

Winter 2023 Newsletter



President's Message:

Happy New Year everyone! I guess I can still get away with saying that since at the time of this writing my message, it's still January. We haven't seen much snow this year, which I'm fine with personally. Shoveling snow is not one of my favorite things on my list to do and I don't ski. I'm sure I'll get some comments from the snow lovers out there.

Since my last message, the Branch and the Lehigh Valley Section have been busy and returned to in-person events. In December we went to Montgomery County Community College to visit their new Challenger Learning Center in Pottstown where I had the opportunity to speak on the recently released report card for Pennsylvania's Infrastructure.

The Lehigh Valley Section had a very successful 100th anniversary celebration in December. Society President Maria Lehman came to visit the Section and spoke to the attendees at the Sections celebration.

Again, we are pleased to have U.S. Representative Chrissy Houlahan from the 6th Congressional District speak to us in a virtual town hall to discuss progress that has been made on Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the 2022 Pennsylvania Report Card on Friday February 17th at noon. We thank Rep. Houlahan and her staff for their continued support.

On Tuesday March 28th, the ASCE Reading Branch will team up with the Berks Mineralogical Society for a tour of the Reading Science Center. More details will be provided in the coming days.

This time last year, we received the news about the Fern Hollow Bridge collapse in Pittsburgh. Since then, a new bridge has been built and the NTSB has recently released their report for which I provided in the link below.

<https://www.nts.gov/investigations/Pages/HWY22MH003.aspx>

Lastly, as we begin a new year, I wanted to remind you to renew your ASCE membership if you haven't already. To renew visit www.asce.org. We thank you for your participation and look forward to seeing you at a future Branch or Section meeting.

John Caperilla, ASCE Reading Branch President & Region 2 Governor

ASCE Reading Branch Board of Directors

President

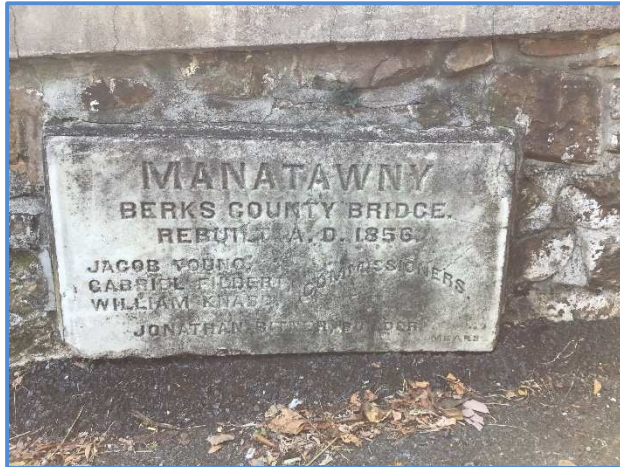
John Caperilla, CDR Maguire Engineering

Directors

Chris Antoni, STV ● Phil Harter, Worley ● Kyle Turner, CEDARVILLE Engineering Group
Nick Johnson, Johnson Environmental Engineering ● Sean Pence, Traffic Planning and Design

Historic Civil Engineering Sites Across the Reading Branch:

While the Lehigh Valley Section celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the founding of their section in 2022, we will continue to identify key sites and landmarks in the Reading Branch. 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.



Pleasantville Bridge Over Little Manatwny Creek – Oley Township, PA

The Pleasantville Bridge was constructed by an accomplished builder named David Renno in 1854, to replace a span that had been destroyed by a major flood in 1850. Renno was paid \$2,156 to design and construct the double Burr Arch truss, which spanned 142 feet from portal to portal. Although timber bridges of this era were normally roofed to protect the main structural elements from the weather, a lumber shortage caused by the 1850 flooding made this impossible.

In 1856, after the lumber shortage eased, the Berks County Commissioners contracted with another builder, Jonathan Bitner to enclose the bridge and add a third arch to each main truss. Thus, the Pleasantville Bridge is quite unique in its two-phase construction and its use of a triple Burr Arch configuration. The structure was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1981. The use of both vertical and horizontal exterior siding reflects this bridge's two distinct phases of construction by two different builders. Pleasantville Bridge is unique in its use of a triple Burr Arch truss configuration. The third arch was added during the second phase of construction in 1856.

*Information pertaining to this site can be found in the book "100 Civil Engineering Landmarks, Celebrating the Centennial the ASCE Lehigh Valley Section".

Legislative Affairs Minute – A New Congress & A New Administration in Harrisburg

On January 3rd, the 118th U.S. Congress convened. In this Congress, the Republicans hold a 222-212 majority. Members were not able to be sworn in under a Speaker was elected, over four days and 15 votes, Rep. Kevin McCarthy, from California, was ultimately elected as Speaker. This is the first time in 100 years where the Speaker was not elected on the first ballot. In the U.S. Senate, the Democrats have a 51-49 majority. Senator John Fetterman, former Lt. Governor was elected to the seat here in Pennsylvania replacing Pat Toomey, who did not seek re-election.

In Harrisburg we are experiencing a similar situation in the PA House of Representatives. At the time of writing this the Republicans have a slim majority of 101-99, however, there are three open seats due to them being vacated. There will be three special elections to fill these seats on February 7th. These seats were held by Democrats, and it's anticipated that they will remain with the Democrats and would have a 102-101 majority. The only business that the House has conducted was the election of the Speaker. Rep. Mark Rozzi, a Democrat out of Berks County was elected and then the House was adjourned. The House has not been in session since and they don't appear to be called back into session until after the special elections.

Josh Shapiro was sworn in as Pennsylvania's 48th Governor on January 17th. Tom Wolf was termed out and not eligible to run for a 3rd term. Governor Shapiro has announced his cabinet nominees which will require a confirmation vote by the Pennsylvania State Senate. Several of the cabinet nominees are noted below. For those who have yet to be confirmed by the State Senate, they will hold the title of "Acting Secretary". Below are brief bios of the nominees.

Michael Carrol – Acting Secretary of Transportation (PennDOT)

Mike Carroll was first elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 2006 and subsequently re-elected for seven additional terms, and he worked on transportation throughout his time in public office. Mike was Democratic chairman of the House Transportation Committee from 2018 through 2022. Mike formerly worked as the chief of staff for then-state Rep. John Yudichak, served as legislative liaison for PennDOT under Gov. Robert Casey and served as district office director for Congressman Paul Kanjorski.

Cindy Adams Dunn – Secretary of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

Cindy Adams Dunn has served as the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources since 2015. She has served multiple positions in the agency under three governors during the last three decades. Ms. Dunn first joined DCNR in the mid-1990s as Director of Community Relations and Environmental Education.

Richard Negrin – Acting Secretary of Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

Richard Negrin most recently served as the Vice President of Regulatory Policy and Strategy and head of external affairs at Commonwealth Edison, where he led the development of clean energy regulatory policies and strategies. At ComEd, Negrin led efforts to increase the use of renewable energy, spur the adoption of electric vehicles, and increase energy efficiency. Negrin's extensive leadership and management track record includes his service as Deputy Mayor of Administration & Coordination and Managing Director of the City of Philadelphia.

To learn about the Pennsylvania Cabinet, visit: <https://www.pa.gov/#government>

SOCIETY NEWS

Peña-Mora, Phillips named official nominees for ASCE 2024 president-elect

ASCE is pleased to announce the official nominees for ASCE 2024 President-Elect. The members of the society will vote for their choice later this year. They will be installed into office at the ASCE Convention in October and will become Society President in 2024.

Feniosky A. Peña-Mora

With nearly 30 years of experience in academia and practice, Peña-Mora serves as the executive director of the Center for Buildings, Infrastructure and Public Space at Columbia University, where he also has been the Edwin Howard Armstrong Professor of Civil Engineering and Engineering Mechanics since 2012. He's been a visiting professor in China for Nankai University since 2017 and Tsinghua University since 2013. Additionally, Peña-Mora is the founder and president of Peña-Alcantara Consultants Inc.

Peña-Mora's involvement with ASCE dates to 1990 as a student member. He's since gone on to many Society leadership roles, including chair of the Construction Research Council 2009 through 2011, chair of the International Conference on Sustainable Infrastructure in 2017, and chair of the Industry Leaders Council 2020 through 2022. Peña-Mora served on the Board of Direction as an at-large director, 2019-2022, during which he also led the development of ASCE's new strategic plan through his role as chair of the Board Strategic Advisory Council.

Brett C. Phillips

Phillips has 38-plus years of experience in hydro-environmental, catchment management, flood mitigation, and stormwater quality work in Australia and around the world. He now works as senior principal for Stantec Australia, following two decades with Cardno, where he also served as senior principal among other roles.

An ASCE member since 1979, Phillips served as 2013-14 president of the Australia Section. He was a Region 10 governor from 2014 through 2016 and served on the ASCE Board of Direction as Region 10 director from 2016 through 2019. Most recently, Phillips chaired the Members Communities Committee Global Members Task Committee.

To learn more about the nominees visit: <https://www.asce.org/publications-and-news/civil-engineering-source/article/2023/01/24/pena-mora-phillips-named-official-nominees-for-asce-2024-president-elect>

We want to hear from you!

If you have a topic that you might think would be good for a technical presentation at an upcoming meeting, please reach out to us. We want to highlight all the great projects that are currently going on in the Branch. Also, if you are interested in getting more involved with the Branch at a Board level, please contact us as well.

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 feel free to contact us.

John Caperilla | President ASCE Reading Branch | john.caperilla@cdrmaguire.com

Find us on LinkedIn: Search "ASCE Reading Branch"