



Valley Engineer Newsletter

December 2019-January 2020

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Feb. 8, 2020 MATHCOUNTS, Trexler Middle School, 851 N. 15th Street, Allentown, PA 18102

Feb. 21, 2020 Engineer's Week Banquet, ArtsQuest Center at SteelStacks, 101 Founders Way, Bethlehem, PA 6:00 – 9:00 PM



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OF
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS**

**LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER
(ORGANIZED 1935)**

CARBON, LEHIGH, MONROE, & NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES

President's Message

Alex Dezubay, PE

As we approach the end of 2019 and enter 2020, and the end of the decade, I will deviate from the usual president's newsletter professional message to reflect on our society's many blessings.

We are fortunate to be members of the engineering profession and to practice it in the United States where we have the freedom to follow our individual skills and talents. As NSPE and PSPE members we see this diversity of engineering disciplines and career paths in our members. They come together for common purpose to promote high standards of ability and ethics in their work. They have the right to freely associate with each other and use it to promote the profession through MATHCOUNTS and scholarships, to continue to educate themselves with diverse tours and speakers, and guard public safety by being in continuous contact with government to keep engineering issues in the hands of licensed professional engineers.

We have also been fortunate to be members of this profession, which is driven by ability and merit. It is driven by facts and performance and not as susceptible to spin and opinion as some other occupations.

I wish all a Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Happy Kwanza, and Happy New Year. I hope all have time to relax with friends and family. Please remember those who are less fortunate. Also, I look forward to working with many of you in the new year on Young Engineer of the Year, Engineer of the Year, MATHCOUNTS, scholarships and other activities.

Thanks

JUST BORN CONFECTIONERY PRODUCTS

Alfred Gruenke, PE

My wife, Joan Gruenke, is a health enthusiast. She runs five miles a day, she counts calories, is careful what she eats and how much she eats. She has only a few weaknesses, one of which is Peeps. She loves Peeps®, and partakes every Easter, and their counterparts at other holidays. It's the only candy she truly loves. She likes chocolates and strawberries dipped in chocolate, but she loves Peeps.



In mid-November, over a dozen members and guests of the Lehigh Valley Chapter, Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers toured the makers of Peeps and other delectable delights, Just Born Confectionery Products, located on Stefko Boulevard, Bethlehem.

Facilities Manager Chas Kaltenbach and Sr. Manager, Engineering and Facilities Dave Escott guided the group through the facilities. It is the only manufacturing site for Peeps, Mike and Ikes, and Jelly Beans. Just Born consists of five interconnected buildings employing around 300 workers in manufacturing, three shifts, five days a week, plus 140 office personnel. Sales are seasonal, but manufacturing is year-round. The shelf life of Peeps and other candies is 18-24 months. Just Born uses two warehouses near Brodhead Road and Township Line Road in Bethlehem, and in Atlanta, Georgia. There is also have a factory in Philadelphia, PA, where Goldenberg's® Peanut Chews® Candy is produced. All shipping is by truck. Obviously, shipments peak in the months before Easter.



Chapter President Alex Dezubay talking to Facilities Manager Chas Kaltenbach

Since this is a food processing facility, we were required to don smocks, hair, and beard nets. We were cautioned to ensure that loose metal parts did not enter the manufacturing floor and possibly contaminate the product. We also had to wash our hands. No photography of the facilities were permitted. Pictures for this article (other than above) were either from Just Born's website or from a feature presentation by the TODAY show on NBC.

Dave and Chas gave a history of the company. Just Born is a privately held company founded primarily by Sam Born, a Russian immigrant, in 1923, in Brooklyn. In the 1930s the company moved to its present location in Bethlehem. Their slogan was, and is, "A Great Candy is not made, it's Just Born." Present owners are Ross Born and David Shaffer, grandchildren of the founders.

Just Born is best known for Peeps, which entered the company product group in the 1950s. Just Born bought a candy company in Lancaster County, and Peeps was one of their hand-made products. The traditional Peeps are primarily an Easter candy but other configurations such as Bunnies and Christmas Trees are also made. Just Born produces enough Peeps® Brand Marshmallow Candies in one year to circle the earth twice. The primary market is the US and Canada, though Israel is also a sizeable market.

All candy manufacturing and most packaging is automated. The variety of equipment to make the candies was fascinating to both engineers and non-engineers. The Peeps process is continuous, on-line. Each product is sampled every hour, taste tested every day.

There was the unmistakable smell of candy throughout, but no air-entrained dust. Powdered sugar is one of the components of Peeps, but powdered sugar can be explosive. To prevent a catastrophe, and to eliminate airborne dust, there are efficient dust collectors throughout. A pleasant working environment.



Peeps on Parade!

Peeps are made of marshmallow, in various colors. The rows of Peeps on the five-foot wide belt conveyor, six units of five, are reminiscent of the march of the Droids in the Star Wars movies or the Terracotta Army of China. Installing the eyes is especially important, and exacting. Dave mentioned that Just Born occasionally receives quality complaints about Peeps. The main complaint is that the eyes are either missing, or not installed symmetrically. Not the taste, not the coloring, it's the eyes that generate more quality issues!

The other products produced in Bethlehem, Hot Tamales® and Mike & Ike® candies are not as automated as Peeps, but still formidable. As we toured the facilities, we were given samples of each product.

Just Born is well known outside of the Lehigh Valley. Besides the aforementioned TODAY show on NBC, Just Born and Peeps have also been featured on Fox and Friends on FNC. It is the favorite candy of Reese Witherspoon and Justin Bieber and shown on Conan O'Brian's TV show.

There is a Peeps & Company store in the Promenade Shops at Saucon Valley which provides candy, apparel, accessories, and gifts.

In addition to being a highly respected confectioner, the Just Born family is an active participant in local activities and charities. Locally, a 400-pound Peeps Chick is dropped at Steel Stacks on New Year's Eve. The event is broadcast live in WFMZ-TV.



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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.

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Please note “LVPSPE Scholarship Fund” on the comment line.

Or, you may also 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
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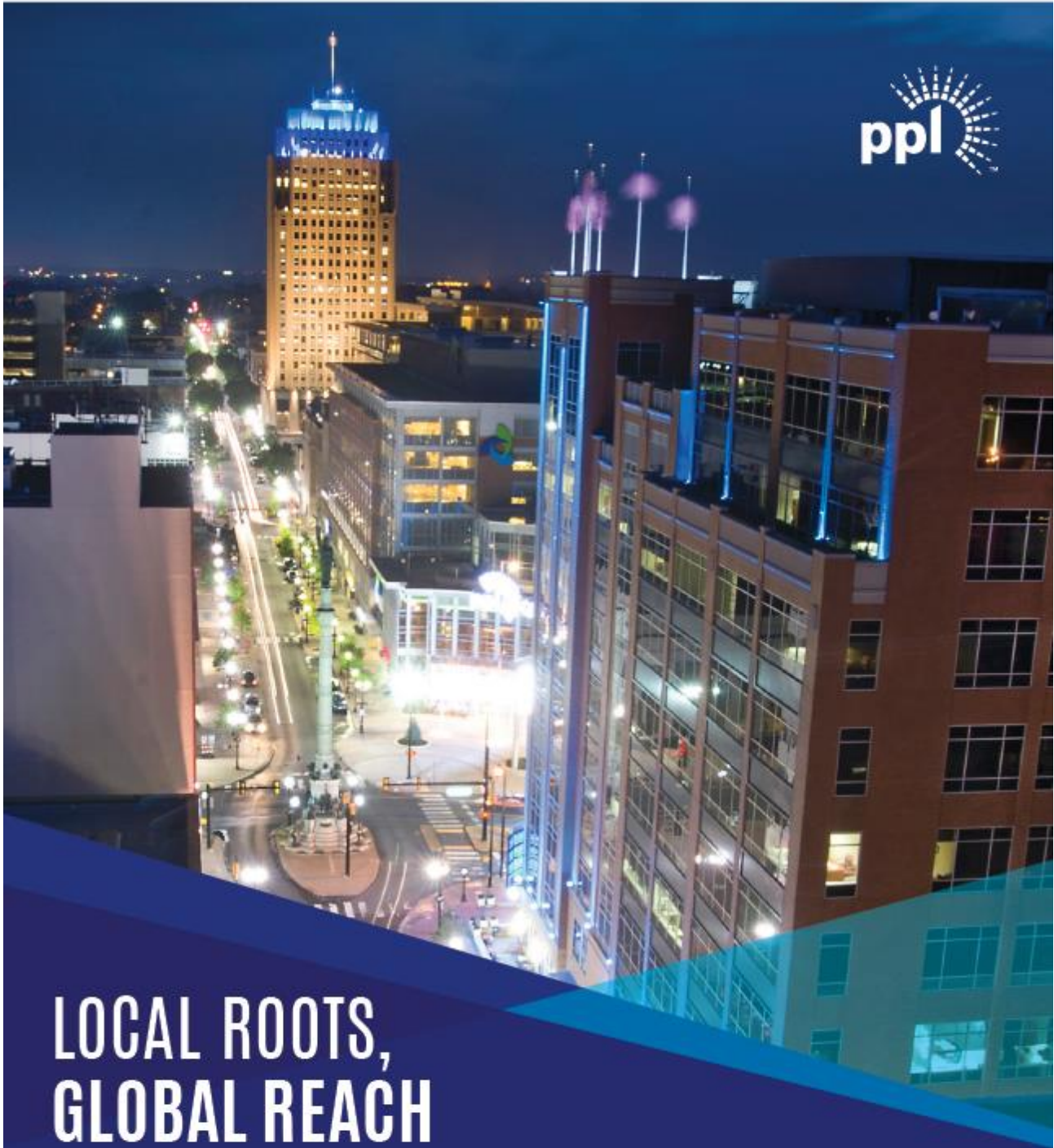
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We were given gift packs of Just Born candies. I took two bags home and placed them on the kitchen table. The next day a couple of our grandchildren visited. I haven't seen the bags since. What better testimonial to a candy?

We thank Dave Escott, Chas Kaltenbach, and the entire Just Born organization to view candy making at its finest.

The only thing I ask of you is to speak well of me. Lie if you have to,
-August Polinske

You will never reach your destination if you stop and throw stones at every dog that barks.
-Winston Churchill

HOME COOKIN'

Alfred Gruenke, PE

When on assignment in North America my usual accommodations were hotels and motels, with meals at a restaurant. In many locales in other parts of the world guest houses were the norm, with meals supplied.

Sometimes, however, I was left to my own devices.

I lived in Cuenca, Ecuador, for over a year, over two assignments. Both times I lived in an apartment. It came supplied with a very nice kitchen, a maid, and a washer-dryer. The maid was in high demand since she could read and write in Spanish, so I was able to communicate with her without actually meeting her. A very nice restaurant was available nearby, but I preferred to cook in my apartment.

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Shangri-La? The view of the Cajas (boxes) west of Cuenca.

First a disclaimer. Between eating and cooking, I'm much better with the former. My wife does very well in that department. My girth and gravitational attraction are proof of her abilities, but I'm willing to cook when I have to.

The previous occupant of my apartment left a small paperback cookbook entitled "Dinner for Two" by Betty Crocker. Most recipes had a minimum of components, often less than five. That made it appealing to someone with few culinary skills.

Fortunately, Cuenca has a feature of modern America, the supermarket. They featured shopping carts, and checkouts. Not as opulent as Wegman's or Giant, but reasonably stocked. Meats was on styrofoam plates and wrapped in plastic. Civilization at its best!

However, the products offered were not what we would consider standard. My teenage son came to visit me. About two weeks later my wife and eight-year-old daughter arrived. The first day he took them to the supermarket and showed them the guinea pigs (cuy in Spanish, pronounced COO-e) nicely displayed. They were about eight inches long, all skinned and gutted on a styrofoam plate and nicely wrapped in plastic, but with the

head, teeth, and claws intact. Not too appealing to an All-American girl!

On weekends I bought food at the local farmer's market, where people from the countryside came down to sell their wares. One could buy a variety of vegetables plus meats, either butchered or "on the wing", or on the hoof, or paws, whatever the case may be. It was more fun (and cheaper) than the supermarket. I wasn't brave enough to buy guinea pigs but did buy beef, pork, chicken, and rabbit. Shrimp were cheap, equivalent to \$1.00 per pound. They were such a good buy I kept a couple of pounds in the freezer at all times. Pineapples were so good they were indescribable. Rice was available, and for some reason potatoes tasted better than potatoes at home. Maybe they were of a different variety.

Interestingly, breadcrumbs were not available for breaded chicken. I solved the problem by buying French baguettes from a local bakery. Let it sit for a few days and it became so hard it could be used to beat off wild animals. A little pounding with a hammer and voilà, breadcrumbs. Sauerkraut at the supermarket was made by a German expat and it was among the best I've ever eaten. Horseradish was not available, which surprised me with the number of Germans living there.

The first requirement of home cookin' is a Crock Pot slow cooker. I consider a slow cooker the greatest aid to cooking since the invention of fire. Throw everything in the pot and let it cook for ten hours. Cuenca is at 8,000 feet elevation. Water boils at 92°C thus takes a little longer to cook. Come home, and it's ready to eat. As a plus there's usually enough for at least two days so cooking does not have to be a daily chore. Besides, leftover stew is always better after a couple of days. Bacon was readily available. When plantains are fried with bacon the starch turns sweet and is delicious. Gourmand dining

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it's not, but not bad. I even had the confidence to invite friends for dinner. And if the meal turns out to be less than gourmand quality, that's why God invented soy sauce. Or hot sauce. Or Merlot. Or Chardonnay.

I had ample opportunity to partake of the local epicurean delights. Restaurants were plentiful and cheap, though some of the offerings were new to me. There was the usual chicken, beef, pork, that kind of thing. Shrimp, for reasons I never understood, was served with the shells on. First thing I had to do is peel them. Most restaurants offered ceviche as an appetizer. Ceviche consists of raw shrimp "cooked" in lemon juice, super-hot peppers, plus some other stuff. It's also reputed to be good for curing hangovers. Also popular was a type of bean that looked like lima beans that had the flavor of cardboard that had been left outdoors for a couple of years. Fortunately, hot sauce (aji) was readily available.

A Pizza Hut in Quito offered pineapple pizza. Now that's different.

The Ecuadorian contribution to fast food is chancho. This is a pig, slaughtered in such a manner that the body remains intact. Strips of meat are cut from the inside and hung up to dry. After a while the strips are barbequed over eucalyptus coals. Now, that's good! There were no flies with whom to share our fare. Apparently, flies can't "fly" in the rarified atmosphere of 8,000 ft. elevation. On a weekend it seemed as if every other house along the main road had a pig carcass on the porch. Many a Saturday afternoon was spent partaking of chancho and washing it down with local brews or squeezings of the grape. The things we have to put up with when we travel internationally!

The traditional drink is zhumir, derived from sugar cane and allowed to age an indeterminate time. A liter cost around \$1.50. There were grades of zhumir, ranging from barely drinkable to godawful. A

common bar drink was "rapidos", two shots of zhumir in rapid succession. I understand that a lot of employer-employee agreements stipulated zhumir with the noon meal, especially at higher, hence colder, elevations. The more discerning mixed zhumir with coca cola, half and half. I believe zhumir was invented by Lucifer to punish mankind after God threw him out of heaven! Fortunately, the local beer was good, and Chilean wine was readily available.



The local chancho stand



Your humble correspondent with the Ecuadorian contribution to epicurean splendor

After a while, after some prodding by a colleague, I learned to like cuy, guinea

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pig. I never cooked it but it was common in restaurants and at banquets. Another surprise. One would expect half a cuy to be half split lengthwise as we split chickens. But no, it was split front and back.

Doing my own cooking is not my choice, but the times I've done it have been enjoyable. I do a little cooking at home, but only rarely. Aside from various shrimp dishes my specialty is Polish Jambalaya, usually from leftover Thanksgiving turkey. I call it Polish Jambalaya because I use kielbasa instead of andouille sausage. Not too bad, but that's why God invented soy sauce. Or hot sauce. Or Merlot. Or Chardonnay.

Bon Appétit!

FOR THOSE WHO NEED A LITTLE TIME AWAY FROM THE GRINDSTONE AND A SMILE.....

How important does a person have to be before they are considered assassinated instead of just murdered?
 Once you're in heaven, do you get stuck wearing the clothes you were buried in for eternity?
 What disease did cured ham actually have?
 How is it that we put man on the moon before we figured out it would be a good idea to put wheels on luggage?
 Why is it that people say they 'slept like a baby' when babies wake up like every two hours?
 Why are you IN a movie, but you're ON TV?
 Why do people pay to go up tall buildings and then put money in binoculars to look at things on the ground?
 Why do doctors leave the room while you change? They're going to see you naked anyway...
 Why is 'bra' singular and 'panties' plural?
 Why do toasters always have settings that burns the toast to a horrible crisp, which no decent human being would eat?
 If Jimmy cracks corn and no one cares, why is there a stupid song about him?

Why does Goofy stand erect while Pluto remains on all fours? They're both dogs!
 Why do the Alphabet song and Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star have the same tune?
 Why did you just try singing the two songs above?
 Did you ever notice that when you blow in a dog's face, he gets mad at you, but when you take him for a car ride, he sticks his head out the window?
 Why do we press harder on a remote control when we know the batteries are getting dead?
 Why do banks charge a fee on 'insufficient funds' when they know there is not enough money?
 Why does someone believe you when you say there are four billion stars, but check when you say the paint is wet?
 Why do they use sterilized needles for death by lethal injection?
 Why doesn't Tarzan have a beard?
 Why does Superman stop bullets with his chest, but ducks when you throw a revolver at him?
 Why do Kamikaze pilots wear helmets?
 Why is it that no matter what color bubble bath you use the bubbles are always white?
 Is there ever a day that mattresses are not on sale?
 Why do people keep running over a thread a dozen times with their vacuum cleaner, then reach down, pick it up, examine it, then put it down to give the vacuum one more chance?
 Why is it that no plastic bag will open from the end on you first try?
 How do those dead bugs get into those enclosed light fixtures?
 Why is it that whenever you attempt to catch something that's falling off the table you always manage to knock something else over?
 How come you never hear father-in-law jokes?
 The statistics on sanity is that one out of every four persons is suffering from some sort of mental illness. Think of your three best friends -- if they're okay, then it's you

