



**ASCE**  
PHILADELPHIA SECTION

**THE**

**NEWS**

Vol 98-2

**Our 113th Year**

The Sidney Robin Memorial Newsletter of the Philadelphia Section ASCE

October 2025



**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 2025-26

The Section Meeting program for the upcoming season is in its formative stages and our meeting program committee is busy lining up speakers and topics for what we hope will be an interesting and informative series of meetings. The information we have at this point is provided below for your planning purposes. We would suggest that you use this to mark your calendar at this time and hold the dates.

In coming issues of *THE NEWS*, this information will be "fine-tuned" to provide updates as they are available. We also suggest you visit the Section website for the latest changes in our meeting program. As we have done, each month's edition of *THE NEWS* will feature detailed information on that month's meeting along with as much information as is available for the following month's meeting, and the "look-ahead" schedule will show details that are available at that time for your advance awareness. E-mail blasts will be sent out on a regular basis to advise and remind of upcoming events and registration deadlines.

We also note the advantage of joint meetings with other societies and will continue to schedule these as we can.

Also, our Technical Groups and Institutes will have their usual programs of meetings and events which will be noted in e-blasts.

### 2025

December 9 - Engineers' Club of Philadelphia, Multi-Society Meeting

### 2026

January 21 (Wednesday) – joint meeting with American Society of Highway Engineers

February, to be determined

March 12

April 9

May 14 – Spring Social, to be determined

## NOVEMBER DINNER MEETING

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2025**

Maggiano's Little Italy, 1201 Filbert Street (corner of 12th Street), Center City  
Cocktails 5:30 PM, Dinner 6:30 PM, Meeting Presentation Follows (approximately 7:30 PM)

Please hold the date and time for this. More information will be provided in the November edition of *THE NEWS* and upcoming e-blasts.

## OCTOBER DINNER MEETING

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2025**

\*\*\* PLEASE NOTE DIFFERENT FROM OUR USUAL THURSDAY PATTERN/SCHEDULE \*\*\*

Maggiano's Little Italy, 1201 Filbert Street (corner of 12th Street), Center City  
Cocktails 5:30 PM, Dinner 6:30 PM, Meeting Presentation Follows (approximately 7:30 PM)

**SUBJECT: Ethical Issues in Prevention Through Design (PtD)**

**SPEAKER: T. Michael Toole, PhD, PE**

**RESERVATION DEADLINE – TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1.** The cost per attendee is \$50, with a half-price (\$25) cost for government agency employees and students, for reservations received by this deadline.

Reservations can be made through our website ([www.asce-philly.org](http://www.asce-philly.org)) and paid via PayPal or by check. This option will NOT be available after the reservation deadline. Checks, made payable to "Philadelphia Section ASCE," will be accepted at the reservation table at the door as an option to electronic payment. Reservations received after the deadline and "walk-ups" without prior reservations paying at the door will be subject to a higher charge and on a space-available/standby basis. There is NO guarantee that space will be available if you do not reserve in advance.

**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. This will be subject to room capacity constraints.

**ACCESS AND PARKING:** Maggiano's is a short walk from SEPTA's Jefferson Regional Rail station and a half-block from bus routes, the Subway-Surface Trolleys and the Market-Frankford Line on Market Street. There is a parking garage directly above the restaurant for which validation can be offered for a reduced price.

Please join us as we return to one of our favorite dinner meeting locations after our summer "vacation."

Prevention through Design (PtD) is an emerging safety management technique in which the safety of construction and maintenance workers is explicitly considered during the design phase of a project. This presentation will summarize the PtD concept, provide examples from multiple construction sectors, and discuss/review the relevant portions of the ASCE and NSPE engineering codes of ethics.

Attendees will be able to earn one Professional Development Hour (PDH) at this meeting, which will meet the ethics requirements for those states which have such (Pennsylvania is NOT one of these states).

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



## Greetings and welcome to the 113th year of the ASCE Philadelphia Section!

It's an honor to serve as President this term as we prepare for some amazing events in Philadelphia over the next few years—the 250th anniversary of our great nation's independence in 2026 and hosting the launch of ASCE's new signature annual technical conference in 2027, just to name two. But I'm getting ahead of

myself, because we have some awesome things in store for this year, too.

To start, we will be back at Maggiano's for our dinner meetings in October, November, and March—come hungry! We're starting the season with a PDH-worthy ethics presentation, as those are always in demand amid license renewals, and we have some other local project and technical presentations planned that we're excited to announce soon. We're excited to participate in the Engineers' Club of Philadelphia's Multi-Society meeting in December, as well as the events it hosts for Delaware Valley Engineers Week in February. In January, our friends at the ASHE Delaware Valley Section have again invited us to join them for their January dinner meeting at the Crowne Plaza in King of Prussia, which is always a good event. And of course, we'll wrap up our year with two of our hallmark events: the Multi-Technical meeting in April, where our local institute chapters and technical groups join us to host breakout presentations after a group dinner and some special recognitions; and last but not least, our annual Spring Social, which will be hosted at The Lucy and feature our awards ceremony.

We know, we know... it makes for a busy calendar, but we look forward to seeing you at as many of these events as you're able to attend. We have some other activities in the works that we'll share details on throughout the year. In the meantime, stay safe, be well, and bring on the season!

Best,  
Jesse Gormley  
President, ASCE Philadelphia Section



## NEWS FROM NATIONAL ASCE 2025 Convention

Here's a sneak peek at some sessions you'll find at the Convention.

- Hear the opening keynote, "How AI will Define the Future of Everything," by renowned roboticist and AI expert **Ayanna Howard**, dean of The Ohio State University College of Engineering.
- Learn from an expert panel about procedures for identifying and mitigating risks in the session, *Recent Federal Government Fraud and Corruption Cases*.
- Discover how The Port of Seattle weathered a ransomware cyberattack in the session, *Creating Operational Resilience: Engineering during a Cyberattack*.
- Gain an understanding of evacuation behaviors in wildfires in the session, *Critical Behavioral Lessons from Past Wildfire Evacuations*.
- Get the latest insights on life-cycle cost, resilience, workforce, energy, extreme weather, and more.

Please visit <https://www.asce.org/education-and-events/events/meetings/asce-2025-convention> for more information.

## ASCE, PHILADELPHIA SECTION OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTION — 2025–26 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.

We thank these folks for their service and wish them well in their spots.

### Contact Us:

#### President—Jesse Gormley, PE

Pennoni  
1900 Market Street, Suite 300  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
[jgormley@pennoni.com](mailto:jgormley@pennoni.com)

#### Secretary—Danielle Schroeder, PE

Huitt-Zollars, Inc.  
1900 Market Street, Suite 08-198  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
[dani.civileng@gmail.com](mailto:dani.civileng@gmail.com)

### PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

#### 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 NOVEMBER EDITION 2025 ISSUE  
OCTOBER 10, 2025**

## YOUNGER MEMBER FORUM NEWS

Laurel Welch, Forum Editor  
Kevin Walsh, Forum President 2025-26  
HNTB, jkwalsh@hntb.com

### Upcoming Event Spotlight Fall Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup

October 11, 11AM to 2PM  
1211 S Bethlehem Pike, Ambler



**ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY CLEANUP**

**OCT 11**  
11 AM

**FIRESIDE BAR & GRILLE**  
1211 S BETHLEHEM PIKE,  
AMBLER, PA 19002

Join members of ASCE Phila YMF and ASCE Del Valley to help clean up Bethlehem Pike in Ambler, PA. Volunteers must be 18+ to attend.

Lunch and supplies will be provided. 11AM-1PM Clean up, Lunch to follow

**RSVP**

ASCE PHILADELPHIA YMF & ASCE DELAWARE VALLEY

### Event Recaps

#### End of Summer Happy Hour, Headshots, and Group Photo

August 18

YMF hosted a lively End-of-Summer Happy Hour at Urban Village Brewing Co., bringing together nearly 40 members for an evening of great food, networking, and fun. Attendees enjoyed reconnecting with familiar faces and meeting new professionals in a relaxed, welcoming atmosphere. A standout feature of the event was the professional headshots, which was a hit among attendees and added a valuable touch to the evening. With such a strong turnout and positive energy throughout the night, the event was a clear success—and we're already looking forward to doing it again next year! Thank you to everyone who attended this awesome event!



#### Girls Inc. Eureka! Camp

July 21

YMF had the pleasure of presenting Civil Engineering and Earthquake-Resistant Structures to the students of Girls Inc. Eureka! Camp held at Girard College. The event welcomed over twenty enthusiastic participants for a hands-on engineering activity: designing and building a model structure using toothpicks and marshmallows to withstand a simulated earthquake. With finite resources, just like in real engineering projects, the students embraced the challenge. The groups waited with anticipation as they saw their creations put to the test and fortunately none toppled over! A sincere thank you to Girard College for hosting this event and to the dedicated teachers and volunteers who helped make the day both educational and a whole lot of fun.



## THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS – 35 YEARS STRONG!

At this early point in our season, we are proud to note that 14 firms have agreed to participate in our Section Sponsor program. We extend our special and collective THANKS to each sponsor for their financial commitment and support.

And, as noted in the title, this is the 35th season that we have been offering our sponsorship program. When this started in our 1991-92 season, there were nine firms that participated in it (one remains at present!). Thanks to all of you have participated in this over the years.

Sponsor logos are displayed in a special Sponsors section of our website. Additionally, we provide direct links to sponsors' own websites 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*.

We contacted last year's sponsors in late August to determine their interest for this season, so if you were "in" last year but haven't yet renewed, we look forward to having you back. If you have an interest in joining our sponsorship program, please contact **Bob Wright** at [newseditor@asce-philly.org](mailto:newseditor@asce-philly.org) for more details.

We are also offering a higher level of sponsorship this year, which will offer an opportunity for a firm to be featured as the exclusive sponsor of our regular e-mail blasts. This would entail a sponsor to be highlighted in the Section blasts that will be going out for a particular month and would be limited to one month per sponsor. This will be available for a \$500 fee.

In case you were wondering, the nine "original" sponsors were the following. You are correct if you might think some of them no longer exist.

BCM Engineers Inc.	Drexel University	Temple University
Lippincott Engineering Associates	National Timber Piling Council	Pennoni Associates, Inc.
Pickering Corts & Summerson, Inc.	The RBA Group	Reutter Engineering

## ASCE Day – NOVEMBER 5

In 1852, twelve esteemed engineers gathered in New York City to establish what would become the American Society of Civil Engineers.

**November 5** will mark the Society's 173rd anniversary, so mark your calendars for this ASCE Day. We are providing this advance notice so you can plan your celebrations accordingly.

**The bond of our common humanity is stronger than the divisiveness of our fears and prejudices.**

— Jimmy Carter



## NATIONAL ASCE IN THE NEWS

**ASCE Executive Director Thomas W. Smith, III** has announced his retirement, effective December 31, after nearly 30 years of service to the organization, including the last 11 years in his current role.



In setting the timing of his departure with the ASCE Board of Direction, Mr. Smith said he felt the time was right to transition to new leadership as the organization embarks on a series of strategic initiatives. "Personally, it's been a dream job to lead an organization that has been a part of my life since my student days, and I'm proud of the things we've achieved through the close partnerships we've built between our staff and volunteer leaders," he remarked. "After almost three decades with ASCE, I'm eager to pursue some of my personal and professional passions in other ways and truly feel that the timing is right to pass the leadership mantle on to a new leader."

In representing ASCE at countless events and driving positive relationships across the industry, Mr. Smith has become a trusted voice for the profession and a passionate advocate for infrastructure. His leadership and guidance helped

expand the influence of ASCE's Report Card for America's Infrastructure, which was instrumental in helping secure passage of the most significant federal infrastructure bill in decades. His numerous accomplishments over many years include skillfully navigating ASCE through the COVID pandemic, staunchly defending challenges to engineering licensure and protection of scientific intellectual property rights, expanding ASCE's leadership in standards, resilience, and sustainability initiatives, and producing two highly successful giant screen films and educational projects.

In addition to his role as ASCE Executive Director, Mr. Smith actively contributes to his community and profession as a member of the Fairfax County Board of Zoning Appeals and the boards of the United Engineering Foundation, Renewable Natural Resources Foundation, and the Council of Engineering and Scientific Society Executives. He is also an ASCE Fellow, a member of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100, the National Academy of Construction, and a past recipient of the ASCE William H. Wisely American Civil Engineer Award and the University of Virginia Engineering Distinguished Alumni Award.

The ASCE Board of Direction will be launching a comprehensive search process to identify Mr. Smith's successor. We thank him for his leadership and dedication to ASCE.

geotechnical scoping, proposal review, technical report preparation and review, preliminary geotechnical engineering, subsurface investigations, structure foundation and roadway design, plans review, and construction and maintenance consultation.

With her promotion to Construction Services Engineer four years ago, Sarah has taken on additional duties and oversees construction staff, materials, surface treatment, constructability and schedule review, consultant agreements, structure control, other construction services, and multiple construction projects of various sizes and types. She has strived to provide timely project delivery and safe, economical and constructable products, and has taken great effort to implement a design program to minimize construction and future maintenance costs. This has been achievable through her leadership and ability to utilize the latest available technologies to further the Department's mission. On the current I-95 reconstruction projects in particular, her insight into constructability has reduced the need for extra work and has resulted in considerable cost savings.

Sarah received her Bachelors degree in Civil Engineering from Syracuse University in 1992, followed by her Masters degree from Villanova University in 2013. She is active in our Section's GeolInstitute and has served on the Board of Directors of the Delaware Valley Section of the American Society of Highway Engineers for several years. She has authored and published numerous papers and presentations on geotechnical topics as well. She was recognized for her efforts with our Section's Geotechnical Engineer of the Year award in 2020. She and her family live in Harleysville.

### Philadelphia Young Civil Engineer of the Year

Our Philadelphia Young Civil Engineer for 2025 is **Briana Pampuch**. Briana serves as a Senior Project Manager at Langan at its office in Warrington. She has been with the firm for the past twelve years. Her responsibilities include overseeing the preparation of plans and reports for Highway Occupancy Permit submissions, management of PennDOT ECMS funded projects and ADA-compliant curb ramp designs, and traffic impact studies and analyses. She additionally handles roadway and highway designs across multiple states in addition to local efforts, which encompass projects in Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Ohio and Virginia. This includes activities in right-of-way identification and acquisition, construction cost estimating, corridor grading, and utility design. She has successfully managed several multi-million dollar roadway improvement design projects for developments encompassing over 500,000 square feet of building space. Briana earned her Bachelors degree in Civil Engineering and a Masters degree in Transportation Engineering at the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 2013. She is an active member of our Section, where she served in several Board positions including Past

*Continued on page 5*

## THE 2025 SPRING SOCIAL – WELL-RECEIVED



The warm spring evening of May 15 was not a good evening to be inside, but over 100 Section members and guests went inside anyway at The Lucy in Center City to close out another successful Section season. Good food and a couple of popular bars forced attendees to choose between the first floor and the balcony to get some eats and drinks and mingle/network, followed by dinner (what, someone's still hungry with the spread that was offered...?) and the "business" portion of the evening to wrap up the event. This would include a chance to thank our outgoing Officers and Board of Directors, induct the incoming slate of Officers and Board members, cite our Delaware Valley Science Fairs awardees and Section Scholarship winners, and recognize those who would be receiving Section Awards. As

always, an ambitious agenda and a comparatively short time to do it all, but we did it.

**President Kevin Brown** had the unenviable task of separating folks from the appetizers and drinks and networking, to get them settled into their tables for more eating... He succeeded in getting folks seated and dinner was served. As dessert wound down President (for a couple more hours...) Brown got things started with the business of the event, with a little twist on the recognition of Section Awards recipients, as the usual Powerpoint slide show was offered but with live narration for the first time in quite a while (possibly 40 years). This year's awardees are noted below.

### Philadelphia Civil Engineer of the Year

The recipient of our highest honor, the Philadelphia Civil Engineer of the Year award, is **Sarah McInnes**. Sarah holds the position of Senior Assistant Construction Engineer, Services, at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation District 6 office in King of Prussia, which encompasses the five-county Philadelphia metropolitan area, the busiest and most populous of PennDOT's 11 districts across the Commonwealth. She has been with PennDOT in various capacities for the past 29 years. She has been involved with all phases of transportation project development including

## SPRING SOCIAL

Continued from page 4

President in 2021-22, as well as the Women's Transportation Seminar, the Commercial Real Estate Women's Network, and the Engineers' Club of Philadelphia. At the Engineers' Club she is the current Vice President and a Vice Chair of the Club's Delaware Valley Engineers Week Committee. She is also a member of Chi Epsilon.

In her spare time Briana enjoys hiking, working out, and traveling. She, her husband Jeremy, and their daughter Anya live in Harleysville.

## Geotechnical Engineer of the Year

**Michael Giovannitti** has been cited as our Section's Geotechnical Engineer of the Year for 2025. Mike is a Senior Geotechnical Engineer at American Geotechnical and Environmental Services, Incorporated and serves as the Branch and Office Manager at the firm's office in King of Prussia. He has been with AGES in various capacities for 26 years and has held the position of Branch Manager since 2005. He started at the firm as a core boring inspector and has risen through the ranks to his current capacity as Geotechnical Project Manager, where he leads the firm's efforts and assistance for geotechnical aspects and assignments in transportation projects totalling over \$1.5 billion. He provides geotechnical and related soil and foundation design and construction services to an extensive list of clients and consultants. He additionally leads the firm's local efforts in technical oversight and business development. His current construction projects locally include PennDOT projects on the I-95 CAP effort in the Penns Landing area, I-95 reconstruction sections in lower Northeast Philadelphia, including Section BS2, and SR 61 reconstruction in Schuylkill County. He is additionally managing the development of a geotechnical laboratory at his office.

Mike received his Bachelor of Science degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Pittsburgh in 1995. He has professional engineering licensure in four states and the District of Columbia and has been active in our Section's Delaware Valley Geo-Institute as well as a presenter for the Structural Engineering Institute. He is also a member of the American Society of Highway Engineers. He has visited over 40 countries and is an avid cyclist. He lives in Conshohocken.

## Young Government Engineer of the Year

Our nominee for our Young Government Engineer of the Year award is **Christian Antisell**. Chris is a project engineer with PhilaPort, a State agency which manages and operates the Port of Philadelphia, and has held this position for the past two years following his service at a local consulting firm. He manages both design and construction activities for the agency to enhance its port operations facilities and enable it to efficiently and effectively conduct its import/export functions at its piers and warehouses. This includes direction of on-call construction and maintenance contractors, review of design and construction plans, specifications, schedules, cost estimates and budgets, bid packages and related activities, review and assessment of qualifications packages and submissions for engineering design and construction contracts, coordination of construction scheduling and staging with terminal operators and port stakeholders, and assistance in the allocation of funding, development of budgets and prioritization of capital repairs and construction projects.

Chris received his Bachelors degree in Civil Engineering from Widener University in 2019 and was active in Widener's ASCE Student Chapter during his time there, and remains as the Practitioner Adviser for the Chapter. He brought his willingness to volunteer to the Section's Younger Member Forum and has been a key part of several groups and committees in the Forum, including outreach to convey information on civil engineering careers to local grade and high school students. He is a professional engineer in Pennsylvania. Chris is a resident of the Wissahickon section of Philadelphia.

## Government Service Award

The recipient of our Section's Government Service award is **Leslie S. Richards**. Leslie has held key agency positions over the past several years, most recently in her service as the General Manager and CEO of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, where she was appointed in 2020, just prior to the start of the pandemic which would change the public

transit world greatly. She served as the leader of SEPTA, the sixth largest transit authority in the United States, for four years. Prior to her appointment at SEPTA she led the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation. She was appointed as Secretary of Transportation in 2015 and managed the Department for five years. Thus she has served as the leader of two major transportation agencies in the nation, positions in which she directed billions of dollars of investment in communities and transportation facilities across the Commonwealth. Throughout her career she has consistently worked to accelerate inclusive economic growth, promote job creation and lay the foundation for stronger, more livable and connected communities. She is known as an innovative change maker who leads collaboratively, taking the time to listen and elevate the voices of others, and always putting people first.

Leslie transitioned from SEPTA GM last year to become a Professor of Practice in the Weitzman School of Design at the University of Pennsylvania in its Department of City and Regional Planning. Her extensive background in transportation agencies as well as her previous experience in leadership positions in Montgomery County and Whitemarsh Township will serve as a great resource for her students in this program. In her various agency and government positions she was able to support and utilize the service of civil engineers to accomplish the goals of infrastructure upgrades and improvements to improve mobility and the quality of life for her constituents and users.

Leslie received her Bachelors degree in Economics and Urban Studies from Brown University in 1989, with a Masters degree in Regional Planning from Penn in 1993. She and her husband reside in Center City.

## Community Outreach and Service Award

We are pleased to recognize **Elvira-Marie Mikhael** as the recipient of our Community Outreach and Service Award. Elvira is a Highway Design Specialist with TPD at the firm's Center City office. She has been with TPD since her graduation from college in 2021. Her duties include design of horizontal and vertical alignments for roadways, site and driveway access, and sidewalks for applications for PennDOT Highway Occupancy Permitting, DelDOT Entrance Permitting, and City of Philadelphia driveway permits, as well as analysis of roadway stormwater systems and drainage and production of construction plans for roadway improvements.

Elvira received her Bachelors degree in Civil Engineering from Drexel University in 2021. She has been an active member of our Section's Younger Member Forum since her graduation and has served in several Forum positions including K-12 Outreach Chair and College Contract Chair, as well as other volunteer efforts for the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia and TPD's internal DEI best practices group. She lives in Fishtown.

As we have done in the past, we invited our First Place winners in the **Delaware Valley Science Fairs** to attend the Social and show off their award-winning projects. Both of our award winners were able to attend and show their projects to the crowd. Grades 9-12 winner, **Adelina Cutrona** of Souderton Area High School, conducted her project on *"The Perfect Curve: Arch Bridges Rise-to-Span Ratio,"* while Grades 6-8 awardee, **Emma Frank** of Cedarbrook Middle School, focused her project on *"Water You Waiting For? How Filters Affect Dirty Water."*

We also cited our Section Scholarship winners. Our *Section Student Scholarship* went to **Ben Aaron** of Swarthmore College. Our *Delaware Valley Engineers Week Student Scholarship* was awarded to **Amelia Landry** of Swarthmore College.

## Thanks to...

Special thanks are extended to those who helped make the Spring Social a success once again this year. This includes the Spring Social Program Committee (chair **Troy Illig**, **Kevin Brown**, **Assunta Daprano**, **Jesse Gormley**, **Tom Kulesher**, **Joe Natale**, **Briana Pampuch**, **Jen Reigle** and **Bob Wright**), the Awards Committee (chair **Bob Wright**, **Assunta Daprano**, **Carol Martsoff**, **Allan Moore**, **Joe Natale** and **Mahmid Rahman**), and the Awards presentation narrators, for a change visible and in person, **Tom Kulesher** and **Bob Wright**.

We will begin planning for the 2026 Spring Social later this fall and details will be provided as they develop.



## THE MULFORD CLASSIC – GOLF OUTING

The Engineers' Club of Philadelphia will be conducting its annual **Philadelphia Engineering Foundation (PEF)/Mulford Classic Golf Outing**. This event, the **10th Annual Mulford Classic** as well as the **26th Annual PEF Outing**, is scheduled for **Monday, October 13** at the **Bala Golf Club** in **Wynnefield**. Various sponsorships, foursomes, and individual play are available.

If you're not a golfer, volunteer opportunities for various event duties are available. This is all for a good cause, as PEF funds and administers college student scholarships and prizes in conjunction with the Engineers' Club that are awarded during Engineers Week.

Please visit the Engineers' Club website ([www.engrclub.org](http://www.engrclub.org)) for more information and registration.

## TIME TO PAY YOUR DUES...

### ALSO, LOOKING TO REFER A NEW MEMBER? OR SOMEONE WHO'S NOT AN ENGINEER?

As a reminder, your ASCE dues for 2026 is coming due at the end of the year. You may have seen the e-mail reminders on this and hard-copy invoices are being mailed to those who have requested them. You may be thinking "didn't I just pay this," but that's probably last year's dues and, yes, time does indeed fly.

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 the recent changes and consolidations in membership grade, one can now join as a full Member, which is available to those having "an interest in the advancement of the purposes and objectives of the Society" as well as civil engineering-degreed individuals. Non-CE-degree applicants were previously accepted at the Affiliate Member grade, but this has been folded into the Member grade with the noted recent revisions.

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.

Of the more than 160,000 members in 177 countries that are represented by ASCE, just 3 percent hold the prestigious honor of being an ASCE Fellow. These individuals have made celebrated contributions to the profession and developed creative solutions that have changed lives around the world.

The specific requirements for application for Fellow are listed on [asce.org](http://asce.org).

## N-ASCE\*

### FOUL BALLS – WHICH ONE OF YOUSE GETS THEM?

As baseball season winds down and playoffs are about to start, *THE NEWS*, in its usual timely fashion, would like to enlighten you on the apparently touchy subject of foul balls at baseball games. If you have attended a game you may recall getting a warning over the PA system about baseballs that can leave the playing field and could cause injury. This tends to be right up there with the usual safety instructions one gets on a flight before it leaves the ground and gets about as much attention. In any event a recent "disagreement" over a home run at a Phillies game in Miami, which caused an Internet and social media stir for a few days, brought to light once again the somewhat loose rules (if there are any at all) on who gets the possession of a ball that leaves the playing field, as well as the follow-up action of who may take it from who and claim it is theirs, etc. The teams do not seem to mind that people treasure them and take them these days, as long as there is no interference with play (e.g. leaning over a railing and grabbing a ball that a fielder is attempting to catch).

We at *THE NEWS* were reminded of a time when such balls had to be returned to the field of play and were not permitted to be taken as valued souvenirs. That all changed over 100 years ago, right here in our fair city.

In 1923 a baseball cost a princely \$1.50, or about \$28 in 2025 dollars. The Phillies, then a last-place team with a notoriously thrifty owner, wanted all foul balls returned to be used again (and again...). One day a neighborhood kid known as "Toughie Reds" helped change everything. Robert Cotter later became a mail carrier, a father of six, and grandfather to Kelly Anne Clark, who has kept this story going. But before that, he was a hustler, and, unwittingly, a trend setter.

It may seem a little strange that Bob Cotter's offspring became Phillies fans, considering the team had him thrown in jail overnight, at age 11, for daring to stuff a foul ball in his rear pocket at a 1923 Phillies game and try to leave the ballpark with it. Bob Cotter became a cause célèbre who drew national attention after his caper.

On July 18, 1923, Cotter left his house on 15th Street and shimmied up a rain spout to sneak with his brother, Raymond, into a Phillies game (apparently not for the first time) against Chicago at Baker Bowl, the ramshackle ballpark in North Philadelphia that was the Phillies' home from 1887 to 1938. He then proceeded to snag a foul ball hit into the right-field bleachers, drawing applause for his "dexterity," as later reported.

Fatefully, Cotter tried to keep the ball, perhaps hoping he could sell it for a quarter to a fan on the sidewalk after the game. But he was apprehended by ballpark guards, known as "red

caps" and was dragged, allegedly tearfully, to a police station, where he was arrested and taken to the House of Detention. He spent the night there, in part because his mother had arrived at the courthouse after it closed.

By the next morning, Judge Charles Lincoln Brown in Municipal Court had learned of Cotter's plight and demanded that the boy be brought into court, along with a representative from the Phillies, who tried to explain that Cotter had committed larceny. This was an epidemic that needed to be addressed and this was a test case, the Phillies said.

Judge Brown was irritated, but more with the Phillies and their business manager, Bill Shettsline. The judge said Cotter had only "followed his natural impulses," then discharged him, saying, "Why, I would have done the same thing myself if I had been in the boy's place."

Not only was Cotter free to go, but he got to keep the foul ball he had caught, a sweet postscript for the article that ran at the bottom of Page 1 of the *Inquirer* on July 20, 1923, with the headline "Phillies' Officials Fail to Jail Boy Who Pocketed Ball". "All American and National League clubs are trying to cut down their losses from stolen baseballs," Shettsline said later. "We were simply trying to protect our property." About 500 balls a year were lost by each league team, aggregating a loss in both leagues of 8000 balls.

The story had legs, with another headline, "Judge Frees Boy Held for Stealing Foul Ball in Phillies' Ball Park," on a wire story that appeared the next day in the *Chicago Tribune*. Ballclubs did not share foul-ball policies. In 1916, Charles Weeghman, the Cubs' owner, was the first to allow fans to keep foul balls at his 2-year-old ballpark, later known as Wrigley Field. Weeghman said, "The charm of novelty, of possible gain, might lure far more spectators than enough to pay for the lost balls." But the New York Yankees had three fans arrested in one week that season for keeping foul balls or home runs hit at the Polo Grounds. Yankees' co-owner Tillinghast Huston said, in counterpoint, "When people go to a restaurant, do they take the dishes or silverware home for souvenirs?"

Legal precedent, of sorts, had been established in 1921, when a New York Giants fan, Reuben Berman, was thrown out of the Polo Grounds when he caught a foul ball, and, when approached by ushers to give it up, threw it even deeper into the stands. Citing "humiliation before a large crowd," Berman sued the Giants, and he won \$100. Many big league clubs, financially stretched thin, had figured out by that point that they stood to keep losing in court, so they relaxed their foul-ball policies. The Phillies were owned then by William Baker, a former New York City police commissioner who knew how to pinch pennies. Famously, he used sheep to trim the outfield grass at the ballpark.

Not surprisingly, throwing an 11-year-old in jail overnight for filching a foul ball turned out to be lousy public relations. Following the incident,

*Continued on page 7*

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### N-ASCE\*

Continued from page 6

Cotter decided to start rooting for the Yankees. The Phillies were on their way to a 104-loss season, anyway. Another local Yankees fan took him to a Yankees-A's game, and he managed to meet Babe Ruth and received a baseball signed by Ruth and other Yankees.

That would seem to be the end of Toughie Reds' cool story, but in 1998, granddaughter Clark wrote to Larry Shenk, the head of public relations for the Phillies, to remind him that 75 years had passed since the failed ball heist. Her grandfather was in poor health. Shenk arranged for the family to attend a Phillies game as the team's guests. The team presented two

autographed baseballs to the family, one from the 1998 Phillies, the other from legendary former pitcher Robin Roberts.

And, as a result, you are now welcome to keep balls that leave the playing field, depending on whether you are able to fend off other fans who claim you took what was obviously their ball.

Thanks to the *Inquirer* for this information.

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



## 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.



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS UPDATE

As you may be aware, professional engineers, land surveyors and geologists in many states are required to obtain continued professional development (CPD) credit to renew their licenses in many states. Locally, this includes Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware. You have (hopefully...) submitted your Pennsylvania renewal and payment at this point as [licenses expire on September 30](#). New Jersey and Delaware are "on deck" for renewal in the spring.

During your renewal process, you likely had to check your tally of professional development hours (PDH) that you needed to attest that you had to meet the minimum for renewal. As you may know, our Section's meeting program is generally able to count toward your continuing education requirement (meetings that the Section believes would not count will be prefaced as such in the meeting announcement) for many states. We also offer various Technical Group/Institute and YMF meetings and events that offer PDH. We continue to have a verification program in place to help our members obtain and track PDH's. Over a two-year licensure period, our Section meeting program alone could amount to half of what one needs to meet many states' requirements.

Additionally, please keep in mind our October Section meeting will feature the elusive ethics topic, for which some states (not Pennsylvania) require a handful of PDH's for renewal.

Additionally, [ASCE National offers free on-demand webinars and coursework](#) that will get you up to 10 PDH's as a benefit of your membership. Information on this is available in the Membership section of the ASCE National website ([www.asce.org](http://www.asce.org)).

**Fear of making mistakes can itself become a huge mistake, one that prevents you from living, for life is risky and anything less is already loss.**

— Rebecca Solnit

### MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

#### Pampuch One of Lehigh Valley Business' Forty Under 40

Past Section President Briana Pampuch was recognized by Lehigh Valley Business as one of its **Forty Under 40** at its event on September 11. The Forty Under 40 awards recognize the future leaders of the Lehigh Valley who are under the age of 40 and are achieving success in their careers as well as giving back in meaningful ways to the Lehigh Valley community.

We congratulate Briana on this honor.



## NATIONAL REPORT CARD RELEASED

The grades are officially in, with the 2025 Report Card for America's Infrastructure awarding an overall grade of C. While this is the highest grade that's been given since ASCE's first Report Card, there's still much to be done to ensure infrastructure systems and communities thrive. Please visit [www.infrastructurereportcard.org](http://www.infrastructurereportcard.org) to view the new grades and accompanying reports.

As a reminder, the Pennsylvania Report Card will be issued next year. If you would like to be part of this effort, please see below on how you can help.

#### CALL FOR 2026 PA INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT CARD CATEGORY CHAMPIONS & VOLUNTEERS:

**Category Champions** are responsible for leading the volunteer effort of grading and writing their chosen Report Card category with the support of our co-chairs, volunteers, and ASCE HQ. **Category Volunteers** are responsible for researching, grading, and writing a Report Card category. The effort is 12-14 months long with an intended release date in November 2026. The report card categories are:

- Aviation
- Bridges
- Broadband
- Dams
- Drinking Water
- Energy
- Hazardous Waste
- Inland Waterways
- Levees
- Public Parks
- Ports
- Rail
- Roads
- Schools
- Solid Waste
- Stormwater
- Transit
- Wastewater

For more information and to volunteer please email our co-chairs Paul Ackerman and Justin Komp at [packerman@ycp.edu](mailto:packerman@ycp.edu) and [jkomp@langan.com](mailto:jkomp@langan.com).