

## **A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT – 4/9/21**

Greetings from Dahlonega. It has been a strange year to say the least. My condolences to all who have lost friends or family to the Covid 19 pandemic. All of us have been affected and I know it has been especially hard on those with school-age children. Let's continue to hope that the vaccine program will help put the life-changing disruptions from this disease behind us. Being in the vulnerable cohort of over 65 senior citizens, Margret and I were among the first group with the opportunity to get vaccinated. I hope everyone seizes the opportunity now that the vaccine is available to all adults. We are a science-based society and should be at the forefront encouraging family and friends to get the vaccine when available.

Last year (was it 2020?) we met in Athens at Flinchum's Phoenix with literally no idea what lay ahead. Just three weeks after we met the pandemic began to hit home and now we have been through an entire year of remote learning and Zoom meetings that have left us longing for more social interaction. We held our Annual Business meeting by Zoom two weeks ago along with an hour-long discussion on Ethics. Leading up to that for the better part of the year, the Executive Committee debated how, where and when to hold our Annual Meeting. As President-Elect I had put together a program here in Dahlonega complete with our usual field trip and in-person technical sessions and then we had to watch and wait to see if an in-person meeting could really be executed. We discussed doing the entire technical session remotely but that seemed like a gargantuan task for us volunteer officers to pull together and our consensus was that remote learning was just not very satisfying. Not holding our Annual Meeting has left us all short on CEUs that we need to maintain our certification.

So, all that introduction leads us to our first opportunity to see each other in person and earn some much needed CEUs. On April 26, we have scheduled a Field Day at the Georgia Experiment Station in Griffin. Led by Dr. Gary Hawkins of the UGA faculty, we will be looking at different types of products for absorption fields and discussing some of the critical aspects of installation. Several stations will be set up where we will get hands-on experience with product installation and with laser transits used to assure level systems. Tom Vanderboom and Chris Kumnick with DPH will be attending and will share the latest updates on rules and will be available for a wide ranging Q & A session about product performance and the status of the Soil Classifier program. More details about the Field Day will follow. For now mark your calendars for 10:00 AM Monday April 26 at the UGA Experiment Station at 1109 Experiment Street in Griffin. Directions to locate the field site will be provided. Plan to arrive early if you can for some socializing so we can get started promptly at 10:00. We will be meeting for two hours in the morning, break for lunch then two more hours in the afternoon. This will fulfill the required 4 hours of field CEUs to maintain our certification.

Before closing I want to congratulate Rick Joslyn on his election as President-Elect for 2021-2022. Rick and I will be meeting to discuss plans for our Annual Meeting in 2022. Our current thoughts are to meet in Dahlonega using the same facilities that I had planned for 2021. More to follow in the coming months. In the meantime feel free to give me a call, text or email to discuss whatever is on your mind.

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