

### VOL. XXV, NO. 1 WINTER 2012

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Josh Owens

Hello OSSS Members,

First I want to mention the most exciting thing scheduled to happen in 2012 (Mayan Calendar excluded), that being, the "Soil Quality Network 2012" event happening February 23 and 24 at the Lloyd Center Double Tree Hotel in Portland, OR! The Soil and Water Conservation Society has been busy planning this event for a while now. The Oregon Society of Soil Scientists has also been helping out, and this will be a great way for our members to network with people around the state that love soil and want to take care of it. Later in the Sharpshooter you will see an agenda that includes great speakers, field trips, and workshops. Of particular interest to the OSSS, is Dawn Ferris of the Soil Science Society of America. She is coming to continue the discussion on professional certification/licensure and how the OSSS can be involved in this process as it moves forward. Her talk will conclude the first day, and afterward we are hoping that you will join the OSSS board at the nearby Broadway Grill and Brewery for

food, drinks, and our annual business meeting! (See map directions to the Broadway Grill.) This will be a good time to tell the board of directors what we should be doing better to serve you, and you will also get the inside scoop on OSSS happenings proposed for the upcoming year.

2011 has been a big year for me. After four years of living in Corvallis, I moved to Lake Oswego with the family to continue my career in water resources engineering. And yes, I do use the Soil Survey every once in awhile. The move went well and we are enjoying getting to know the new town. Now in 2012, I am writing my last President's message, passing the torch to James Cassidy who has already proven to be a very capable President. I am looking forward to being involved with the OSSS this coming year in the roll of Past President, especially if the whispers I have been hearing about the summer tour are true. This has been an enriching experience for me and I encourage everyone to become more involved in our society.

I wish you all a prosperous 2012.



## Soil Quality Network 2012 Doubletree Hotel – Portland, OR

Soil Quality Network 2012 is the first of two workshops planned for agricultural professionals and land managers. Workshop participants will gain an appreciation for the role soil quality plays in crop productivity and the viability of agriculture operations. The workshop will help agriculture consultants and planners develop strategies and actions to support farmers interested in improving soil quality.

Keynote speaker, Rick Fasching, Agronomist with the NRCS West National Technical Support Center, will kick off the workshop with an introductory presentation, "Soil Quality-It's Your Future." Day one will include a tour of farm fields where participants will view and discuss soil assessment and management techniques. An evening no-host social hour will include a GeoLink activity to encourage network-building among geographically-common participants, and a presentation by Dawn R. Ferris, Soil Science Society of America, that will shed light on Oregon House Bill 3647 that requires agricultural land capability assessments be performed by professional soil classifiers.

Day-two breakout sessions will provide participants an opportunity to engage in discussions and hands-on demonstrations with researchers, technical specialists and educators who will share their perspectives on methods to improve soil quality in various cropping systems, and describe assessment and monitoring strategies. A general session panel will explore the role of soil quality in efforts to maintain a viable agricultural land base.

Who should attend: NRCS and SWCD conservation planners, Extension staff, crop consultants, field representatives, soil scientists, soil quality specialists, federal, state and county agency agricultural staff, farmers and ranchers, as well as third party certifiers and inspectors.

Also please note that this conference has been pre-approved for CCA CEUs and for 11 OHLA credits.

The workshop is being held at the **Double Tree Hotel**, 1000 NE Multnomah St, Portland, Oregon 97232. Tel: +1-503-281-6111; Fax: +1-503-284-8553. A block of rooms have been reserved at the Hotel for February 22, 2012 – February 25, 2012. The special room rate (\$113.00 USD/Night plus taxes) will be available until January 30 or until the rooms are sold out.

Online meeting and hotel registration can be made at: www.swcs.org/SQN

- SWCS, SSSA and OSSS Members \$225, register before February 8 \$135 (we will have sponsors register at this rate).
- Non-members \$225, register before February 8 \$185
- Students contact Amy Garrett for student discount code \$50



## Soil Quality Network

February 23 and 24, 2012 Doubletree Hotel Portland, Oregon

More information and online registration at <u>www.swcs.org/SQN</u>

### **Draft Meeting Agenda**

### Day 1: Thursday, February 23, 2012

Time	Session			
8:00 am	Registration/breakfast on your own			
9:00 am	Welcome/Housekeeping – Moderator			
9:15 am	Opening Session – Rick Fasching, NRCS "Soil Quality-It's Your Future": how we got to "soil quality" today and why it is necessary to "do" soil quality now and for all of our future.			
10:15 am	Break			
10:30 am	TOUR travel – half will go to Dancing Roots Farm first and half will go to McMenamins Edgefield. Groups will switch spots after lunch.			
11:00 am	<ul> <li>Tour Stop #1 – Dancing Roots Farm</li> <li>Farmer presentation – Shari Sirkin</li> <li>Cover crop sampling – Nick Andrews/Amy Garrett</li> <li>Soil quality test kit – Rick Fasching &amp; Steve Campbell, NRCS</li> <li>Soil classification in an assessment package – Andy Gallagher, Red Hill Soils</li> </ul>			
12:30 pm	Lunch at Edgefield McMenamins (provided with registration)			
2:00 pm	<ul> <li>Tour Stop #2 - Edgefield McMenamins</li> <li>Farmer presentation - Kimberly Kincaid</li> <li>Compaction testing - James Cassidy, Oregon State University</li> <li>Soil sample collection - T. Matteson, Soil Quality Project, Benton SWCD</li> <li>Willamette Valley soil quality assessment cards - Stefan Seiter, LBCC</li> </ul>			

Time	Session			
3:30 pm	Travel to Doubletree			
4:00pm	Break			
4:30pm	Social Hour with no-host bar and GeoLink activity			
5:30 pm Special OSSS presentation – Dawn R. Ferris, Soil Science Society of America				
6:30 pm Dinner/Evening on your own – invite GeoLink friends to continue network building!				

## Day 2: Friday, February 24, 2012

8:00 am	Breakfast and Speaker (included in registration) Topic: Ecosystem Markets Carrie Sanneman, Willamette Partnership			
9:10 am	<ul> <li>Concurrent Sessions - Crop Mingle</li> <li>Soil quality in intensive organic management systems - Craig Cogger, Washington State University</li> <li>Alternative soil amendments for blueberry production - Ryan Costello, Oregon State University</li> <li>Soil classification for vineyard management - Andy Gallagher, Red Hill Soils</li> <li>Intercropping in Organic Wheat - Sarahlee Lawrence, Rainshadow Organics</li> </ul>			
10:20 am	<ul> <li>Concurrent Sessions – Soil Assessments</li> <li>Soil quality assessment and N management – Dan Sullivan, Oregon State University</li> <li>Soil assessments and livestock nutrition – Woody Lane, Lane Livestock Services</li> <li>Soil quality test kit – Rick Fasching &amp; Steve Campbell, NRCS</li> <li>Soil quality assessment and organic certification – Rex Dufour, National Center for Appropriate Technology</li> </ul>			
11:30 am	Lunch and Speed Mentor (provided with registration)			
12:30 pm	<ul> <li>Concurrent Sessions - Soil Building Practices</li> <li>Cover Crop / Fertilizer Calculator – Nick Andrews, Oregon State University Extension, Small Farms / David Brown, Mustard Seed Farms</li> <li>Soil building for livestock nutrition – Woody Lane, Lane Livestock Services</li> <li>Soil quality lessons from 80 years of soil management– Don Wysocki, Oregon State University, Columbia Basin Agricultural Research Center</li> <li>Soil biology in cherry orchard systems – Mike Omeg, Omeg Orchards</li> </ul>			

Time	Session
1:45 pm	Wrap-up Panel Discussion / Interactive Topic: The Role of Soil Quality Assessment in Preserving and Maintaining our Agricultural Land Base
3:00 pm	Adjourn

# MAP from DOUBLE TREE HOTEL to BROADWAY GRILL



5. Take the 1st left onto NE Broadway 187 ft Destination will be on the right

1801 NE Broadway St, Portland, OR 97232

Map data ©2012 Google



## SQN 2012 Sponsors:







SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION SOCIETY	Healthy Land Clean Water For Life			
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Soil Quality Network 2012

Feb 23-24 Portland, OR

**Registration Form** 

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0 0 0 0 0	SWCS or OSSS Member Non-Member Register & Join SWCS Student Member Student Non-Member	<u>Early (by</u> \$135 \$185 \$215 \$50 \$50	Feb 8)	Regular \$225 \$225 \$305 \$50 \$50	
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	THOD OF PAYMENT Choo nent must accompany application. All		non-refundat	ole and must b	e made in U.S. dollars.
	heck enclosed for above amou check and registration to: Ore			325 River Rd	Ste 3, The Dalles, OR, 97058
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Address (for card)			_City, State	ZIP	
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Oregon Chapter of SWCS • 2325 River Rd Ste3 • The Dalles, OR • 97058 • 541-298-8559 ext 113





# The OSSS Annual Business

# Meeting

In association with Soil Quality Network 2012

February 23, 2012

6:30 p.m.

(Immediately following Dawn Ferris Presentation)

**Broadway Grill and Brewery** 

1700 NE Broadway Portland, OR 97232

Hot Topics: Should Oregon Organize its **Own Certifying Board?** •OSSS's Non-Profit Status Sustaining OSSS for the Future Meet the New Board Members

RSVP to Past President Cory Owens by February 15, 2012 pastpresident@oregonsoils.org + 503-210-6033

# **Editor's Note:**

If any of our members have an interest in taking over the "Sharpshooter Editing Duties" please contact Ed Horn at <u>e2horn@gmail.com</u> (Josh????). Also, the OSSS is looking for someone to take over Brenda Sanchez's duties as secretary. If you're interested, please let one of the OSSS Board Members know.

### STUDENTS' CORNER

by Alicia Leytem



Six graduate students made the journey to San Antonio this last October for the annual Soil Science Society of America conference. Between us we presented five posters and two talks. This was my first experience going to an SSSA conference, and let me say it was HUGE. It is held as a tri-society meeting along with ASA and CSSA, which leads to four very packed days of talks, posters, and special events. I think I was able to attend roughly one third of all of the talks I was interested in, and I spent a lot of time rushing between lecture halls. Of course, as graduate students, we also put some time into exploring San Antonio's food, culture and entertainment.

I was a little disappointed by the empty feeling of most of the downtown area – where most of the activity seemed to be either on the River Walk or around the Alamo. (Although we explored both of these – they were obviously focused on tourists.) As far as food goes, on the River Walk, we found some great Tex-Mex and feasted on Texas barbeque our last night (I think I avoided meat for the next two weeks). SSSA held a special event celebrating

their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and many of us attended the party afterwards – making quite a mess with the *cascarones* (confetti filled egg shells). My trip in San Antonio ended with something very exciting and totally unexpected: a record-breaking 4.6 magnitude earthquake. It wasn't strong enough to do any damage, or even wake up my slumbering roommates, but it was an exciting end to a packed trip.

Back in Oregon my attention turned to two large upcoming events. First, on November 18, 2011 I took the SSSA soils fundamentals exam. I had signed up figuring that becoming certified would be a great asset as I entered into the job market. I assumed that the test would be a cakewalk since I had recently taken most of the required classes, but when I received the study packet I got a little worried. It is over 200 pages long and full of every topic I've ever studied in soil science plus more. I studied a lot; the three of us taking the test formed a study group, and I'm happy to say that all of us passed the test. We have now earned the title of Associate Professional Soil Scientists. Once that challenge was over, I moved onto my next large task: completion.

Graduate school must come to an end for all students – and my completion is almost visible on the horizon. It will take a few more months of hard and dedicated work for me to finally reach that goal – but I look forward to stepping out on the other end. I've completed my classes and my research – and the only thing between the "real world" and me is a pile of data analysis and a lot of writing. Writing is such a tricky thing to focus on – it seems to come in waves at its own pace. Ideas and words roll around in my head constantly, but getting them on paper can feel like an Olympian feat. Lately I've been hoping for some great writing strides, where I can accomplish a good chunk at a time so that I feel better about the times I'm unable to do anything. Hopefully the writing gods will smile favorably on me in the weeks to come.

Since I will be completing, this will also be my last article for the students' corner. Which means my post as a student liaison will be opening up – and I am eagerly looking for someone to fill it. If you are a student, or you know a student, who would be interested in being more involved with OSSS – please have them contact me at <a href="https://www.levendoi.org">levendoi.org</a>. My goal is to have this position filled by the upcoming winter meeting in Portland. Thank you for reading—I've had great time writing, and I hope to see you all at the winter meeting!

### **MEMBER SPOTLIGHT**

~ Joel Norgren ~

### by James Cassidy

If you have ever been on any of the OSSS field trips over the past few decades, you no doubt have met or at least seen Joel Norgren. I am sure many of our members have known Joel for a much longer time than I and they could add much to this very brief profile of Joel. However, I first met Joel at an OSSS winter meeting at the Oregon Coast where we pulled off Hwy 101 heading south out of Newport to get a close-up look at the amazing display of Spodosol profiles that are easily seen on either side of the road. I ended up next to Joel by luck, and I was immediately struck with the wealth of knowledge and experience he had to offer about what we were looking at and a lot more. Over the past few years I have watched him carefully, and always hung back on field trips to listen to what he had to say and get his interpretations of what we were "seeing" after our tour guides finished telling us - Joel is a bona fide treasure to our Society and I urge you (especially young people) to hang back, take the time, and just watch and listen. You can learn more about soil in 15-20 minutes standing in front of a pit-wall with Joel than you could learn in a year of soils study – really, he knows a lot and has seen it all. You can't miss him, he is easily the most senior member of the society that regularly attends our meetings. I spent an hour or so



Joel Norgren hiking out of restored tidal marsh wetland, west of Astoria (OSSS Winter Meeting, 2007).

interviewing Joel one morning recently and was treated to a long tail of a life spent in service of the land with amazing and humorous observations on life, human nature, bureaucracy, farming, and soil.

"Any day I am ambulatory I consider no reason to complain about" were the first words Joel said to me after asking how he was doing (Joel suffered a heart attack back in '95). Joel will be a very young 79 this year, is still as guick as ever and a terrific storyteller, and he's still at it! For the past 20 years he has been "helping locals jump through hoops," navigating the complexities of land classification changes as he noted, "soil maps are highly variable." In fact, Joel claims that just by looking at the lines on a soil map - "how many squiggles per inch" - he can tell the quality of the information contained therein. And he should know, he has been making soil maps for well over 50 years and has drawn many of those lines, both squiggly...and otherwise. Joel was around at the very inception of the SCS (Soil Conservation Service, later renamed the NRCS) which, early in the previous century, the fiercely independent Pennsylvania Dutch farmers who volunteered to have their soils mapped (preferring the less distasteful Soil Conservation Districts to do the work) preferred to call it the "Soil Conversation Service," a not-too-disguised demonstration of what they thought of the new agency. Joel's early work was to "fill in the holes" — that is, in the maps where these surveys fell short. Joel's life as a soil mapper is a complex tale of mostly contract work, working for the CSC, BLM, US Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife, and MANY other state and federal agencies in many states all across the US. Joel seriously doubts that some of this contract work ever saw the light of day as a story of some work he did in the 1970s, where hundreds of thousands of acres needed to be mapped quickly with "less squiggles per inch" than usual, became impossible to locate some years later by a former boss, though the work was signed off on. Oh, well....

Joel was born in Danvers, MA, in 1933; however, because his father was an ambassador in the Foreign Service, he moved around a lot as a child. He lived in Canada in the '40s (when Dewey "defeated" Truman), then in Stanford, CA, when his father accepted a professor gig there, and spent his last year in high school in Stamford, CT. The following October he enrolled as a Wildlife Major at nearby Cornell because "I liked hunting and fishing" but soon thereafter changed his major to the Agronomy program which, unbeknownst to Joel, required a lot more coursework and was essentially a graduate school prep program; thereby the die was cast. Oh, well... (and thank goodness). The Agronomy program at Cornell in the early '50s had a very rigorous "farm practice requirement," which meant students spent their summers working on farms for little or no pay and "not enough to eat" as it turns out. "Farming is a hell of a gamble" – nothing changes really. Oh, well....

Then came the threat of the draft and, rather than waiting for luck (good or bad – a hell of a gamble), Joel enlisted in the Army where he nearly froze to death at Fort Dixon during basic training; but he was saved when, because

of bad publicity the year earlier, a senator's son froze to death under similar "training" conditions, the pup-tent-insnow exercise was called off. From there he ended up at Dugway Proving Grounds (Utah) where the US military was doing germ, nerve, and atomic warfare research. Pretty nasty stuff as you can imagine (and more file cabinets stuffed with paper that will never "see the light of day"). First he was feeding the guinea pigs (literally! even guinea pigs being exposed to germ/nerve/atomic agents gotta eat, and some poor feller has to feed them) but later was transferred to the Top Secret stuff(!), which Joel didn't say too much about. He also worked with scientists farmed-out to look at the dangers of the local, wild rodent populations moving around some of these biological weapons and helped set trap-lines. During this work, there were opportunities for published work to get out to the scientific community and that interested Joel. However, Joel states that the main benefit from his army years was the time off for mule deer hunting and excellent trout fishing, made even more appealing by the fact that soldiers posted at this location received three-day leaves (normally only two) because it was considered "hardship duty" – on account of it being so far from the nearest bar (two-day leaves apparently proved to be hopeless). Oh, well....

After the Army, Joel married MarthaAnne (he's not sure of the spelling but knows its "one word now") in 1958 (he's pretty sure of the date!) and they have two children. MarthaAnne integrated the Forestry School in Maine (where she majored in Wildlife) - she was the first woman to get a forestry degree there (in spite of the lack of "facilities" for "ladies"). She fared better in Minnesota where the drinking age was lower and they treated women better in the program. MarthaAnne did journal editing in the Wildlife Department at OSU for many years as well (she put together the ten-year summary - twice!) followed by work on children's books. She received her MS in Library Sciences from the U of O and never quite got her PhD (largely on account of several of her master's professors dving on her!). About the same time Joel met MarthaAnne, he got a job with the SCS studying national rates of erosion (remember - a nation that destroys its soil, destroys itself!) in Pennsylvania for a field season and then entered the graduate program at OSU in 1958. Back then keeping track of student hoursworked was a little less sophisticated than it is today and Joel claims to have worked so many hours in his 14 years in the department (yes, he did finally get his PhD!) that he actually has a pension he could tap if he needs to! Simultaneous, and in addition to getting his degree, he and three other mappers mapped the entire Alsea drainage, as well as other giant tracts of land that were of interest for studies looking at diverting rivers to California. He estimates the four mappers mapped about 2 million acres per summer and decided on how much around to cover a day by the amount of sunlight left to get back to camp. Squiggly lines? - oh, well....

So please, do yourself a favor and take advantage of meeting the man – we should be so lucky to have such a varied and productive life, and we are lucky to call him one of ours!

## DATES TO REMEMBER



**February 4 – September 22, 2012**: "Dig It – The Secrets of Soil," Smithsonian Traveling Exhibit at The Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture (MAC), 2316 West First Avenue, Spokane, WA 99201. Visit the Spokane Conservation District web site for more information: http://www.sccd.org/digitpromo/digit.html

**February 23-24, 2012**: Oregon Society of Soil Scientists 2012 Winter Meeting: "Soil Quality Network 2012 Workshop," Portland, OR. For the latest information visit the SQN web site at:

www.swcs.org/SQN

**February 24, 2012**: Washington Society of Professional Soil Scientists Winter Meeting, Central Washington University, Ellensburg, WA. Visit their meetings page for the latest information: <u>http://www.ieway.com/wspss/wspss\_events.html</u>

March 25-30, 2012: 2012 National Collegiate Soils Contest, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV.

**May 31 – June 1, 2012**: Washington Society of Professional Soil Scientists Summer Tour, Spokane, WA. Visit their meetings page for the latest information: <u>http://www.ieway.com/wspss/wspss\_events.html</u>

**October 21-24, 2012**: ASA, CSSA, and SSSA Annual Meetings, "Visions for a Sustainable Planet," Cincinnati, OH. Visit their meetings page for the latest information: <u>https://www.soils.org/meetings</u>



### Sharpshooter

The *Sharpshooter* is the official newsletter distributed to the members of the Oregon Society of Soil Scientists. Published quarterly by the Oregon Society of Soil Scientists. Address changes or inquiries about membership to:

OSSS Box 2382 Corvallis, OR 97339

Website and email address: http://www.oregonsoils.org

#### **Advertisements**

Reach more than a hundred soil science professionals with an advertisement in the *Sharpshooter*. And the price is right—whole page \$45, 1/2 page \$25, 1/4 page \$15, or 1/6 page \$10. All you need to do is provide a disk and hard copy to the *Sharpshooter* editor by the deadline (first of the month – January, March, June, and November).

All articles and advertisements submitted are subject to room available basis.

### News items

Remember all articles submitted to the *Sharpshooter* can be emailed to the Sharpshooter editor at <u>e2horn@gmail.com</u> in most any text, http, or word processing format. Pictures are best in 300 dpi jpg format.

#### Member rates

\$ 30.00	Regular member
18.00	Associate member
35.00	Sustaining member
10.00	Student member
300.00	Lifetime member

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