

MCATEE RECEIVES LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The March of Dimes Southeast Pennsylvania Chapter cited **Joseph McAtee** as the recipient of its Lifetime Achievement Award. This honor was presented to Joe at Chapter's 23rd Annual Transportation, Building, & Construction Awards Luncheon at the Pennsylvania Convention Center on March 16.

The Luncheon recognizes leaders from both the public and private sectors of the transportation, building, and construction industries. Joe is a founding volunteer of the Luncheon and has served as a Board Member and sponsor of the event since its inception, as well as the Chair for the Luncheon's board in 2005-07. He was selected by a committee of his peers and honored for his achievement and leadership in their respective professions and for his efforts to promote economic development within Southeastern Pennsylvania. In the Luncheon's 23-year history, more than \$2 million has been raised for the March of Dimes mission. Urban Engineers served as a platinum sponsor of this year's Luncheon. Other honorees included Philadelphia Mayor **Jim Kenney** and Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Secretary **Leslie Richards**.

Joe joined Urban in 1967 and became one of its principal owners in 1993. He most recently served as the Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, and currently serves as a Senior Consultant for the firm. A graduate of Drexel University with a Bachelors degree in Civil Engineering, he has been an active member of numerous professional societies and a recognized leader in his profession. In addition to his activity in our Section, he has served as President of American Council of Engineering Companies/PA (ACEC/PA) in 2007-08. In 2005, he was appointed to the Construction Management Association of America (CMAA) Foundation Board and was elected to its College of Fellows in 2004. In 2003, he was named Chairman of the Construction Manager Certification Institute.

Joe has been cited for his contributions to the Engineering profession by several organizations. In 1990, our Section honored him as Construction Engineer of the Year, and as Civil Engineer of the Year in 2001. ACEC/PA presented him with the 2011 Distinguished Award of Merit. He received Drexel University's Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2012, he was presented with his Life Membership certificate from ASCE.

Congratulations to Joe on this honorable recognition!

APRIL DINNER MEETING

Philadelphia Section, American Society of Civil Engineers

THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2016

The Mansion at Villanova Conference Center, 601 County Line Road, Radnor, PA
Cocktails 5:30 PM, Dinner 6:30 PM, Meeting 7:30 PM

This meeting will follow the "breakout" format used that has been the theme of our April event for the last six years. Attendees will assemble in the main room of the Center for dinner and announcements, then move to other rooms depending on which topic they want to hear. There will be a choice of three separate modules/topics as described below.

RESERVATION DEADLINE – FRIDAY, APRIL 8. The cost per attendee is \$40, with a half-price (\$20) cost for government agency employees and students, for reservations received by this deadline.

RESERVATIONS RECEIVED AFTER APRIL 8: Reservations received after the deadline and "walk-ups" without prior reservations paying at the door will be charged \$50 (government agency employees and students will be charged the regular \$20 rate), but will be subject to acceptance on a space-available basis. Please note that payment via PayPal will NOT be available at the close at the reservation deadline.

THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT SPACE WILL BE AVAILABLE IF YOU DO NOT RESERVE A SPACE. Walk-ins and anyone without a reservation will be handled on a space-available basis.

Reservations can be made via e-mail at info@asce-philly.org or electronically through our website (www.asce-philly.org) and pay via **PayPal**. As noted above, the PayPal option will NOT be available as a payment option after the reservation deadline. Payment for reservations by check (made payable to "Philadelphia Section ASCE") will be accepted at the reservation table at the door as an option to electronic payment.

As always, guests will be welcome to attend the presentation without dinner at no charge. The individual modules will be subject to room capacity constraints.

SPECIAL FEATURES:

LIFE MEMBERS NIGHT – Newly-inducted Life Members will be featured and honored at this meeting as guests of the Section.

PAST PRESIDENTS NIGHT – Past Presidents are invited to attend this meeting as guests of the Section in appreciation of their service and assistance.

The featured "breakout" sessions will consist of the following:

Total Precast Bridge Structures & BIM (sponsored by the Structural Engineering Institute (SEI))

SPEAKER: Russel Dickson, Pennstress

This presentation will offer a summary of various types of total precast bridge structures including the Ashcom Project, a one for one replacement of a conventional cast-in-place (CIP) concrete bridge, multiple deck modular structures with integral abutments, the PennDOT District 9 "Chain" precast bridge structures, a precast multi-span arched pedestrian bridge, and precast structures on I-78 in Lehigh and Berks Counties.

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SPRING SOCIAL & DINNER DANCE

Philadelphia Section, American Society of Civil Engineers

THURSDAY, MAY 5, 2016

LeMeridien Hotel, 1421 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA

Please hold the date for our 2016 Spring Social. We will be returning to the **LeMeridien Hotel**, 1421 Arch Street, Center City (across Arch Street from the Municipal Services Building) on **Thursday, May 5**. Details will be provided in the May edition of *THE NEWS*.



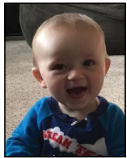
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I can't believe spring is finally here! I hope everyone has been enjoying the relatively warm weather and all the beauty that spring has to offer. I also can't believe I am in the last few months of my Presidency. It has been an exciting year with many accomplishments to date. If you remember back, one of my main goals for this year that I spoke about in my induction speech was to help develop excellent technical programs and dinner meetings that would help draw more members to our meetings. I am happy to report that the attendance at our monthly dinner meetings has been off the charts this year! I attribute this to the variety of very interesting topics and outstanding speakers that we have been able to provide as well as to our new venue, Maggiano's, where we are able to offer our members good food at a good price as well as an opportunity to network throughout the evening and not just at cocktail hour.

Another important goal that I wanted to help accomplish was the completion of the much anticipated 100th Anniversary Centennial Book. I am again happy to report that we are making great strides in the completion of the book which is currently due to be wrapped up this summer (keep your eye out for a draft cover that will be unveiled at the Spring Social). The book will highlight all the accomplishments of Civil Engineering in our Section over the past 100 years.

Behind the scenes we have been working diligently this year to firm up and really dissect our Section budget. This will allow future Boards to easily understand what is needed to create the yearly budget, when disbursements need to be made and when revenues are expected. We are also preparing Standard Operating Procedures for all Board positions that will list the responsibilities and any other helpful information that is associated with each Section Board position. This will help new Section Board members understand their expected task as they take office.

All of these accomplishments could not have been realized without the help of the volunteers, members and most importantly my amazing Board who continuously support our Section throughout the year. I am truly honored to have been able to work alongside of them. Their passion, dedication and energy have helped me continue to make our Section great. Thank you for all you do!



And now for a quick update on our little buddy John. John has been very busy this past month. He has managed to perfect the art of rolling from his back to his belly which makes it very difficult to change him these days! He is also desperately trying to crawl; he has the idea down but ends up giving up and swimming on the carpet with his little arms and legs flailing up and down. John also has developed and extensive vocabulary these days including Ma, Bah and Da (or some form of it). And his most important accomplishment is his ability to devour pureed fruits (don't ask about vegetables, he is currently having no part of them!). He amazes us every day with his new tricks. We are very excited for the warm weather to get him outside on the swings and eventually in the pool!

Sincerely,
AnnMarie Vigilante, P.E.
President, ASCE Philadelphia Section

THE VIGILANTE PRESIDENCY — JOHN'S MOM DOES GOOD...

Dictated by tradition, one that pre-dates your current Editor's occupancy of that seat (and probably even pre-dates your Editor lifetime-wise!), we take some time to put together a summary and in some ways a "roast" of the standing Section President as his/her term comes to a close. This time around the President is a "her" and we therefore continue this mysterious tradition and offer our take on the term of one AnnMarie Vigilante, as we wouldn't want to upset the cosmic apple cart or get karma out of whack, and we'd hate to see the loyal followers of *THE NEWS* (the tens of them) rise up and revolt. (They tend to be a bit revolting anyway...)

We do this in each year's April edition, and in some ways we wonder if there's a tie-in to April Fool's Day, which gives the President an opportunity for rebuttal in May. Some of you may ask why we do it, but, as noted, it's not that we want to, it's more that we have to, and we've never bothered to ask any President whether he or she would like to have it or not. When your Editor inherited the captain's chair of *THE NEWS*, it was one of the "musts" that came with the job. So the effort continues, such that it is. Where the previous and exalted occupant of the Editor's desk would pen this piece using words that most of us did not know existed or hadn't seen since we took the

SAT's, and often forced us to blow the dust off that dictionary in our bookcases that we never use, the more mediocre Ivy League alum who currently holds that spot prefers run-on sentences (e.g. this one), despite his rigorous Catholic school training in all things grammar.

And one last caveat — this is all in fun, but it is based on the facts as we know them. As you may know, your Editor does admit to not always paying attention to detail, and he is getting close to being able to blame this on age as well as late-onset ADD (some of you may think he's well past that point...), so the facts may be a bit subjective and in some cases a little bit stretched or distorted. We'll let you, the reader, be the judge.

AnnMarie Vigilante must have had a tough time growing up, since every boy who ever watched cowboy movies knows what a "vigilante" is and the teasing must have been brutal. (You can almost hear the jokes — lookin' for them cattle rustlers?, thar's a new sheriff in town, we don't need no steenkin' badges...) She seems to have survived it well and maybe that's where some of her boundless energy and enthusiasm comes from. While her "day job" finds her at Langan Engineering and Environmental Science's office in Doylestown, where she is a Senior Associate

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** In accordance with our Constitution and Bylaws, only the immediate Past President will serve on the Board, and only for a one-year term. We show the most recent three Past Presidents as has become our tradition.*

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COPY DEADLINE FOR

MAY 2016 ISSUE

APRIL 15, 2016

YOUNGER MEMBER FORUM NEWS

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Chris Renfro, Forum President 2015-16

Philadelphia Department of Streets

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GIRLS EXPLORING TOMORROW'S TECHNOLOGY

MARCH 12

West Chester East High School

Several volunteers representing the YMF volunteered at a STEM Outreach event aimed towards high school girls. More than 600 girls from various Delaware Valley high schools attended this rapidly-growing annual event containing both an expo and career exploration sessions. YMF Volunteers ran two sessions of "Keeping You in Suspens(ion)," a suspension bridge-building activity, as well as a "tallest tower" competition at the expo.

SPRING-FORD ENGINEERS WEEK OUTREACH FEBRUARY 23 AND 24

Spring-Ford High School, Royersford

During National Engineers Week, YMF K-12 co-chair **Charlie Mumford** coordinated visits to two schools for engineering panel discussions, presentations, and hands-on activities. **Giselle Schlegel** and **Nicholas Silva** of both the American Institute of Chemical Engineers and the Engineers' Club of Philadelphia Committee on Younger Members as well as fellow YMF board members **Kevin Brown** and **Katrina Lawrence** were also crucial to making the week a success. To coordinate the visit to Spring-Ford High School, College Career Counselor **Kathleen McNeill** worked with the YMF to present to students involved in their Engineering Project Lead The Way (PLTW) classes. Thank you to YMF volunteers **Mohamed Elghawy**, **Chris Gray**, **Alexa Harper**, **Drew Horgan**, and **Brian Ward** for donating their time to help students make choices about their future.

NORTH PENN ENGINEERS WEEK OUTREACH FEBRUARY 26

North Penn High School, Lansdale

For the second visit during Engineers Week, in full interdisciplinary spirit, the YMF recruited Engineers outside the civil field in order to fulfill North Penn's wish that students be exposed to multiple types of engineering. **William Michael**, North Penn's Technology and Engineering Education Department Chair, coordinated with the YMF to set up a Q&A session before breaking into groups for hands-on Civil, Chemical, and Manufacturing Engineering activities. Thank you to AICHE and ECP's Committee on Younger Members for sharing in the planning efforts and to volunteers **Giselle Schlegel**, **Ted Heron**, **Colleen Guyre**, **Yasmina Shields**, **Assunta Maria**, **Caroline Voigtsberger**, **Takashi Izutsu**, **Cory Bogas**, and **Charlie Mumford** for allowing 210 students to experience Engineering!

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY

APRIL 17

Fireside Bar & Grill, Ambler

The YMF is again joining forces with ASHE Delaware Valley for the first cleanup of our adopted highway in 2016. We're meeting at Fireside Bar & Grill in Ambler, before walking our segment of Bethlehem Pike—from Butler Pike to the Lafayette Avenue Connector—to pick up trash and have a good time! Afterwards, light refreshments will be provided at Fireside Bar & Grill. Please RSVP by April 8 at www.ymfphilly.org. This is a FREE event.

CRITICAL ISSUES SEMINAR

APRIL 21

Time Restaurant, Philadelphia

Join us for our annual **Critical Issues Seminar**, a panelist-led discussion focusing on a key issue facing the Engineering profession, being held on the second floor at Time Restaurant, Whiskey Bar, & Taproom. This year's topic will be "Grassroots Engineering - Government Relations for the Young Engineer." Learn about getting involved in government relations early on in your career, making the most of your ASCE resources, and how to become an advocate for our industry! Please RSVP by April 15 at www.ymfphilly.org. This is a FREE event, but you must be 21+ to attend.

MAR STUDENT CONFERENCE JOINT NETWORKING SOCIAL

APRIL 22

Celebrate the end of the work-week with Drexel University and the YMF as they welcome the region's colleges to the weekend of competitions. Attendees will enjoy complimentary appetizers and discounted drinks while conversing with graduating engineers. More details and a link to RSVP can be found at www.ymfphilly.org. To volunteer at the locally-held competitions on Saturday & Sunday (the 23rd & 24th), contact **Chris Renfro** at cjrenfro84@gmail.com.

CANSTRUCTION EXHIBIT

MAY 14-22

The Shops at Liberty Place

Can't wait to hear what the YMF has planned for CANstruction? Oh, SNAP! From the Polaroid camera to Snapchat, we will take you on a tour of your favorite forms of instant-gratification photographs through the decades! Contact **Eammon Farley** at EFarley@mccormicktaylor.com to get involved with remaining tasks leading up to **Build Night** on May (Friday the) 13th.

UPCOMING YMF EVENTS

Philadelphia Cycling Infrastructure Tour: Join the YMF this spring on a bicycle tour of the city highlighting bicycle infrastructure in Philly. More details to follow!

I-676 Bridge Replacement Project Construction Tour: Join the YMF this spring to see firsthand what is taking place overhead as you traverse the Vine Street Expressway. More details to follow!

SPONSOR PROFILE

PENNONI THANKS ITS CLIENTS, TEAMING PARTNERS, AND STAFF FOR 50 YEARS OF SUCCESS

As Pennoni celebrates 50 years in business, the company reaffirms its commitment to provide personalized service to clients and to determine the solution that best suits their needs. Established in 1966, Pennoni is a multidisciplinary firm that employs more than 1,200 professional, technical, and administrative personnel strategically located to best serve our growing list of clients around the world. It provides services to local, state, and federal governments and private, commercial, industrial, and construction clients, as well as to other professional firms.

With an Employee Stock Ownership Program (ESOP) in place, Pennoni's staff dedicate themselves daily to client service, to giving back to the community, and to nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit of its employee-owners. The firm has received numerous awards for its work as well as its corporate culture, including national rankings by the Zweig Group and Engineering News-Record. Pennoni is ranked as the Number 3 Engineering Firm in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Area by the Philadelphia Business Journal. At the national level, the firm was named Engineering News Record's Mid-Atlantic 2014 Design Firm of the Year and was ranked 95th on the Engineering News-Record's 2015 list of Top 500 Design Firms and 68th on their list of the Top 100 'Pure' Designers.

From its establishment, Pennoni's longevity through a constantly evolving industry has provided opportunities to continually expand the range of services provided to most effectively meet the needs of its clients. Today, it offers a broad range of professional services including: Civil/Site, Construction Services, Environmental, Geotechnical, Landscape Architecture & Planning, MEP, Structural, Survey & Geomatics, Transportation, Water Resources, and Water/Wastewater.

Pennoni has always had strong roots in Philadelphia, beginning with the establishment of a small structural engineering firm in West Philadelphia by Founder and Past Section President C.R. "Chuck" Pennoni in March 1966. Over the last five decades, the firm has been involved in the planning, design, and construction of some of Philadelphia's most recognizable landmarks. Pennoni's staff have helped bring to life Citizens Bank Park, the Cira Center, the Pennsylvania Convention Center, the Comcast Center, the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, the campuses of Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania, segments of I-76 and I-676, the Navy Yard, the Philadelphia Eagles' Novacare Complex practice facilities, the National Constitution Center, the Schuylkill River Trail, and the Philadelphia Zoo, to name a few.

It is with great pride that Pennoni announces and celebrates its 50th Anniversary. This is a monumental corporate milestone that could have only been achieved through quality workmanship, strong client relationships, and a dedicated staff with unique skills. In the coming years, the firm will continue to strive toward excellence through the

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MARCH JOINT LUNCH MEETING

March 10, 2016

Maggiano's Little Italy, Center City

Manayunk Bridge Trail Connection

by Robert Wright, Editor

Spring was in the air – maybe even summer, given the record-warm temperature for late winter – and if another hint that the impending end of winter was needed, the Flower Show was in full “bloom” around the corner from our March meeting venue at Maggiano's in Center City. Our Section returned there for the first time since November, conducting our sixth dinner meeting with a room-filling crowd of over 90 attendees who decided to forego the unusually nice weather outside to see how an iconic bridge was reused for a different mode of transportation than it was originally intended.

President-Elect **Guy DiMartino**, filling in for President **AnnMarie Vigilante**, settled the crowd down and got them to their seats and away from the bar for Past President **Ruben David's** usually good invocation/grace, and the dinner feast began. As the meal was winding down, President-Elect DiMartino returned to the podium for a few announcements and the introduction of Temple University's Student Chapter President **Jacob Nichols** to present information on the Chapter's activities. **Jared Celona** also gave a short update on the newly-formed ASHE Student Chapter at Temple. Following this, Younger Member Forum President **Chris Renfro** and Director **Spencer Finch** came forward to introduce the evening's speakers.

Chris Leswing, the Assistant Director of Building and Planning for Lower Merion Township, began the presentation with some history and background. The structure dates to 1918 and was built by the Pennsylvania Railroad for its line paralleling the Schuylkill River from Philadelphia to Pottstown. Commuter trains used this line from then until SEPTA truncated the service at Cynwyd in 1986. Severe concrete spalling and deterioration was addressed in a project to restore the bridge in the early 1990's and make conditions safe, more for those beneath it. The opportunity to adaptively reuse the bridge to connect the Cynwyd Trail on the Township side of the Schuylkill with the Main Street-Manayunk restaurant/entertainment district, the Valley Forge Trail, and the Manayunk Canal Towpath in Philadelphia seemed worth exploring. Funding was obtained and evaluation efforts began, with the determination that there was a desire for such use by pedestrians and bicyclists. If this could be effected, it would be the first exclusive ped/bicycle bridge across the River.

Mr. Leswing outlined the myriad of government agencies that would need to be consulted and brought in for support of the proposal. Funding from the William Penn Foundation was obtained and this was used to leverage dollars from the Federal Highway Administration, PennDOT, PADCED, and both the Township and City. SEPTA, as the owner of the structure, would need to approve any new use and changes that might result. A design consultant, Whitman Requardt and Associates LLP (WRA), was selected for the planning, engineering, final design and community coordination of the effort, in 2011.



WRA's project team leaders, **Jeff Riegner**, Vice President and **Mike Campbell**, Associate, walked the crowd through the project design and development process. One early-on decision was how to accommodate the higher-speed bicyclists along with the more casual bikers and pedestrians. Several paver patterns were developed and reviewed with stakeholders and community groups, with a separation provided simply with different textured surfaces. The existing overhead electric wires, still providing critical power transmission for Amtrak and PECO, had to remain in place, thus the catenary support structures would need to stay, but the architectural elements of the bridge railings were designed to complement them. New railings and fences were provided as those existing would not be adequate for the new users of the bridge.

The community outreach process was comprehensive and Messrs. Riegner and Campbell explained these efforts. There was a desire expressed for landscaping, but the design team found that there were few opportunities for “greening” on the bridge itself and limited space for such on the Manayunk trailhead/plaza. The project was able to be moved to the bidding stage in 2013, with AP Construction as the successful low bidder/contractor, with a total project value of nearly \$5 million.

Trevor Booz of the City of Philadelphia Department of Streets led the construction management team. He outlined the various issues and difficulties encountered during construction. He explained that one element that could not be provided given the funding constraints was trail lighting, but infrastructure has been included to allow for this in the future. As a result, the bridge is closed and gated during nighttime hours.

Mr. Riegner added that the bridge was opened for use on October 30 with considerable fanfare, and users are already asking for possible extensions to connect directly to the Valley Forge Trail and Manayunk Canal Towpath. He also thanked Kay Sykora of the Manayunk Development Corporation, a key project supporter and a planned speaker at this meeting who was unable to attend.

Several insightful questions were posed by the audience and ably addressed by the presenters.

President-Elect DiMartino closed out the presentation and thanked everyone for coming, and he presented tokens of the Section's appreciation to each speaker for a job well done.

2016 SECTION AWARDS

Our Section Awards will be presented at our **Annual Spring Social and Dinner Dance on May 5** at the **Le Meridien Hotel** in Center City. More information and details on the Social will be included in the May edition of *THE NEWS*.

A total of six Award recipients have been nominated for these honors and approved by our Section Board of Directors. The honorees are:

David Fleisher, Fleisher Forensics –

Philadelphia Civil Engineer of the Year

Drew Sirianni, Pennoni Associates –

Philadelphia Young Civil Engineer of the Year

Kristin Leese, Amtrak – Young Government Engineer of the Year

Gary Knappick, City of Philadelphia

Department of Public Property – Government Engineer of the Year

Jeremy Colello, HNTB – Transportation

Engineer of the Year

Megan Syrnick, Hill International –

Construction Engineer of the Year

We hope you will join us at the Social to honor our Awardees for this year.

When we return from our summer vacation, in the October edition of *THE NEWS*, we will present more information on the awardees as well as a detailed report on the Social. (Or you could just attend the Social and not have to wait until October...!)

VIGILANTE PRESIDENCY

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and Vice President, handling roadway and traffic projects mainly in the northern extremes of our area and leaking into the Lehigh Valley, last summer she added another full-time responsibility as John's mom. (Some may prefer to view this as her taking on outside employment as the second career with mom being the more important assignment, but we'll leave that to the reader.) You've seen the photos of “little John” in each one of her President's messages, a veritable fashion show of his Popeye Halloween costume, his snowsuit, enjoying his “bacon” teether, and others, and he seems happy with all of this exposure as the “co-star” of proud Mom's monthly messages. We hope his college fund isn't based on the royalties he'll be getting for this... Your Editor heard some grumbling (please recall the sentence above about his not paying attention – whether he actually listened to these complaints is another story...) when space did not permit a John photo to appear in the February edition. While we did make up for it with a “two-fer” in March, it just wasn't quite the same... And we made darned sure we didn't repeat that error!

AnnMarie took over the Section Presidency on a nice spring evening last May, at our well-attended Spring Social at the LeMeridien Hotel, in what had to be an interesting year for her. She managed to do a couple of life's more stressful things in a short time – moving into her current home earlier that year and having John in August – and seemingly didn't flinch, so taking on our top job must have been a veritable piece of cake. With her involvement in the Section as Secretary and on up the presidential track for several years, she knew what she was getting into, but she also knew she had a good Board and officers in place

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VIGILANTE PRESIDENCY

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to help her. One could say she planned well, since John's arrival was during our usual summer "hiatus", but she was back into the swing of things when our activity picked up again in September and didn't miss a beat. Those of us who know her were not the least bit surprised. Her performance as one of the key people in the Delaware Valley Engineers Week Committee, coordinating the various awards of Engineers Week, and taking the spotlight at the Engineers Week Luncheon to announce the various scholarship, student paper and associated winners also seemed to occur almost seamlessly.

And not that her business life isn't complicated... AnnMarie has been at Langan for the past eleven years, and she oversees the Traffic and Transportation Department for the firm's Pennsylvania operations, covering four offices and an extensive geographic area, as noted. She is a proud Penn State grad, obtaining her Bachelors degree in Civil Engineering with a minor in Environmental Engineering there in 1996. She also has a Masters degree in Engineering Management from Drexel. The reason she doesn't sound like she's from around here is that she's not, being a product from the Scranton area in that "upstate" place that generally covers anywhere in Pennsylvania outside of our metropolitan area. (We sometimes call folks from that neck of the woods "coal crackers" but use that term at your own risk...!)

AnnMarie is good at what she does and this has been recognized in a few ways. In 2014 she was honored by our Section as our Transportation Engineer of the Year. A couple of months before that, she was cited as one of several recipients of the 2014 Lehigh Valley Women of Influence Award. (So '14 was a good year for her...) With John's arrival in 2015 being a notable life event for her, 2016 should also be memorable. When her term as President is finished, she's not going to Disney World (the preference of most Super Bowl MVP's and other famous folks), but she will be getting married this summer, another stress-filled event (!), so good luck to her and her intended, Ethan, on this.

Given our self-imposed (you're welcome...) page limit on The News these days, we see this is getting a little lengthy, and we hope we have been able to give you a little insight on our outgoing President. In any event, we thank AnnMarie for her service to our Section and offer her the customary reward of being honored as a Past President in a month or so as she wanders off into the sunset, like every vigilante in those cowboy movies we mentioned at the start of this tale, once their good deeds were done and the "varmints" were pushed to the next town. (Which seems like job protection, since the vigilante can go to the next town and push them out, and so forth...) Her term was a great one, and, as usual, the proverbial bar has been set high for her successor, Guy DiMartino, who will have to do all of this without John's help (note to Guy – you might want to talk with AnnMarie about hiring John as a consultant...). We're sure Guy will do well, and this time next year tradition will once again dictate that we do this "roast" for him.

N-ASCE*

AMERICA'S SUDDEN U-TURN ON HIGHWAY FONTS

In a notice posted in the *Federal Register* on January 25, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced a small change that has huge implications for the nation. The agency terminated an order it had issued back in 2004 approving the use of a new font in highway signs. Now those signs are going to change. Again.

By ending its "Interim Approval for Use of Clearview Font for Positive Contrast Legends on Guide Signs," the FHWA reversed its position on Clearview, a font developed to improve highway-sign legibility on the roads. In 2004, the agency embraced Clearview, based on studies that appeared to demonstrate its superiority, especially in nighttime driving tests.

Just 12 years later, the FHWA is changing course: Highway Gothic is the only font for U.S. highways going forward.

Clearview was made to improve upon its predecessor, a 1940s font called Highway Gothic, at a time when an aging Baby Boomer generation meant lots of older drivers on the road. Certain letters appeared to pose visibility problems, especially those with tight interstices (or internal spacing)—namely lowercase e, a, and s. At night, any of these reflective letters might appear to be a lowercase o in the glare of headlights.

By opening up these letterforms, and mixing lowercase and uppercase styles, Clearview aimed to improve how these reflective highway signs read.

At the time, the FHWA agreed. In its 2004 approval memo, the agency noted that Clearview boosted highway-sign legibility for drivers traveling at 45 miles per hour by 80 feet of reading distance—or 1.2 seconds of bonus reading time. Separate studies performed by the Texas Transportation Institute at Texas A & M University and at Penn State supported this.

Was everyone wrong? The FHWA explains its about-face on Clearview by pointing to further research after 2004. The boost in legibility, for example, could be attributed to simply replacing older signs with newer signs.

In fact, the FHWA stopped granting approval to use Clearview at least two years ago. This window into the approvals process reveals another problem that may have doomed Clearview: The font was never a mandate, only an alternative. As a result, some places have inconsistent usage, while local jurisdictions may be using the font in states that are not. Local and state governments that have taken up Clearview don't have to remove signs that feature this font. But when these signs are eventually replaced, the new ones that take their place will bear the old font.

Thanks to *CityLab* for this information.

*N-ASCE – not always something concerning engineering...

SPONSOR PROFILE

Continued from Page 3

application of client-centric solutions and investments in technology. It will continue to innovate, inspire, and serve its clients and the communities in which it works. It will continue to put its passion, talent, and value into every project, every day to truly be "Partners for What's Possible".

TECHNICAL GROUPS/CHAIRS

Information on the ASCE, Philadelphia Section's Technical Groups is given below. If you have any topics that you think would be of interest to the Groups, please feel free to pass this information along to the appropriate Group Chair.

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APRIL DINNER MEETING

Continued from Page 1

Government Relations 101 – Staying Current with Politics and Communicating with Elected Officials

SPEAKER: Beth Ann Ray, ASCE, State and Local Governments Relations

MSE Walls and Reinforced Soil Slopes – Best Practices (sponsored by the Delaware Valley GeoInstitute (DVGI))

SPEAKER: Jerry A. DiMaggio

This presentation will provide an outline and review of the history and current practices with geosynthetically reinforced soil structures and a review of the paradox between best practices and reality. It will cover selection of wall and slope type for earth retaining structure applications, design of walls and slopes, construction and monitoring, and asset management and summary. The Villanova Conference Center is NOT on the University's campus. For directions, please visit www.acc-villanovaconferencecenter.com/villanova-conference-center-en.html

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

MARTSOLF NOW TRAINING DIRECTOR AT URBAN

Past President **Carol Martsolf** has been promoted to Director of Training at Urban Engineers. Ms. Martsolf is a vice president who previously served as the manager of training. She replaces Urban's first director of training, **Bruce M. Mundorf, Esq.**, who remains Urban's general counsel.

"Since joining Urban in 2003, Carol has utilized her technical expertise and career knowledge to develop dynamic training programs and create the Urban Training Institute," said Urban Executive Vice President Kenneth R. Fulmer, PE. "Under her leadership, the Institute quickly evolved into an award-winning and highly-respected institution. Carol has proven herself to be an outstanding leader in the profession."

A graduate of Temple University, Carol is a Professional Engineer with 20 years of experience. She helped Urban become an Accredited Provider with the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) and receive the National Exemplar Award for Internal Training. The program has since evolved to become a dynamic business for Urban, offering professional development opportunities for the entire A/E/C community, who can now participate in the Institute's classes from anywhere in the world through an online connection. Since its inception, the program has been responsible for awarding over 10,000 professional development hours to its participants.

We congratulate Carol on her promotion.

BRADY MOVES TO CDI/L. R. KIMBALL

Past President **Tom Brady** recently started as a Senior Transportation Engineer at CDI/L. R. Kimball at its office in Harrisburg. For over 22 years, Tom has served PennDOT, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, the Delaware River Joint Toll Commission and the City of Philadelphia as Highway Design Engineer or Project Manager on numerous projects. In his new role, he will support CDI / L.R. Kimball's transportation practice in eastern Pennsylvania and will focus on growth and market expansion including business development and client relationships. He had previously been with RK & K at its King of Prussia office.

Good luck, Tom!

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