



# Valley Engineer Newsletter

October, 2014

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- October 29 - Ocean Spray Tour
- October 30 - Saturday, November 1 - 2014 Northeast Regional Meeting/ Maryland Engineers Conference
- December - Holiday Banquet
- February - Engineer's Week



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## President's Message

Kevin T. Campbell, PE, LEED AP

The Lehigh Valley Chapter, Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers welcomes you to a new year!

Last month at the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers State Conference in Fogelsville our Chapter was honored to receive the Chapter Outstanding Program Award in recognition of our almost-monthly tours of area businesses. This is the second year our Chapter has been honored by the PSPE. Last year we received the Chapter Communications Award. These tours have become a mainstay of our Chapter for years, but it's nice to be recognized for our efforts. I urge all members to avail themselves of these opportunities to become acquainted with Lehigh Valley businesses and earn a PDH to boot! We have a new slate of plant tours scheduled for the upcoming year, but there are some empty months. If any member has a good idea for a tour, please contact me. E-mails will be sent to members informing them on upcoming tours.

Also at the Conference, our Peter Staffeld, PhD, PE, F.NSPE was inducted as a NSPE Fellow, commemorating his work on the local, state, and national levels.

Our Chapter has the unique distinction of having two of our members as PSPE officers for next year. Eric W. Tappert, PE is the

Continued on Page 2

PSPE President, and Peter Staffeld, PhD, PE, F.NSPE is the Treasurer. Joseph McCarthy had been elected as Vice President Northeast Region, but family health obligations obliged him to withdraw from this position.

We will not be returning to Trexler Middle School for the 2015 MATHCOUNTS® competition. Instead, we will be using the facilities at Springhouse Middle School on Saturday, February 7 with a snow date of February 8. This site will require some more work on our part, but it's not something our small army of volunteers can't overcome. Tracy Torres has already sent out the first letter to the coaches, ordered the awards, is already tracking registrations, and will be ordering the testing materials shortly.

This summer our Chapter sponsored two scholarships to a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, mathematics) camp sponsored by Lafayette College. Continuing our commitment to our future engineers, our Chapter will be engaged in a new venture this year. Members will have an opportunity to have a real impact on the youths in the area by volunteering as a mentor, guiding young people by explaining engineering and engineering principles to young people in this area. The program is being coordinated by Darryl Alexander, darryl@davincisciencecenter.org, of the Da Vinci Science Center in Allentown. Because it involves interaction with minors, background checks are being required of all participants. The Chapter will reimburse all expenses incurred. For further information please go to <https://allentown.us2020.org>.

Last, but certainly not least, Peter Staffeld, PhD, PE, F.NSPE will head up an Officer and Board nominating committee. Members are invited to volunteer or submit nominees to Peter.

Al Gruenke and Alex Dezubay will again be fund raising for our Scholarship Fund and finding worthy recipients. Our MATHCOUNTS and Scholarship Funds will be combined this year in order to simplify the contribution process. I wish them well.

One area we have not had much success is recruiting new members, especially for officers and Board members. This area will be our primary focus. An improved economic climate should help in this endeavor.

We have had good years recently. However, quoting President Ronald Reagan, "Our best years are still ahead."

## **80<sup>th</sup> Annual PSPE Conference, September 17 – 20, 2014**

Alfred Gruenke, PE

The State Conference was held at the Holiday Inn Conference Center, Breinigsville on September 17-20, 2014. The function of the state conference was for state members to meet, installation of new officers, and attend PDH presentations. There were 48 PDH presentations, attended by over 160 engineers. The subject matters ranged from turnpike interchanges and bridges to polyphase motors and cyber security.

Two members of the Lehigh Valley Chapter are state officers; Eric W. Tappert, PE is the PSPE President, and Peter Staffeld, PhD, PE, F.NSPE is the Treasurer. Other officers are Susan K. Sprague, PE Immediate Past President; Steven J. Novotny, Secretary; Timothy S. Ormiston, President Elect; and regional Vice Presidents. They were installed by Harvey D. Hnatiuk, PE, F.NSPE, NSPE President.

The Keynote Speaker at the State Conference was William C. Ostendorff, of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission. His

Continued on Page 3

topic was the Fukushima nuclear accident and the world-wide ramifications. Mr. Ostenforff presented some interesting facts on the earthquake that caused the disaster and its aftermath. The plant is built near where two tectonic plates meet. The magnitude 9.0 earthquake moved Japan eight feet east! The plant was designed for 20 ft. high waves. The ensuing tsunami was 46 ft. high, overwhelming the protective walls and flooding the basement where the diesel generators were installed. The loss of power to the cooling pumps caused the reactor cores of three generators to melt. The heat produced hydrogen, which exploded and caused more damage. No personnel was hurt directly, and long term health issues are expected to be minimal. Fukushima is now stable. Decommissioning will be completed in 20-30 years.

All 48 reactors in Japan have been shut down as a result of Fukushima, with only one approved for restart.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission launched a Task Force to evaluate the safety of U.S. reactors. Their conclusion was, that all U.S. plants were safe and none have to be shut down. Germany, however, is closing all their plants. Eight of the seventeen operating reactors in Germany were permanently shut down following Fukushima, with all to be shut down by 2022.

New reactor construction continues. Presently there are five nuclear plants under construction the U.S. and 67 world-wide. China has 31 nuclear generating stations under construction.

The nuclear generating industry was jolted by the events in Fukushima disaster. On a positive note, various industry regulatory groups were forced to re-evaluate their positions.

There was a spirited Q and A session.

*Editor's note: The newly installed President of the PSPE, Eric Tappert, PE, had an inspiring message for the attendees at the State Conference in September. It has been reproduced here.*

## **President's Comments**

Eric Tappert, PE, PSPE President

Before most of you were born and when a few of us were youths searching for a path through the world we lived in, President Kennedy challenged the nation to an ambitious and extraordinary technical challenge – put a man on the moon in less than a decade and bring him safely back to earth. A task that was undertaken, not because it was easy, but because it was hard. The reaction of the country was swift and supportive. Engineers became objects of public admiration, to the point that members of that normally humble profession were actually embarrassed by the attention. Schools rewrote their curricula to include more science and engineering, including advanced placement calculus. Not because it was mandated by politicians in Washington or Harrisburg, but because technology was the future and teachers saw their role as preparing our youth for tomorrow. Engineering enrollment in our great universities swelled to overflowing as technology was seen as the path to a prosperous national future. On that fateful night in 1969 when Neil Armstrong took that one small step, tens of millions of people around the world watched it live and in awe on the other engineering marvel, television. There was no doubt that engineers were changing the world, in fact, making it better and the world knew it.

Today, almost half a century later, the manned trip to the moon is in Chinese hands and the big technological news in the media is the repackaging of the iPhone. The humble

Continued on Page 15

## SCHOLARSHIP SPONSORS

A great way to be involved in the LVPSPE Chapter is to contribute to the **LVPSPE SCHOLARSHIP FUND**. Please Contact the Valley Engineer Editor to sponsor scholarships for the remainder of the calendar year.

If you would like to contribute in any amount – please send your TAX DEDUCTIBLE donation to “Pennsylvania Engineering Foundation” or “PEF”. Donations should be mailed to:

**Peter O. Staffeld, PhD, PE, F.NSPE**  
**P.O. Box 241**  
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Please note “LVPSPE Scholarship Fund” on the comment line.

Or, you may contribute via the LVPSPE website <http://www.lvpspe.org/Donations>.

Scholarship application is at <http://www.lvpspe.org/Scholarships>. Any questions regarding scholarships can be directed to

Alex Dezubay, PE  
 610-597-2007  
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The Pennsylvania Engineering Foundation currently administers the following scholarships for engineering students:

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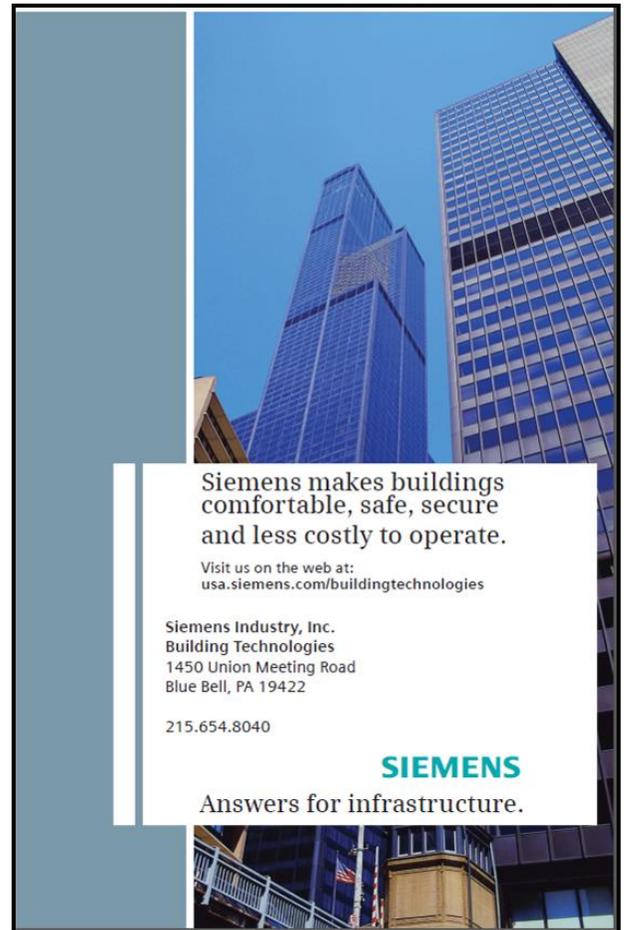
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engineer, perhaps more comfortable, is no longer in the public limelight. Yet each of us has ethical obligations to the public and the profession. We need to keep up with the technological advances that shape our works. We need reminders of the way we have to apply our moral values to our work. Help for the friends of the profession is still needed. There are still some middle school teachers who want a mathematics competition to spur their students on to excellence and a satisfying life-long career. Kindergarten children want to explore the world of engineering and exercise their creativity by making structures with common household materials. Promising engineering students still need financial assistance. And of course there are always groups trying to enhance their image by passing laws that allow encroachment on the things engineers are uniquely qualified to do. At some point we all yearn to do something about these things and are faced with a stark choice: be a lone voice crying in the wilderness or join with fellow engineers enlightened enough to know, as Aristotle put it, the whole exceeds the sum of its parts.

That's what the professional engineers' society is for; allowing engineers to tackle the issues of the profession with a combined voice loud enough that it must be heard and with a combined effort large enough to ensure success. We're here to help. Tell your colleagues, they might not know.

Thank you.

Life can't be all bad when for ten dollars you can buy all the Beethoven sonatas and listen to them for ten years.

-William F. Buckley, Jr.

I feel sorry for people who don't drink. When they wake up in the morning, that's as good as they're going to feel all day.

-Lyndon B. Johnson



Words of Wisdom, from Down Under

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Cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education.

-Dr. August Polinske

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I thoroughly disapprove of duels. If a man should challenge me, I would take him kindly and forgivingly by the hand and lead him to a quiet place and kill him.

-Mark Twain

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To educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society.

-Teddy Roosevelt

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Great minds discuss ideas. Average minds discuss events. Small minds discuss people.

- Eleanor Roosevelt



**Lehigh Valley Chapter**  
*Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers*  
*Lehigh, Northampton, Monroe and Carbon Counties*



**Minutes for the October 13, 2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**6:00 pm at the Office of Barry Isett & Assoc. 85 S. Route 100, Allentown, PA**

Attendees: Kevin Campbell, Al Gruenke, Peter Staffeld, Don Kohn, Angelika Forndran and Chris Williams.

**Call to Order: Kevin Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM**

**President – Kevin Campbell**

- Roles & Responsibilities:
  - Programs – Kevin
  - Valley Engineer – Al G
  - Scholarship – Al D
  - Student Chapters – Peter
  - MATHCOUNTS Coordinator – Kevin
  - MATHCOUNTS Volunteer Coordinator – Chris
  - Website – Peter, transitioning to someone else eventually
  - Membership – Possibly Brian Kutz

**Programs**

- Oct 29 – Ocean Spray tour
- Nov – ?
- Dec – Holiday Banquet – Date and location TBD. Costs have been high recently at Hotel Bethlehem and Bethlehem Brew Works. Kevin will reach out to Stoned Crab, Hotel Bethlehem, Allentown Art Museum, Buckeye Tavern. Possible presentation by Mark Jandl on Waterfront development.
- Jan – ?
- Feb – Engineers Week
- Discussed options for tours – Just Born, Smooth On, PPL Center, Allen Organ, etc.

**MATHCOUNTS**

- Date will be Feb 7<sup>th</sup> or Feb 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Kevin has not had success reaching out to new Allentown SD facilities director. Probably need new location.
- Kevin contacted Parkland, East Penn, Bethlehem and Southern Lehigh Superintendents proposing a rotational plan where these four districts take turns hosting. They are all centrally located and consistently participate in the program. Parkland has responded positively, and they are currently looking at availability for this coming event.
- We will have to rent tables and chairs, will try to minimize cost, but could be as high as \$1,000.
- Kevin will coordinate with MATHCOUNTS team and confirm whether or not Carl Dicker will be involved going forward.

**Valley Engineer (VE) & Scholarship Fundraising – Al Gruenke**

- Between MATHCOUNTS and scholarships, we need to raise about \$10,000.
- Need to expand from usual donors and find new ones. Various volunteers to contact JP Mascaro, Victaulic and Smooth On.
- Will solicit donors for VE advertisements, scholarships and MATHCOUNTS together. Donation will earn recognition in all three.

**Treasurer – Ray Szczucki – no report****State Director – Angelika Forndran**

- Big push for membership at State level. Mike Docherty is doing a statewide membership survey.
- HB 1447 Industrial Exemption – PSPE reps testified at hearing.
- Fiscal year will be changing from calendar year to July-June in coming years. Peter feels this will have little to no impact on the Chapter.
- Had discussions on timing of PE/FE exams.
- Had 162 attendees at the state conference.
- Joe McCarthy will be stepping down as VP of NE region. Maybe Mike Basta can replace him.

**Past President – Peter Staffeld**

- All agreed the Chapter would benefit from getting new people involved.
- Discussed possible candidates for future officer/director positions. Al will also solicit in VE.

**Old Business/New Business**

- Al Gruenke thanked the Board for the Truman Yeager award.
- Da Vinci Science Center is looking for mentors. Students in grades 2 through 12. Will provide more information in next VE. Only requirement is passing background checks.
- Peter made a motion that if a member volunteers for mentor program, the Chapter will reimburse for cost of background checks. Angelika seconded. All were in favor.

**Adjournment at 7:20 PM on a motion by Don, seconded by Al. All were in favor.**