



# Texas Soil Profiles

## *President's Message from PSSAT President Sidney Paulson*

On the positive side, we have opportunities right over the horizon. As fall is beginning, political campaigning abounds and the stock market not so well. PSSAT is full speed ahead and Soil Science is healthier than ever.

So first let me pause and say, we have had a loss in a major way in Soil Science by losing a member, friend and leader in the passing of Levi Steptoe. Levi was the Regional Director for NRCS. Levi you will be greatly missed.

### Opportunities:

1. PSSAT Scholarship application is on the web site. We desire to have the most qualified candidate receive it. Please share this opportunity with all eligible students.
2. PSSAT Fall Tour in Stephenville is Friday evening on October 23, 2015 and Saturday, October 24, 2015. Tarleton State University and PSSAT is hosting the tour. Much work is being put into this. Please make it a priority to come. Register on the PSSAT website by September 30, 2015.

PSSAT thrives on your participation. Thanks you, everyone, for being a vital part of PSSAT and helping promote soil science in Texas and beyond.

### 2015 PSSAT Officers

**President** – Sidney Paulson, USDA NRCS, Stephenville    **President-Elect** – Jacob Eickstead, TRC, New Braunfels

**Treasurer** – Chance Robinson, USDA NRCS, Marfa    **Editor** – Jamey Douglass, USDA NRCS, Temple

**Past President** – Amanda Bragg, USDA NRCS, San Angelo

In this Edition  
**In this Edition**

President's Message

Minutes from 2015 Annual Meeting

Photo's from 2015 Annual Meeting

Upcoming Events

6:35 pm

**President Amanda Bragg** opened the meeting. She introduced herself as the Resource Soil Scientist, San Angelo Zone, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Amanda then asked each person in attendance to introduce themselves. The folks in attendance consisted of retired professionals in the Soil Science arena, NRCS soil scientists, a contingent from Tarleton State University, Texas Tech University, consultants, National Soil Survey Center Staff, Kellogg Soil Survey Laboratory staff, Texas Railroad Commission staff, Texas A&M University, and several folks who were to interested in applying for membership with PSSAT.

**Sidney Paulson** was recognized to offer a prayer.

**Ricky Lambert, PSSAT Webmaster** presented his report. Ricky said our PSSAT website was now 15 years old. Since February 1, 2014, the website received 41,738 visits. This represents a 2 percent decrease from the previous year.

Ricky provided some interesting facts pertaining to our website:

1. The top five types of domains visiting the PSSAT website; U.S. commercial, Networks, U.S. Government, U.S. Educational and organizations.
2. We had hits from 63 foreign countries. The most visits came from Brazil, Peoples Republic of China, Germany, Italy, Ukraine, and Russia.
3. The top five search phrases used to find our site include:
  - Careers in Soil Science
  - PSSAT
  - Texas Soils / Soils of Texas
  - Texas Soil Map
  - Ask a Soil Scientist
4. The top five pages viewed within the PSSAT website:
  - PSSAT.org index page
  - Texas Soils
  - Newsletter Vol. 23 No. 1
  - Upcoming Events
  - Smithsonian Exhibit

Ricky discussed the Ask a Soil Scientist service provided by member of PSSAT. There were seven inquiries. Those members who responded include; Dr. David Weindorf, Jamey Douglass, Mike Risinger, Richard Reid, Travis Waiser, Dr. Clay Robinson, Dr. Larry Wilding, and Dr. Tom Hallmark. Dr. David Weindorf answered the most questions.

Ricky added that there are links to Facebook and Flickr on the PSSAT website.

Amanda asked if there were any additions to the Minutes from the previous PSSAT Annual Meeting, which were printed in the PSSAT newsletter. Being none, a motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as printed in the newsletter.

Amanda asked next presented the **Finance Report provided by Chance Robinson**. He was unable to attend in person.

For the all accounts, as of January 1, 2014 the balance was \$7,132.86. The December 31, 2014 balance increased to \$8,342.91.

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Start of Year</u>	<u>End of Year</u>
General Fund	\$ 893.00	\$1,025.58
Public Relations	\$1,968.38	\$1,826.09
Scholarship Fund	\$4,221.88	\$5,466.29

Amanda reported that our IRS request for exemption from Federal Income Tax has been approved. This was one of Chance’s instructions from previous meetings. The means we are retroactive back to October 4, 2014.

Sidney was selling PSSAT Fleece and Fishing shirts on behalf of orders taken by Chance. He mentioned these items could be reordered.

Amanda next reported on the **Scholarship Committee on behalf of Jessica Jobe**, who also was unable to attend. Jessica reported this year there were three extremely qualified applicants. This year, the 2015 PSSAT Scholarship went to Jennifer Ramero, a Texas Tech University student, who also was unable to attend. Dr. Weindorf read Jennifer’s letter to PSSAT discussing her scholarship award. Some ethics questions came up when her check was handed to Dr. Weindorf. He assured all Jennifer would receive her check.

Amanda next recognized **Wayne Gabriel** to present the **Ethics Committee** report. Wayne added there were no ethics complaints against any PSSAT member this past year. Wayne said there was an edit to be made in the Constitution and Bylaws, Article III. Item 4, there was a misspelling of the word two, it was tow. A motion was made and seconded to correct this item, the motion passed.

Amanda proposed opening up the Scholarship to graduate students. Many of these grad do not have monetary support. If the Scholarship Committee chose to open to the grad students, we would need a letter from their major Professor acknowledging their status. Dr. Cristine Morgan suggested we keep the scholarship for undergraduate students. Amanda mentioned that the Scholarship Committee Chair, Jessica Jobe admitted she had to use student loans. Dr. Weindorf also endorsed keeping the scholarship for undergraduates as the first priority, and making grad students secondary. Amanda asked if there were any other questions. Ed Janak made a motion that if there were no undergraduate applicants to the scholarship, then they would accept applications from graduate students. Dr. Morgan said usually the reason no undergraduate applicants applied is due to the timing of the application process, during their Christmas break. We should make the applications due in October. Wayne Gabriel asked if the applications were available on Facebook, Amanda answered “yes”. A Tarleton grad student mentioned there is a need from grad students for money. Dr. McGahan said to ask the students about deadlines, and also ask the graduate students to participate. Charles Pehl made a motion to refer back to the Scholarship Committee. Amanda asked for a second, and called the question. The Nays won. So the motion was defeated. Dr. McGahan suggested Ricky Lambert send a link, and he would get his Google Folks to setup the application.

Amanda said there are currently 8 Honorary Members, (she had them listed on a computer and screen). She mentioned Larry West and Dr. Tom Hallmark.

Next Amanda recognized several PSSAT members as “Sustaining Members”. The Sustaining members present were Jamey Douglass, Shanna Dunn, Ted Zobeck, Dan Kowalski, and Dr. Cristine Morgan. She then showed the Charter Members; one name was left out, Dr. Larry West.

Amanda said as far as “New” members, last year there were eleven (11). Our member retention rate from 2001 to 2010 is about 33 percent. So as an organization, we are not growing. She asked, “How do we grow?”

Some suggestions from the floor included Field Trip; pay for four years and get the fifth year free; we should encourage membership – not penalize members for delinquent dues; list Certified Professional Soil Scientists on our website, no endorsements, just a list.

Dr. Larry West added he belonged to a similar organization in Georgia. They provide training to earn CEU’s (Continuing Education Units). He suggested someone could talk about making soil profiles (monoliths), training on Ksat, or other field activities weather permitting.

Amanda suggested training on landforms, sampling soils, touring Mined Soils. Sidney Paulson, and Dr. Morgan said they would work up some ideas. Another suggestion was to meet with other state organizations, or groups such as SSSA, or ASA (Soil Science Society of America, Agronomy Society of America). There could be many opportunities to bring new employees to these activities.

More comments were made from the floor. Amanda reminded us there would be a need for willing participants, and locations for the meetings. Alan Stahnke suggested create the event and see who comes. Jacob Eickstead interjected if the event was planned, what would happen if only three folks showed up?

A suggestion by Travis Waiser was to do a Survey Monkey to see member interest in this type of event. Someone commented that we did meet with Professional Soil Scientists of Oklahoma in the past. More comments were made from the audience.

Amanda hoped to involve those folks who are unable to make it the annual meeting. She admitted government rules do not help!

Dr. Weindorf asked about job announcements. No one had an answer. Dr. Weindorf suggested Soil Talk as a way to communicate; however, he is not getting messages. Tom Feuerbacher said he was not getting Soil Talk notices either.

There was a question from the audience about a Linkn site. She replied we currently did have that, but Facebook and Twitter accounts are open. She said if a Linkn site was needed, one could be developed. Several members showed interest.

Jon Weidenfeld asked how PSSAT would provide CEU’s. Shanna Dunn said it depended on the topics. He thought CEU’s would be an excellent incentive for folks to participate.

At this time, Jamey Douglass was recognized to make his presentation. Jamey had the idea, that since this was “Year of Soils,” he would show soil profiles, giving hints to the audience to see who could recognize the soil profile. This would allow those in the audience to see a plethora of soil profiles from Region 9 (parts of Texas, New Mexico, Louisiana and Oklahoma). Jamey ran through about 20 profiles, and the audience seemed to enjoy the presentation. Several folks made comments to do this again next year.

At this time Amanda handed the gavel over to incoming President Sidney Paulson.

Sidney mentioned how Amanda did a great job as President. He asked all in attendance to give her a round of applause. She was presented with a fleece jacket in support of this organization. So she got fleeced?

Sidney adjourned the meeting.

## 2015 PSSAT Annual Meeting Photos



Amanda Bragg passing the gavel to incoming President, Sidney Paulson



The PSSAT audience participating in the 2015 Annual Meeting



Jamey Douglass, Editor presenting "Guess which profile this is?"



More of "Guess the name of this profile", with hints from Jamey



Amanda Bragg visiting with Dr. Cristine Morgan

# UPCOMING PSSAT EVENTS

## **PSSAT Fall 2015 Soils Review**

We are pleased to announce the 2015 PSSAT Soils Field Tour, scheduled for Oct 23-24 on the west Cross Timbers and Grand Prairie near Stephenville, Texas. Soil Scientists, professionals from all related disciplines, and guests are invited to attend.

### **PSSAT Soil and Landscape Review**

Friday, October 23rd 6pm - 8pm at Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center, Stephenville, Texas

Saturday, October 24 7am - 2pm at Hunewell Ranch, Stephenville, Texas

Trip Leader: Donald McGahan, Assistant Professor Environmental Soil Science, Tarleton State University

To register, email [treasurer@pssat.org](mailto:treasurer@pssat.org) or register online at [www.pssat.org](http://www.pssat.org) using PayPal. Registration of \$30 includes meal Friday night and lunch on Saturday.

**Registration deadline is 9/30/2015.**

A PDF of the official flier can be downloaded [here](#).

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Super 8. 1 King is \$58 or 2 Queen is \$63. Reservation deadline is 9/30/2015.

Call (254) 965-0888 and mention PSSAT to make your reservation.