



# Spade and Auger

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June 2004

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## **Message from the President**

I'm in the final year of my term on the SSSSNE Board of Directors and have decided to step down after eleven years of service, four as President. It truly has been a wonderful experience for me. I joined the Board soon after I transferred to Connecticut from New York, and it was a great way for me to meet, serve, and be a part of the soil scientist community in Southern New England. However, it is time for others to have the opportunities to help our Society and its members. We are very highly regarded in the soil science community outside Southern New England because we deliver quality programs and services to members. I'm so proud to be a part of SSSSNE!!

Many thanks again to the members who worked so hard to insure that our SSSSNE Spring Workshop on disturbed wetland soils was a success. We are busy planning future Society events and would appreciate help from more members. We have received some great ideas for future workshops, but we also need folks to help with other Society work. So if you have some time, energy, and interest in helping out please contact us.

We may be having a one day fall workshop, details are being worked out. Keep your eyes open for the announcement – it'll be a once-in-a-lifetime special opportunity!

Enjoy the summer,

Marjorie Faber, President.

## **ARCPACS Certification Exam**

The next Council of Soil Science Examiners National Test will be held Oct. 8, 2004. Test locations include: University of Connecticut, University of Massachusetts, University of New Hampshire, and the University of Rhode Island. Register by Aug. 27 at [www.soils.org/csse/](http://www.soils.org/csse/) or by contacting Kathie Nardi at 608/273-8090, ext. 311, [knardi@agronomy.org](mailto:knardi@agronomy.org)

## **Frigid Histosols in SE Mass?**

A soil temperature data collector was set at 50 cm below the surface in an Atlantic White Cedar swamp in the town of Norwell, Massachusetts (south shore of Boston). Temperature readings were recorded every 6 hours from Feb. 2003 through 2004. During the period the mean annual soil temperature was 47.8F a little over the 46.4F cutoff to qualify for the frigid temperature regime. Visit: <http://nesoil.com/climate> for more information.

## Version 3 of Field Indicators for Hydric Soils

The New England Technical Committee for Hydric Soil is proud to present Version 3 of the Field Guide for Identifying Hydric Soils in New England. The new version (which supercedes version 2 published in 1998) is the result of ongoing field documentation and several years of revisions made by the NETCHS. This guide helps field wetlands resource personnel identify and document hydric soils and their boundaries. These field indicators provide consistent and reliable evidence as to whether a certain soil meets the definition of a hydric soil. When properly applied, this field guide yields results that are consistent with the identification of hydric soils as per the 1987 Army Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual. "Field Indicators for Identifying Hydric Soils in New England" is written by the New England Hydric Soils Technical Committee and published by NEIWPCC with funding from EPA-New England. It is updated periodically to reflect new information and refine the indicators. To order a copy or download the document visit: <http://www.neiwpcc.org/hydricsoils.htm>

## National Soil Judging Competition

This April the University of Rhode Island soil judging team represented New England at the 44th Annual National Soil Judging Contest. The contest was held in Normal, IL and was hosted by Illinois State University. Normal is about 125 miles south-south west of Chicago and a very "normal" Midwestern town. Agriculture is king and beer and bowling are high on the list of things to do on a workweek night. We concentrated on soils in the mostly flat farm fields.

During the practice sessions and the two half day competitions, our students were able to get a first hand look at soils formed in glacial till, loess, outwash, aeolian sand, alluvium, and combinations therein. We saw lots of Mollisols and some Alfisols, Inceptisols, and Entisols.. Some of the soils formed in the aeolian sand contained the largest lamella I have ever seen (some as much as 5 cm thick). This was a great educational experience for the students and myself.

Twenty schools participated in the contest. The University of Wisconsin-Platteville was the winning team at the competition. The University of Rhode Island placed a very respectable 12th out of the 20 teams that participated. On behalf of the participating students and the Department of Natural Resources Science, I would like to thank the society for their support toward the training of our future soil-environmental scientists.



**URI Soil Judging Team (L to R): Courtney Shay, Katie Manchester, Tim Twohig (assistant), Trish Brennan, Matt Richardson (assistant), Patty Plante, Peter Keller**

# Lewis Ilgen 1912-2004

LONGMEADOW - Lewis W. Ilgen, 91, of Longmeadow, Mass., and North Kingston, R.I., died peacefully at home on Sunday, April 4, 2004. Lewis was born in 1912, oldest of four sons of the late Wallace and Lena (Larson) Ilgen, in Centre Hall, PA. As the oldest son, he helped his father on their dairy farm, learning to plow with a team of horses and mules. He was educated in a one-room schoolhouse, and attended high school in Spring Mills, PA. He attended Pennsylvania State University, where he received a B.S. Degree in Agriculture in 1935, and an M.S. Degree in Biochemistry in 1936. Mr. Ilgen also attended the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, in a Doctoral Program on a graduate fellowship. In 1938, Mr. Ilgen found an occupation that combined his interest in farming and science. He joined the Soil Conservation Service, a newly formed unit of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, established as a "New Deal" program to prevent soil erosion, a problem that led to the "Dust Bowl" and the "Dirty Thirties." In the late 1930's and early 1940's Mr. Ilgen worked as a Soil Scientist throughout New England. One of his first jobs was to survey the farms in the Swift River Valley in Central Massachusetts, to establish fair market value for farms that were eventually covered by the construction of the Quabbin Reservoir in 1939, near Ware, Massachusetts. In 1942, Mr. Ilgen received a commission of Lieutenant in the U.S. Navy and attended Naval Officer Training at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts. He served as Communications Officer on a troop transport ship in the Pacific Theatre for the duration of World War II. Among his responsibilities was to cut out references to various battle areas from the out-going mail of troops in transport who tried to let loved ones know where they were headed. He joined and retired from the Naval Reserve following his honorable discharge in 1945. Mr. Ilgen married the former Mary E. Halloran of Quincy, Mass., in 1945 and in 1947 they moved to Rockville, Connecticut, where they were longtime residents. Mary passed away in 1967. In 1974, Mr. Ilgen married the former Emily Wright Burke of Longmeadow. Mr. Ilgen was a Certified Professional Soil Scientist, and was a Supervisor of the Tolland (Connecticut) County Soil Conservation District and was a member of the Soil Science Society of Southern New England and was also a member of the Soil Science Society of America. Mr. Ilgen retired from the Soil Conservation Service in 1971 and became his own private consultant as a Professional Soil Scientist, in which he was active until 1999. Mr. Ilgen worked as a Soil Scientist in 6 of the 8 counties in Connecticut and was considered the "Dean" of soil science in that state. Published in The Republican on 4/7/2004.



## Richard Marx 1957-2003

Richard Marx, 46, a professional member of SSSSNE, died in December 2003. He was the Principal Environmental Scientist at Parsons, Brinkerhoff, Quad and Douglas, a consulting firm in New York City. Rich was also a longtime member of the New Jersey Association of Professional Soil Scientists and served as Vice-President of that organization. Rich is survived by his wife Irene Chan Marx.

### Mark Your Calendar

September 15-16, 2004 Environmental Hazards of Acid Sulphate Soils, Bowie MD:  
[http://sawgal.umd.edu/mapss/Acid\\_Sulfate\\_Soils.pdf](http://sawgal.umd.edu/mapss/Acid_Sulfate_Soils.pdf)

October 28-31, 2004 National Land Conservation Conference, Providence RI.  
<http://www.lta.org/training/rally.htm>

### Google's top 5 Soil Sites

<http://www.soils.org/>  
<http://www.soilsci.com/>  
<http://ltpwww.gsfc.nasa.gov/globe/>  
<http://soil.scijournals.org/>  
<http://hintze-online.com/sos/>

Also try <http://nesoil.com/ssssne>

# Retirement of Dr. Robert B. Grossman

Dr. Robert "Bob" Grossman has announced his retirement, effective June 30, 2004, after 46 years of meritorious federal service.

Bob was born in New York City, New York, on May 15, 1931. He received his primary and secondary education largely at Edmeston New York Central School. He attended Cornell University (1948-54) where he received his Bachelor and Master of Science degrees. He earned his Ph.D. in 1959 from the University of Illinois.

Bob was first employed by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) in 1958 as a Soil Scientist and was stationed at the Soil Survey Laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland. He was transferred shortly thereafter to the Soil Survey Laboratory, Lincoln, Nebraska, where he remained as a Soil Scientist, Supervisory Soil Scientist, and then Laboratory Head until 1975.

In September 1975, he was detailed on a two-year IPA assignment to the University of Missouri, Columbia, Missouri, where he served as a Professor in the Agronomy Department. He returned to the consolidated National Soil Survey Laboratory in Lincoln, Nebraska, as a Research Soil Scientist. His principal professional activities have been in the application of physical methods and analysis to soil interpretations.

Aside from Bob's extensive laboratory and research work, Bob may best be remembered for the numerous training sessions he has taught at the Soil Science Institutes and Basic Soil Survey courses.

A book of letters and best wishes will be presented to Bob. If you would like to contribute, please send your email wishes to: [janet.bauer@nssc.nrcs.usda.gov](mailto:janet.bauer@nssc.nrcs.usda.gov). You may also send cards and letter via regular mail to:

Janet Bauer for Robert Grossman USDA-NRCS, MS 36 100 Centennial Mall North Federal Building, Room 152  
Lincoln, NE 68508-3866

## **Shakespeare's little known draft version of Macbeth where the three witches were first generation soil scientists:**

But the three witches/soil scientists were standing around their bubbling cauldron chanting Double, double, soil and trouble

What is in the horizon, A?  
Be it humus, be it detritus  
Macbeth you are too weak to fight us.  
Mapping the land is our life  
and you have an evil wife  
Clays, silts, and loams  
are the foundation of our Danish homes  
Do not doubt  
erosion and sedimentation  
otherwise they will be this country's lamentation  
Upon your death you will find  
soil will cover you, front and behind.

If only more Shakespearean scholars knew of this.

**by Seth Lerman, Resource Conservationist, Tolland, CT**



Dr. Robert Grossman



## We Want to Hear from You!

I am the representative of the Society of Soil Scientists of Southern New England to the U.S. Consortium of Soil Science Associations. The USCSSA is an organization to which represents the more than forty national, regional, and state soil science professional societies and Soil Science Society of America. We developed an on-line survey to get feedback from professional soil scientists and others working in soils regarding their needs and opportunities. The goal of this survey is to help organizations plan programs and services to better serve the needs of their members.

Some of you may have received an email announcement about the survey earlier this spring. Initially there was only a very short time that the survey was "open" -- not enough time to make a concerted effort to reach all of the members of SSSSNE via *Spade and Auger* or even by email. We have decided to extend the survey deadline to allow even more soil scientists and others working in soils to participate. The deadline is now July 31, 2004. Individual answers are anonymous; the Consortium and SSSA will see only compiled results. I will be presenting the final results at the USCSSA / SSSA Roundtable program at the SSSA Annual Meeting in Seattle this November. In addition, the results will be distributed each of the state soil scientist societies / associations represented by the Consortium. SSSSNE will print the survey results summary in the *Spade and Auger* and post it on our website.

If you have not had the opportunity to view this survey, please go online to complete this survey of 17 questions by July 31, 2004. The survey is at:

<http://www.zoomerang.com/recipient/survey-intro.zgi?p=WEB2GEUENKPKQ>

If you have any questions about the survey, please feel free to contact me at: [margie.faber@ct.usda.gov](mailto:margie.faber@ct.usda.gov) (860) 688-7725 ext. 115. For further information on the sponsors of this survey, here are their web addresses:

Soil Science Society of America: <http://www.soils.org/> or <http://soilsassociation.org/>

By Margie Faber.

## New Soil Mapper Joins Mass. NRCS

Melissa Hayden was recently hired as a soil scientist for the Plymouth County Soil Survey update. Melissa will assist with completing the updated soil mapping as well as help prepare and document the survey for publication.

Melissa has earned two degrees; the first a bachelors in Environmental Science and Management from the University of Rhode Island and the second a masters in Soil Science from the University of Vermont. Her masters research concentrated on nitrogen cycling in a Vermont peat bog. Until recently Melissa was a Wildlife Habitat Restoration Intern with NRCS in Rhode Island.

Melissa is a welcome addition to the Massachusetts National Cooperative Soil Survey staff and should compliment its mission and vision wonderfully. Please welcome and introduce yourself to Melissa when you have the opportunity

By Rob Tunstead

## Spring Hydric Soil Workshop

A sellout crowd of 65 people attended the SSSSNE/USDA-NRCS Spring Hydric Soil Workshop in Tolland Connecticut on May 27. The workshop focused primarily on disturbed soils but also provided information on the new Version 3 of the field indicators of hydric soils. Morning talks were followed by afternoon field sites just as the sun came out. The field sites consisted of 6 soil pits which were monitored with observation wells during the 2004 growing season, another station focused on conducting a wetland delineation. Special thanks go out those who assisted with the workshop program: Mark Stolt, Steve Tessitore, Tom Pietras, Tom Peragallo, Jeff Peterson, Jim McManus, Rob Tunstead, Donald Parizek, and Jim Turenne. Also thanks to Art Allen, Margie Faber, Margaret Washburn, and Melissa Hayden for assisting with logistics and workshop preparation.

**SOCIETY OF SOIL SCIENTISTS OF SOUTHERN  
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Jim Turenne, editor.



*Dedicated to advancing the soil science profession and encouraging broad  
use of soil resource information dedicated to advancing the soil science  
profession and encouraging broad use of soil resource information.*

**WWW: [http://nesoil.com/  
ssssne](http://nesoil.com/ssssne)**

## Ed Sautter Fund – We're Almost There!

We need to raise \$800 to reach our goal of \$10,000. This would let us sponsor the Windsor soil monolith in Ed Sautter's name at the upcoming Smithsonian soil exhibit.

Please help us complete the fund and have SSSSNE be one of the first 'state' societies to officially reach sponsorship level. There is a donation form at the end of this issue of Spade and Auger. To those of you who have already contributed, thanks so much!

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Contribution to the Ed Sautter Fund (Make checks payable to SSSSNE)

Return form to: SSSSNE, PO Box 258, Storrs, CT. 06268