



Illinois Soil Classifiers Association Newsletter

Spring — May 2023

Upcoming Events:

ISCA Council Meeting May 25th

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Message from the President

As I reflect on this upcoming year, I have gotten this strong feeling about how much uncertainty there is in today's world. Sometimes I think I feel that way only because I am older-but then again, maybe it's because there truly is more uncertainty. When I was a kid, we didn't have mass shootings, or even police in our schools – so I am afraid my feelings may be because of the later, but I sure wish it was the former.

Some uncertainty lies within the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association. I fear that in a short number of years our organization is going to lack the required number of Certified Professional Soil Classifiers to conduct on-site soil borings, and other services, for the general public. At the end of the 2023 Annual Meeting, I took a very unscientific poll, first asking for the number of CPSC's present at the meeting-there were 12. Then I asked how many were retiring in the next 5 years? Half of those present raised their hands. Currently we have 38 Certified Professional Soil Classifiers in ISCA. Of those 38 only 28 are listed on the ISCA Website as being available for consulting. I know my poll was very unscientific, but if half of those 28 retire in 5 years we are in trouble! Thankfully, I think with combined efforts from among our members we can make a difference.

I am not sure on exact methods on how to turn things around. I think one great and positive step was the changes made to the Certification Standards in more recent years by the ISCA. It has allowed for some of our younger members to get Certified. Great efforts were made by Bill Kreznor and others to achieve this, and they should all be commended for a job well done. However, I feel that many of us Classifiers could not afford to train a young soil scientist for 2 years or more. What is the answer? Again, I cannot say for sure. We don't want weak standards, but we will need more Classifiers. Perhaps more outreach to colleges with soil programs would help. Perhaps we need to reach out to nearby state colleges with soil programs. Our Public Relations and Education Chair Ashtyn Stufflebeam is doing some initial work in this regard. One thing I think we could do is provide more monetary support to those colleges with soil judging teams, both in state, and possibly in nearby states. Our Burt Ray Scholarship remains at \$500. Nowadays that might buy a book-maybe? How do we fund all this-well we have had some discussion on raising membership dues and/or certification fees. Had some very good points made both for and against. I feel by raising dues and fees we could certainly be a little freer with assistance to young soil scientists. So, another thing I would hope we could do is continue that discussion on dues and fees. Just for example CPSC's working in Lake County, IL pay the County \$178 for a yearly license. Most of us don't think too much about it. Our \$25 yearly Certification fee is quite a difference from that \$178.

I would ask all members to please weigh in on your thoughts about our membership dues, and certification fees. Current yearly dues for Full Members are \$25, for Student Members-\$5, for Affiliate Members-\$5 and for Retired Members-\$5. The yearly Certification fee is again \$25 per year. Please reach out and let me know what you think about these fees and what, if anything, we should do.

Of course, if you have any other ideas, or concerns please let me or any of the Council Members know.

Thank you! A call, text, or email regarding our fee structure would be greatly appreciated.

Bob Oja 815-703-7062 bob.oja@mchenryswcd.org

2023 Annual Meeting Recap

Submitted by Liz Miernicki & Ashtyn Stufflebeam

Twenty-eight members came together on Saturday, March 18, 2023 for the ISCA Annual Meeting at the Illinois Natural History Survey in Champaign, Illinois. The last Council meeting before the “changing-of-the-guard” occurred before lunch. There was a soil texture quiz for members to practice their texturing skills. This year lunch was provided by Biaggi’s Ristorante Italiano. ISCA’s historian, Bill Kreznor, put together a fantastic slideshow full of pictures of ISCA members that was enjoyed during lunch. After lunch, Sam Indorante spoke on the importance of soil judging and thanked ISCA for the help with Southern Illinois University’s soil judging team. Liz followed Sam with a brief description of the Burton W. Ray Scholarship Award and announced the 2022 winner, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign junior, Kyle A. Baldwin. This year’s guest speaker was Michael Flanagan, the Champaign Regional Supervisor at the Illinois Department of Public Health. Michael presented on the usefulness of soil evaluations in the context of constructing and maintaining onsite wastewater disposal systems. Many members were particularly interested in the regulatory portion of the talk. A business meeting followed Michael’s presentation where all committee chairs provided their annual report.

Liz provided a brief update on Dr. Andrew Margenot’s Illinois Centennial Soil Archive Project since he could not attend the meeting. All relevant information has been sent to the membership and is on the website if they wish to help with this project. Brandon Mueller reviewed the 2023 budget that he and his committee put together. The budget was voted on and approved. Bob McLeese was the MC for the Bent Auger Award this year. He provided a rundown of the new plaque he created for the award. Dr. Andrew Margenot was selected as this year’s bent auger award winner based on his site selection for a soil pit used in a field workshop in Marshall, Illinois (hint: water table). William Kreznor and Associates and Liz Miernicki provided door prizes this year. The winner of the soil texture quiz was announced during this time, too. Brandon Mueller was declared with winner of the soil texture quiz and was awarded a book titled: Geology of Illinois. After door prizes, a quick demo of ISCA’s new Twitter account was given by Liz. ISCA is going to try it out for a while and then re-evaluate whether the account is beneficial for us. Josh Litwiller announced this year’s elections results. Mary Beth Falsey is the new Vice President and Brandon Mueller is President-elect. Congrats, Mary Beth and Brandon!

Bill Kreznor was the penultimate speaker. He read the two letters he wrote, nominating Chuck Frazee and Don Fehrenbacher for honorary membership. The change of membership for both Chuck and Don were approved. Bob Oja concluded the meeting with listing his committee chair selections and a few comments about the upcoming year.

Thank you to all who helped make this year’s meeting possible!

2023 Honorary Member Nominations

Submitted by Bill Kreznor as presented at the 2023 Annual Meeting

Nomination of Dr. Charles J. Frazee for Honorary Member of the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association

It is my privilege to nominate Chuck Frazee as an Honorary Member of the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association. (The following biographical information is taken directly from the Sangamon County Farm Bureau induction of Chuck into the Farmer Hall of Fame in July 2016.)

Charles Joseph Frazee was born on November 8, 1940 to Elmer and Helen Frazee, Divernon. After graduating from Pawnee High School he attended Western Illinois University for his undergraduate degree and then the University of Illinois for his Master's and Ph. D. in Agronomy. He married Lois Summers in 1965 and they have two children Laura (Joe) Pickrell and Joe (Sarah) Frazee and 4 grandchildren. Chuck was a professor of Agronomy at South Dakota State University from 1969- 1975. As a professor he taught soils and conducted research in remote sensing. In 1975, he returned to the family farm, Round Barn Farms Inc., to farm with his father and brother Tom. The farm became a sesquicentennial farm in 2012. Upon returning to the farm, Chuck expanded the hog operation to a 200 sow farrow to finish operation. They also raised corn and soybeans and were one of the early no-till farmers in the area. Chuck was very active in Sangamon County Pork Producers and is well known for grilling some of the best pork chops in the area. He was a 4-H leader for 20 years. He has served on the Soil and Water District Board for over 35 years. He also served on the Farm Bureau Board for 9 years and has been on numerous committees within the Farm Bureau. He was appointed and served on the Illinois Fertilizer Research and Education Committee for 4 years. He was elected to serve on the Sangamon County FSA committee for 12 years. Chuck is a charter member of the Sugar Creek United Methodist Church in Chatham. He has served as trustee and a treasurer of the United Methodist Men's group. He currently operates a soil consulting business that provides soil analysis for septic systems. He has operated Frazee Soil Consulting for 20 years and has served many area Farm Bureau members. Chuck's comment: "Farming has seen many changes but soil conservation is still important for future generations to feed the world."

Chuck earned his B.S. at Western Illinois University. Chuck's studies at the University in Illinois for his M.S. degree focused on the sodium-affected soils in central and southern Illinois, working under ISCA Honorary Members Dr. Joe Fehrenbacher and Dr. Russell Odell. His work with Dr. Fehrenbacher that earned him his PH. D. dealt with loess distribution from a source. In his "spare time" as a graduate student, he mapped soils in six counties as part of the statewide soil survey program which was administered at that time through the University of Illinois Agricultural Experiment Station.

Upon earning his doctorate, Chuck began a professorship at South Dakota State University in Brookings, SD in 1969. Along with his teaching duties, he pioneered using satellite imagery to develop soil maps for land appraisal and irrigation suitability. He was among the first to be awarded a grant from NASA to use remotely-sensed data from the ERTS (now LANDSAT) spacecrafts.

2023 Honorary Member Nominations

Submitted by Bill Kreznor as presented at the 2023 Annual Meeting

Nomination of Dr. Charles J. Frazee for Honorary Member of the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association (continued)

Upon his return to his farm just north of Divernon, Illinois in 1975, Chuck re-connected with his colleagues, became a Charter Member of our Association, and began a private consulting practice. He helped craft the first Standards for Certification and in 1980 was among a group of sixteen members who were the first to become certified. He served as the first Secretary- Treasurer of the Certification Board. He was elected Treasurer of our Association in 1993 and has served continuously in that office up to the present. As an officer, he also served on the Executive Council for these past 30 years. Over that time, his knowledge of parliamentary procedures and our history has been the “even keel” helping steer his junior council members through the waters of administering the ISCA. Chuck always provided thoughtful guidance toward amending our Constitution and By-Laws, and our Standards for Certification.

Chuck’s credentials of education, experience, and active membership in the Farm Bureau, Sangamon County Pork Producers, 4-H, and the Board of the Sangamon County Soil and Water Conservation District are recognized throughout central Illinois. His clients often refer to him as the “Soil Doctor”. Local and state health department regulators seek him out for technical guidance. Chuck was instrumental in getting those regulatory changes incorporating soils investigations for onsite wastewater treatment. He has admirably represented our Association as a speaker at local and regional onsite wastewater treatment conferences. Chuck’s ethical conduct and professionalism have inspired others to work in private practice.

Chuck’s location near Springfield is also of great benefit to our Association. He has an ear trained toward the Capitol and keeps our Association in the loop regarding proposed legislation that would affect our profession. This legislation included state licensing of Soil Classifiers and attempts of some engineering and geological groups to appropriate the unique expertise of the Soil Classifier into their respective professions.

While he may be transitioning to a less active role in our Association, Chuck will continue both as a role model of professionalism and serving our mission of promoting the wise use of the soil resource. Without hesitation, I ask you to consider and approve Dr. Charles Frazee as an Honorary Member of the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association.

Respectfully submitted,

William R. Kreznor, CPSC (ISCA) 18 March
2023

2023 Honorary Member Nominations

Submitted by Bill Kreznor as presented at the 2023 Annual Meeting

Nomination of Donald J. Fehrenbacher for Honorary Member of the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association

It is my pleasure to nominate Don Fehrenbacher as an Honorary Member of the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association.

His career as a Soil Classifier began in the summer of 1974 in Brown County (McKee Creek watershed) and McDonough County where he served as a USDA-Soil Conservation Service Soil Scientist Trainee. ISCA charter member Les Bushue was his supervisor. Don joined the Iroquois County soil survey crew in 1975 soon after graduating from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I first met Don in February 1977 when I joined the Iroquois County soil survey as a County Soil Scientist. As one of the senior members of the crew, Don provided a substantial part of my training that included soil mapping, soil profile description writing, and sample collection for lab analysis during the 30 months I was there. He also encouraged me to establish and maintain a professional demeanor, advising me to join the Soil Science Society of America and the ISCA, in which he was a Charter Member. Don also worked with ISCA member John Pearse, who was assigned to Iroquois County as a Soil Scientist summer trainee.

As the Iroquois survey was winding down in 1979, Don was offered a position as Soil Scientist with a major coal mining company with extensive operations in central and southern Illinois. He declined the offer. Rather, he took a leave of absence and returned to the University of Illinois to pursue a master's degree in Pedology. There he studied soil properties and crop growth in soils reconstructed from surface mining for coal. After earning his M.S. in May of 1980, he was immediately assigned to Ford County Illinois where he served as Project Soil Survey Leader until 1984. While there, he supervised the work of ISCA members Bruce Putman and Bill Teater. When Don completed his assignment in Ford County, he was transferred for a brief period to White County as project Soil Survey Leader, supervising ISCA member Bruce Houghtby, before taking the position of Area Soil Scientist in northeastern Illinois in 1985. He was named Resource Conservationist in northeastern Illinois in 2003 until 2005 when he was promoted to State Soil Scientist of Wisconsin. He served in that capacity for 5 years. He completed his federal career as Program Manager of the regulatory branch of the St. Paul, MN District of the US Army Corps of Engineers, retiring in 2010.

Certainly, Don has had a rich and varied career in federal service. I would like to focus on the work he performed while serving as Area Soil Scientist for the Chicago metropolitan region, beginning in 1985, headquartered in Kankakee and Bourbonnais. I believe the contributions he made to our profession and to the public welfare while in that position merit earnest consideration for Honorary Membership.

Many of you excel in your field. What sets Don apart, what I believe makes him worthy of this recognition by our Association, is that Don created the field in which he excelled. He was the first Area or Regional Soil Scientist in Illinois after the 1970s. His area included both rural and highly urbanized soils and landscapes, and everything in between. The soils were as diverse as the population: aeolian sands; clayey glacial sediments; bedrock soils; organic soils; soils reconstructed from the mining of coal, sand, and gravel; human affected-human transported soils.

2023 Honorary Member Nominations

Submitted by Bill Kreznor as presented at the 2023 Annual Meeting

Nomination of Donald J. Fehrenbacher for Honorary Member of the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association (continued)

I don't know what was written on his job description, but he quickly came to look at this position as an opportunity to, over the course of the next 20 years, create and re-create the role of a soil classifier specializing in the properties and management of urban soils. His work as an urban soil specialist was both revolutionary and evolutionary, and his approach working with the various clientele in an urban setting was truly innovative.

Don welcomed the challenge to introduce the knowledge, skills, and abilities we have as Soil Classifiers to a host of individuals and groups in the public and private sectors. These included land planners, appraisers, engineers, septic system designers and installers, storm water managers, health department officials, forest preserve and park districts, not-for-profit land trusts, and the law enforcement community. Some of these individuals and groups might consult a soil survey report for information on soil use and management. Very few ever had any direct contact with a Soil Classifier.

As such, they were not aware of the valuable information a Soil Classifier could provide, particularly from the site-specific information derived from onsite soil investigations. Don made it his mission to introduce soil science and soil classification services to any and all who were directed his way. But more importantly, he actively sought out new avenues of practice with individuals and groups who had no idea that Soil Classifiers existed, let alone how the work of a Soil Classifier could be of benefit to them and the clientele and stakeholders they serviced. As an example, Don had no reservations about driving his probe truck for 2 or 3 hours through Chicago and its suburbs to spend a few hours with a county health department official in order to conduct an onsite investigation for a failed septic system and turn around to make that same drive back to Kankakee. He was a remarkable advocate for the profession of soil science and became the "go-to" guy for technical expertise throughout the Chicago metropolitan area.

Soon after his arrival in Kankakee, Don was asked by the McHenry County Department of Health and Department of Building & Zoning to serve on a committee to draft regulations that would incorporate onsite soil investigations and site-specific soils information for approval of residential and commercial subdivisions served by septic systems, and for the design and installation of those systems. A local engineer, Duray Potter, with an interest in developing an alternative method to percolation testing also served on this committee. He accompanied Don on several onsite investigations for new and replacement septic systems and Don sold him on what eventually became standard regulatory practice in McHenry County in 1988: the assignment of wastewater loading rates based on soil properties. This practice was soon followed by several other suburban counties, and eventually throughout Illinois.

McHenry County regulators were also looking for a way to prevent the creation and development of "junk" lots; lots platted in areas of wet or clayey soils or areas disturbed by cutting and/or filling that had very severe limitations for development. Working with Potter, Don developed an innovative method for and prepared the first detailed soil map used for subdivision planning as a pilot project in McHenry County.

2023 Honorary Member Nominations

Submitted by Bill Kreznor as presented at the 2023 Annual Meeting

Nomination of Donald J. Fehrenbacher for Honorary Member of the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association (continued)

The method included randomized sampling along a grid system of surveyed points on a topographic base map having a 1- or 2-foot contour interval referenced to USGS datum. The method also required supplemental sampling between those points in order to draft a detailed soil map that could be used to plat individual lots having a contiguous area of soils suited to development. Again, this became the regulatory standard for many of the counties (and some municipalities) in northeastern Illinois.

Many of the contacts that Don made would have been quite happy to have employees of the federal government provide onsite investigations and detailed mapping at little or no cost to them. While Don had no hesitation conducting this type of work as a demonstration or pilot project, he had no interest in routinely providing this service. Rather, he had the foresight to see opportunities for private sector consultants to follow his lead and he urged those regulators, engineers, developers, contractors, planners, etc. to hire or contract with consulting Soil Classifiers in the private sector. By the end of 1989, there were five such consulting Soil Classifiers servicing northeastern Illinois and another four or five working for county regulatory agencies.

Don also realized that for this new industry to become credible and remain viable, and to protect the public welfare, there should be in place an unbiased, professional standard for those conducting this work. He continually urged that regulations require Full Membership in ISCA as a minimum standard to conduct onsite investigations for septic systems, and certification as a Professional Soil Classifier by ISCA or ARCPACS as a minimum standard to prepare detailed soil maps.

I genuinely believe that no one has done more to create the industry of private consulting in soil science as it now exists in Illinois than Don Fehrenbacher.

Throughout his career, Don has served our Association in many roles: two terms as President, one term as Vice-President, chair of the Finance, Nominations, Constitution, By-Laws & Legislative, and Public Relations & Education committees. He remains active, serving as our representative on the State Advisory Commission on Sewage Disposal and on the ISCA Technical Advisory Committee. Without hesitation, I ask you to consider and approve Don Fehrenbacher as an Honorary Member of the Illinois Soil Classifiers Association.

Respectfully submitted,

William R. Kreznor, CPSC
(ISCA) 18 March 2023

2023 Hydric Soils Course

Submitted by Clayton Heffter

We are delighted to announce the success of the 2023 hydric soil course co-sponsored by ISCA, DuPage County Stormwater Management, Engineering Resource Associates, V3 Companies, and M&M Soils. The course was held on Forest Preserve sites in DuPage County and was led by Ken Anderson, Mark Bramstedt, Mary Beth Falsey, Clayton Heffter, and Alicia Metzger, all members and soil classifiers with ISCA. With 44 participants, the course was a resounding success, and we were honored to have Jennifer Smith, the Wisconsin State Soil Scientist, as our special guest.

The two-day course covered a wide range of topics, including:

- The basic properties of hydric soils
- The formation of redoximorphic features
- Soil, landscapes, and water flow
- Hydric soil indicators
- The Midwest Supplement

Participants had the opportunity to learn in the classroom and the field about soil properties and hydric soil indicators, enabling them to better understand the role of hydric soils in wetland delineations.

The course was held at two DuPage County Forest Preserve District sites, providing participants with an opportunity to experience the characteristics of hydric soils firsthand. Participants engaged in hands-on activities such as soil sampling, texturing, and profile descriptions, deepening their understanding of the subject matter.

We would like to thank all of the participants for their interest and participation in the course. We would also like to thank our sponsors for their support. We hope to see you all at our next course!



2023 Hydric Soils Course

Submitted by Clayton Heffter

Check out the ISCA website and social media pages for more photos, information and resources!



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2023 Bent Auger Award Recipient

Submitted by Bob McLeese and Steve Zwicker

Dr. Margenot was nominated by Steve Zwicker during the 2023 Annual Meeting for his outstanding presentation despite the unexpected wet soil pit conditions during the Marshall-Putnam Farm Bureau Nutrient Loss Stewardship Field Day sponsored by Illinois Farm Bureau in cooperation with SWCD on June 29, 2022. Bob McLeese and four of his grandchildren are shown presenting Dr. Andrew Margenot with the Bent Auger Award (bottom). Congratulations Dr. Margenot on your achievement!



Equipment Available

Submitted by Dennis Anthony

Available for free for pick up or you pay for shipping:

3 boxes (appx. 100/box) of 36" zero contamination tubes and probe equipment

Available at:

Winnebago County Soil & Water Conservation District

4833 Owen Center Road

Rockford, Illinois 61101

Contact Dennis Anthony with questions

danthonyswcd@comcast.net



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Submissions

This is **YOUR** newsletter. If you wish to submit material, here are some preferences.

- Send information by the last week of the month before the newsletter is scheduled to be published.
- Digital copy in Microsoft Word
- Use as little formatting (indents, bullets, charts) as possible. This increases the work to get it into Publisher. It can be done, but increases work load for the committee.

The Newsletter Committee reserves the right to make edits/corrections deemed appropriate

Publication Schedule

- Winter (February)
- Spring (May)
- Summer (August)
- Fall (November)



The Illinois Soil Classifiers Association is an organization promoting the wise use of the soil resource. ISCA is made up of professional soil classifiers in public service, private industry, and education and includes students and others interested in preserving soil. A soil classifier maps, describes and interprets soils according to a national system of soil classification. ISCA was established in 1975 and is affiliated with the American Registry of Certified Professionals in Agronomy, Crops, and Soils.

ISCA on Facebook and Twitter

For those of you who want to keep in touch with ISCA members and others interested in soils in Illinois, join our group on Facebook or Twitter. Search Facebook for "Illinois Soil Classifiers Association" or Twitter for @ISCA_Soil. Anyone may post messages, announcements, pictures or events that may be of interest to our membership. These are great platforms for posting information and meetings of other associations or organizations who use soil information. This is also a great place to post pictures of recent projects, interesting soils, or maybe something unrelated to soils, but of general interest to the membership. If you don't have Facebook or Twitter, it is easy to set up. Just go to www.facebook.com or www.twitter.com and follow the instructions. Unfortunately, these sites are restricted on some government computers, so many of you will need to do this at home. Contact webmaster@illinoissoils.org if you have any difficulty or if you have any questions or comments.



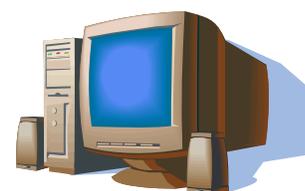
ISCA Newsletter Committee is looking for pictures of its members, past or present, to include in future newsletters!

Submissions can be sent electronically or hard copy to the staff address, see above and left. Please include a narrative for the caption! If hard copies are sent please indicate, if they are to be returned otherwise photographs will be retained in an archive photos file.

www.illinoissoils.org

New, exciting links have been added to the "Announcements" page on our website. Be sure to bookmark this page. It is an excellent resource to keep you informed on the latest soils issues.

Better yet... make it your home page!



ISCA Newsletter
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Maple Park, IL 60151

Visit the ISCA website to see the color version of this newsletter

www.illinoissoils.org/news

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Change of Address Form

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*Mail to: Scott Wiesbrook, ISCA Secretary, 1816 S. Oak St., IL 61820