

# The Transportation Times

ASHE DELAWARE VALLEY SECTION

2012-13 EDITION #4

## *A Message from President Bruce Masi*

So, Punxsutawney Phil says that "Spring is on the way" ..... then why am I sitting in my office with the heater on full blast (lol). It is the anticipation of events (like Spring) which can fuel our fires and ignite motivation in us. BUT it is only by living in the present which allows us to most fully appreciate our lives. (I once heard the adage "....Today is a **gift**. That's why it is called **the present**". It's a bit kitschy, but I feel there is sage wisdom in this phrase.)

Thus, I thought I'd share with you, as of today, what our Section has accomplished this season. As I pen this missive, our membership stands at 376, and we are one of most populace of the Society's 42 sections. We now have two new committees, Student Chapters and Young Members. These forums are meant to introduce students to our Society and encourage graduate engineers to become involved in ASHE early in their careers. These committees have only existed for less than one year, and we have made great strides in establishing each. In fact, the Young Members Committee will end up hosting three events this season, and, in addition, we even had a presence at the Young Engineers Social during Engineers Week. The Student Chapters Committee has already established lines of communication with four universities and is working towards establishing an ASHE Student Chapter at each institution.



The Scholarship Committee is distributing \$6,500 worth of funds to seven students this month. Since 1997, we have distributed **\$98,850.00** in scholarship money!! That is the THIRD largest amount of the 18 Sections in the Northeast Region who have given out scholarships. Only the Harrisburg and Southern NJ Sections have given more than we in the Delaware Valley Section. So, if you are "on-the-fence" about being a sponsor of our Annual Golf Outing in July, please contribute. In this way, we can increase the amount of money which we give to deserving students.

On the more "work-a-day level", the Section is completing an update to our By-Laws. The By-Laws were last edited seven years ago, and this current effort was spurred on by National promulgating a "Section By-Law template", to encourage more consistency amongst Section By-Laws. In addition, we have a record number of Non-Board Committee members this season. (I personally look at Committee participation as the "farm system" for the Section's Board of Directors.)

Once again, we have a full slate of Dinner Meeting and Technical Session presentations for our 2012-13 season. And, if one attended all ASHE functions this season, one could accumulate 13 PDH's toward one's license renewal.

Thus, this continues the fact that one can participate in ASHE events over a two-year period and secure the necessary 24 professional development hours required for PA PE license renewal.

This season, we will have jointly sponsored several of our meetings with other engineering societies, including ASCE, MASITE, and WTS. Additionally, we are participating in the Engineers' Club of Philadelphia's "Engineering in the City" campaign and have designed and funded a "plaque" concerning the Benjamin Franklin Bridge. This sign is now in place, erected in Franklin Square. Other chief participants of this self-guided walking tour are the Philadelphia Engineering Foundation and the Franklin Institute.

That's a quick update on some of the many, many accomplishments your Section has succeeded in providing to its members, and to the engineering community in southeastern PA.

May your Spring be filled with light, joy, prosperity, and success.

*Your devoted President,  
Bruce P. Masi, P.E.*

## **2012-13 Meeting Dates – Winding Down...**

Hard to believe, but our meeting season is rapidly winding down. After the March 20 meeting, we will have one more remaining, and that will be on **April 17**.

Meeting topics have not yet been finalized but will be announced in each monthly meeting announcement flyer.

## **Golf Outing – Please Hold the Date**

Our 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing will be conducted on **Monday, July 22** at Blue Bell Country Club. Please mark your calendar (and perhaps keep some of those golf gifts you may have gotten for Christmas at the ready). More information and details will be forthcoming on this.

**Delaware Valley Section Patron (D.V.S.P.) Program – Season 8****\*\*\* Five-Year Participants \*\*\*****AECOM****Baker****McCormick  
Engineers & Planners  
Since 1946  
Taylor****MCMAHON  
TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERS & PLANNERS****SoftDig®  
Underground Services Inc.****TPD  
Est. 1989  
TRAFFIC PLANNING AND DESIGN, INC.  
WWW.TRAFFICPD.COM****URBAN  
ENGINEERS  
Formulating Excellence®****URS****AMMANN & WHITNEY****HDR****JMT  
JOHNSON, MIRMIRAN & THOMPSON  
Engineering A Brighter Future®****Keystone Acquisition  
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TARGETED RESULTS. EXPERTLY MANAGED.  
WE STAKE OUR REPUTATION ON IT.  
A CDI Company****WBCM  
ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING CONSTRUCTION****Delaware Valley Section  
Officers and Board of  
Directors – 2012-13 Season****Bruce Masi, President**

Gannett Fleming Inc.

**Stephanie Butler, First Vice  
President**

McMahon Associates Inc.

**Bob Wright, Second Vice President**

Urban Engineers Inc.

**Jeff Obrecht, Treasurer**  
URS**Jeff Given, Secretary**  
Loftus Construction Inc.**Board of Directors**

Term expires 2013

**Pete Berthold**

Penna. Dept. of Transportation

**Bill Laird**

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**Sarah McInnes**

Penna. Dept of Transportation

Term expires 2014

**Carlos Garcia**

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**Mark Kinnee**

Urban Engineers Inc.

**Jack Mitchell**

McMahon Associates Inc.

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Penna. Turnpike Commission

Term expires 2015

**Elaine Elbich**

Penna. Dept. of Transportation

**Phil Mandato**

Felix Mandato &amp; Sons Inc.

**Curt Shugars**

Pennoni Associates Inc.

**Don Stark**

Ammann &amp; Whitney Inc.

**Rob Prophet, Regional Director**

Traffic Planning &amp; Design Inc.

**Dick Prentice, Past President (ASHE  
National)**

McMahon Associates Inc.

The Section started the D.V.S.P. Program in the 2005-06 season to allow supporting firms to be recognized. We are proud to note that 14 firms are participating in the Program this season (listed above). Many thanks to those of you who have signed up and helped support the Section's many activities. As you may be aware, the proceeds of the D.V.S.P. go directly to support the Section's Scholarship Fund.

The cost for the "basic" level of support (\$100) will remain as it has been since the start of the program. As we started last season, we are once again offering a "website" level, which, for \$150, will allow your logo to be placed on our website as well as in THE TRANSPORTATION TIMES, with a hyperlink directly to your website.

If you are not in this Program and would like to join, please contact Section President Bruce Masi or Second Vice President/Editor of THE TRANSPORTATION TIMES Bob Wright (contact information is given on page 6).

**So You Want To Be On A Section Committee... ?**

Our Section Committees and Committee chairs are listed below. If you have an interest in being part of any Committee, please contact Section President Bruce Masi or Second Vice President/Editor Bob Wright (contact information is provided on page 6):

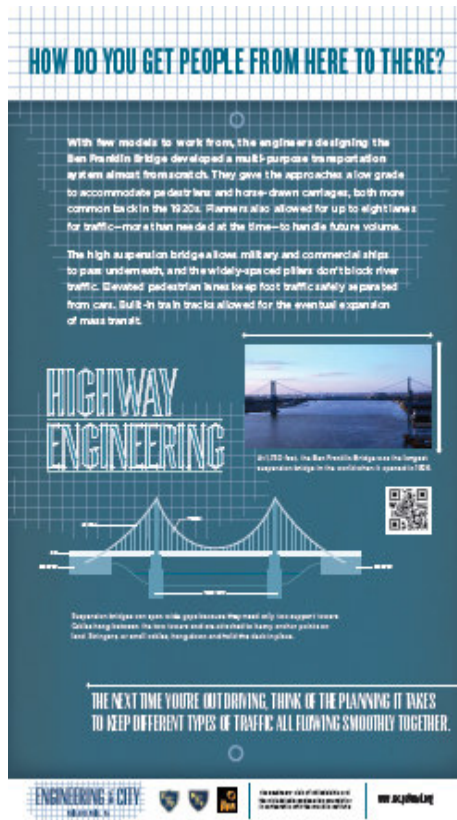
ASHE/PennDOT Breakfast Meeting	Carlos Garcia	Program	Rob Prophet
Audit	Bruce Masi	Project of the Year	Bill Laird
Dinner Meetings	Mark Kinnee	Public Relations	Don Steele
50/50	Dick Prentice	Scholarship	Sarah McInnes
Golf	Rob Prophet	Social/Society Relations	Elaine Elbich
Hotel	Phil Mandato	Student Chapters	John Caperilla
Membership	John Caperilla	Technical Papers	Curt Shugars
Newsletter	Bob Wright	Technical Sessions	Jack Mitchell
Nominating	Stephanie Butler	Young Members	Alexa Harper

**Dinner Meetings/Technical Sessions Costs**

Dinner Meeting prices for the current season will be held at \$35 with advance reservations (by the reservation deadline) and \$45 for after the deadline/at the door (the same as the last three seasons), with the cost for public employees and students remaining at \$20. These costs remain low compared to those charged by other technical groups as we strive to negotiate the best deals we can with our provider to keep costs as low as possible.

Additionally, Technical Sessions, which had been free in the past, will remain free for Section members (another benefit of ASHE membership!). Non-members wishing to attend will be assessed a \$40 charge for each Technical Session.

**Engineering in the City Debuts**



The hustle of daily life often means it's easy to overlook all that engineering accomplished in the city – skyscrapers, roadways, bridges, subways, water works, the list goes on. To highlight some of the city's engineering feats, the Engineers' Club of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Engineering Foundation have partnered with The Franklin Institute to create a self-guided walking tour for the public to better understand how engineering has played a role in creating some of the city's most recognizable landmarks and some lesser-known attractions.

The first of its kind in Philadelphia and new this year, the Engineering in the City Tour will challenge residents and tourists alike to look at the city in a new way and to appreciate the work of engineers. Signs designating eight different sites have been installed throughout Center City Philadelphia. These signs will describe the engineering work connected to each specific site and a QR code will link them to this website – [www.pefound.org/eic/](http://www.pefound.org/eic/). Mockups of all eight signs were on display at our February meeting.

Our Section has been a participant in this effort and our sign (at left) highlights the Ben Franklin Bridge. It is located near Franklin Square in Center City.

**2012 Project of the Year Competition**

**The Project of the Year competition will be open for submissions until March 1.** The program will follow the two-category format, with separate awards for "large" and "small" projects. **The breakpoint between the two classifications will be determined once submissions have been reviewed by the Committee,** unlike in past years when this was divided at \$10 million, to allow more flexibility in the decision making.

Winning projects will be announced at the April Section meeting.

**ASHE Mission Statement**

*Provide a forum for members and partners of the highway industry to promote a safe, efficient and sustainable highway system through education, innovation and fellowship*

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## Technical Sessions – Two Down, One To Go

Our second Technical Session of the season was held on February 20, prior to the February Section Meeting. This session, entitled “12 Lessons on Sustainable Stormwater Management”, was well received and attended.

The last Technical Session scheduled for this season will be conducted on **April 17**. More information will be provided in the next edition of THE TRANSPORTATION TIMES and in an event-specific flyer which will accompany the monthly meeting announcements.

As always, if you have any thoughts on topics or would like to present a session, please pass this along for our consideration as we begin to plan our program for next season.

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## National Conference Coming Up



The National Conference for this year will be conducted from June 5 to June 9 in Lake Placid, NY. We hope you will be able to attend.

More information can be found at [www.ashe2013.org](http://www.ashe2013.org).

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## Nominations for Section Officers – Slate to be Announced

The Delaware Valley Section will present its slate of new Officers and Directors for the 2013-14 season at our March Section meeting (March 20). If you are interested in being considered for a Board position, please contact Nominating Committee Chair/First Vice President Stephanie Butler ([sbutler@mcmahonassociates.com](mailto:sbutler@mcmahonassociates.com)) by March 13. Nominations will be closed at that time.

There are several vacancies on the Board as well as the Second Vice President position that will be considered by the Nominating Committee.

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## National Membership Database Upgrade

ASHE National has “rolled out” its new web-based membership database. Each member can access and maintain his/her own membership data. National’s goal is that this database will become the common database that both National and all Sections can use to maintain all membership information.

To access this database, go to [www.database.ashe.pro](http://www.database.ashe.pro) and input your personal ID number (this is an 8-digit number which can be found on the ASHE SCANNER mailing label, above your name) – this is your ASHE ID number for as long as you are an ASHE member. Your initial password is the zip code of the mailing address you use for the SCANNER (include the dash if this is a 9-digit zip code). You can change your password after your initial login to protect the security of your data.

Please take an opportunity to review and update your personal data in this database.

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## PennDOT Seminar Scheduled

The Section has conducted a half-day seminar at PennDOT District 6-0 for the past several years and will be doing it again this year. The seminar will be conducted on **Wednesday, May 22**. More information will be included on a separate flyer to be sent on this event. Please mark your calendar and hold the date.

As in the past, there will be a limit of two attendees per firm to attend, to allow PennDOT employees to have priority in their attendance.





## Donna Prentice Memorial Section Scholarship Competition – Candidates Selected, Awards Made

The Section's Scholarship Program continues to be successful. The Program was started by the Section in 1972. Over the 40 years of its existence, it has benefited numerous local college students, many of whom have gone on to become ASHE members after graduation. It was renamed in honor of the late **Donna Prentice**, wife of longtime Section member Dick Prentice, in 2003.

A total of **28 (!)** applications were received by the October 26 deadline. Our Scholarship Committee, chaired by Sarah McInnes, dutifully reviewed the volume of applications and supporting materials, and recommended seven worthy candidates for awards. The recipients were notified in January and invited to attend our February Section meeting as our guests to be honored and presented with their checks.

The seven winners of Section Scholarships, who were awarded a total of \$6500, are:

**Lauren Crawford**, Widener University

**Ajin Fatima**, Drexel University

**Victoria Franzen**, Villanova University

**Jared Hurwich**, Drexel University

**Rachel Mannix**, Villanova University

**Gregory Potens**, Drexel University

**Dominic Taglione**, Drexel University

We were pleased to have six of these students able to attend our February meeting. Pictured below, from left to

right, are Gregory Potens, Rachel Mannix, Jared Hurwich, Victoria Franzen, Ajin Fatima and Lauren Crawford.



Our Section has awarded over \$98,000 in scholarships since 1997 and is third among Sections in ASHE National in this area. We are proud to be able to support our local students and help them in their educational pursuits.

Thanks to Sarah and members of our Scholarship Committee for another job well done this year! We encourage students to apply for this when the time comes next year, and we encourage parents of students to help us support their childrens' educations by encouraging them to apply!

## Members/Firms in Transportation/Transition

### *Peirce Collaborates on Publication*

John Peirce will participate in the revision of Chapter 7 of "Temporary Structures in Construction", 3rd Edition, by Robert T. Ratay. John and Thomas J. Tuozzolo of Moretrench American Corporation were approached to revise and update Chapter 7, Earth-Retaining Structures. Together, they updated the chapter to reflect new developments in tieback anchor construction, soil nailing, jet grouting, and secant pile walls for use as temporary excavation support systems. Ratay's 3rd Edition contains significant improvements to an already excellent reference book for engineers.

### *McMahon Expands*

McMahon Associates, Inc., a full-service transportation engineering and planning firm, is proud to announce its grand opening of its newest Mid-Atlantic office in the Lehigh Valley

region, its eleventh along the East Coast. McMahon is reinforcing its mission to provide responsive client solutions in the region, one of the fastest growing in Pennsylvania.

McMahon continues to strategically plan to broaden its market areas, while meeting the needs of its clients. It recognizes that this growing region will face traffic issues and challenges with increasing development.

McMahon's Mid-Atlantic offices are located in Fort Washington (corporate headquarters), Allentown, Exton, Camp Hill, and Pittsburgh, PA; Yardville, NJ; and Bowie, MD, which employ 85 of the company's 120 full-time employees. The firm also has two offices in Florida and two offices in Massachusetts.

## Young Members Committee Plans Park Cleanup

The YMC will be having our first annual community service event at Valley Forge Park on **Saturday, April 6** from 9 AM until 12 Noon. Volunteers will be helping with general trail maintenance and park clean up. This is open to ASHE members of **ALL AGES!**

Watch for a separate flyer on this event with more information, which will be coming your way shortly. We hope you will be able to participate in this event and help us enhance our community.

## Governor Corbett's Transportation Plan – From a Layman's Point of View

*Following the recent release of Governor Corbett's plan for transportation funding, this interesting article appeared in the Pittsburgh Post Gazette, authored by reporter Jon Schmitz. It puts a slightly different spin on things.*

There's a certain brilliance to Gov. Tom Corbett's transportation funding proposal, which would raise \$5.4 billion in new revenue with something that is technically not a tax increase even though it walks, swims and quacks like one. On top of that, the governor's plan to uncap the Oil Company Franchise Tax defies any precise forecast of what it will wind up costing drivers. That will depend on how gasoline prices fluctuate and how much added cost gasoline wholesalers will swallow rather than passing it along to the driving public.

None of that is going to stop us from offering an assessment of the impact, though. If a furry critter from the backwoods of Pennsylvania can get away with telling us spring is just around the corner while it's snowing sideways, we can make a semi-educated guess as to what Mr. Corbett's plan will cost a typical driver.

Warning: There will be math.

The tax on gasoline at the wholesale level is 153.5 mills but it is only applied to \$1.25 per gallon of the actual price. (Wouldn't it be nice if, say, the sales tax on a new car only applied to the first \$5,000 of the purchase price?) Uncapping the OCFT would apply the tax to the full "average wholesale price," which is calculated by the state Revenue Department based on last year's prices, announced in December, and stays in effect for the entire following calendar year. This year's magic number is \$3.114 per gallon.

Mr. Corbett proposes lifting only one-third of the cap this year, and the rest in 2015 and 2017. For now, the cap is protecting \$1.864 per gallon from taxation; tearing out a third of this tax shelter would subject another 62.1 cents of the

wholesale price to the tax. That means 9.6 cents per gallon more (in this game, the rules say we always round up to the nearest tenth of a cent). For a typical driver (12,000 miles in a 24 mpg vehicle), this translates into a \$48 annual increase — but only if the wholesalers pass the full cost on.

Some experts think they will absorb at least some of the increase, or maybe even raise prices someplace else (I vote Ohio) to recover the money. But wait! More math is needed! The Governor also wants to roll back the tax paid by drivers at the pump, currently 12 cents per gallon, by a penny. That knocks \$5 off the annual impact on Average Motorist, bringing it down to \$43.

That's \$43 toward better roads and bridges, solvent transit systems and improvements to rail, airports and trails. That's less than the cost of a couple cases of beer or 15 minutes in front of a slot machine. And bear in mind, that's the worst-case scenario.

What will happen in 2015 and 2017 when the rest of the cap would be removed? It's not even worth hazarding a guess. Pump prices have fluctuated by 60 cents just in the past year. If you know what the price of gas will be in 2015 and 2017, I'll start listening to your spring weather forecasts and tune out the groundhog.

Feel free to print this out and keep it handy for the next time someone screams bloody murder about the cost of the Governor's plan. We learned this week that traffic congestion is costing each of us \$800 a year in wasted time and fuel, and bad roads another \$373 in repair costs. The Governor's plan looks like a bargain.

## ASHE Apparel and Merchandise Now Available!

As a member of ASHE, you now have access to the new ASHE Online Apparel and Merchandise Store. The Store offers branded/logo apparel, bags, totes, hats, caps, and similar items that indicate and celebrate your membership in ASHE. The items are easy to order and it only takes about two weeks from the time you place your order until you have the items in your hands. (Rush service is available also.)

You can view the available items at [www.ashe-store.cathyrossner.com](http://www.ashe-store.cathyrossner.com) or through the pull-down menu for ASHE Company Store at National's website, [www.highwayengineers.com](http://www.highwayengineers.com).

## From the Editor...

THE TRANSPORTATION TIMES, the newsletter of the Delaware Valley Section, is published and distributed to our Section's members to advise and update all on current events and happenings in the Section.

If you have news items for future editions of THE TRANSPORTATION TIMES, please feel free to contact us.

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