



PROFESSIONAL SOIL SCIENTISTS ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

Texas Soil Profiles

2017 PSSAT Officers

President - Chance Robinson, USDA-NRCS, Stephenville **President-Elect** - Carlos Villareal, USDA-NRCS, Temple
Vice-President - Shanna Dunn, USDA-NRCS, Robstown
Treasurer - Travis Waiser, USDA-NRCS, Kerrville **Editor** - Jon Brandt, TerrEval Consulting, Corpus Christi
Past-President - Jacob Eickstead, TXDOT, Austin

In this issue:

- Annual Meeting notes from February 1, 2017 --- page 2
- Photo Contest Winners --- page 8
- Financial Report Summary for 2016 --- page 15
- Soils News --- page 16
- Upcoming issue and call for newsletter articles --- page 16

PSSAT President's Message, from Chance Robinson



PSSAT Members,

As we conclude 2017, I hope this finds each of you well. Like many of you, 2017 has been a busy and eventful year, but as I look back I happen to wonder where all the time went? As we approach the holidays I wish each of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! Amidst all of the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, I hope you find time to rest, reflect, and enjoy the company of your friends and family. I also hope that each of you are making plans to join your PSSAT cohorts in College Station on January 31 for the annual meeting. Details will be forthcoming in the January newsletter.

We have several members and family of PSSAT members who have struggled with sickness or other difficulties this past year. Please keep each of them in your thoughts and prayers. I especially ask that you keep Ricky Lambert and his family in your thoughts and prayers as he battles cancer.

If you wish to send a word of encouragement to Ricky, his email address is RLamb43005@hotmail.com or you may send a card to the Soil Survey Office, and his coworkers will see that it is delivered:

*Ricky Lambert
Nacogdoches MLRA Soil Survey Office
1122 N. University Drive Box C
Nacogdoches, TX 75961*

It has been an honor to serve you as President this year. I thank Jacob Eickstead and all those who have served this organization over the past 35 years for making PSSAT an organization that I am proud to serve and be a part of.

*Cheers,
Chance Robinson
PSSAT President*

Professional Soil Scientists Association of Texas February 1, 2017 Annual Meeting (*Meeting Notes, Courtesy of Jamey Douglass*)

Location: G. Rollie White Visitor's Center

Folks attending this year's meeting gathered alongside the building under the live oak trees. Turns out, the building was locked. Travis Waiser, Treasurer, was taking dues, dinner fees, and selling PSSAT caps and shirts on a picnic table under the live oak.

At about 6 pm, President Jacob Eickstead called the meeting to order. He recognized Amanda Bragg, Scholarship Chair, to make her presentation. Amanda said there were several good applicants this year, but the winner was from Texas A&M University. The winner was Franklin Linam, a junior Plant and Environmental Soil Science Major, with a minor in Chemistry. Travis Waiser, Acting Treasurer, was working hurriedly to draft the Scholarship check. Amanda then presented Franklin with his scholarship check. He said he appreciated the money, and encouraged PSSAT to continue to award the scholarship. Franklin later followed up with an email to Amanda:

Ms. Bragg,

I wanted to follow up with and thank you and the Profession Soil Scientists Association of Texas for your generous support of my education. Also, thank you for inviting me to your annual meeting and being so hospitable to me. It is extremely encouraging to see so many professionals pursuing a career in soil science.

Because of the financial support from PSSAT and other similar organizations, I will be able to graduate from Texas A&M and attend graduate school without having to figure out how to pay off student loans.

Thank you again, wishing the best to you all,

Franklin Linam, Texas A&M--May 2018

Jacob then recognized Dr. Cristine Morgan, guest speaker, to make her presentation. Dr. Morgan presented information on teaching the soils part of the Texas Master Naturalist program. She taught for the Brazos County, Washington County, and Red River County programs. Why Red River County? Her parents started the Master Naturalist program there. She told the group, it was very enjoyable to talk to folks who are very interested in soils. The students really enjoy getting their hands dirty, learning about soil properties, and even Web Soil Survey. Dr. Morgan said to contact her for more information.

Jacob made the decision to have the caterer set up the food outside on a picnic table, under the live oak. So folks got in line for the beef and chicken fajitas. At about 6:35 pm, someone showed up to unlock the building. The timing was pretty good, so now the attendees had a place to sit down and eat. Once all the guests and PSSAT members were inside dining, the meeting resumed.

Dr. Morgan announced the annual Texture Contest, and encouraged all in attendance to give it a try. Former colleagues, students, retirees, academia, and others enjoyed the visiting during the meal. Lots of banter about.

Dr. Morgan reminded everyone who was attending the Soil Survey and Land Resource Workshop that this year it would not be in Rudder Tower, but in the Koldus Building, adjacent to the parking garage. She said as of last count, about 60 folks had registered. This was mainly due to the NRCS travel budget restrictions. Last year, about 80 folks had registered.

Jamey asked John Sackett III to be the PSSAT Annual Meeting photographer.

There were about 35 to 40 persons attending this year's annual meeting. There were PSSAT Officers, and members, TAMU, TTU, Tarleton students and Professors, consultants, mining company staff, Railroad Commission of Texas staff, NRCS staff, NRCS State Office staff, NRCS Resource Soil Scientists, NRCS MLRA Leaders, retirees, the Soil Survey Regional Director, and staff from the NRCS Tech Center in Fort Worth, TX.

At about 7:33 pm, President Jacob Eickstead, called the meeting to order. Jacob thanked all those folks who attended the Gibbons Creek Mine Tour. There were two soil pits to view. He said there was a bald eagle within a mile of the pits, but he was not out yesterday. Jacob said overall, the tour went well. There was a native soil pit, and a disturbed soil pit. There were lots of native grasses. The mine was a huge disturbance on the land.

Many state and federal government agencies, and the coal company, were trying to make the good on the reclamation process. He offered thanks to Tom Feuerbacher and Jan Horbaczewski for setting up the tour. And special thanks to Jan for the chemical analyses in the tour book. Jacob added that the tour book would be posted to the PSSAT web site.

Chance Robinson, President-Elect reminded folks about the Green Valley Tour in Marfa, scheduled for August 4-6, 2017.

Jacob recognized Carlos Villarreal, Photo Contest Chair, to make his report. Carlos said since no projector was available, there would be no PowerPoint presentation tonight. He reported there were about thirty (30) entries in three categories. He called on Dr. David Weindorf, Dennis Brezina, and John Sackett to come forth and receive their prizes. Each winner was presented a Texas cooking apron, a Green's Sausage koozie, and a bottle opener shaped like Texas. The top-three placing photos in each category are presented in this newsletter starting on page 7.

Jacob recognized Jamey Douglass, Editor, to present his report. Jamey reported that he was lazy this past year, only producing one newsletter. He admitted he had lost his enthusiasm for the Editor position. But like years past, perhaps a break from this job, the apathy might go away.

Jamey said he would be giving the Webmaster report, since Rick Lambert was unable to attend this year. The PSSAT web site has been on the internet for seventeen (17) years. Rick Lambert and Craig Byrd first developed the web site. Jon Brandt took over as webmaster for 10 years, starting in 1999. Rick Lambert resumed webmaster duties in 2009. In 2002, we obtained the pssat.org domain name, and began using Datarealm for webhosting at a cost \$134 per year.

The PSSAT web site received 34,116 visits since Feb 1, 2016 (a 7.5 percent decrease from 2015-2016). Some fun facts about our web site:

1. Top five types of domain visiting the PSSAT web site: U.S. Commercial, Networks, U.S. Government, U.S. Educational and Organizations.
2. 59 foreign countries visited the PSSAT web site. The most visits came from; Germany, Ukraine, Czech Republic, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and China.
3. Top five pages viewed on PSSAT web site;
 - PSSAT.org index page (home page)
 - Texas Soils
 - PSSAT Fall 2015 Soil Review
 - Careers in Soil Science
 - PSSAT Officers

There were only two inquiries for Ask a Soil Scientist this past year. Thanks to Dr. David Weindorf, Dr. Clay Robinson, Dennis Brezina, and Matthew Clemons who participated in answering the inquiries.

Change of Webhosting with Datarealm: we are still using the webhosting plan from Datarealm that began in 2002. Currently it costs us \$134 per year, and provides a whopping 240 mb of server space. Datarealm now offers servers that are WordPress capable and can provide server space for 10 gb and up.

Rick had two suggestions on how to improve the current webhosting;

- a) Basic Plan; 1 TB of bandwidth, 10 gb server space for about \$44.52 per year,
- b) Business Plan; unlimited bandwidth, 20 gb server space for about \$89.52 per year

Rick did not think he could choose the best plan for PSSAT. The higher server capacity would allow for pictures and limited video, plus a WordPress-produced web site.

Jamey entertained a motion to either pay \$44.52 per year, or move to the higher capacity Business Plan for about \$90 per year. Motion was seconded. Motion passed to do with the Basic Plan. Rick will contact Travis about paying for the new service.

President Jacob asked for a report for the Constitution and Bylaws Chair, who was not present. Jamey Douglass, incoming Chair for Constitution and Bylaws said some changes were still needed on the dues section, and he would make sure this was taken care of.

President Jacob called on Travis Waiser, Treasurer, to make the Finance Committee report (a summary of the report follows the meeting notes, on page 15). Travis reported that last year, the changes in the three funds were the following: Scholarship Fund down \$272.59; the Public Relations Fund was up by \$65.34; and the General Fund was up \$137.07. Overall, the net change in PSSAT funds in 2016 was a negative \$40.18. Currently, after the 2017 scholarship check is written, the Scholarship Fund will have a negative net change of \$514. Travis handed out a few pages to show how funds were allocated in 2016. Travis asked if there were any questions. There were none.

President Eickstead called for the Nominations Committee. This year several offices were up for elections. The first was the President-Elect, this is a two-year post; one year as President-Elect, second year as President. The nominee for President-Elect is Carlos Villarreal. Carlos was recognized to say a few words. He said he would do a great job. A motion was made to elect Carlos to the President-Elect position, it was seconded and passed.

Next Office was the Vice President. Two nominees were selected for this position, Shanna Dunn and Dr. David Rupert. Travis and others handed out ballots and the members cast their ballots. During the counting, Wayne Gabriel asked a question about the number of current members. Travis said we have about 48 to 50 current members. Wayne said in the past, PSSAT had membership drives. They got a mailing list from SSSA and TBPG web sites, and sent out membership applications. Travis mentioned he had done the same, and we increased by about 3 or 4 new members.

The ballot counting was concluded, Shanna Dunn was announced as the new Vice President.

The Treasurer was up for election, and Travis Waiser, serving as Acting Treasurer was the nominee. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to elect Travis as Treasurer.

The last Office up for election was Editor, Jon Brandt had been selected as the Editor. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to fill this position with Jon.

President Eickstead asked if there was new Business. Dr. Tom Hallmark spoke about the Texas Board of Professional Geoscientists. He said in the next two years, there would be Sunset reviews for TBPG. Dr. Hallmark said of the Board Members for this organization, we are lucky to have 1 Board Member who is a soil scientist. The Sunset review is made up of five Texas Senators, 5 Texas Representatives and two citizens. It would be good to have endorsements by professional organizations for the TBPG.

Dr. Hallmark made a motion to have PSSAT authorize the President, to name a committee of his choice, to review the documents and create an endorsement of the TBPG. It was seconded and passed.

Jacob asked if there was any more new Business, a motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as they appeared in the newsletter. Motion passed.

Jacob asked Chance Robinson to come forward. Jacob remarked, "My reign has ended." Chance presented Jacob with a plaque for this service as President of PSSAT. Jacob passed the gavel to Chance.

At this time Chance entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting. The ayes had it.

Chance again reminded everyone about the Summer Green Valley Tour in Marfa, August 4-6th, 2017 and let everyone know he had registration forms for those interested. John Sackett's photos of the meeting follow:





PSSAT Photo Contest 2016

(Information Provided by Carlos Villareal)

The top entries for the three photo categories follow:

Soil Profiles

- 1st - Dennis Brezina: Gibbonscreek Series (Fine-loamy, Typic Ustorthents)
- 2nd - Dr. David Weindorf: Thixotropic silt as reworked glacial outwash alluvium (Cook Inlet, Alaska)
- 3rd - Dennis Brezina: Shiro Series (Fine, Udic Paleustalfs)



1st Place (Soil Profiles): Dennis Brezina



2nd Place (Soil Profiles): Dr. David Weindorf



3^d Place (Soil Profiles): Dennis Brezina

Flora/Fauna

- 1st - John Sackett: Dew on a firewheel
- 2nd - John Sackett: Bluebonnets and switchgrass
- 3rd - Dr. David Weindorf: Ant working (Lichtenburg, South Africa)



1st Place (Flora/Fauna): John Sackett



2nd Place (Flora/Fauna): John Sackett



3rd Place (Flora/Fauna): Dr. David Weindorf

Miscellaneous

- 1st - Dr. David Weindorf: Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe)
- 2nd - Chance Robinson: Line cabin (McKittrick Canyon, Guadalupe National Park)
- 3rd - Dennis Brezina: Ephemeral pond (Montgomery County, Texas)



1st Place (Miscellaneous): Dr. David Weindorf



2nd Place (Miscellaneous): Chance Robinson



3rd Place (Miscellaneous): Dennis Brezina

Finance Committee Report for 2016 - Summary

(Information Provided by Travis Waiser)

PSSAT 2016 Financial Report			
<u>Bank of America - Credits</u>			
General		\$ 1,297.92	
Public Relations		\$ 182.04	
Scholarship		\$ 1,257.41	
		\$ 2,737.37	
<u>Bank of America - Disbursements</u>			
General		\$ 1,160.85	
Public Relations		\$ 116.70	
Scholarship		\$ 1,500.00	
		\$ 2,777.55	
	Difference	\$ (40.18)	
<u>Bank of America - Balance</u>			
	1/1/2016	\$ 7,926.44	
	12/31/2016	\$ 7,886.26	
	Difference	\$ (40.18)	
<u>Summary of Funds</u>			
	Beginning of 2016	End of 2016	Difference
General Fund	\$ 1,307.89	\$ 1,444.96	\$ 137.07
Scholarship Fund	\$ 5,107.58	\$ 4,834.99	\$ (272.59)
PR Fund	\$ 1,510.97	\$ 1,576.31	\$ 65.34
Proposed 2017 Budget			
<u>General Fund</u>			
<u>Income</u>			
Dues	Current Members (48)	\$ 480.00	
	Student Members (2)	\$ 20.00	
	New Members (1)	\$ 10.00	
	2017 Annual Meeting fees (50 meals)	\$ 1,000.00	
		\$ 1,510.00	
<u>Expenses</u>			
	2017 Annual Meeting - catering	\$ 830.00	
	Postage	\$ 25.00	
	Website	\$ 155.00	
	2017 Photo Contest	\$ 125.00	
		\$ 1,135.00	
	Difference	\$ 375.00	
<u>Scholarship Fund</u>			
<u>Income</u>			
Dues	Current Members	\$ 720.00	
	New Members	\$ 15.00	
	Donations - Sustaining Members	\$ 250.00	
	Interest Income	\$ 1.00	
		\$ 986.00	
<u>Expenses</u>			
Scholarship		\$ 1,500.00	
	Difference	\$ (514.00)	
<u>PR Fund</u>			
	Income (PSSAT items - current & new inventory)	\$ 621.00	
	Expenses (PSSAT merchandise)	\$ 557.00	
	Difference	\$ 64.00	
	Net Projected Change in 2017	\$ (75.00)	

Soils News

Recruiting students to soil science education and related careers - article from November 16, 2017, titled, "Cool Jobs: Unearthing the Secrets of Soil." Article includes the following sections, some of them in "non-traditional" soil science disciplines: digging in frozen soil; catching criminals; and unearthing the past. Story found here: <https://www.sciencenewsforstudents.org/article/cool-jobs-unearthing-secrets-soil>

Using microchips to study soil microorganisms - work being done at Lund University, Sweden. "Our soil chips could revolutionise how we study microbiological processes in the ground. Finally, we can follow what actually happens down the ground under a microscope in real-time," says Edith Hammer, associate senior lecturer the Department of Biology in Lund.' Full story published on December 7, 2017, found here: <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/12/171207095023.htm>

Dr. David Weindorf will be in India in January 2018, serving as a Fulbright Specialist for the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Dr. Weindorf will spend approximately two weeks in January at the Indian Institute of Technology (ITT) Kharagpur in West Bengal, India, where he will share his soil science expertise and will conduct collaborative research and provide training to ITT scientists on advance soil spectroscopy analysis (excerpted from Texas Tech Today Media Resources press release, December 8, 2017: <http://today.ttu.edu/posts/2017/12/fulbright-specialist-weindorf>) .

Upcoming Issue and Call for Newsletter Articles

The upcoming issue will be published the first week of January and will include information about the PSSAT Annual Meeting on January 31st, 2018, and will include the absentee ballot.

The January newsletter will also include photos and recaps of the two field trips held this past year:

- Gibbons Creek Mine Field Tour, February 2017
- Green Valley Field Tour in the Trans-Pecos, August 2017

Please send articles, information, or photos that are suitable for future newsletters to: editor@pssat.org

Thank you!