

the news



Address Service Requested
FIRST CLASS MAIL

FIRST CLASS
POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 130
CONCORDVILLE
PA 19331

**PHILADELPHIA SECTION
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS**

P. O. Box 58186, Philadelphia, PA 19102-8186

Electronic Message Hotline: 1-800-461-4190 (24 hours a day)

Web site: <http://www.asce-philly.org>

National ASCE Central Number 1-800-548-ASCE • Toll Free

The Sidney Robin Memorial Newsletter of the Philadelphia Section ASCE

Vol. 77-1

Our 91st Year

Summer 2004

IMPORTANT!!! PROPOSED CHANGES IN ASCE NATIONAL GOVERNANCE

In the June edition of the National ASCE News, you are being asked to vote on proposed changes in the structure of the Society's national governance. This is a very important issue and it could have significant effects on the Philadelphia Section.

At present, the Section is one of four included in National's District 4. District 4 consists of the State of Pennsylvania. District 4 is unique in that it encompasses one state. All other Districts cover more than one state. Roughly 4000 ASCE members are part of District 4, which includes four Sections (Pittsburgh, Central Pennsylvania, Lehigh Valley, and Philadelphia) and two Branches (the Northwest Branch of the Pittsburgh Section and the Reading Branch of the Philadelphia Section). The proposed rule and structure changes will revise District 4 to include other Sections. Thus, a "yes" vote on the governance issue will be detrimental to the clout of our Philadelphia Section in National matters and issues.

We in the Philadelphia Section believe you should review the facts for yourselves and know both sides of the issues before you vote. We believe it is imperative that you do vote. There will be much information presented in various forums on this and in the interest of space, we choose not to repeat it all here. However, some of the highlights for both sides of the argument are given below.

Much information on the benefits of the change is presented at ASCE National's website, <http://www.asce.org/governance/>. More data is included in the National ASCE News' June edition. Also, the April edition of the National ASCE News included side-by-side arguments in the article "Measure Twice, Cut Once." This article can also be accessed on-line at http://sections.asce.org/n_carolina.

So what is proposed for change? The current Board of Direction (21 Directors, 4 Vice-Presidents, 3 Presidential Officers) offers constituency representation. The Directors represent geographical areas (Districts). The proposed governance revision will add two at-large Board members who will be nominated by the Board and will be members of ASCE, but who will not be required to be Civil Engineers. This position will provide a path to national leadership for those who do not have a geographic base of support – for example, if their professional pursuits have caused them to move frequently. The Board-level committees will nominate candidates for these positions.

A position of Regional Governor is proposed. This will take the place of District Directors, Zone Vice Presidents, and District Councils. They will not have a Board vote. Having a vote is important, because the District Director and Zone Vice Presidents, who visit the Branches and Sections, can currently carry the member concerns directly to the Board table.

A new structure of Geographic Regional Boards of Governors is being proposed. This structure will be empowered to manage activities at the local level and will provide a focused point of communication and interaction for the Institutes. These Boards of Governors are part of ASCE's management structure. This will enhance relations and communications between those who participate nationally and those who participate locally. Members of these new Geographic Regional Boards will be appointed to national committees and the Boards will be comprised to represent the diverse mix of member interests at the local level providing an opportunity for representation of new perspectives.

The proposed at-large nomination of the National President will allow ASCE to elect the individual with the background, expertise and leadership skills needed to confront current challenges, regardless of where that member lives. This also allows members to seek the Presidency when they

desire rather than needing to wait for a turn in a preset rotation.

In the perspective of the Philadelphia Section, the change will result in the loss of a voting representative at the National Board level. The Regional Governor will not have the clout or power of the District Director. Our "constituency representation" will be lost. Additionally, the allowance of non-civil engineers at the Board level potentially reduces the impact of representation of the best interests of civil engineers.

The current structure serves the Section well. It works fine "as is." In our opinion, we see no need to drastically change it.

We urge you to familiarize yourself with the issues. It is VERY important that you VOTE, whichever way you think is best after you review the facts. While we believe a "no" vote is in the best interests of the Section, we strongly suggest that you make sure your voice is heard at National, whether it is "yes" or "no."

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

The Section Sponsorship program for 2003-04 was a resounding success. A total of 34 local firms took part in the program last season. The Section extends its collective "thank you" to our sponsors for their commitment and continued support of the Philadelphia Section.

There are several benefits available to you as a Section Sponsor. For a low \$200 annual fee, you too can be a part of this program and have your business card appear in each edition of THE NEWS, among other perks. This edition does not contain any cards, but we will be soliciting the 2003-04 participants later this summer to hopefully have them continue for the coming season. If your firm was not in this esteemed group, and you would like to become a sponsor, this is the time to consider it. Cards will begin appearing in the October edition of THE NEWS and will continue through the end of the season.

For information on the program, please contact our Interim Editor, **Bob Wright** at (215) 686-5538 or robert.wright@phila.gov.



PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

I hope this edition of the newsletter finds everyone enjoying the beginning of the summer season. I would like to update everyone on a couple of items that your Board has begun to address. The formation of a Government Affairs Committee is taking shape. We look forward to having access to many of our policy makers and policy information to the membership. The Committee will be chaired by Phila. Section Past President **Ruben David**.

We are formalizing the Committee Chairpersons, and would ask that you contact a Board Member to see where your talents can best be utilized with our Phila. Section. I will be reporting on the activities of these committees throughout the year.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask each of you to become aware of a major issue within ASCE. You have already received in your National ASCE Newsletter (June edition) a copy of a ballot for the upcoming election. One very important item on the ballot is the restructuring of the Governance of ASCE. I ask that each of you become knowledgeable of this issue and vote. The article in this issue outlines where you can read about the restructuring.

In my opinion, and that of the Board, the restructuring will lessen the influence the Sections and Branches have within ASCE, and we are recommending that you **vote NO on the Restructuring**. The District Directors, currently part of the Board, will be eliminated, and a Board of Governors, not a part of the Board, will replace the District Directors. This will give the Sections and Branches less say on the direction of ASCE.

Again, I ask that you become educated on this issue. My personal recommendation and that of the Board is to **vote NO on the Governance Restructuring**.

I am looking forward to a great year for our Phila. Section. I will be calling upon many of you to get involved in many ways, including the vote on the Governance issue, as well as volunteering to help with activities within your Section. I thank you for this opportunity, and look forward to seeing all of you at our meetings.

Sincerely,
Brian A. Stover, P.E.
President - Philadelphia Section, ASCE

TENTATIVE SECTION MEETING SCHEDULE 2004-2005 SEASON

MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW! The schedule for the Main Philadelphia Section, ASCE meetings for the upcoming season has just started to take shape. Many interesting topics and speakers are being considered. At this time, the details are not all finalized, but we would suggest that you mark the following dates in your calendar as "ASCE Meetings". Details will be provided in the next edition of THE NEWS.

Please keep in mind that this information, as always, is to the best of our knowledge at press time, but it is also TENTATIVE and subject to future change.

ALL DINNER MEETINGS (except as noted): Cocktails - 5:30 pm; Dinner - 6:30 pm; Meeting - 7:30 pm. All dinner and/or luncheon meetings have discounted prices for students. In addition, all are welcome to attend meetings without having the meal, at no charge.

Thursday, October 21, 2004	Union League
Thursday, November 18, 2004	Union League
Wednesday, December 8, 2004	Joint Meeting with SAME Philadelphia Post, location to be determined
Wednesday, January 12, 2005	Joint Meeting with ASHE Delaware Valley Section, Radisson Valley Forge
Thursday, February 17, 2005	Joint Meeting with ASCE South Jersey Branch, location to be determined)
Thursday, March 17, 2005	Union League
Thursday, April 20, 2005	Union League
Friday, May 13, 2005	The Annual Spring Social and Dinner Dance at the Sugarloaf Conference Center in Chestnut Hill.

This schedule will be updated and repeated in THE NEWS throughout the coming season.



Handy Guide to Modern Science:

1. If it's green or it wiggles, it's Biology.
2. If it stinks, it's Chemistry.
3. If it doesn't work, it's Physics.

SECTION WEB SITE!

Our Section's web site has taken on a new look! Check us out at www.asce-philly.org. Make sure you bookmark this site to check on our latest meetings and events, links and much more! Comments and/or suggestions? Please contact us either via our Electronic Message Hotline at **1-800-461-4190** (24 hours a day) or e-mail at info@asce-philly.org.

PHILA. SECTION, ASCE OFFICERS 2004-2005

PRESIDENT
Brian A. Stover

PRESIDENT-ELECT
Christopher J. Menna

VICE PRESIDENT
Carol C. Martsolf

SECRETARY
Kristen A. Bowman

ASSISTANT SECRETARY
Jennifer Walsh

TREASURER
David C. Hanly

ASSISTANT TREASURER
Mark N. Washington

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY
Thomas W. Brady

DIRECTORS

Frank Falcone Anthony Kelly
James Markham Michael D. Petner
Mark Tiger Christopher W. Wright
Gerald Donnelly (Reading Branch)

PAST PRESIDENTS
Chris L. Rood
Ruben D. David
Allan F. Moore, Jr.

President - Brian A. Stover, P.E.

Senior Vice President
Urban Engineers, Inc.
530 Walnut Street, 14th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106
(215) 922-8080
Email: bastover@urbanengineers.com

Secretary - Kristen A. Bowman, P.E.

Project Engineer
Flow Science, Inc.
1500 Kennedy Blvd.
2 Penn Center, Suite 200
Philadelphia, PA 19102
(215) 854-6445
Email: kbowman@flowscience.com

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Interim Editor of THE NEWS

Robert Wright

Staff Writers

James Markham Joe Symick

SEND COPY TO:

ASCE News
P.O. Box 58186, Philadelphia, PA 19102-8186

**COPY DEADLINE FOR
OCTOBER 2004 ISSUE
SEPTEMBER 10, 2004**

WIDENER UNIVERSITY - VISITING FACULTY POSITION IN CIVIL ENGINEERING

The School of Engineering at Widener University invites applications for a **visiting Assistant or Associate Professor** position in the Department of Civil Engineering from September 2004 to August 2005. The successful candidate should have strong oral and written communication skills and a background in geotechnical engineering. He/she will be expected to teach undergraduate courses in Soil Mechanics (including soils laboratory) and Foundation Engineering, to advise students, to supervise student projects and organizations, and to participate in other outreach/service/scholarly activities. The ability to teach undergraduate courses in highway engineering is also desirable.

The ideal candidate should have an earned doctorate in Civil Engineering, a P.E. license/experience in civil engineering practice, and university-level teaching experience. Candidates who are currently completing their doctoral degree, or candidates with a P.E. license and significant practical experience, will receive consideration. Screening of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

Please send applications, including a resume and the names and contact information of three professional references to: **Dr. Vicki Brown**; Chair, Department of Civil Engineering; Widener University; One University Place; Chester, PA 19013; Email: vlb0001@mail.widener.edu; Phone: (610) 499-4607; Fax (610) 499-4059.

Widener is a metropolitan university committed to highest quality teaching and mentoring of students. The School of Engineering is located on an attractive suburban campus ten miles southwest of Philadelphia. The university website is www.widener.edu. Widener University is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

DELAWARE VALLEY SCIENCE FAIR

The 2004 version of the Science Fair took place on April 7, 2004 at the Fort Washington Conference Center. The Phila. Section, as it has for many years, offered four Special Awards for the over-400 contestants representing 6th through 12th grades in area schools.

The winning efforts were:

First place, grades 9-12 — Laura Penna, Delran High School (11th grade).

Project — *It's All in the Truss*

Second place, grades 9-12 — Kelsey Gibbons, Parkland High School (11th grade)

Project — *Treating or Cheating? An Up-Close Look at Industrial Pollution in the Community* Kelsey was the Section's first place winner in this category in 2002.

First place, grades 6-8 — Alex Braccio, Indian Valley Middle School (7th grade)

Project — *Fibonacci Bridge is Falling Down?*

Second place, grades 6-8 — Ariel Bradley, Sussex Academy of Arts and Sciences (8th grade)

Project — *Is a Traffic Light Needed at Five Points?*

Both Laura and Alex attended the Spring Social as the Section's guests, with their parents, and

APRIL DINNER MEETING

April 14, 2004

The Union League, Philadelphia, PA

"Transportation Legislation and Funding"

By Jim Markham, Staff Writer

For the final dinner meeting before the summer hiatus, the Philadelphia Section of ASCE joined with the Philadelphia Chapter of the Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS), and the Mid-Atlantic Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (MASITE) for a dinner meeting on **April 14, 2004** at the Union League. Those of us who were not preoccupied with finishing our taxes were treated to an informative array of speakers highlighted by the keynote speaker Representative **Richard Geist**.

Section President **Allan Moore** began the final dinner meeting of his term by thanking the current Board of Directors and the Past Presidents who have made the Philadelphia Section, ASCE what it is today.

Mr. Moore then introduced our guests from Widener University. Professor **Vicki Brown**, Student Chapter President **Matthew Bezanson** and Vice President **Eric Cimo**. They shared some of their many experiences for the past academic year including, an engineering tour of the SEPTA Elevated Reconstruction Project and their participation in the American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC) Steel Bridge Competition.

Mr. Moore then recognized **Carol Martsoff** for her most recent accolade, the 2004 ASCE Zone I Citizenship Award. Congratulations to Carol! (For more information on Carol and her many accomplishments, see the March Edition of THE NEWS, in which Carol was featured in the Younger Member Spotlight.)

After some brief remarks from our co-hosts, WTS Section President **Donna Powell** and MASITE President **Casey Moore**, **Ed D'Alba** introduced the featured speaker for the evening Representative **Richard Geist**. Mr. D'Alba noted that Representative Geist practiced Engineering for thirteen years before becoming a public servant, and is a vocal advocate for Engineering and Engineers in Pennsylvania.

Representative Geist began his talk, as most Engineers do, with a war story from one of his earliest projects, a retaining wall. Through the process of creating the "most over-designed retaining wall in Pennsylvania," Rep. Geist learned about how government inefficiency added to the costs of projects, and he was "appalled." Thus began his interest in politics.

Rep. Geist described the transportation needs in Pennsylvania, including funding for highways,

they displayed and explained their winning projects to all attendees during the social hour preceding the dinner.

Thanks to **Chris Menna** and **Bob Wright**, who served as the Phila. Section's judges at the Fair, and to **Allan Moore**, who presented the prizes to the winners at the Fair's ceremony on April 8, 2004.

A card placed at all projects reviewed by the Section's judges at the Fair. The Section thanks **Gail Wright** for the card design and artist **Kathie Papiro-Feen** for the use of her watercolor of the Bells Mill Road Bridge.

structures, freight and passenger rail and transit. By his reasoning, Pennsylvania needs a 12-cents per gallon gas tax in order to properly fund Pennsylvania's transportation infrastructure. The State Assembly, however, lacks the knowledge and foresight to pass this tax increase, with the result that we currently have an underfunded program which is unable to do much other than maintain the existing infrastructure with no increases in capacity or enhancements to safety.

That's Where You Come In

Rep. Geist indicated that Engineers must be more involved in the political process in order to sufficiently fund the transportation needs of Pennsylvania. He noted that there are Representatives on the Transportation Committee that do not know what Engineers actually do. He emphasized, in closing, that Engineers must become active participants in the political process and are needed to educate the legislators about the infrastructure needs of the citizens of Pennsylvania.

Conclusion

After a brief question and answer session, President Moore thanked Representative Geist and gave him a few tokens of our appreciation. President Moore closed the meeting, citing the conclusion of still another successful program of Phila. Section, ASCE Meetings.



The 2003 Zone I Citizen Award recipient is **Carol Martsoff, P.E.** Carol is currently a Project Engineer for Urban Engineers in Philadelphia. Carol was selected for her involvement in numerous community and volunteer activities over the past 10 years. (See the March edition of THE NEWS for more information on this award.) Pat Galloway, National ASCE President, is on the left. The award was presented at the Zone I meeting in New York City in March.

PAST PRESIDENT KOERNER TO BE HONORED BY DREXEL

Drexel University's Department of Civil, Architectural and Environmental Engineering is proud to host a Symposium honoring the research achievements of **Dr. Robert M. Koerner**, '56, '63, on **Monday, September 13, 2004** at **Drexel University**. For more information or to register, please visit www.drexel.edu/coe/conferences/Koerner. For general inquiries, please contact **Sharon Stokes** at (215) 895-2341, fax (215) 895-1363, or e-mail: Koerner_symposium@coe.drexel.edu.

FROM THE ANNALS OF THE SECTION'S HISTORY

In the 91 years of the Phila. Section's existence, much has happened. In the 2003-04 editions of THE NEWS, we provided some snippets and highlights of notable occurrences over that time period. This season, we will continue to provide some historical information in each edition of THE NEWS, but in a slightly different format. Instead of the monthly format used last season, we will focus on particular topics. In this edition, we will report on the Spring Social over the past few years.

The Spring Social and Dinner Dance, as many of you know, is the Section's annual end-of-season dinner event. At the Social, outgoing officers are cited and thanked and, incoming officers are sworn in (as opposed to the 'swearing at' they will face in their tenures — only kidding!). We also congratulate the Phila. Section's winners at the Delaware Valley Science Fair, the recipients of the Section Scholarship, and Phila. Section Award winners.

When it was first held, and we're not sure of the year, it was an affair that was arranged by the Section's Ladies Auxiliary and it was typically conducted at a local country club. As the Ladies Auxiliary membership decreased, it was no longer able to handle this duty alone, and the Phila. Section appointed a committee to assist the Auxiliary in the production of this event. The nature of the Social changed thusly in 1986, when it was moved to the Bourse Building and occupied the Grand Hall on the ground floor of the Bourse.

Since then, it's been conducted in other locations:

1987 to 1990	Colleen's Restaurant
1991	Holiday Inn City Line
1992	Catalina Restaurant
1993	Naval Base Officers Club
1994	Harbour League Club
1995 to 2001	Sugarloaf Conference Center
2002	Radisson Hotel Philadelphia Northeast
2003 and 2004	Sugarloaf Conference Center

Themes were first established in 1995 when the Social's organizer, **Sandra May**, realized that the Social would be held on Cinco de Mayo (May 5). Sandra decided that festive decorations and ethnic food would add to the celebration, and the idea took hold. Themes have been used every year since then, except for the 2002 Social which focused on ASCE's 150th anniversary:

1995	Mexico (Cinco de Mayo)
1996	West Africa
1997	Polynesia (Hawaiian Luau)
1998	Italy (Le Fiesta Italiano)
1999	Ireland (Erin Go Braugh)
2000	Caribbean (Come Back to the Caribbean)
2001	East Asia (Asia Express, Land of the Morning, Pearl of the Orient)
2003	United States (Stars and Stripes)
2004	Cajun (Back to the Bayou)

A full report on the 2004 Social will be included in the October issue of THE NEWS. The 2005 Social has been scheduled for **May 13, 2005** at Sugarloaf. We hope you **triskaidekaphobics** (those who fear the number 13) will not mind this too much!

FROM THE SLIGHTLY CLUTTERED DESK OF THE INTERIM EDITOR...

Now that I've got one year as Interim Editor of THE NEWS under my proverbial belt, I thought I'd pass along some observations and thoughts.

A year ago, I would have never imagined that I'd be writing this. I have to admit that when I received the sad message that came my way last August 16, that Sid Robin had suddenly passed away, my initial thoughts revolved around what would happen to THE NEWS. I'm ashamed to say it, but that's the truth. And it wasn't anything against anyone else — we have many capable bodies in the Phila. Section — it was more on the thought that Sid did the lion's share of the work involved in the creation of each edition of THE NEWS, and someone would have to fulfill that role.

For several years, I had bugged the Phila. Section Board to think the unthinkable, to have a "Plan B" ready in case anything happened to Sid and we needed to produce THE NEWS without him. For those years, many of us didn't even want to consider that, even though we knew we'd have to some day. We optimistically procrastinated, hoping that, if we never thought about it, it would never happen. A couple of years ago, we had a scare when Sid was briefly hospitalized and several of us scurried to complete one edition of THE NEWS. Even with this "dry run," we didn't think about alternatives once Sid came back. Much like Jack Benny, Sid seemed to stay at the age of 39 for at least that many years, both in his own mind and to most of us.

Little did I realize that "Plan B" was perhaps accidentally, perhaps prophetically, called that for a reason. When the Board had to face the harsh reality that Sid would no longer be available to serve as Editor last August, it suggested its own alternate "Plan B", with the "B" standing for "Bob." I can't totally lay blame for this on the Board, however, since I volunteered to take on the duty and attempt to fill the big shoes of an icon. Of course, the way I saw things, if Sid had 61 years to perfect things, then I should get at least that much time to prove myself. If I'm still doing this job in 2064, we can chat about that! (You may have to talk loudly, since I'll be a few digits past 100 years old then.)

I have to admit that it's been both a learning process and a fun experience. Yes, it's not easy, but with our Creative Director, the wizard behind the curtain, **Kathy Keiper**, who puts it all together, it's not all that hard either. And several of you have generously responded to our requests for assistance (and don't think just because you haven't been tapped yet that you're off the hook or I forgot — your assignments are coming!).

THE NEWS continues to be successful, I have to modestly admit, but it's mainly because of your help. The columns of **Mark Young**, our LawAce, have been welcomed and well received. I've heard some good things about the Section History pieces, and I'm hoping to run some again

this year — after 90 years, there's quite a bit of history in this organization (but finding it is the hard part). **Jim Markham** has thankfully stepped up to cover the Section Meetings, and, once we were able to excise the word "noted" from his vocabulary, his work has been great. Several others have helped here and there, and their contributions are greatly appreciated.

Of course, we have to cite the generosity of our 34 sponsors (and we hope we can "re-up" them for this season!). After I finally (!) whipped **President Moore** into shape for the timely production of his monthly messages, he handed off to **President Stover**. While Stover is a Penn guy, this training/cajoling process for the messages shouldn't be nearly as difficult as it's been with that Drexel grad Moore! Now if we can only get that cartoonist...

The main concern I had over the past year is the attempt to keep the level of quality that is expected with THE NEWS. You've seen the "Oops" columns (I'm not perfect, not even close). I'll be human and err if you'll be divine and forgive. Or you could be nice and just overlook. Yes, I have Ivy League training, but it's in Engineering (at least that's what my diploma says in Latin, if I've translated it correctly). However, I do have a certified Ivy League English major and experienced editor I can rely on for help (even though her spelling is sometimes a bit suspect and creative). The rigorous training I received in grammar and all things English in twelve years of Catholic school is a fallback which, surprisingly, I can vividly remember, and it comes in handy, except that I still write the occasional run-on sentence or two, not that many of you would notice this. (If you don't, try to diagram the previous sentence!)

I think I have some more probationary time to endure before I think I can fully accept the title of "editor", so for the time being — unless the Board decides to dump me, but that's unlikely (since who else would want this job?!) — I remain your Interim Editor. Keep those cards, letters and jokes coming! And, in the immortal words of Perry White, editor of the Daily Planet (of Superman fame), "Don't call me chief!"

— Bob

SEE YOU AGAIN IN THE FALL

The Officers and Board of Directors of the Philadelphia Section, along with the staff of THE NEWS, extend our wishes to you for a fruitful and enjoyable summer season. Whether you intend to lie on the beach, work on your golf game, watch your garden grow, whatever, we hope you enjoy it.

After this issue, the editorial staff will once again go into dormant mode for a couple of months. The first "official" issue of THE NEWS for the coming season will be in your mailboxes in late September/early October. We will have up-to-date information on Section happenings for your use at that time.

So, when it's time to put the beach chairs and short pants away and get the leaf-raking gear ready for use, keep an eye out for the next edition of THE NEWS.