

# PEDOLOGUE

• Winter, 2004

Newsletter of:  
Mid-Atlantic Association of Professional Soil Scientists

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## **Editor's Comments**

I have decided to put out 4 issues of Pedologue in 2004 and to continue this practice in succeeding years if it works ok in 04. This is the first issue, called winter issue, for 04. Following issues are planned for Spring, Summer, and Fall. I'll aim to get the Spring issue out in early April, so if you have things to submit, please try to get them to me by April 1, although I will probably still be accepting stuff after that.

You should already have learned by an e-mail announcement from Jim Brewer that a MAPSS business meeting, with dinner and speaker, is scheduled for 4 to 8pm on Feb. 18, a little less than a month from now. I strongly encourage all members to attend. Please let Jim Brewer [James.Brewer@md.usda.gov](mailto:James.Brewer@md.usda.gov) know that you plan to come as he needs a head count for planning purposes. See map on last page for directions to American Legion Hall where meeting/dinner will be held. We are very fortunate to get Dr. Foss to be our speaker for this event.

This issue of Pedologue will again be available from the MAPSS Web Site, <http://sawgal.umd.edu/mapss/>. Hard copies will not be sent unless I, Del Fanning, the editor, [df3@umail.umd.edu](mailto:df3@umail.umd.edu), 301-405-1308 or 301-864-5561 (answering machine at this number is for Aunt Emily's Dolls – Aunt Emily is Del's wife) know of someone who needs one. Also I am trying to let everyone know that I will be away, going to NNY and

visit my sister on an island in Quebec -- where will get across lake on snowmobile for most of first two weeks in February. Postal Mail for me can be sent to: Dr. Delvin S. Fanning, Department of Natural Resource Sciences and Landscape Architecture, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742-4452. If you want to try to reach me in NNY, you can try by phone at 315-688-2538 or by e-mail at [DelvinDel@aol.com](mailto:DelvinDel@aol.com)

I would like to let you know that I am taking my duties as editor seriously. I was advised by Gary Jellick of a Workshop on Meeting the Needs of the Professional Soil Scientist, sponsored by the U.S. Consortium of Soil Science Associations (USCSSA), at the SSSA Meetings in Denver last October. I decided to go to Denver when it appeared that no other MAPSS member would be at the Workshop. I really enjoyed the Denver meetings and the workshop. I want to let everyone know about the consortium that has been organized by Jim Culver, Lincoln, NE, 402-483-0604, [j4culver.aol.com](mailto:j4culver.aol.com). He and the USCSSA webmaster [dmohlman1@unl.edu](mailto:dmohlman1@unl.edu) have developed a great web site <http://soilsassociation.org>. Under membership on the site one finds a listing and contact information for all of the different associations, like MAPSS, in the country. I haven't counted them, but I think there are 40 or more. There is also considerable educational information about soils there etc. In looking at the site just before I wrote this paragraph, I see that the information about MAPSS on the site needs to be up-dated, although one could find us by the information that is there. The site shows Gary Jellick as MAPSS secretary and contact person. The MAPSS web site is not listed or linked, as it is for a number of the other associations. Anyhow I encourage MAPSS members to take a look at the USCSSA site and we need to inform the consortium of our best contact information so it can get on their site.

Much of the talk at the Denver meetings was about how soil science needs to be aggressive in promoting our discipline/profession. I can't agree more. There is urgency in getting the Smithsonian soil exhibits up and going etc. MAPSS needs to push.

I am sorry that we don't have a write-up in this issue about the very successful MAPSS Fall Workshop/Field Trip in Delaware for Soil Scientists and Septic Installers that was organized and lead by Phil King, Bruce Bagley and others on the Columbus Day Holiday, Oct. 13, last fall. The event made some money for MAPSS and helped to put the organization back on a more sound financial footing. Now we need to do more to try to raise several thousand dollars to sponsor our state soils in the Smithsonian etc. Anyhow, please be sure to thank Phil and Bruce and anyone else, such as Marty and Philip Zurheide that helped put that field trip together for us.

**Minutes of Dec. 16-03 meeting of MAPSS Executive Council**

**MAPSS Executive Council Meeting 12/16/03**

**NRCS State Office**

Members Present: President Rabenhorst, Vice President Needelman, Secretary/Treasurer Brewer, President Elect King, Member at Large Shields, Past President Jellick, and guests Mr. Robinette, Dr. Fanning

Called to order 3:30 PM

Several items were on the agenda for discussion.

**NOTE: Below each agenda item is a list of duties for Council members and guests that were generated from the minutes.**

#### Smithsonian Project

General discussion took place as to the raising of \$10,000 for the state monolith sponsorship each state is encouraged to raise for the Smithsonian soils exhibit. Vice President Needelman stated that no fund-raising activities have taken place in Maryland as of yet. Dr. Fanning and Vice President Needelman stated that many names can be part of the donors list sign to accompany monoliths of soils of given states in the Museum of Natural History. They also stated that a tele-conference was planned for the Smithsonian project committee (of which Needelman and Fanning are members) with Valerie Breunig, ASF Director of Development, and other Smithsonian project committee members on how to raise funds etc. Editor's note – the telephone conference will be on January 28 04. Member at Large Shields agreed to help on this project. Vice President Needelman stated most monies come from individual and organizational donations and that he and other U of MD professors would help organize MAPSS involvement. He also suggested that part of any monies made at any MAPSS future workshops could be used as part of a donation. President Rabenhorst stated that MAPSS needs to get behind this project and that the fund raising could be spread over a two year period by doing programs to raise the \$10,000. President Elect King mentioned that any donations are tax deductible. Past President Jellick stated he could get a mailing list of possible engineering firms who would make a donation or that MAPSS could sell them a soil textual kit, of known soil samples, for \$50 to \$100 depending upon the number of samples (3 to 5). Past President Jellick stated he would put together a letter of interest to mail out. Vice President Needelman and President Rabenhorst stated that the university had some samples available and that a silt loam, sandy loam and clay loam would be good representative samples.

#### CEU's for October Field Trip Participants

President Rabenhorst stated some type of documentation, from MAPSS, is needed to provide verification that people attended this session and any future MAPSS workshops, seminars, etc. President Elect King stated that DENREC was sending out documentation for participants that deal with them. Secretary/Treasurer Brewer stated he would draft a letter to state the amount of CEU's for the session and verification to be sent to all participants. He would sign it as a MAPSS officer. President Elect King will provide Secretary/Treasurer Brewer with list of participants. It was suggested that at all future MAPSS educational workshops that a document of CEU verification be provided to all attending participants at time of registration.

#### Honorary Membership

There was general discussion on this topic in lieu of Richard Hall's recent death and members wanting to vote him in as an honorary member. Secretary/Treasurer Brewer

stated that the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation address this and that the membership would need to vote on it at a regular or special meeting. It was suggested to bring it before the membership at the next business meeting. Dr. Fanning stated he could put it in the newsletter to let members know it would be addressed. President Rabenhorst and Mr. Robinette suggested that it could be done posthumously for Dick Hall as well as George Demas, both of whom did a lot for soil science in Maryland and Delaware. Secretary/Treasurer Brewer stated a formal motion could be made at the next business meeting.

#### Meetings/Events for 2004

President Rabenhorst entertained ideas for MAPSS 2004 activities/meetings/programs. Secretary/Treasurer Brewer stated that an annual business meeting is required and that in the past MAPSS usually had a business meeting/meal/educational lecture or speaker. General discussion took place as to possible speakers (Past President Jellick, Dr. Gary Peterson from Penn State, Michael Golden, etc.) or subjects (GIS application for members). President Rabenhorst stated Council members should think of possible speakers and or lecture subject and get back to him. Secretary/Treasurer Brewer stated he would look into locations in the Annapolis area, which is centrally located for a meeting. All agreed that a late afternoon to early evening time period would be best sometime mid week and that it would be “business meeting-meal-lecture/speaker”. President Rabenhorst suggested Feb.18, 2004 for a date. All agreed.

Further discussions took place as to a possible MAPSS sponsored educational workshop. Vice President Needelman suggested something related to acid sulfate concerns. Past President Jellick suggested wetlands or archeological aspects of soil. President Rabenhorst felt that the acid sulfate idea could be a large and very important subject for engineers in the area. President Elect King suggested getting a mailing list of engineering and other consultants from the local conservation districts. President Rabenhorst and President Elect King suggested an indoor venue or both an indoor one day and field trip the following day. It was suggested that there could be an indoor session for 150 people and then limit the field trip to first (40?) to sign up. President Rabenhorst and President Elect King suggested the indoor part could be a morning session of theory and basic principles and the afternoon session would be detailed projects and example problems concerned with acid sulfate. Also a meal could be included. Then next day would be field trip to view projects and acid sulfate concerns. Cost would be \$100 to \$200 including luncheon and field trip. The month of May was thought to be too soon, Sept 14-16 was suggested as reasonable dates. Dr. Fanning stated he would help as much as possible. President Rabenhorst stated that it needed to be promoted before summer. To do this we would need potential cost, program subjects and a brochure before May 1, 2004. Secretary/Treasurer Brewer stated the need for a mailing list by April 2004. It was suggested the P.G., A.A, Bowie, Annapolis area would be best for indoor session. Mr. Robinette suggested Holiday Inn on Rt. 50. Past President Jellick said he would look into location.

Discussion ensued in regard to a member’s educational field trip. Mr. Robinette suggested we need a time “just to get out and look at soils and have fun”. President Elect

King suggested looking at new soil series in the Piedmont and Coastal Plain physiographic provinces. Secretary/Treasurer Brewer suggested Baltimore County area because of soil survey update going on now and that we could tie it in to the sampling Joe Kraft would be doing. It was suggested that it be a Saturday field trip for members with a lunch. Members could car pool or MAPSS could get a bus if needed. MAPSS would subsidize a certain portion of the cost. President Rabenhorst suggested May 8<sup>th</sup>.

#### Treasurer's Report

Past President Jellick gave this report (he is helping Secretary/Treasurer Brewer by doing the Treasurer's duties). In summary, MAPSS took in \$4647 (workshop, dues, gift, loan) and spent \$2152.80 (bank charges, repay loan, postage, scholarships, workshop food and drink) between 1/1/03 and 12/16/03; leaving a balance of \$2494.20. For details see official report.

#### Scholarships

Motion was passed to continue the annual \$500 scholarship at U of MD for a selected outstanding undergraduate student. There was discussion about a possible funded scholarship to U of DE. It was decided to wait until the soils program (the hiring of a pedologist) is under way before funding a scholarship there.

#### Soil Judging

President Rabenhorst announced that U of MD placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the team competition in the regional contest held in Rhode Island this past fall. All 5 students on the team placed in the top ten contestants. The nationals will be held April 23<sup>rd</sup> in Normal, IL (hosted by Ill. State Univ.). There will be 5 students and two coaches going. The motion was passed to give the soil judging team \$500 for expenses to the national contest. Dr. Fanning will put this information in the newsletter.

Mr. Robinette brought up the possibility of MAPSS contributing to the State Land Judging in Maryland. General discussion ensued as to what land judging is in relationship to Envirothon. A motion was passed to give \$175 to the top three individual winners (\$100 first place, \$50 second place, \$25 third place) in the state contest. Mr. Robinette will look into what form to provide the money in and also FFA approval for the awards.

#### Communication with membership

Dr. Fanning had concerns about the entire membership not receiving notice of the Oct. workshop and the need to have all members' e-mail addresses and or a way for members to access information from the web page. Secretary/Treasurer Brewer will provide the latest email addresses to Dr. Fanning and Secretary/Treasurer Brewer will also send out another 2004 dues notices (have only received 7 dues since the first went out last month). Dr. Fanning mentioned the newsletter (winter 04 Pedologue) would be out by mid January.

#### Publication of a document on the soil landscapes of MD and DE

Bill Effland (not present) asked President Rabenhorst to bring up the subject of this type of document. General discussion thought it was a good idea and that Extension Bulletin #212 would fit this type of idea. Richard Weismiller has been working on the revision of this bulletin. The council decided to assist Dr. Weismiller with his revision of the Bulletin. Vice President Needelman mentioned that Arizona has a very good example.

#### Web Page

All agreed it was in good shape and being updated regularly. Secretary/Treasurer Brewer mentioned about having a current consultant list and to be sure all would be on it who would want to be on it. Dr. Fanning suggested that the student research-meeting/seminar-series schedule for the spring semester at U of MD be put on the web page.

#### Separation of Secretary/Treasurer Position

Past President Jellick and Secretary/Treasurer Brewer have talked about this subject for years. It will take a change in the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation supported by a vote from the membership. Past President Jellick will rewrite the parts of both documents and Vice President Needelman will put in on the web site for all members to view before the meeting in February.

This discussion led to other possible changes in the association. To provide for continuity from year to year:

Past President Jellick discussed a possible board of directors (not members of Executive Council) who would be voted in by membership to provide information to the Council. One problem: It is hard enough to get members to serve on Council and committees, could we get members for a board of directors in addition.

Mr. Robinette thought longer terms for Executive Council members would help.

President Rabenhorst thought two year terms for the Members at Large (elected in alternative years), since they don't have any major assigned duties.

Other possible change to Bylaws:

Dr. Fanning thought a student representative (non-voting) to serve on Council would be nice to give the students of the organization a voice.

#### Other MAPSS Stuff

Vice President Needelman and President Rabenhorst discussed the need for MAPSS items to sell for advertising and as small fund-raisers -- things such as hats, mugs, T-shirts, etc. Vice President Needelman felt he could get the graduate student members to work on this. All agreed on the need for them

Meeting adjourned at 6:06 PM

#### **Honorary Membership in MAPSS – reminder of by-laws statements that pertain etc.**

The Executive Council wants to remind the members about the Honorary Membership class in view of the likelihood that there may be nominations for new Honorary Members at the MAPSS business meeting on February 18.

#### From By-Laws

Article III, Section 3.b. A candidate for honorary membership can be nominated by any member of the Association in good standing at a regular or special meeting of the Association. If the nominee is approved by a two-thirds vote of a legal quorum, the Secretary-Treasurer shall complete the processing and issuance of a membership card. An honorary member shall be elected for life, or until such time as the membership is revoked by a majority vote at a special or regular meeting of a legal quorum for just and sufficient cause.

#### From Constitution

Article III, Section 3.c. Honorary Member - Shall be one whom the Association desires to honor because of outstanding contribution to the profession.

MAPSS currently has two Honorary Members. They are Dr. Roy Simonson and Dr. Delvin Fanning. The Executive Council will consider any nominations from the membership at the next annual business meeting. If a member would like to present a nomination, please have information available as to the nominee's outstanding contributions etc.

### **UMD Soil Judging Team wins for the 4th year in row at the Northeast Regional Contest in Rhode Island!**

The University of Maryland Soil Judging team had an unusually strong showing at the Northeast Regional Soil Judging contest near Kingston, Rhode Island this past October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, 2003, where everyone on the team finished among the top 10. The contest was hosted by the University of Rhode Island and former UMD Student (now professor of Pedology at URI) Dr. Mark Stolt and was held on property owned by the Audubon Society. The contest featured an interesting assortment of soils on glaciated landscapes. Although UMD finished 3<sup>rd</sup> in the group judging portion held on Saturday morning behind Ohio State University (1<sup>st</sup>) and the University of Rhode Island (2<sup>nd</sup>), they proved exceptionally strong in the individual scoring, where all five of the UMD contestants finished among the top ten. Individual honors for the 3 pits judged on Friday went to the following UMD students: Bryan Strong (2<sup>nd</sup> place), Rebecca Blank (3<sup>rd</sup> place), Julia Lieberman (6<sup>th</sup> place), Judy Turk (7<sup>th</sup> place), and Joanna Stewart (8<sup>th</sup> place). Overall combined teams scores put the University of Maryland in 1<sup>st</sup> place followed by Ohio State University in 2<sup>nd</sup> and University of Rhode Island in 3<sup>rd</sup>. These three schools look forward to participating in the National Soil Judging contest the week of April 19-23 which will be hosted by Illinois State University in Normal, Illinois.



University of Maryland 2003 NE Regional Soil Judging Champs: First Row: Rebecca Blank (3<sup>rd</sup> place), Julia Lieberman (6<sup>th</sup> place), Danielle Balduff (Asst. Coach); Second Row: Judy Turk (7<sup>th</sup> place), Bryan Strong (2<sup>nd</sup> place), Joanna Stewart (8<sup>th</sup> place), and Rosalynd Orr (Asst. Coach); Back Row: Coach Martin Rabenhorst.

Editor's Note: This report and picture were submitted by President Rabenhorst.

### **Delmarva uses Arcview for digital mapping**

## **Delmarva Uses ArcView for Digital Mapping**

By Carla Baker

Keeping pace with the evolving technology available to soil scientists, NRCS in the State of Maryland installed the prevailing desktop mapping and GIS software ArcView in every soil survey office in 2001. Everyone agreed it was the logical step forward for soil survey, but many soil scientists began to wonder why they were still compiling over a light table. After all, what's the purpose of powerful mapping software in soil survey if it can't make a soil map? Considering this question, Philip King, MLRA 153C/D Co-Leader, began to develop a method for updating and digitizing that would enable field soil scientists to map and edit soils accurately and efficiently on their computer, not the light table.

Talbot County, Maryland promptly began the first phase of the process: scanning, rubber-sheeting, and geo-referencing the old map sheets to digital orthophotography provided by NRCS. This task was contracted to GIS specialist John Inkster of Geo-Ink-Graphics, Lewes, Delaware. Inkster converted the scanned lines from raster data into vector data and built polygons for the second phase: attributing. Survey staff attributed the polygons in ArcView using a customized interface designed by Inkster. Pull-down menus of mapunit symbols allowed the symbol to be selected and placed without typing, saving considerable time and effort. With the attributing complete, Inkster integrated the soil symbols into the polygons and made global edits to the attribute table according to correlation decisions previously made by survey staff. 86,000 of the 205,000 acres, or 42 percent of the mapunits, were re-attributed instantaneously through global edits.

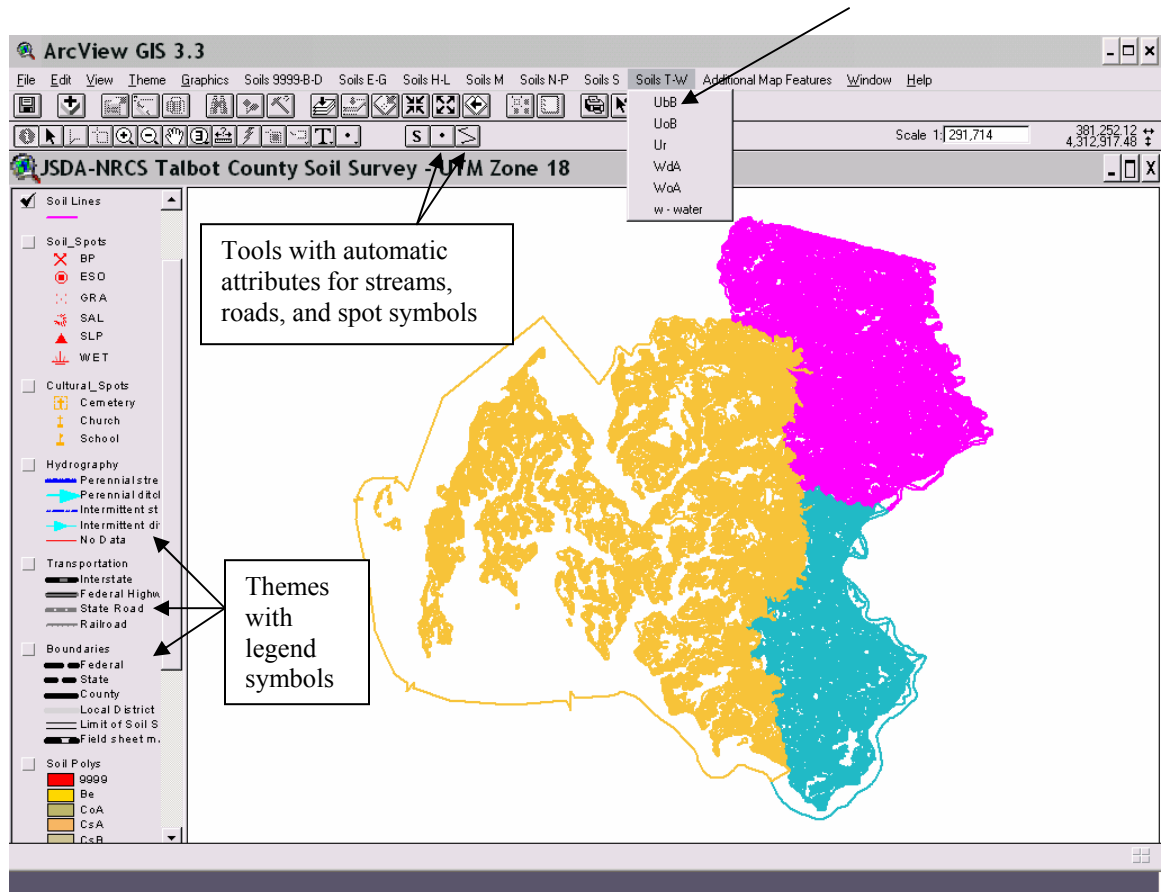
The third phase began when the digitized, attributed version of the old Talbot County Soil Survey was presented to the survey staff in a project split into three geographic areas, one for each staff member. The project includes separate themes for layers of data, such as hydrology and cultural features, with representative symbols from the legend. Special extensions and customized pull-down menus run scripts that allow themes to be edited without starting and stopping the edit mode, resulting in a more efficient procedure. While numerous other approaches to on-screen mapping are simultaneously developing in other regions, one unique feature to this procedure lies in the actual soil lines. Editing polygons in ArcView is a tricky matter due to the fact that any one boundary between soil polygons actually has two lines, one for each adjacent polygon. Moving both lines concurrently is a difficult task and frequently results in gaps and overlaps. Editing polylines however, as is done in Inkster's projects, requires fewer steps and presents fewer opportunities for error.

Supplemental layers of data, like contours, higher resolution photos, or tax maps, can be instantly turned on/off or left open in an additional view; an immense improvement over flipping back and forth between sheets of mylar. Another noteworthy feature of ArcView is the ability to query old mapunits, displaying trends that aid in correlation decisions and attributing. Talbot County Soil Survey Project Leader, Jim Brewer and his staff are currently in the editing phase of the project. Once complete, Inkster will edgemark and dissolve joins, then perform several quality control procedures. A CDROM with the complete project will be forwarded to a national map-digitizing center in preparation for SSURGO certification.

Other Delmarva counties have adopted a similar approach of updating and digitizing, while some counties choose only to digitize. Somerset County is in the editing phase, and Caroline and Kent Counties are scheduled to be digitized next. An additional benefit to digitizing initially and then updating is that a digitized version of the old survey is available to conservationists and planners to utilize in Toolkit until the editing and map finishing is completed.

The Talbot County survey staff agrees digital mapping has significant advantages over light table compilation. Line transfer by hand, which previously took months, can now be completed in weeks (depending on the contractor). Gingerly erasing on mylar is replaced by clicking and dragging with a mouse. While this may seem tedious at times,

the digital data requires fewer steps to meet SSURGO certification standards in the long run. Naturally, the degree of improvement over traditional compilation techniques depends highly on the quality of the old survey lines, quality of the new digital imagery, and the capabilities of your computer. As project member Charlie Hanner states, “You’re always going to want better imagery and a faster computer, that’s the way it will always be.”



Sample view of ArcView project showing themes set up for editing and pull-down menus for attributing.

### Calendar of Some Future Events.

Spring Semester at University of Maryland officially started Monday Jan. 26 04, although there were no classes that day because of a snow day.

Wednesday February 18: 4-8pm, MAPSS Business Meeting/Dinner/Speaker at American Legion Post #7 Hall. Speaker: Dr. J. E. Foss on Soils and Archeology.

**(see further announcement, page 11, and map, page 12 for directions.)**

Pedology and Associated Soil Science Research Meetings at the University of Maryland – Schedule not yet available, watch the MAPSS web site for this when it is ready.

Northeast Branch American Society of Agronomy Meetings will take place at Rutgers EcoComplex, Bordentown, NJ. Joe Heckman at Rutgers is organizing a (half day?) soils field trip that MAPSS editor thinks will be looking at glauconitic soils and possibly acid sulfate soils.

National Hydric Soils Workshop, Norfolk, VA, August 2-6, 2004. Information on this workshop was submitted by Gary Jellick. Information stated that the purpose of the workshop is to encourage dialogue concerning hydric soils and their relationship to wetlands delineation, mitigation, regulation and assessment and to expand this understanding between both the wetland and soil science communities. People are encouraged to submit abstracts for paper, on a wide variety of topics (Gary sent me a list listing topic areas) by March 15 to Ralph J. Spagnolo, USEPA, Region 3, Environmental Services Division (3ES30), 1650 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-2029. The e-mail address is [spagnolo.ralph@epamail.epa.gov](mailto:spagnolo.ralph@epamail.epa.gov) or phone 215-814-2718, or fax 215-814-2783.

**Coming MAPSS events on drawing boards (lets discuss these more at the Feb. 18 meeting).**

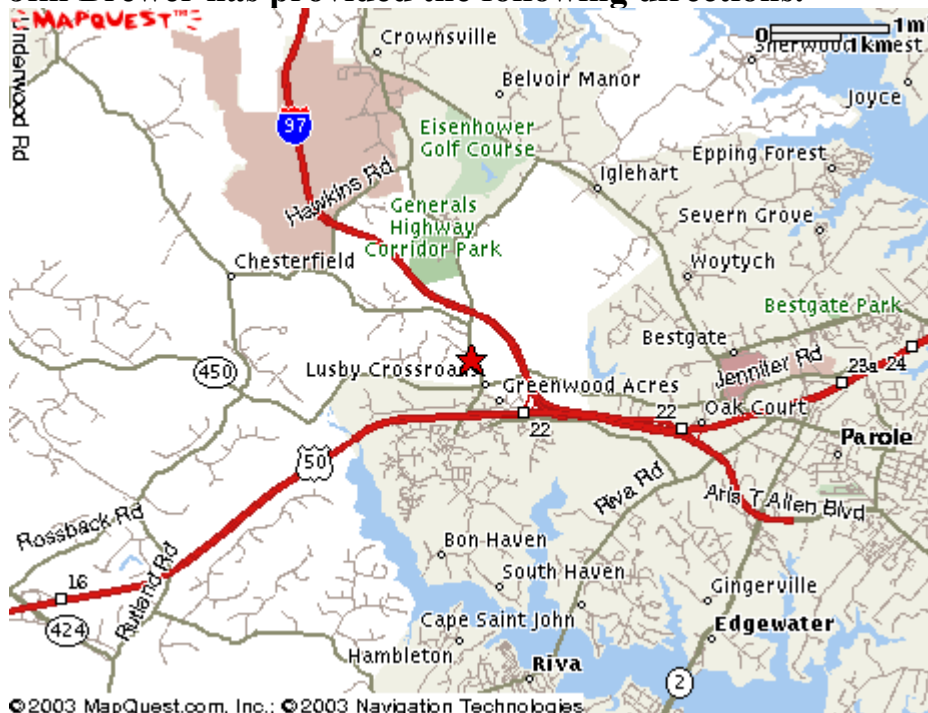
**Sat. May 8 2004 (probable date): Educational-fun field trip for MAPSS members – see minutes of executive council meeting for more details on this. More details may be available at the Feb. 18 business meeting. Put it on your calendar.**

**Tues., Sept. 14 and Wed. Sept. 15, or Wed. Sept. 15 and Thurs. Sept. 16. Acid Sulfate Soils Workshop/Field Trip in Anne Arundel/P.G. County area. We aim to attract engineers, regulators and others beyond the soil science community as well as soil scientists to this event. Again, see executive council meeting minutes for more details on this.**

**Feb 18 Business Meeting/Dinner/Speaker. Dr. John E. Foss to speak on Soils and Archeology.**

The speaker for the Feb. 18 meeting on the topic of “soils and archeology” will be Dr. J. E. (John) Foss. John is a long time MAPSS member who is an Emeritus Professor at the University of Tennessee, where he was Head of the Agronomy Department prior to his retirement a couple years ago. John was a faculty member in the Agronomy Department at the University of Maryland from 1966-1981, where he taught the Introductory Soils course for many years, prior to going on to head departments at North Dakota State University and subsequently at Tennessee. He has been involved in soils and archeology work since his days at Maryland and is an expert in this field with much international as well as national experience in this area.

To assist attendees to find the Feb. 18 4-8pm business meeting/dinner, Jim Brewer has provided the following directions.



**From West** Take Rt. 50 East to Exit 13, go north on Rt. 3  
Turn right onto Rt. 450, go approx. 7 miles to Crownsville Rd  
Turn Left onto Crownsville Rd. (American Legion should be near by)  
(If you go under Interstate 97, you have gone too far.)

**From East** Take Rt. 50 to Exit 23b turn left onto Rt.450 (Annapolis Mall is on your right) You have to turn left at the next light to stay on Rt. 450  
Go approx 2 to 3 miles. (you will go under Interstate 97)  
Turn Right onto Crownsville Rd. (American Legion should be near by)

**From North** Take Interstate 97 south to Rt. 50 East  
Take Rt. 50 to Exit 23 bear right onto West St. (Rt. 450)  
Go under Rt. 50,  
Turn left at 2<sup>nd</sup> light (?) to stay on Rt. 450, go approx 2 to 3 miles. (you will go under Interstate 97)  
Turn Right onto Crownsville Rd. (American Legion should be near by)

American Legion is 1905 Crownsville Rd. 410 573-0004