quality 100 % cotton and have the WVAPSS logo over the left breast. Short sleeve T's are \$9.50 and are available in medium, large and x-large. Long sleeve T's are \$10.50 and available in large and x-large. Colors available are white, gray, navy and hunter green.

We also have some of the old style short sleeve t-shirts left in green (large only) and light blue (x-large only). They are a 50/50 cotton/poly blend and cost \$ 5.00.

You can place your order for these items by contacting Mary Beth Adams at mbadams@fs.fed.us or 304-478-2000.

Soil Scientist Registry available on-line

The WVAPSS membership directory is available on-line at our new web address www.wvapss.org. Please take a minute and check your registry entry. Is your information up-to-date? If you have found errors or need to update your information, please send changes to Stephanie Connolly @ sconnolly@fs.fed.us

2005 Elections

It is election time again. Do you know anyone who would make an excellent candidate for Vice-President or Executive council? Elections will be held in the late spring. The results will be announced at the Annual Summer Meeting (see article above). If you are interested and are a full member of WVAPSS in good standing (dues are paid current), please send your name and what office you are interested in to Wendy at Wendy.Noll@wv.usda.gov ASAP. The Slate of candidates and their bios will be sent out to the general membership by May 15, 2005.

At the annual meeting last June, an amendment was passed to officially allow voting for executive council via both e-mail and snail mail.

2004 – 2005 WVAPSS Executive Council

If case you didn't know, here's a list of the executive council members for the current year.

President - Wendy J. Noll

Vice President - Dr. John Sencindiver

Secretary / Treasurer -Dr. Mary Beth Adams

Ethics & Registration Chair - Stephanie Connolly *

Constitution & By-laws Chair - Jared Beard

Public Relations Chair - Mark Van Lear

Smithsonian Institute Project Chair - Skip Bell **

- Term expires July 2005; **Appointed by Executive Council

On the Lighter side

COOLING IT IN LOST RIVER

During the 70's, the small watershed program in eastern West Virginia provided substantial funding, even to the soil survey program. Therefore, many trainees passed through the soil survey offices of Grant, Hardy, and Pendleton Counties. They eventually scattered far and wide across the country, some staying in soil science to become soil survey party leaders and such, and one became a State Soil Scientist in New Jersey. Others, however, changed disciplines to become RC&D Coordinators, District Conservationists, Farmland Preservation Coordinator, Regional Conservationist, and a State Conservationist. I attribute the defections to the hard work of soil science plus the hot weather, rather than accept any of the blame as party leader.

Eastern West Virginia can become awfully hot and dry. Even prickly pear cactus seems to thrive on some of our dryer sites. Mapping soils in such a climate, especially after boring holes up and down the side of a 3000-foot mountain thru laurel, can leave even the most devoted wondering why he chose this occupation.

One young recruit came aboard during a very hot summer. He and the party leader were working the rugged mountains of eastern Hardy County. Those of you who have mapped soils know how miserable it is to run out of drinking water, while at the same time sweating profusely, and being miles from the vehicle. On top of that, the workday is only half over. Such was the case when the duo worked their way down one of the dry, sandy mountainsides of the George Washington National Forest, and came to the edge of Lost River. The only sensible thing to do was jump in.

Off came the work clothes, except for briefs. We had to maintain some small degree of modesty and professionalism. The party leader dove in. It was a most refreshing experience except for the fact that his briefs were now wrapped around his ankles. In a move that would have evoked envy from an Olympic synchronized swimming team, he curled up and reached down to retrieve his lost possessions. In doing so, however, he raked the top of his toes across the bottom of Lost River. Now his toes were bloody, his briefs were missing, and a substantial portion of his flesh was attached to the abundant sandstone fragments at the bottom of the stream. Some might have suggested that this was not the image of modesty and professionalism. Some might have concluded too rashly that the bloody, naked party leader standing there in the river was not the ideal image of a mentor to an ambitious young soil scientist. Nonsense.

Coincidentally, the young recruit chose to become a District Conservationist. I blame it on the hard work and hot weather.

-ANONYMOUS

Scenes from the 2004 Summer Meeting Held in conjunction with the NE Cooperative Soil Survey Conference held at the Canaan Valley Resort and Conference Center, June 2004



Our Display



Members enjoy good food & old friends



John S., Carlos C. and Darlene Pyle



Preparing for the field trip



Jared Beard reads his report to the group



Skip Bell and Wendy Noll