

THE

# Pedestal



## 2012 Fall Tour

Indiana Association of Professional Soil Classifiers (IAPSC)

### Indiana Association of Professional Soil Classifiers Fall Tour

**Location:** Par Gil Natural Resources Learning Center at 2335 N. State Road 9 LaGrange, IN, 46761

UTM Zone 16, 631073E 4614912N, NAD 83

**When:** September 14th, 2012

**Agenda** (Eastern Daylight Savings Time)

9:00 -10:00 **Registration:** Paul McCarter  
IAPSC Secretary/Treasurer  
(Doughnuts, juice and coffee will be served)

10:00-10:05 **Welcome and Introductions:**  
Tim Monaghan, IAPSC President

10:05-10:10 **Area Welcome:** Kimberly Neumann,  
NRCS NE Area Conservationist

10:10-10:25 **Martin Franke**, SWCD Technician  
History of Par Gil Learning Center

10:25 -10:55 **Don Ruesch**, Private consultant  
Organic soils of Indiana

10:55-11:25 **Perry Yoder**,  
Amish lifestyle and traditions

11:25- 11:50 **Scot Haley**, Resource Soil Scientist,  
Soil Health

11:50-12:00 **Travis Neely**, Indiana State Soil Scientist and MLRA 11 Leader:  
USDA – NRCS Update.

12:00 - 12:45 **Hot Lunch and Door Prizes**

12:45 - 1:45 **Business Meeting**

1:45 – 2:00 **Break**

2:00 - 3:00 **Dr. Gary Steinhardt**  
Critique of the soils pits

**The Indiana Association of Professional Soil Classifiers (IAPSC)** is a not-for-profit organization of soil scientists who are interested in the field study and evaluation of soils.

Tim Monaghan, President  
Dr. Phillip Owens, Past President  
Dr. Darrell Schulze, President Elect  
Bob Jones, Vice President  
Paul McCarter, Jr., Secretary-Treasurer  
Norm Stephens, Pedestal Editor

<http://www.isco.purdue.edu/irss/iapsc.html>

**Indiana Registry of Soil Scientists**  
(As written on the IRSS web site.)

The Indiana Registry of Soil Scientists is a program that establishes ethical standards and education, examination, and work experience criteria for Indiana Registered Soil Scientists.

<http://www.isco.purdue.edu/irss/>

## **Pedestal**

We really need your stories and photographs for the Pedestal. Please email them to:

[norm.stephens@in.usda.gov](mailto:norm.stephens@in.usda.gov)

Or mail them to:

Norm Stephens

NRCS-USDA

6013 Lakeside Blvd.

Indianapolis, Indiana, 46278

### **See the Pedestal in color:**

Electronic copies of Pedestal can be found at:

<http://www.indianasoils.com/pedestal.htm>

## **Soil in the News**

By Norm Stephens

The Pedestal is published twice a year and it is always a challenge to find enough material to put in it. We do get a few submissions from time-to-time, but I will often be searching the net looking for articles to fill partial pages and round out the publication. I've been looking at the news stories from around the country it has become quite clear there is a large disconnect between the news writers and soil science. The headlines are often supported by half truths and plain misinformation. The articles will abound with buzz words like "Soil Health, and Urban Soil", but will offer very little in terms of data to support their arguments, or stories. I often try to imagine what Hans Jenny would be thinking when a writer selects one soil forming factor and then hails it as the cure to all ailments, or the very root of all evils.

I recently read an article about "Soils in the City" in the CSA News. Urban soils have been an interest of mine since moving from the farm to the inner city and as a project soil scientist I am always looking for the best/better way to update soils in an urban environment. The article was quite disappointing, and in some places, focused a lot of blame on soil taxonomy. This seemed a little silly to me since it would be a lot like blaming a dictionary for a snow storm when all the dictionary did was store the words used to describe the storm. Some of

this comes from a misperception of soil taxonomy and what it means. This misperception may be the basis for another Pedestal article some day in the future.

Evaluating urban soils is not all that different from evaluating any other soil, other than you have far less predictability with the additional disturbance and past land uses. I watch the neighborhoods during my commutes around town and take advantage of any open holes I find, even if it's just to take a quick picture and note of what's there. The difference can be quite dramatic from one building lot to the next even in the areas not being totally reshaped by the earth movers. Soil taxonomy sure didn't create those differences! Articles on soil and land use should not be written by the same person who covers the flower show. They need to be written by knowledgeable people based on science and practical application. Those people are "You"! There is always room for soil articles in the Pedestal and with an IAPSC membership of over 100 soil scientists ... one article every two years would do a lot of good for our publication and add some real knowledge to the internet.

### **HASTI 2013**

The status of the HASTI Convention is unknown at press time.

## **Par Gil Natural Resources Learning Center**

Fall Meeting Directions

The Par Gil Natural Resource Center is located about 2 /12 miles ***north of LaGrange***, Indiana in LaGrange County on State Road 9 on the east side of the road. Word of caution, Google maps placed the site address south of LaGrange when I tried it. If you see a sign "Welcome to Michigan" then you've passed it and you need to turn around.

Camping will also be at the Par Gil Natural Resource Center.





# Government Auctions

By Norm Stephens



The hard times have moved a lot of people to selling off assets at auction and that also includes the US government. Earlier this spring, I watched a low mileage 4x4 truck with a mounted backhoe sell for \$5,725. I really didn't have a use for this truck myself, but I figured there was someone in the membership who might have had a use for one. The auction site I watch is GSA Auctions:

<http://gsaauctions.gov/gsauctions/gsauctions/>

It's not the only auction site out there for government surplus, but it is a fairly easy site to use. The key to using this site is to have your GSA Auction account setup before the item you can't live without comes up for auction. It can take a little time to setup the account since GSA needs to confirm you are a real person before you bid. The US Marshals also sell off confiscated property on this site too, but all of their sales will require a bidding deposit as do the real estate auctions. Most cars, trucks, and other property do not require bidding deposits other than the credit card number you enter during registration.

The bidding is similar to eBay, except that a last second bid will only extend the auction thus giving the previous high bidder another shot at it. Once you win an auction, it can be paid for with a credit card, or a check. You will need to be sure and make your payment within the time period set in the auction. All payments go to the GSA payment center listed in the auction and you will receive the paperwork releasing the item from the storage location from that payment center. You will need this paperwork when picking up the item at whatever location it is being stored. Be careful with your bidding and make sure the item you're interested in is within a distance you'd want to commute. They do not ship, or load any purchases for you.

The site does have a few quirks and you need to click on the search button instead of just hitting return after typing in your item. Also, the last page of the auction is almost always blank, but you can't get there from the first page. You have to be on a page number greater than one before you click on it.

The site allows you to have favorites, or watch items, similar to eBay, but these favorites disappear once they sell unlike eBay watch items. There is a category on the menu called "Other". You can look up items that have sold in the past there, including the items you had previously marked as favorites.

Most of the auction items are posted by government personnel who have never actually seen the item and may not have any idea what it's used for. Make sure the picture (when available) makes sense with the item description. There is always a contact person listed on the auction page and you can often get questions answered by calling, or emailing them. Property disposal is not their primary job function and they may, or may not be available for any last second questions. Deals can be found on this site and whether you're just looking for a slightly used truck for the wife to haul your firewood in, or that special vacation retreat 15 miles off the coast of New Jersey, or a very large barge to haul your surplus space shuttle, or maybe even a typewriter once used by Ted Kaczynski, it can often be found on this site.



# The End of an Institution

By Norm Stephens



The first Indiana soil survey rolled off the presses in 1902 with the publication of Posey County. These early soil surveys were published in a format similar to that of the dime novels so popular during the same time period. These small and lightweight books that could be stuffed in your jacket pocket for the convenience of the reader. The map scales, such as 1-62,500, didn't allow for the type of useful detail needed for fieldwork and the next generation of soil survey books in the early 1960s got larger and thicker to accommodate 1-20,000 and 1-15840 map sheets. The soil surveys also became more detailed in terms of interpretation tables and cropping information. They were no longer a book you could stick in your pocket, but still a handy compilation of soil information to keep on the dash of your truck. Sputnik and satellites like it ended the value of keeping the United States aerial photography top secret and finally allowed for the photos to be published in the soil surveys, even though the soil survey program had been mapping on air photos since Jennings, County Indiana in 1929. Each soil survey generation brought about improvements to the soil survey book and made it a little thicker and heavier to carry. The last of the published map sheets were at 1-12,000 scale quarter quadrangles. This gave us a lot more detail and a lot of loose pages floating around the truck. The writing was on the wall and it was pretty clear the soil survey information was moving onto the internet and away from the hard copy printed medium. Soil survey reports can now be generated at the NCSS Web Soil Survey:

<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/>

This site allows you to print your maps and then head to the field. It's still an inconvenience not to have the whole county available, but it is workable.

Smart phones, with enabled GPS, will allow the user to download an application which will then give you a soil report for the spot you're standing on:

<http://blogs.usda.gov/2012/02/03/a-smartphone-app-provides-new-way-to-access-soil-survey-information/>

It's a quick and easy application which brings the soil survey back to being pocket sized again. Still, it's sad to see empty shelves where the soil survey books once resided. The Soil Survey books were largely historical documents since they were long out-of-date, but then that is the nature of any printed document in today's fast paced world.

(cont. The End of an Institution)

Users wanting copies of the old soil survey books will have to depend on used book sellers and maybe an occasional county which may have a few copies lying around. I've bought a few soil surveys I've needed on Ebay.com and at ABEbooks.com. Some electronic soil surveys can be found here:

[http://www.soils.usda.gov/survey/online\\_surveys/indiana/](http://www.soils.usda.gov/survey/online_surveys/indiana/)

These soil surveys are downloadable in PDF format. Some soil surveys are available on Google Books, but the soil maps are not scanned. There are a few soil surveys on <http://www.kobobooks.com> too.



**NASIS 6.2** has been deployed. NASIS is the main database used by the soil survey program. The Web Soil Survey pulls its data from this database and it's also the day-to-day working database for NRCS soil scientists. Purdue and Soil Survey lab data sets reside in NASIS as do the modern point observations such as transect points. Early versions of NASIS used the Gumby character as an indicator the computer was actually doing something during the long waits for reports and queries to run.



## ON A STRANGE RELIGION

September 28, 1962  
Clayton W. Stephens

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 United States. 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 very 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 these later.



The general appearances 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 very 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 alter. Generally, this is roughly round in outline but oblong' ones have been observed, particularly when the worshipers are searching for a sacred entity called Krotovina. 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 alter 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 very gently removed from the hole and very gently laid nearby 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 alter and the moment of silent meditation the worshipers fall upon this object of worship and literally tear it to pieces. They take bits of earth from this holy body and crush it in their hands. They prod it with knives, measure it with rules or tapes, they treat it with acid. Crush it and expectorate on 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 which talking in tongues is observed, or at least it seems that it is a talking in tongues for it is completely incomprehensible to the uninitiated. Some say that they understand each other but this seems unlikely to the casual observer. Sometimes they say names of rivers, or towns, or counties that may be hundreds, even thousands of miles away. From this it might seem that the beholding of this Deity brings on visions, for some of the worshipers 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,

1st. "loam"

2nd. "nope, very fine- sandy loam"

3rd. "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 AI, B1R, Aoe or Cca. 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 worshiped by lesser members even though they don't understand it, or even know who or what or how it is or what it will do when it arrives. It is called Seventh Approximation.

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 from 15 minutes to 4 hours and it seems as if they are always talking about something that It (Profile) isn't. The true religious nature of this group is proven by its



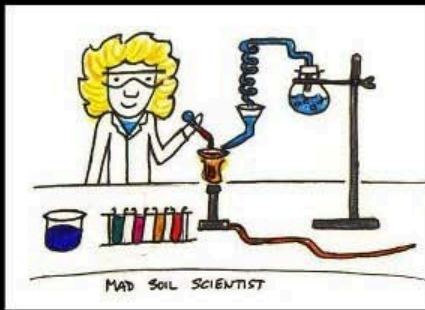
mystic characteristics. The mystery being that the high priests do not know what "It" is but always know what "It" isn't. Lesser members who haven't yet attained the mystic insight of the high priests or even the Party Chief usually know what "It" is but not what "It" isn't. Following the discussion 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 is to get funds from administrators, the relative merits of various types of spades and of hunting or 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 half-dozen may gather round and shovel and kick dirt into the hole.

It might be mentioned that, as in all religious groups, there are usually one or two non-believers. They usually stand around telling jokes at the most inappropriate times, sometimes openly heckling the worshipers 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.

(Article found and submitted by Dave Gehring)

# SOIL SCIENTIST



What my friends think I do



What my Mom thinks I do



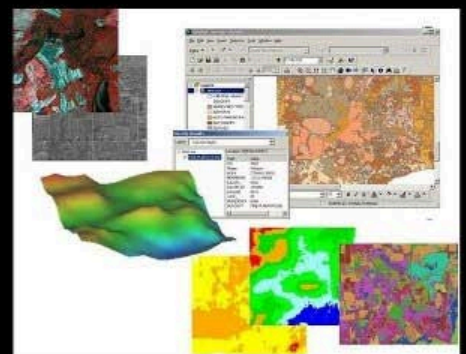
What society thinks I do



What my boss thinks I do



What I think I do



What I really do

# 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Central States Forest Soils Workshop



## Tuesday, Oct. 9:

Registration/Displays, 5:00 p.m.  
Dinner in Lakeview Dining Hall, 5:30 p.m.  
Evening Program, Mallard Ball Room, 6:30 p.m.

## Wednesday, Oct. 10:

Field Trip departs, 7:30 a.m.  
Picnic Lunch at Hughes Mountain, 12 noon  
Busses return to Lodge, 5:00 p.m.  
Business meeting @ Lodge Chapel, 6:00 p.m.  
Dinner and Social Hour, 7:00 p.m.

## Thursday, Oct. 11:

Field Trip departs, 7:30 a.m.  
Busses return to Lodge, 12:00 noon  
Times listed are Central Time.

## Workshop Lodging and Meetings

Trout Lodge  
YMCA of the Ozarks  
13528 State Hwy AA  
Potosi, MO 63664  
(573) 438-2154

For more information go to:

<http://www.showmemapss.org>

### Make Checks Payable to:

Missouri Association of Professional Soil Scientists  
(MAPSS)

**Payment must be received by deadline date  
to qualify for preregistration discounts!**

**Send To:** Ralph Tucker  
1004 Vondera Ave  
Union MO, 63084

**October 9-11, 2012**  
Mark Twain National Forest  
Potosi, MO

## Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Guests \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Representing \_\_\_\_\_  
Special Needs \_\_\_\_\_  
Room Preference - Hotel \_\_\_\_\_ Cabin \_\_\_\_\_  
Roommate/Cabin group \_\_\_\_\_  
Not staying at Trout Lodge \_\_\_\_\_

### Early Registration until June 1, 2012

\$65 each X (number) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Registration until Aug. 1, 2012

\$70 each X (number) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Early Student Registration: until Aug. 1, 2012

\$45 each X (number) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Late Registration after Aug. 1, 2012:

\$80 each X (number) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Late Student Registration after Aug. 1, 2012

\$50 each X (number) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Banquet-only for spouses or guests:

\$15.00 each X (number) Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Pay your registration fee with

[Showmemapss@yahoo.com](mailto:Showmemapss@yahoo.com)



Send me your email address with registration  
form and I can forward an invoice.

# showmemapss.org



# 2012 FALL TOUR REGISTRATION FORM

## For Friday September – 14th

**Registration fee includes lunch.  
Help us keep costs low by registering early.**

**Send in your check today!**

***Registration Fee \$15.00 postmarked before September 6th.***

**LATE FEE after 09/06/2011 - \$20.00**

**If at all possible register before September 6<sup>th</sup>.**

Make checks to I.A.P.S.C. Inc.  
Clip and mail to Paul McCarter  
2753 E. Gallimore Road  
Bloomfield, IN 47424-9750

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Members please update the following, if needed:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_