



ASCE
PHILADELPHIA SECTION

THE

NEWS

Vol 95-8

Our 110th Year

April 2023

The Sidney Robin Memorial Newsletter of the Philadelphia Section ASCE



ASCE Vision

Civil Engineers are global leaders building a better quality of life.



ASCE Mission

Provide essential value to our members and partners, advance Civil Engineering, and serve the public good.



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NON OMNIA POSSUMUS OMNES (WE CANNOT ALL DO EVERYTHING)

**SECTION MEETING SCHEDULE
2022-23 — NEARLY DONE...**

The April meeting closes our Section Meeting/dinner season. The **Spring Social**, scheduled for **May 4**, will be our last Section event for this season. Details are being finalized and more information will be provided in the May edition of *THE NEWS* as well as in upcoming e-blasts.

**Moe's the Boss — Our
2022-23 Section President**

We know that life is very unpredictable. We keep learning this in many ways. Just over three years ago no one would have imagined what would have happened to turn our lives basically upside down. Now that we are coming out of that and getting back to some semblance of normal, we hope that is something we're done with at this point.

We do know that the passage of time and the cycle of the calendar is very much predictable and expected. While this winter was atypical as far as cold and snow, we did indeed know that winter would have to be at best endured. As March comes around the corner, the cold and snow start to become less of a factor (but this year, when after a bitterly-cold snap at Christmas, it was fairly mild until almost the end of winter). One harbinger of spring locally, the Flower Show, returned as that after two years of moving to later in the spring and going outdoors. And we see days getting longer, birds returning, and all that, which gives us hope that winter is indeed past.

We in our Section also expect that when April arrives, we will see the traditional year-end assessment of our current President appear in *THE NEWS*. We know we all anxiously anticipate this annual tradition, if we can call it that (it's certainly been around for a while), and we're always consistently not sure why or how this began. Your Editor inherited it with the other duties passed along from our esteemed late **Editor Sid Robin** over twenty years ago (and hard to believe it's been that long, but...) and the esteemed Mr. Robin did this for as long as your less-esteemed current Editor can remember. We do know we'll keep it as non-offensive and appropriate for everyone as we can, but we will caution that it has been known to take some interesting turns with our review of our President's year thus far. We also are keenly aware that we cannot do this as we risk trivializing one of our Section's traditions and we dare not do that.

Continued on page 5

APRIL DINNER MEETING

THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 2023

American Society of Civil Engineers, Philadelphia Section
The Inn at Villanova, 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 eight years (but not since 2019 in person). 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 7. The cost per attendee is \$50, with a half-price (\$20) cost for government agency employees and students, for reservations received by this deadline.

RESERVATIONS RECEIVED AFTER APRIL 7: Reservations received after the deadline and "walk-ups" without prior reservations paying at the door will be charged \$60 (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 electronic payment will NOT be an available option 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.

All registrations are final. Due to commitments with our event venues, cancellations or no-shows will be invoiced for the full cost of the event. Registrants are able to transfer their registrations to others without penalty.

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.

Villanova University Night – The ASCE Student Chapter, Faculty and Alumni of the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering of Villanova University will be highlighted at this meeting. All Faculty, Alumni and Students are cordially invited to attend and participate.

Continued on page 3

If a woman has to choose between catching a fly ball and saving an infant's life, she will choose to save the infant's life without even considering if there is a man on base.

— Dave Barry

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



HAPPY SPRING! I know most of you, like me, are enjoying the warm weather lately. I, for one, am looking forward to hopefully a warm April and the start of baseball. Spring training is wrapping up, along with the World Baseball Classic. I'm counting down the days to Opening Day and seeing our Fightin' Phils on the road to another World Series. Hopefully, they can overcome losing Rhys Hoskins – what a terrible injury and I hope he makes a full recovery. Sixers just clinched a playoff spot! And the

Flyers seem to be doing better, albeit maybe a little too late at this point, as any shot at the playoffs are off the table for this season (unfortunately our one team that didn't do great things in the past year, but we can't have it all...). But I digress.

This monthly spot has come to be one of the more enjoyable activities of my term as Section President since it provides me with a forum to highlight the many informative, value-added programs our Section has to offer its members. I also get to connect with all of you, on a personal level, through something we all enjoy as Philadelphia sports fan, so hopefully you enjoyed my fandom in these Presidential messages.

March was our last dinner meeting at Maggiano's for the season. It was our largest attended event this year. Big thank you to **Jessica Rehrig** (Benesch) and **Monica Harrower** (PennDOT District 6 Cultural Resources) for presenting on the Chestnut Street Bridges over CSX and 24th Street Rehabilitation. The Buckley Team was also in the house, with Rob offering some words of inspiration on how it truly was a team collaboration (PennDOT, City of Philadelphia Streets Department, CSX, Designer, Contractor, CMCI Team, etc.) and how everyone really worked together to complete this project. Especially with also having to deal with the historic flooding from Hurricane IDA. Great work Team! Great presentation Jessica and Monica.

We look forward to seeing all of our ASCE Philadelphia Section Members on **April 13th** at the **Inn at Villanova** for our **Multi-Technical Dinner Meeting** from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm. DVGI, SEI and T&DI/Construction Tech Group will be hosting our three presentation topics, which are noted in the meeting announcement in this issue. Registration for the event is posted on our website and e-blasts.

As our April meeting will be closing out our season as our last Section dinner meeting of the year, I am looking forward to our last event of the season, our **Annual Spring Social!** We will be hosting the event at the **Down Town Club** at 600 Chestnut Street on **May 4th**, where we will recognize our Section Scholarship Winners, Delaware Valley Science Fairs Winners, and Section Awardees. This will be more of a traditional style Spring Social, for those that remember the pre-pandemic days. This will be our last event of the year where I will be handing over the gavel to the next Section President, and we will be inducting the 2023-2024 Section Board.

I hope everyone is getting ready for spring and I am looking forward to seeing everyone at our April Section Meeting!

Best,
Mohamed A. Elghawy, PE
President, ASCE Philadelphia Section
melghawy@trafficpd.com | 484-363-2472

The right to be heard does not automatically include the right to be taken seriously.

— Hubert H. Humphrey

ASCE, PHILADELPHIA SECTION OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTION — 2022-23 SEASON

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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.

In addition, these folks will serve in appointed positions:

ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Thomas Kulesher, JMT

ASSISTANT TREASURER

Patrick McCourt, PennDOT

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Editor of *THE NEWS*

Robert Wright

Section Outreach

Jesse Gormley, Dennis Wilson

SEND COPY TO:

ASCE, c/o Urban Engineers, Inc.,
530 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106

**COPY DEADLINE FOR MAY 2023 ISSUE
APRIL 14, 2023**

April Dinner Meeting

Continued from page 1

The featured “breakout” sessions will consist of the following:

Broad Street Quay Wall Reconstruction

PRESENTERS: Monica Trudeau, PIDC; Poe Leggette, CBRE; Angelo Waters, Urban Engineers; Michael Wagner, Urban Engineers; Megan Clayton, Pennoni

Sponsored jointly by the Construction Management and Engineering Technical Group and the Transportation and Development Institute (T&DI)

Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Project in Louisiana

PRESENTER: John Volk, AECOM

Sponsored by the Delaware Valley Geo-Institute (DVGI)

Fern Hollow Bridge Emergency Replacement Project

PRESENTER: Jason Fuller, HDR

Sponsored by the Structural Engineering Institute

Attendees will be able to earn one Professional Development Hour (PDH) at this meeting.

The Inn at Villanova is NOT on the University’s campus. For directions, please visit www.theinnatvillanova.com.



DUES – GETTING REALLY BEHIND...

Retaining membership in ASCE allows you to stay connected to the latest industry trends and keeps you linked to the best professional development programs and engaged with a worldwide network of peers. Your continual involvement builds a solid foundation to keep your career on track and moving toward achieving your professional and personal goals.

Dues for the current year were payable by January 1, but, if for whatever reason, you have not renewed, please avoid an interruption in your benefits and renew now. Choose the renewal option most convenient to you: online at asce.org/renewal (the quickest and easiest way), by phone at 800-548-ASCE (-2723), or by mail, using the invoice sent to you last fall (if you still have it). Ensure a positive return on your investment in a Civil Engineering career by renewing with ASCE.

LOOKING TO REFER A NEW MEMBER? OR SOMEONE WHO’S NOT AN ENGINEER?

ASCE’s Member **Get A Member referral program** is a good way to refer prospective new ASCE members to our society. For each new member you refer, you can receive a **\$50 Amazon.com gift card** when they join. You can refer up to five colleagues at a time. More details are available at asce.org.

Also, please keep in mind that ASCE isn’t just for Civil Engineers. While you may be surprised to learn this, ASCE allows Non-Engineers to be members as

well, with a specific grade of membership – the **Affiliate Member grade** – available for this purpose. While those with Civil Engineering degrees and backgrounds can usually join ASCE right out of school as **Associate Members** (and are eligible for reduced levels of dues if they have been **Student Members**), the Affiliate Member grade is available to anyone having “an interest in the advancement of the purposes and objectives of the Society,” as stated in the definition provided in the ASCE Register, who may not have been eligible for Student Membership and/or do not meet the criteria for Associate Membership.

Thus, the Affiliate Member grade is ideal for those who work in related fields who may have an interest in Civil Engineering but do not have a Civil Engineering degree. Affiliate Members enjoy the same benefits and perks of ASCE membership as do other member grades above Student. Additionally, you may want to let some of your colleagues and friends know about this so they can consider ASCE membership and you can get some cash for the referral.

At the other end of the “spectrum”, for those of you more senior and experienced members, the **Fellow grade** of membership is worth consideration. This is the highest level of membership one can attain on one’s own and is a laudable and esteemed achievement. The specific requirements for application for this grade of membership are listed on asce.org.

And Our 2023 Section Awards Nominees Are (The Envelope Please)...

No, not quite the Oscars, Emmys, Golden Globes, but something even better and more important - our Section Awards. These will be presented at our **Annual Spring Social and Dinner Dance on May 4**. More information and details on the Social will be included in the May edition of *THE NEWS*.

As usual, we received a number of strong nominations for Section Awards this year and the Awards Committee had the not-so-easy task to review the submissions and prepare a recommended slate of Award recipients. The recommended recipients have been approved by our Section Board of Directors. They are:

Robert Traver, PhD, Villanova University – Philadelphia Civil Engineer of the Year

Assunta Daprano, AECOM – Philadelphia Young Civil Engineer of the Year

Helen Robinson, GEI Consultants – Geotechnical Engineer of the Year

Cliff Schwinger, IMEG Group – Structural Engineer of the Year

Kevin Malley, Philadelphia Water Department – Young Government Engineer of the Year

Nooraldean Dabdoub, Lennar Development, and **Kayla Nelson**, Schnabel Engineering – Community Outreach and Service Award

We hope you will be able to join us at the Social to honor our Awardees for this year. More information on our awardees will be included in our October edition of *THE NEWS*.

YOUNGER MEMBER FORUM NEWS

Kevin Malley, Forum Editor
 Tim Abel, Forum President 2022-23
 Amtrak, timothyshaneabel@gmail.com

Headshot Happy Hour Recap

February 23

YMF gathered at American Sardine Bar for the Headshot Happy Hour. We learned great tips to make the most of our LinkedIn profiles and got updated headshots taken, all while enjoying a selection of snacks and drinks amongst friends and industry professionals. A big thank you to American Sardine Bar for hosting us and to Ben Leibowitz for capturing some great headshot photos!

New Faces of Civil Engineering

YMF would like to congratulate two of our own who have been recognized recently in the ASCE New Faces of Civil Engineering effort.

Kerianne Chen is YMF's K-12 Chair, a Drexel University alumni, and a highway design specialist at Traffic Planning & Design, Inc.

In the "collegiate edition," **Andrew Kline** is a junior at Villanova University and serves as Vice President of the Villanova Student Chapter.

Congratulations to Kerianne and Andrew on this honor!



SCIENCE FAIRS – SEEKING JUDGES – LAST CHANCE!

As we have for many years, our Section will be offering Special Awards at the **Delaware Valley Science Fairs**. The Fairs will be held on **Wednesday, April 5** at the **Greater Philadelphia Expo Center in Oaks**. Four Special Awards for individual student projects that have a Civil Engineering theme will be awarded, with two prizes for Grades 6 through 8 and two for Grades 9 through 12.

Volunteer judges are needed for this effort. The judging will require you to spend most, if not all, of your day (approximately 8 AM to 3 PM) at the Fairs, examining and short listing possible projects in the morning and then interviewing the students who assembled them and finalizing the selections in the afternoon. A short orientation session will be provided immediately before the judging begins to get one familiar with the process and procedure. It is always a very interesting and enlightening experience.

If you are interested in being a Special Awards judge please contact **Chris Rood** (chris.rood@aecom.com). You will also need to register for this and this can be done through the Fairs' website www.dvsf.org.

For more information on the Fairs please visit the above website.

We hope you can join us for a rewarding and interesting day.

MARCH SECTION MEETING

March 10, 2023

Maggiano's Center City

Rehabilitation of Chestnut Street Bridges over 24th Street and CSX Railroad/Schuylkill River Trail

By Robert Wright, Editor

Our March meeting took us back to Maggiano's in Center City, where we last met as a Section in November, and with weather that would be more expected for mid-April, as well as the Philadelphia Flower Show returning to an indoor late-winter venue at the nearby Pennsylvania Convention Center, one had to convince oneself that was indeed still early in March. Just over 80 folks gathered for some good food as well as a good presentation on the PennDOT efforts to rehabilitate the Chestnut Street bridges on the west side of Center City, on a critical traffic and pedestrian route across the Schuylkill River. Our presenters for the event were **Jessica Rehrig**, Senior Project Manager for the effort, with Alfred Benesch and Company, and **Monica Harrower**, Project Cultural Resources Professional, with PennDOT District 6. **Section President Moe Elghawy** opened the meeting and managed to get everyone seated and settled after a lively networking/social hour. He offered a few announcements and then turned the podium over to a video presentation from **Temple University's Student Chapter**, which was the evening's featured Chapter. Chapter Officers **Kate Kubiak** and **Caroline Merrill** brought everyone up to date on the Chapter's recent happenings and activities. Section President-Elect **Joe Natale** then introduced the evening's speakers.

Ms. Rehrig and Ms. Harrower offered a number of interesting photos and facts/figures on the overall project, which addressed the several bridges that carry Chestnut Street across, from the west, Lower 30th Street, Amtrak, I-76/Schuylkill Expressway, the Schuylkill River, the Schuylkill River Park and Trail, CSX Railroad and 24th Street, before touching down west of 23rd Street. The overall corridor includes different structures of varying types and vintages. The two adjacent structures at the east side of the Schuylkill, which cross CSX, the Trail and 24th Street were the focus of this presentation. Each of these is a historic bridge and had to be handled in particular methods and fashions to restore and preserve the elements that contributed to their historic value.

Ms. Rehrig highlighted the brick arches, stone, metal/railings, and similar features that were in need of rehabilitation and restoration, and covered the various operations and methods specified to ensure their visual, historic and structural integrity. This included several instances of uncovered additional beams to provide for widening of the sidewalks, structural connections to adjacent buildings, and elements such as stairways and blocked/sealed walkways that were uncovered and unexpected, and therefore had to be handled with prompt consideration, quick decisions, and design revisions.

Ms. Harrower outlined the historical features and how they were addressed, including matching existing brick and mortar, recreation and restoration of old-style railings, and stone restoration, which in several instances called for off-site mockups for review and approval prior to the finished work.

The project required a complete closure and detour of traffic on Chestnut Street, which carries a considerable volume which had to be diverted to Market Street. This included three significant SEPTA bus routes and a considerable amount of pedestrian traffic generated by nearby 30th Street Station as well as the popular Schuylkill River Trail. Ms. Rehrig explained that the finished product included wider sidewalks for these pedestrians as well as a separated bicycle lane to accommodate that growing mode, particularly favored by a number of college students at nearby Drexel and Penn.

Several questions were posed by the attendees and the presentation team offered insightful responses. President Elghawy closed the informative session and thanked Ms. Rehrig and Ms. Harrower for their good and informative presentation.



MOE'S THE BOSS*Continued from page 1*

One thing we have changed, however, was that we give the President a chance for rebuttal. Before your current Editor's occupancy of this position, *THE NEWS* closed its season with a combined April-May edition. Thus, assessing the President's accomplishments was "it" as far as any reporting on this, thus we are just a little more kind with our addition of a May issue and allowing the now-penultimate one (April) to provide this "roast" thus giving the President a chance for response in May. (Have you reached for the dictionary yet...?) So with that background, let's get into the details.

You're now five paragraphs invested in this piece and if you don't already know, one **Mohamed Elghawy**, a Construction Project Manager at Traffic Planning & Design, as well as our Section's 110th President, is the subject of our sendoff. Moe, as he likes to be called (and as he likes it to be spelled – as he will tell you, the same as Moe Szyslak of the Simpsons, or better to your Editor, Moe of the Three Stooges), is the first Section President that you may have seen in person in a while, given that our meeting program for the previous two seasons (and, as well, the last meeting of the 2019-20 season – we managed to squeeze in the March meeting of that season just before everything shut down). As we know that's because we only started having in-person meetings again at the start of this season, after the "trial balloon" of Part 2 of last season's Spring Social with an in-person social event to take care of everyone's delayed demand for Maggiano's. We hope that no one anywhere is at all surprised that Moe's time at the helm was successful given the energy and enthusiasm he injected into the events and meetings. And, since he's the boss, technically, just as Moe of said Stooges was also the boss (and again your Editor has more familiarity with that Moe than the Simpsons' bartender), despite "our" Moe having a different hairstyle, he indeed served us well as our "boss".

Your Editor managed to get stumped by Moe as well, something that's not that easy to do (that's what your Editor says...). Apparently, for a few months, despite your Editor's self-proclaimed "eagle eye" for typos, Moe pointed out that he managed to spell Moe's name incorrectly in the officers area of *THE NEWS*. Worse yet, a couple of editions managed to hit the streets until this was found. Your Editor will admit to having a bit of a mental block on Moe's name for some reason, but since then he's been extra careful. (And yes, your Editor is indeed human... But it's not about your Editor...)

Keeping in mind we haven't been to Maggiano's (or for that matter, anywhere in person) for the past two years, it was a bit of a struggle to get folks out of the comfort of "attending" Section meetings from their couches or Barcaloungers/Lazy-Boys. To get them back, Moe craftily used a combination of the temptations of Maggiano's fare and a good meeting program to lure them in, and it worked. And, at this point, with the season winding down, it's hard to even remember what virtual meetings were like. It's good to be back, as many of us keep remarking.

Moe is a Philly sports fan and it shows in his President's messages all season, as he kept us up to date on the "almost" with the Phillies, Union and Eagles each nearly winning "it all," but not quite taking the trophies. In at least one of his messages we had to make some last-minute edits to

reflect how things didn't quite go the way he predicted, but we can certainly appreciate his enthusiasm and optimism.

Moe was also in the enviable position of having a number of notable things happen while he was "steering the ship". As noted, our return to in-person meetings happened in October. We completed the statewide Report Card update and released it in December. We delayed the Report Card release a few weeks to allow us to have an event at which our Section Mural was finally unveiled and dedicated at SEPTA's Jefferson Station, the culmination of an effort that took a few years to get off the ground. Moe will be the first to tell you it was merely coincidence that these events occurred during his reign. A few folks, your Editor among them, reminded him of the approach that many politicians take toward these sorts of things, i.e. if they're in office when they happen, they can take credit for them. Fortunately your President has taken a very different view of this, and will be quick to remind you that others put in the sweat equity and effort that got these things off the ground and in place, and he is very proud to be able to share in the glory but will also remind you these were group efforts and not just something the President did. You have to admire that.

In much the same way Moe was pleased that the two folks recognized as Delaware Valley Engineer and Young Engineer of the Year this year are Section members. Again, coincidence. In his messages over the course of the season Moe cited the return to activity by the Younger Member Forum and Technical Groups, and thanked them for carrying on while the shutdowns impacted their programs and events, which he saw as admirable. He is also very proud to note that in calendar year 2022 alone there were over 20 PDH events that the Section managed to offer, among Section meetings and Tech Group/YMF sessions, and this points to the creativity, resourcefulness and dedication of these groups.

Thus, if you somehow thought this would be a report rife with dirt and scandal, well, (1) your Editor would never go there (he would go close to there, but not there), (2) we know engineers don't usually have too much in this area given how busy we are, and (3) frankly, we couldn't dig up too much (or really any) dirt on Moe. So, sorry to burst your bubble on this...

After two straight years with females in the lead, bring the score up to 10 women who have held that spot (and sadly it remains lopsided with 99 males serving as President, and things looking to remain that way over the next couple of years for us), we'll have to work harder to even the score here. Moe gets points from your Editor as he usually had his President's messages ready to go before he had to be reminded they were due. Of course, as noted, with the sports analogies, sometimes rewrites were needed, but at least we had what we needed. (Future Presidents, please take note...)

We do hope we have been able to give you a little insight on our outgoing President. We are extremely grateful for everything Moe has done. You probably have gotten the impression that Moe is a bit selfless (we hope you have, or maybe you didn't read this closely enough...) and he will be the first to tell you that this has been made very easy with him having the support and backing of a great group of Officers and Directors. And, despite this, you know we'll still follow tradition next year and give incoming President Joe Natale his due "report" as well.

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

We thank the 13 firms participating in our Section sponsorship program this season for their financial commitment and support. Fortunately we are not triskadekaphobic (i.e. we do not fear the number 13...). Sponsor's business cards are printed in each edition of *THE NEWS*. Their logos are displayed in a special Sponsors section of our website, where we provide direct links to their own sites so prospective employees can review all available and up-to-date positions. We also offer sponsors the opportunity to have a "spotlight" article in an edition of *THE NEWS*.

If you have an interest in joining our sponsorship program, please contact **Bob Wright** at newseditor@asce-philly.org for more details.



N-ASCE*

LUST, LIES AND EMPIRE: THE FISHY TALE BEHIND EATING FISH ON FRIDAY

Now that Lent is winding down, maybe this will explain those meatless Fridays you won't miss when Lent is over...?

Did the Pope really make a secret pact to sell more fish? No, but the real story of eating fish on Fridays is much more fantastical. It sounds like the plot of a Dan Brown thriller, with a powerful medieval Pope making a secret pact to prop up the fishing industry that ultimately alters global economics. The result is that Millions of Catholics around the world end up eating fish on Fridays as part of a religious observance.

This "realpolitik" explanation of why Catholics eat fish on Friday has circulated for so long, many people grew up believing it as fact. Some even learned it in Catholic school. It's a humdinger of a tale, the kind conspiracy theorists can really sink their teeth into. But is it true?

According to Christian teaching, Jesus died on a Friday, and his death redeemed a sinful world. People have written of fasting on Friday to commemorate this sacrifice as early as the first century. Technically, it's the flesh of warmblooded animals that's off limits. Fish are coldblooded, so they're considered fair game.

Alas, Christendom never really developed a hankering for snake. But fish had been associated with sacred holidays even in pre-Christian times. And as the number of meatless days piled up on the medieval Christian calendar, not just Fridays but Wednesdays and Saturdays, Advent and Lent, and other holy days, the hunger for fish grew. Indeed, fish fasting days became central to the growth of the global fishing industry. But not because of a pope and his secret pact.

At first, Christians' religious appetite was largely met with herring, a fish that was plentiful but dry and tasteless when smoked or salted. And preservation was a must in medieval times: There was no good way for fresh fish to reach the devout masses. Eventually, cod became all the rage, since it tasted better when cured and it lasted longer, too. The Vikings were ace at preserving cod. And the route the Vikings took at the end of the first millennium — Greenland, Iceland, Newfoundland — matches up with the natural range of the Atlantic cod.

It's possible that others may have followed the cod trail to Canada before Columbus sailed the ocean blue. Clues suggest that English fishermen from Bristol may have made the voyage by around 1480 but kept mum on the location lest the competition rush in. By some accounts, both Columbus and John Cabot had heard of these adventures when they set off on their own epic journeys west. So that's the empire part of our saga. Funny enough, while the Pope story is a fish tale, an official leader of a church did make fish fasting the law for purely practical reasons. For that story we turn to a monarch known for his carnal cravings, Henry VIII.

By the time Henry ascended the throne in 1509, fish dominated the menu for a good part of the year. But after Henry became smitten with Anne Boleyn, English fish-eating took a nosedive. Henry already had a wife, Catherine of Aragon, and the Pope refused to annul that decades' long marriage. So Henry broke off from the Roman Catholic Church, declared himself the head of the Church of England and divorced Catherine so he could marry Anne. Suddenly, eating fish became political.

Fishermen were hurting. So much so that when Henry's young son, Edward VI, took over in 1547, fast days were reinstated by law "for worldly and civil policy, to spare flesh, and use fish, for the benefit of the commonwealth, where many be fishers, and use the trade of living." In fact, fish fasting remained surprisingly influential in global economics well into the 20th century.

As one economic analysis noted, U.S. fish prices plummeted soon after Pope Paul VI loosened fasting rules in the 1960s. The Friday meat ban, by the way, still applies to the 40 days of the Lenten fast. A few years before the Vatican relaxed the rules, Lou Groen, an enterprising McDonald's franchise owner in a largely Catholic part of Cincinnati, found himself struggling to sell burgers on Fridays. His solution? The Filet-O-Fish.

While not exactly the miracle of loaves and fishes, Groen's little battered sandwich has fed millions around the world.

Thanks to NPR for this information.

*N-ASCE – not always something concerning Engineering

SECTION COMMITTEES

Our Section runs very well and it is mainly a result of the dedication and service of our many volunteers, both our Officers and Board Members as well as our various Committees. While many of you know the former group well, you may not be all that aware of the latter. Our Committees address many of our regular and ongoing issues and keep our Section vibrant and in the forefront of service to our membership. A list of our Committees and chairs for this season is provided below. We would like to thank these folks and their helpers for their contributions and diligence in helping our Section do what it does.

Additionally, if you have a particular interest in helping the Section as a Committee volunteer, please reach out to us at info@asce-philly.org or through our Section Secretary, **Dennis Wilson** (contact information is provided on page 2). Committee assignments may change for the coming season and this will be sorted out over the summer.

2026 ASCE National Convention – *Chris Menna* (chair), *Tim Abel*, *Kevin Brown*, *Moe Elghawy*, *Joe Natale*, *Jen Reigle*, *Bob Wright*

ASCE Brochure – *Katrina Budischak* (chair), *Archie Filshill*
Audit – *Jesse Gormley* (chair), *Cathy Farrell*, *Pat McCourt*, *AnnMarie Vigilante*

Awards – *Bob Wright* (chair), *Assunta Daprano*, *Mike DeVuono*, *Carol Martsolf*, *Allan Moore*, *Joe Natale*

Budget and Finance – *Cricket Schreppler* (chair), *Pat McCourt*
Civil Engineers in Government – *Archie Filshill* (chair),

Ruben David, *Bob Wright*

College Scholarship – *Dani Schroeder* (chair), *Kazi Hassan*, *Tom Kulesher*

Communications – *Dennis Wilson* (chair)

Flyers – *Assunta Daprano*

Newsletter – *Bob Wright* (editor)

Social Media – *Mike DeVuono*

Webmaster – *Tom Kulesher*

Continuing Education – *Jesse Gormley* (chair)

Delaware Valley Science Fairs – *Chris Rood* (chair), *Ruben David*, *Michael Lembo*, *Chris Menna*, *Bob Wright*

History and Heritage – *Joe Natale* (chair), *Ruben David*, *Jesse Gormley*, *Bob Wright*

Humphrey Fund – *John Zarsky* (chair); *Ruben David*, *Joe Platt* (trustees); *Moe Elghawy*, *Dennis Wilson* (members)

Membership – *Kevin Brown* (chair), *Katrina Budischak*, *Jen Reigle*

Mural – *Angelo Waters* (chair), *Jen Reigle*, *Bob Wright*

Nominating (for Board Positions) – *Moe Elghawy* (chair),

Jesse Gormley, *Joe Natale*, *Briana Pampuch*, *Bob Wright*

Program – *Joe Natale* (chair), *Dan Gleason*, *Bob Wright*

Venue Coordination – *Troy Illig*

Registration and Payment – *Mike DeVuono* (chair),

Katrina Budischak, *Assunta Daprano*

Society Relations

Legislative Affairs – *OPEN*

Region 2 Board/Governors – *Carol Martsolf*, *Joe Platt*, *Pat Sullivan*

Region 2 Younger Member Representative – *Joe Natale*

Spring Social – *Troy Illig* (chair), *Kevin Brown*, *Moe Elghawy*, *Jesse Gormley*, *Briana Pampuch*, *Jen Reigle*, *Bob Wright*

Subsidiary Groups – *Jesse Gormley* (chair)

Construction Management and Engineering – *Bob Wright*

Delaware Valley Geoinstitute – *Jim Beideman*

Environmental and Water Resources – *Mike Thomas*

Structural Engineering Institute – *Jack Cardinal*

Transportation & Development Institute – *Bill Thomsen*, *Kazi Hassan*

Utility Engineering and Surveying – *Nha Truong*

Younger Member Forum – *Tim Abel*

SECTION AGENCY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

As you may be aware, our Section offers a Section Sponsorship Program to allow firms to help provide our various activities and programs for our membership and the Civil Engineering community in the Philadelphia area. This involves

a financial commitment which is reflected in the placement of the participant's logo and business card in *THE NEWS* and on the Section's website, along with several other benefits. Additionally, we have established an informal

recognition of government and quasi-government agencies for the assistance they have provided us, through volunteer assistance and award recognition among other things. Our Agency Partners' logos are shown below.



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