

Field Archaeology



Beginning an Excavation

This cut-out is a 2x2 meter unit. Notice the string and pegs holding the corners square. All the measurements need to be exact.



These students are opening a 1x1 meter unit.

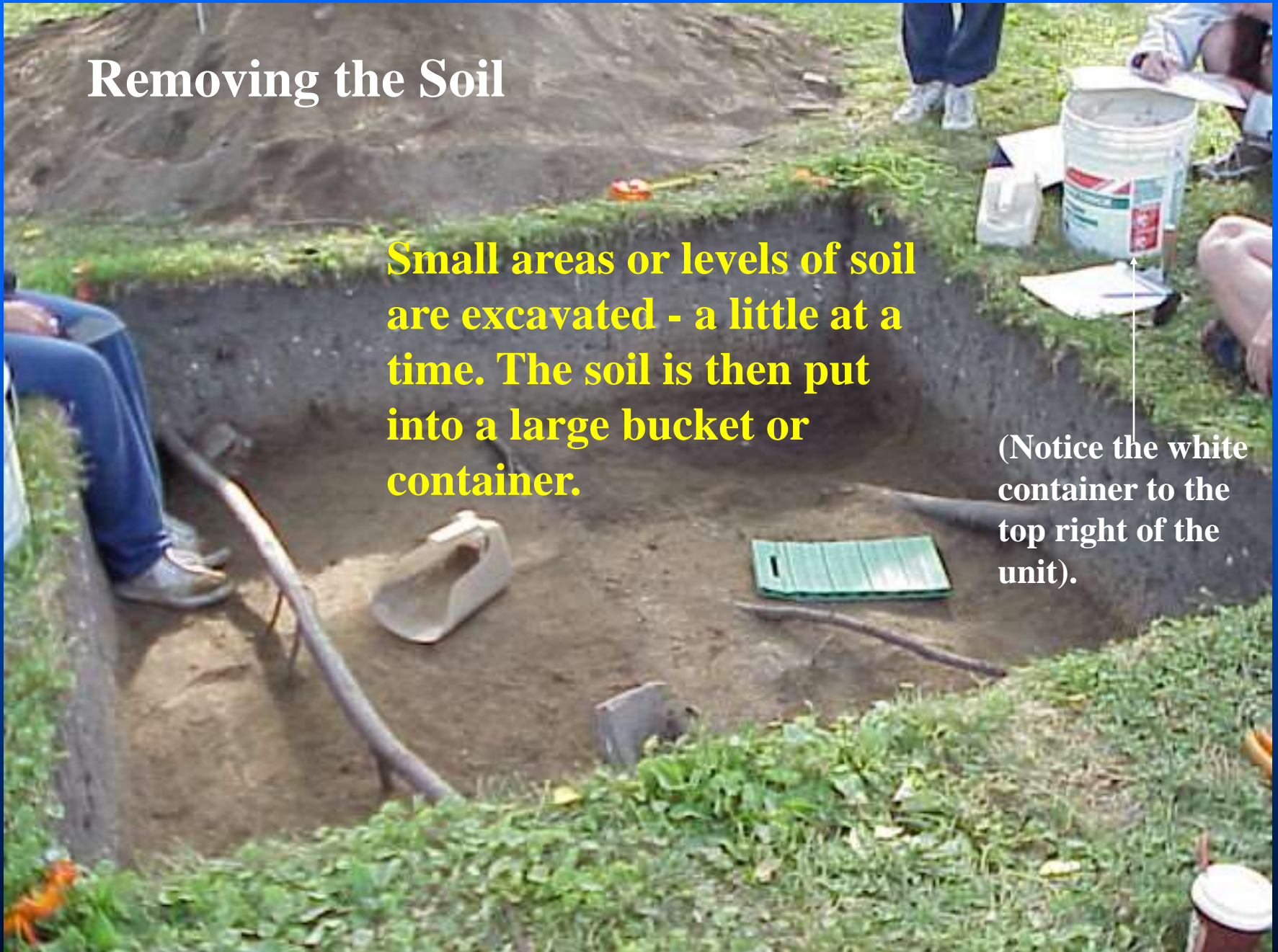
Special tools are needed to peel off the layers of soil. Here, field school students are using trowels and dustpans.



Removing the Soil

Small areas or levels of soil are excavated - a little at a time. The soil is then put into a large bucket or container.

(Notice the white container to the top right of the unit).



Here is a member of the team placing soil into a container.



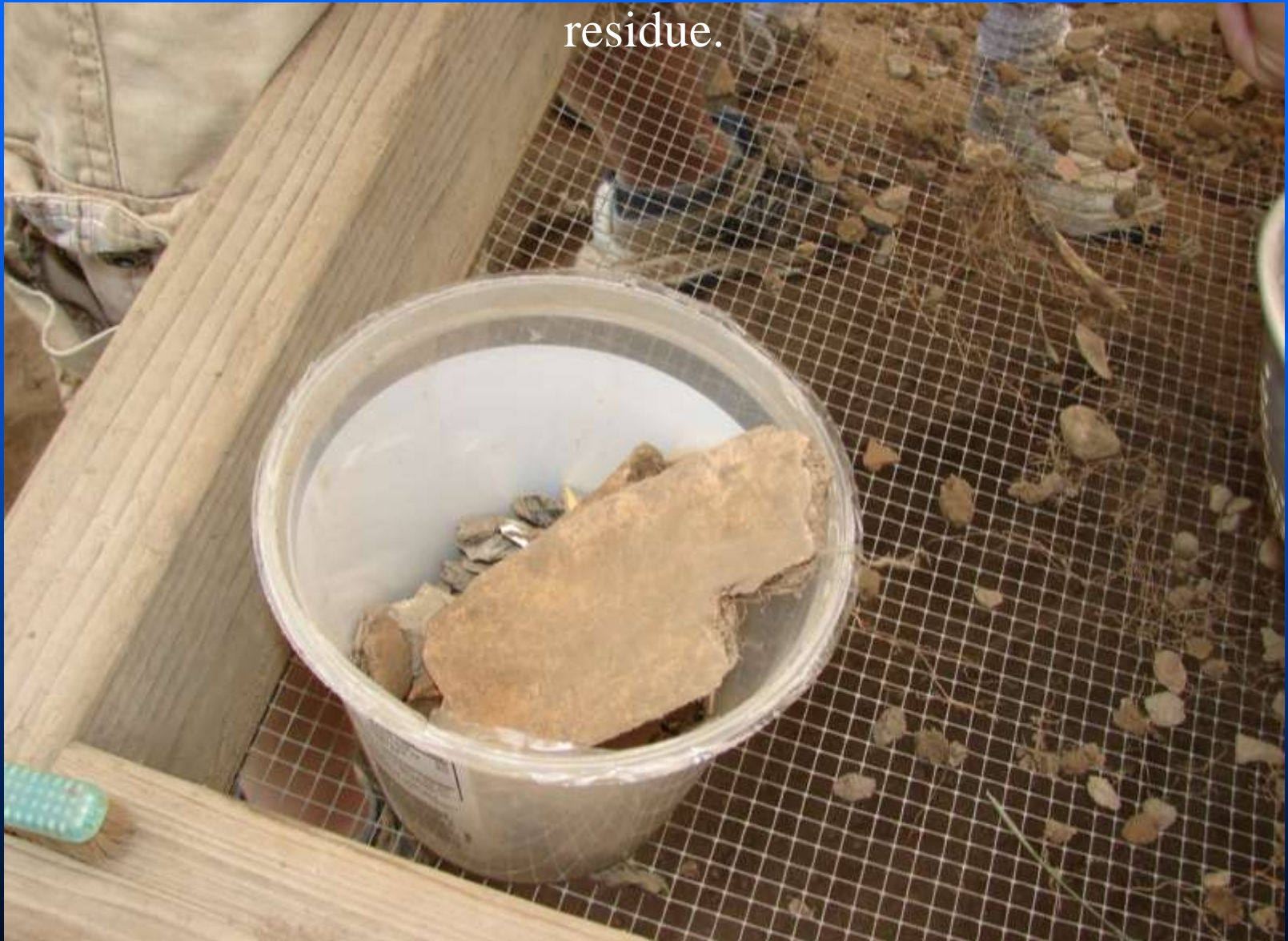


The container of soil is emptied onto a screen. These amateur “archaeologists” are going through the soil, looking for artifacts that haven’t fallen through the screen.



This is a close-up shot of objects that are left on the screen. Some of the materials in the container are debitage (chipped stone flakes) and food residue. These materials are called “cultural debris”.

A large animal bone is placed in a container and kept on one side of the screen. An animal bone is an example of food residue.



Bones fragments are then placed in labeled bags.

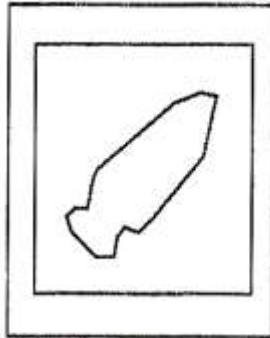


Small artifacts, such as this trade bead, are placed in small containers.



And artifacts,
such as this
Levanna Point,
are labeled and
placed in clear
plastic bags.





Site: Huguenot Street

Object: Projectile point

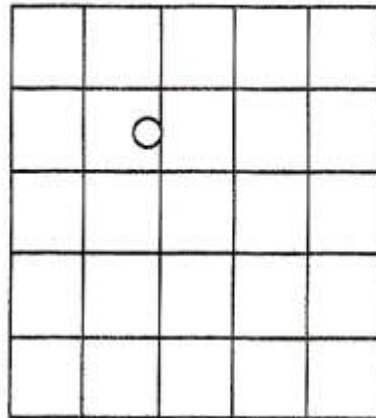
Square: #A1 (The Pit)

Depth: 18"

Level: 3

Date: _____

Excavator: Susan



Remarks The object was found with 6 small chips

of similar material

Artifact # H.A1.32

This is an example of the front of an envelope used to store small artifacts. All fields for each artifact must be clearly labeled.

The soil eventually piles up under the screen.





More soil!!!



**Professional archaeologist,
Dr. Joseph Diamond, assists
students through all aspects
of the field school.**



Sometimes
archaeologists
have to work in
uncomfortable
situations.

A new crew member!



A student measuring the height of her unit.



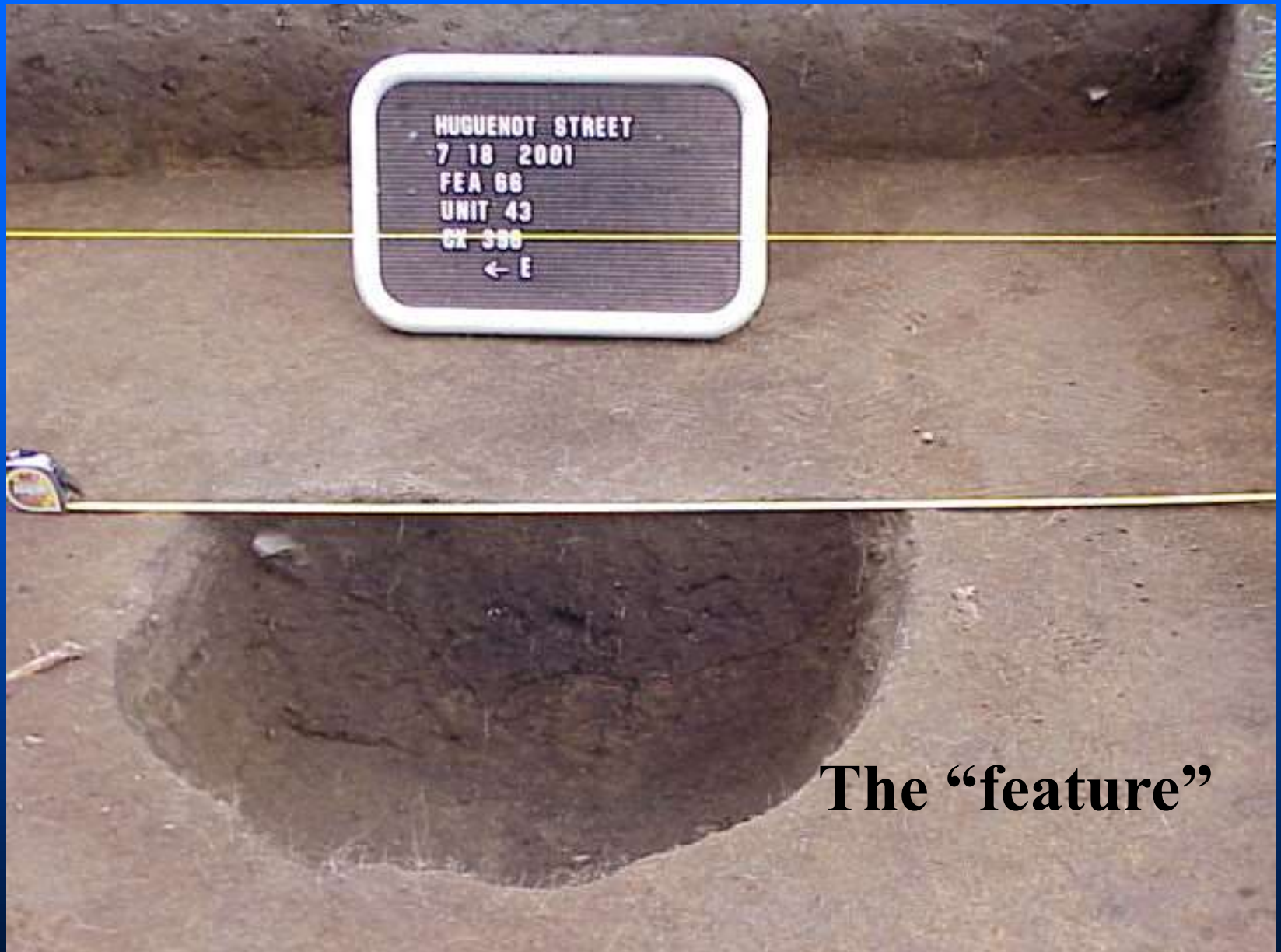
Archaeologists need to take photographs of every unit that is excavated. They use special sign boards which include detailed information about where the site is located, the date the photo is taken, the number of the unit, and an arrow showing the directions (North, East, West or South).



Fire-cracked rocks

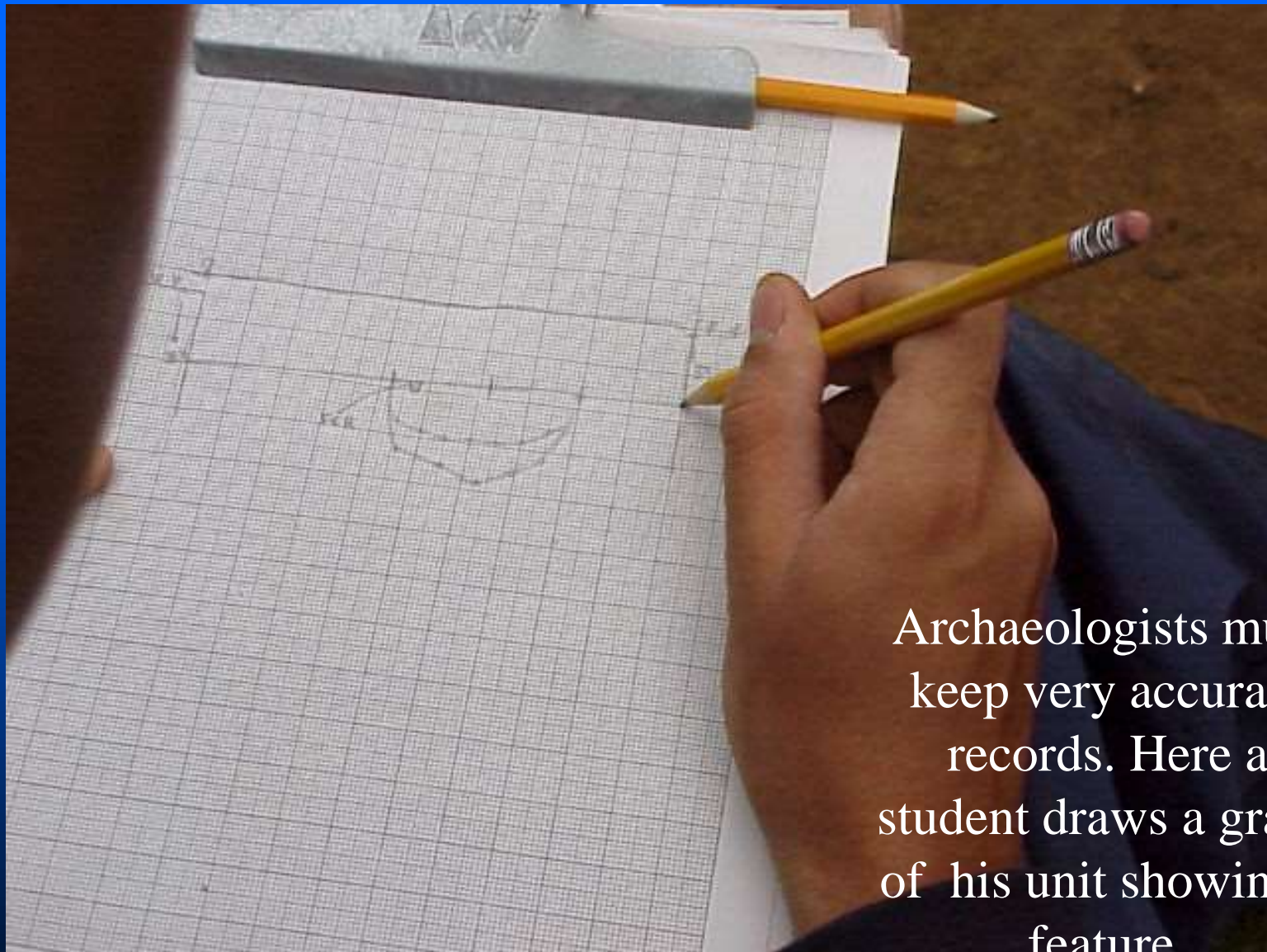
These students are excavating a “feature”. A feature appears as a discoloration in the soil. It shows evidence of human activity. Some examples of features would be post molds, storage pits, or hearths.





The “feature”

(Notice the sign board on the top of the slide)



Archaeologists must keep very accurate records. Here a student draws a graph of his unit showing a feature.

This is a very deep “feature”.





Can you guess what kind of animal was buried here?



Here, archaeology students are using a hose to clean small pieces that were left on the screen.

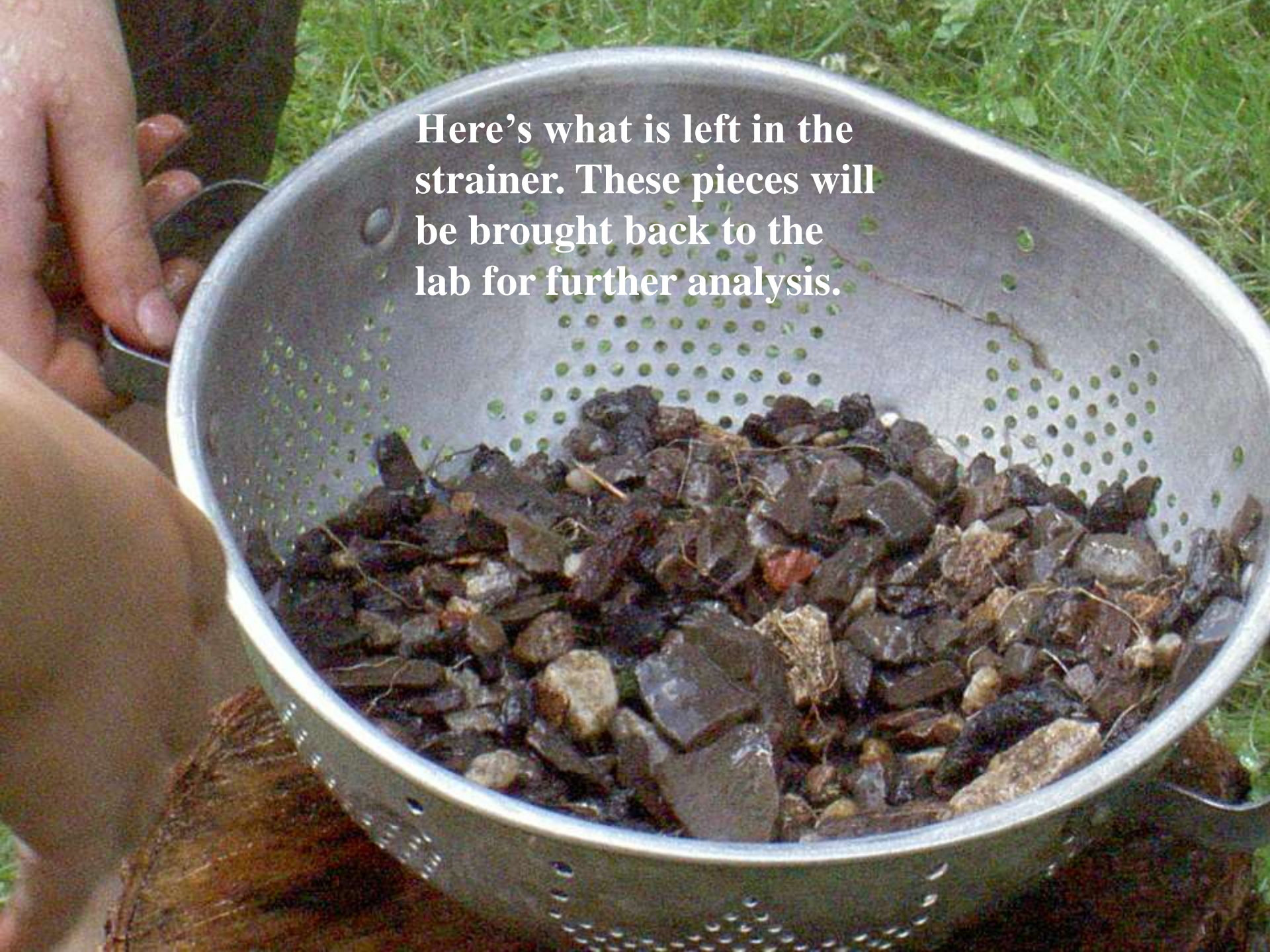
If there isn't a hose nearby, buckets of water can be used to help filter smaller objects.



This student is placing a strainer in the bucket of water.



Here's what is left in the strainer. These pieces will be brought back to the lab for further analysis.



Back at the Lab



Here at the lab,
archaeology
students are
analyzing data.



A student is using a magnifying lens and a bright lamp to sort very small pieces of food residue.



This student is using an old toothbrush to carefully clean an artifact. It appears to be an animal bone fragment.



Analyzing bone fragments at the lab.

When archaeology field school is over, students fill in the units and replant the grass.



In several weeks no sign of the excavation will be visible. The soil, which once contained clues of the past, is shoveled back in the ground, leaving its secrets for us to learn from.

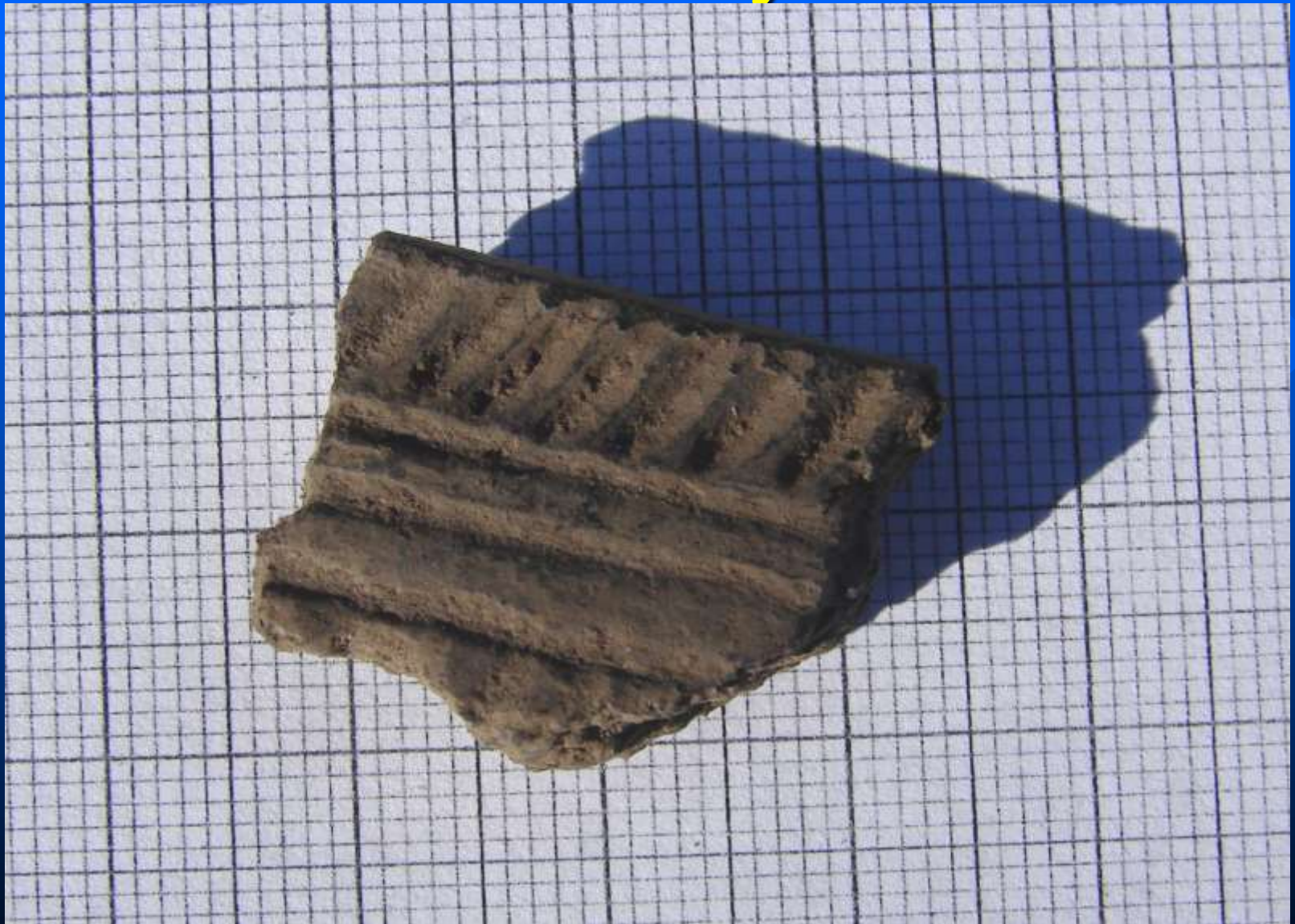
- Special thanks to Dr. Joseph Diamond, professor of archaeology at SUNY, New Paltz, Victoria Hughes, director of education at Historic Huguenot Street and all the field school and archaeology camp students.

■ The End

Additional Images

The background of the slide features a dark blue gradient. Overlaid on this are several thick, parallel diagonal stripes in a lighter shade of blue, running from the top-left towards the bottom-right. The stripes are spaced evenly and create a sense of depth and movement.

Pottery









A trade
bead

A Levanna Point

