

Fall 2022 Newsletter



President's Message:

Happy Fall everyone. As the leaves are starting to change and fall, this only means that soon I'll be raking.

The Branch continues to provide technical programming for our members. Lunchtime seems to be a good time to host these meetings and we will continue to do so on a regular basis. On October 26th, over 70 people registered for our webinar that focused on the newly created Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority. Scott Frances, Executive Director of the Montgomery County Planning Commission along with his counterpart Executive Directors, David Hunter from the Berks County Planning Commission and Brian O'Leary from the Chester County Planning Commission were part of a very informative discussion. If you are interested in learning more about the Authority or would like to provide them with some suggestions as they plan to re-establish rail service, please visit their website at: <https://gosrpra.com/>

In addition, we are planning to get back in-person gatherings. The first event we are planning will be on Thursday December 1st and details will be forthcoming. We are working with Montgomery County Community College to tour their new Challenger Learning Center which opened in late August. The Center focuses on inspiring and engaging students in grades 5-8 where they embark on simulated space missions in a fully immersive Space Station, and Mission Control, working together to run hands-on experiments and solve tough problems. This is a great way to get students interested in STEM and adds to what is already being done by many different organizations including but not limited to, PSPE with MATHCOUNTS and the Future City Competition for which I have been involved with over the years. In addition, I will be giving a presentation on the 2022 ASCE Pennsylvania Report Card for Pennsylvania's Infrastructure which will be released on Tuesday November 15th by each of the four ASCE Pennsylvania Sections.

The Lehigh Valley Section will hold their release press conference at 11 AM at Fitz Engineering Laboratory at Lehigh University. I want to thank David DiGioia from the Pittsburgh Section and Michelle Madzellan from the Central PA Section for Co-Chairing this edition of the report card. Both David and Michele along with their ASCE member volunteers from across all four Pennsylvania spent many hours putting this very important document together. I want to thank all of them for their dedication and commitment to the profession.

As the Lehigh Valley Section celebrates their 100th Anniversary, they will be hosting their 100th Anniversary/Christmas Gala on December 8th. Newly inducted ASCE Society President Maria Lehman will be in attendance and will provide remarks. We hope that you will join us for this wonderful celebration.

Lastly, as election day nears. If you haven't already voted via mail-in or absentee ballot, please do your civic duty on Tuesday November 8th and get to the polls. Every election is important and knowing the issues, especially as ASCE members on matters of infrastructure is critical. As we release the next edition of the Pennsylvania Report Card, we will be able to see what progress has been made over the past four years as well as learn on those areas still need to focus on. Engaging with your elected representatives, both local and federal, will help them craft policy and legislation that will continue to keep us busy and raise those grades.

We thank you for your participation and look forward to seeing you at a future Branch or Section meeting.

John Caperilla, Reading Branch President & Region 2 Governor

Historic Civil Engineering Sites Across the Reading Branch:

As the Lehigh Valley Section celebrates the 100th Anniversary of the founding of their section in 2022, the 100th Anniversary Committee is traveling around the Section to identify key sites and landmarks. While the Reading Branch was founded in 1975 by the Philadelphia Section, in 2017 the Reading Branch was transferred to the Lehigh Valley Section, and we are pleased to be part of their celebration and this assignment. Over the next several newsletters we will highlight a couple of sites here in the Branch and provide some background information along with some photos.

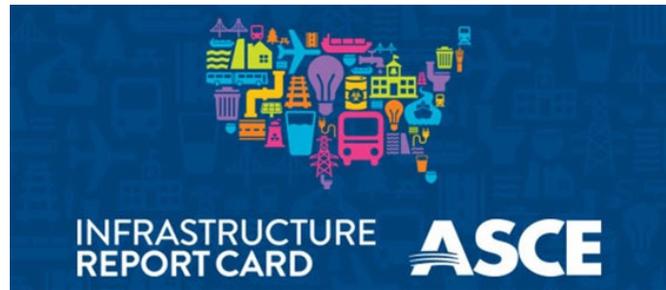


Philadelphia & Reading Railroad Pedestrian Suspension Bridge – Reading, PA

In 1886, the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad (P&R) initiated a project to provide a safe pedestrian crossing over its main line and yard tracks east of the Outer Station in Reading. To avoid the introduction of intermediate piers or columns that would interfere with the future positioning of the tracks, they chose a suspension bridge configuration with a 275-foot main span between the towers. The P&R then contracted with the John A. Roebling's Sons Company of Trenton, New Jersey, to design and build the bridge. The design engineer was William Hildenbrand, who had been a key player in the Roebling Company's recently completed Brooklyn Bridge project.

Unfortunately, the Reading Railroad, successor to the P&R, closed the bridge in 1964 and removed its approach spans three years later. The remainder of the structure was to be demolished in 1983; however, public outcry and intervention by the American Society of Civil Engineers resulted in the preservation of one tower, which was relocated to Heritage Park along the Schuylkill River in Reading.

Summary provided by "100 Civil Engineering Landmarks, Celebrating the Centennial of the ASCE Lehigh Valley Section".



**In-Person Meeting
Tour of the Challenger Learning Center
Presentation of the 2022 PA ASCE Report Card**

Date & Time: Thursday December 1, 2022
Time: 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM, Tour and Presentation
5:30 PM – 7:00 PM, Happy Hour Reception
Location: Challenger Learning Center
Montgomery County Community College
140 College Drive, Pottstown, PA 19464

The ASCE Reading Branch welcomes you to tour the Challenger Learning Center and hear about the 2022 Report Card on Pennsylvania's Infrastructure Report Card which will be released to the public on Tuesday November 15th. After the tour and presentation, we will head over to a local establishment on High Street for a time of networking.

We anticipate that the tour and presentation will meet Pennsylvania licensure renewal requirements and be good for 1 PDH. For more information about both the Challenger Center and ASCE Report Card, please visit the website links below.

[The Challenger Learning Center at Montco Pottstown - Montgomery County Community College \(mc3.edu\)](https://www.mc3.edu/)

[Pennsylvania Infrastructure | ASCE's 2021 Infrastructure Report Card](https://www.asce.org/pennsylvania-infrastructure-report-card)

Space is limited, please RSVP by Monday November 28th, using the link below.

<http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=juhnlg8ab&oeidk=a07ejg8fls123fb785c>

If you have any questions, please contact John Caperilla at jcaperilla@mctish.com.



**2022 Report Card for Pennsylvania's
Infrastructure
Tuesday November 15th, 2022 – 11 AM
Fritz Engineering Laboratory, Lehigh University**

We are excited to inform you that the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) 2022 Report Card for Pennsylvania Infrastructure (Report Card) will be released. We are planning the primary release event to be held at the Fritz Engineering Laboratory, 13 East Packer Ave., Bethlehem, PA 18015.

The ASCE Pennsylvania State Council consists of the four Pennsylvania Sections (Central Pennsylvania, Lehigh Valley, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh) have developed and released the Report Card every four years since 2006. Together the four ASCE Sections in Pennsylvania represent nearly 6,000 members of the civil engineering profession. Using a simple A to F school report card format, the 2022 Report Card will provide a comprehensive assessment of current infrastructure conditions and needs, assign grades, and make recommendations for how to raise the grades. The Report Card is written by ASCE members in Pennsylvania who assign the grades according to the following seven criteria: capacity, condition, funding, future need, operation and maintenance, public safety, and resilience.

The goal of the 2022 Report Card is to raise the public's awareness of how much investment is needed. An additional goal is to give policymakers solid recommendations that the Commonwealth can use to better regulate and fund infrastructure.

To register, visit the link below:

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=gzdb7zgab&oeidk=a07ejfy2p6i22f78003>

If you have any questions, please contact John Caperilla at jcaperilla@mctish.com.

Society News:

Maria Lehman inducted as ASCE President:

ASCE officially inducted Maria Lehman as the new Society President for 2023 at their annual Convention in Anaheim, CA. In addition, several new Society Board members were installed into their respective offices. Carol Martsof was part of those newly installed Board members where she was installed the new Region 2 Director. Carol is from the Philadelphia Section. She takes over for Jack Raudenbush from the Central PA Section who serve as Director for the past three years.

[Ready to work her infrastructure magic, Lehman inducted as ASCE president | ASCE](#)

New strategic plan puts action behind ASCE objectives.

At the annual business meeting on October 22nd the ASCE Board of Direction approved a new strategic plan which takes effective immediately. To view the plan, please visit the link below.

[asce-strategic-plan.pdf](#)

Federal funds buoy Pennsylvania's 12-year transportation program:

The Pennsylvania State Transportation Commission's newly updated 12-Year Program, known as TYP, took effect on Oct. 1, in line with the federal fiscal year. The \$84 billion program includes \$18.9 billion from the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act — also referred to as the bipartisan infrastructure law. This funding will allow the state to complete its expected infrastructure improvements while adding new work to the program. That means more opportunities for engineering and construction firms. To read more, please see the link below.

[Federal funds buoy Pennsylvania's 12-year transportation program | ASCE](#)

Contact Us:

The ASCE Reading Branch sends out a newsletter on a quarterly basis to inform our membership of events and happenings within our Branch. If you have news items for future newsletters, please free to contact us.

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Find us on LinkedIn: Search “ASCE Reading Branch”

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