ASCE News
American Society of Civil Engineers Pittsburgh Section Newsletter
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E-Week Annual Awards Banquet

Renee Piechocki,
Director of the Office of Public Art

Don't miss the annual Awards Banquet coming up Saturday, February 18 at the Engineers Society of Western Pennsylvania, downtown. This year's keynote speaker will be **Renee Piechocki**, an artist and public art consultant. She is the founding director of Pittsburgh's Office of Public Art, a partnership of the Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council and the Department of City Planning, which provides technical assistance and educational programs to the public and private sectors in Pittsburgh. Her presentation will highlight public art projects created in collaboration with engineers/design professionals, and how these relationships can facilitate great civic design.

The highlight of the evening will be after dinner, when the Section Awards will be presented. This event counts toward 0.5 PHD.

The evening's schedule:
5:30: Social Hour
6:30: Keynote Speaker
7:00: Dinner
8:00: Award Presentations

Register online by **February 10** at http://www.asce-pgh.org: click the Section Awards tab, then Awards Banquet. The cost is $50 for Members, $75 for Non-Members and $25 for Students. Platinum and Gold Sponsorships are still available, contact Colleen Elliot at Colleen.Elliott@arcadis-us.com.

Diamond Diamonds by Carin Mincemoyer with John Suhrie, P.E. Located on Market Street in Pittsburgh

Shady Liberty, Pedestrian Bridge
Designed by Pittsburgh-born artist Sheila Klein & SAI Consulting Engineers, Inc. The bridge connects Shadyside and East Liberty at the intersection of Ellsworth Avenue and Spahr Street

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National Engineers' Week at the Carnegie Science Center

The time is here again! ASCE Pittsburgh Section is once again hosting our Civil Engineering Display at the Carnegie Science Center on the North Shore for their E-Week festivities. We need volunteers for 2 to 4 hour time slots on both Friday and Saturday, February 17-18.

E-Week is a crucial opportunity for us to provide insight into our profession to the future students of engineering—and their parents. Please take a few hours and help us demonstrate to people why Civil Engineering is so important to our community and world, inspire some young people, and sow the seeds for tomorrow's Civil Engineers.

Volunteers will demonstrate a variety of Civil Engineering principles using hands-on displays and models of real-life civil engineering challenges. We'll also be answering questions and providing information to schools and other community organizations and visitors. This year we will be adding some new displays! We would like to have 3 to 4 people per time slot.

College Students, this is an excellent networking opportunity! (And don't forget your free T-shirt…)

Please check the Pittsburgh Section website for a list of available time slots: at www.asce-pgh.org. The list will be updated every weekday. To sign up or obtain more information, contact Matt Kusic at matt.kusic@lrkimball.com or by phone at (412) 201-4900.

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Statewide Efforts Update

Gov. Corbett Set to Give Budget Address February 7

Despite the recommendations of the Governor Corbett's Transportation Funding Advisory Commission (TFAC) in August 2011, and the presentation of two transportation funding plans based on those recommendations within the last few months, the Governor has taken no position on the issue to date.

Those recommendations, totaling $2.5 billion annually, were set forth in a five-year plan that included uncapping the gas and oil company franchise tax, increasing fees, moving the state police budget over to the general fund and modernization programs at the state Department of Transportation.

With the Governor scheduled to give his second budget address on February 7, it is expected he will finally respond to the increasing calls by business and community leaders that he do something to address transportation funding.

However, it seems unlikely that his own solution will address the enormity of the problems Pennsylvania faces in this area. Those around the Governor have pointed to his election pledge of "no new taxes" as one reason that he is not expected to uncap the oil and gas company franchise tax in order to increase state revenue for transportation, and he has said that he is hesitant to raise license and registration fees in a time of continued economic hardship for many Pennsylvanians.

The TFAC's recommendations, and the plans of both Republican Representative Jake Corman and Democratic Representatives Mike Hanna and Dan Frankel which are based on them, have widespread bipartisan support across the state, including many industry groups as well as the Pennsylvania AARP.

These organizations counter the Governor's concerns by pointing out that the possible negative economic impact of higher gas prices and license fees is far outweighed by the net gain in jobs and economic dividends to be realized through adopting some version of the TFAC plan.

For example, David Black, president and CEO of the Harrisburg Regional Chamber and Capital Region Economic Development Corp., has said that "the little pain at the pump and increased license and registration fees would be returned in the form of improvement in the economy and improvement in the roads."

The Governor's resistance to acting decisively to fund Pennsylvania's transportation needs also seems in opposition to what his press secretary, Kevin Harley, has said are Corbett's top issues: economic growth and job creation.

The presidents of the 4 Pennsylvania Sections of ASCE, including Pittsburgh, are planning a joint press release in which they will respond to the Governor's budget and his proposed solution for transportation funding immediately after the address. However, there is still time for ASCE members to make their voices heard. The Governor can be contacted at his address:

Governor's Office
225 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

His office phone is (717) 787-2500, and he can be reached by email through his contact form at www.governor.state.pa.us.

Finally, Infrastructure Day this year will be **Tuesday May 8**, when many engineers from across the state will converge upon Harrisburg. Save the date and consider bringing your concerns with the Governor's plan directly to your legislator.

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6th ANNUAL YMF DODGEBALL TOURNAMENT

DODGE, DUCK, DIP, DIVE AND DODGE

When: Saturday, February 25, 2012
Balls fly at 10:00 a.m.

Where: Carnegie Mellon University
University Center Gym

Who: 6-person teams (co-ed or not)
$10/person or $60/team

Why: Cash prizes and trophies given to the TOP THREE place winners

How: Register now by emailing mpierce@gfnet.com by February 15, 2012

This double-elimination tournament has a maximum limit of 32 teams and is open to all member and nonmember engineers! The tournament will feature cash prizes and concessions sponsored by the local ASCE Student Chapters. Free weekend parking is available at the adjacent East Campus Garage. Email Matt Pierce (mpierce@gfnet.com) with your team name, designated team captain and contact information. SIGN UP NOW and dodge the last minute rush. The 2011 event was a great success with competitive dodgeball flying action and some serious laughs with the best-dressed team competition! SIGN UP TODAY!

READY, GO, DUCK, DODGE….

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The current Section leadership is seeking individuals interested in helping to lead the Section as a Director or as Vice President. We are looking to fill Board positions for three, three-year term Directors and a Vice President interested in making a different in the Section.

Are you a "Younger Member" 35 years of age or less? No worries – we want you too! At least one of the nominees must be a Younger Member.

Interested? Email Matt Pierce, Nominating Committee Chair, at mpierce@gfnet.com for more information or better yet, to get your name on the ballot!

Let your voice be heard and join the ASCE Pittsburgh Section Board of Directors.

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The YMF Goes Country

By Lauren Terpak, ASCE Pittsburgh Section YMF President

On January 19 as snow fell in Pittsburgh, a group of seven younger members and ten students representing both Carnegie Mellon and the University of Pittsburgh gathered to to start off for a slightly warmer climate in Nashville, Tennessee to attend ASCE's annual Eastern Regional Younger Member Council (ERYMC) and the Workshop for Student Chapter Leaders (WSCL) conferences.

Four vehicles and 10 hours later we all arrived in the Country Music City, Nashville. Hungry after our long trip, we decided to dine *family style* at a local southern restaurant and bonded over our common interest in ASCE.

Throughout the next 2 days, the conference offered us various activities such as seminars, breakout group discussions, icebreakers, technical presentations and networking activities.

One popular seminar among younger members focused on the skills needed for public speaking and was presented by ASCE National's dynamic and charismatic Past President Blaine Leonard. In this discussion younger members learned why engineers communicate and how to overcome fears when speaking in public.

Other popular conference sessions were the breakouts and round tables, which gave younger members and students the opportunity to break into smaller groups of approximately 10 to 15 and openly discuss topics such as Student Interaction and Transitions, Client Relations, and Professional and Technical Development.

During a joint session with the WSCL and the Workshop for Branch Leaders (WSBL) attendees were witness to a skit on How NOT to run your local board meetings. Skills learned in this session were applied the next day during the ERYMC business meeting.

The Pittsburgh Younger Members were also given the unique opportunity to screen a short outreach video that they produced through the assistance of a State Public Affairs Grant, a program offered by ASCE National. Using a light-hearted script, the video is aimed at teaching elementary to high school level students that Civil Engineering is more than just building bridges. The video was well received.

Younger members and students were able to have a little fun by attending a Tennessee Section-sponsored joint social at the world famous Wildhorse Saloon. Here attendees networked with members from various ASCE Regions via activities like billiards, shuffle board, and in true Nashville style, line dancing.

Overall the conference was great success. It provided younger members and students with a chance to reach out to other sections and offer suggestions on topics from how to host the steel bridge and concrete canoe competitions to boosting membership at events. We took some ideas away and look forward to sharing them with our membership. Discussion during the trip back to Pittsburgh showed conference attendees now have a greater understanding of ASCE and a new enthusiasm for being involved.

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