



**LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER**  
 PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY OF  
 PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

**Lehigh, Northampton, Monroe, and Carbon Counties**  
**(Organized 1935)**

# Valley Engineer Newsletter

November 2023

Activities:

**Christmas Party:**

December 14, 2023, at Kingfish American  
 Bistro in Bethlehem, PA



**PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY  
 OF  
 PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS**

**LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER  
 (ORGANIZED 1935)**

CARBON, LEHIGH, MONROE, & NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES

**President’s Message!**

Alexa Rooney, EIT, JD, President

Let me start off by saying Happy Thanksgiving to all. Enjoy this time with your friends and family and know how thankful we are to our members, as you make our organization what it is. Thank you.

There are a lot of opportunities coming to our members over the next few months. First, our LVPSPE Holiday Dinner scheduled for Thursday, December 14, 2023, at Kingfish American Bistro in Bethlehem, PA starting at 6 pm.

Our next event, MATHCOUNTS®, is scheduled for Saturday, February 3, 2024. As mentioned in the previous newsletter, this event promotes STEM education and encourages students to pursue careers in engineering. LVPSPE has supported this competition for many years and are very excited to continue to support this event for years to come.

The next event will be the Engineers’ Week Banquet at Steel Stacks in Bethlehem on Friday, February 23, 2024. It is at this event that we award our Engineer of the Year and Young Engineer of the Year. If you know someone you wish to honor with a nomination to either award, please submit your nominations by Thursday, December 14, 2023, on the LVPSPE website at <https://www.lvpspe.org/page-1505987>.

Also in the spring of 2024, there will be several tour opportunities for our members to attend. The tours we are looking to include are a tour of ATLSS Lab at Lehigh University, a tour of active construction projects with Allentown, PA Center

City, and will end with a tour of Haines Mill in May of 2024.

Look for more information on our scheduled events for 2024. Until then I hope everyone has a blessed Thanksgiving season and hope to see everyone at our holiday party in a few weeks.

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## **THANKSGIVING AWAY FROM HOME**

Alfred Gruenke, PE

The modern American Thanksgiving celebration has three features: Family, Food, and Football. Other cultures have holidays similar to Thanksgiving, such as harvest celebrations but the essence of this holiday, the eating of a New World bird, the turkey, is uniquely American.

Thanksgiving is always a major event among Americans overseas. We are separated from our families, so it is celebrated with our families away from home, our fellow ex-patriots.

Planning may require months. Considerable creativity and bending of the rules are required, since the ingredients for the Thanksgiving meal are not always readily available. The turkey, however, is essential.

It is fortunate for the proper celebration of Thanksgiving that the turkey is fairly common in many parts of the world, through some searching may be necessary. In Egypt, a turkey could be purchased by going to the market and ordering "dechrumie." The price was by weight, on the wing. Butchering was extra. I bought two medium sized birds. Fortunately, our guest house cook knew how to prepare it tastefully.

Trimmings such as pumpkin pie filling are impossible in Egypt. To obtain pie filling, plus a few other items, I "required" everyone going home on R&R to bring something back. In this way, plus local purchases, the meal was a success.

Our company, Fuller Co., had a policy of paying for Thanksgiving dinner at all overseas locations. And, we were encouraged to invite whomever we choose. So besides our colleagues we invited our drivers, their wives, and the cook's wife, who assisted in the preparation and serving. The meal, and the day, was a success, by any measure.



Thanksgiving dinner, Egyptian style



The pièce de resistance



The hors d'oeuvre table

The Thanksgiving meal in Indonesia was organized and prepared by the wives of our colleagues who had accompanied their husbands. I don't know how they managed to find all the goodies, but they did. The meal was fabulous! This was a

Continued on page 3

real international event, with attendees from fourteen countries.

One of my Thanksgiving dinners was at the American Embassy in Islamabad. Many American Embassies have Thanksgiving dinner for US citizens and guests, or they at least will advise as to where Thanksgiving is served in the area. In Korea, we were told to try the nearest US Army base. We opted for our own dinner.

The customer in Korea managed to purchase a rather small specimen for us from a farm close to an American military base. Our guest house cook butchered it, all the while expressing his opinion of such bird with various expletives deleted, in various languages. The meal was fine, however.

Because the turkey was rather small, we supplemented it with a nice beef roast purchased in a nearby town.

An associate and I had an interesting time buying the required spices. Since our combined Korean vocabulary was less than ten words, we resorted to wandering from shop to shop, opening spice containers, pinching, sniffing, and tasting, until we found what we needed. We were not charged for the spices, because I suspect that the shopkeepers were not sure we were in full possession of all of our marbles.

Once in Egypt, and twice in Ecuador, we had Thanksgiving dinner at a hotel restaurant. Most major hotels worldwide are aware of the significance of Thanksgiving and are able to serve a decent turkey dinner. It may not be on the menu but ask the manager at least a week ahead of time. The trimmings may not be the same as a "home cooked" meal, but something is better than nothing.

A major difference with these dinners is the inability to "pig out". The portions are considerably less than at home, and there are no leftovers.

Depending on the time, and if one is lucky, it may be possible to participate in the third F of Thanksgiving, watching football on television. With the establishment of global television this is becoming easier every year. A colleague managed to get himself invited to the Marine House at the Embassy in Ankara, Turkey for dinner, plus the Lions-Eagles football game afterwards. It never hurts to ask.

One year, when staying at the Hotel Oberoi in Katmandu, Nepal, I completely forgot about Thanksgiving. My "Thanksgiving Dinner" consisted of wild boar, rice, and asparagus. A couple of American tourists, who had gone to the Embassy for their dinner, reminded me of my transgression the next day. So much for being travel-wise.

Thanksgiving away from home can be depressing. But with one's associates, and some creativity, it can become tolerable, and sometimes even enjoyable.

Bon appétit .

-----  
An engineer died and ended up in Hell. He was not pleased with the level of comfort in Hell and began to redesign and build improvements.

After a while, they had toilets that flush, air conditioning, and escalators. Everyone grew very fond of him.

One day God called to Satan to mock him, "So, how's it going down there in Hell?"

Satan replied, "Hey, things are great. We've got air conditioning and flush toilets and escalators, and there's no telling what this engineer is going to come up with next."

God was surprised, "What? You've got an engineer? That's a mistake. He should never have gotten down there in the first place. Send him back up here."

"No way," replied Satan. "I like having an engineer, and I'm keeping him."

God threatened, "Send him back up here now or I'll sue!"

Satan laughed and answered, "Yeah, right. And just where are YOU going to get a lawyer?"

-----  
For once you have tasted flight you will walk the earth with your eyes turned skywards, for there you have been and there you will long to return.  
— Leonardo da Vinci

## **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 any amount –please send your TAX-DEDUCTIBLE donation to PA ENGINEERING FUND. Donations should be mailed to:

**PA Engineering Foundation % LVPSPE  
P.O. Box 195  
Northampton, PA 18067**

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  
610-597-2007  
[Scholarship@LVPSPE.org](mailto:Scholarship@LVPSPE.org)

## **PEF SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Pennsylvania Engineering Foundation oversees the Pennsylvania MATHCOUNTS program and PEF Scholarships.

The purpose is to help nurture future engineers.

## **2022 – 2023 LVPSPE SCHOLARSHIP DONORS**

### **Graduate**

American Society of Civil Engineers  
Lehigh Valley ASCE, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.  
Vitaulic Company  
Easton, PA

### **Senior**

FLSmidth, Inc.  
Allentown, PA  
Joe Sommer Golf Tournament  
Bath, PA

### **Junior**

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Mechanicsburg, Wyomissing, Furlong,  
Stroudsburg, Olyphant, PA  
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Bethlehem, PA  
Bridge Gap Engineering  
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### **Sophomore**

Jeffrey Johnson, P.E., FLSmidth Inc  
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Hanover Engineering Associates  
Bethlehem, PA  
Boyle Construction  
Allentown, PA  
Dreyer Consulting  
Allentown, PA  
Newton Engineering  
Allentown, PA

### **Freshmen**

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Dezubay Engineering Services  
Colliers Engineering & Design  
Allentown, PA  
Robert Peruzzi  
Bethlehem, PA  
Nermin Ferhadbegovic  
Mass Mutual, Center Valley, PA  
Patricia Peoples  
Morgan Stanley, Allentown, PA

### **Contributors**

Michael Basta, PE. F-NSPE  
William Erdman, PE  
Ray Szcuzucki, PE  
Kohn Engineering  
Angelika Fordran, PE

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**Michael Basta, PE,  
F-NSPE**

**Jeffrey Johnson, PE,  
FLSmith Inc.**

**William Erdman, PE**

**Angelika Fordran, PE**

**Ray Szczucki, PE**



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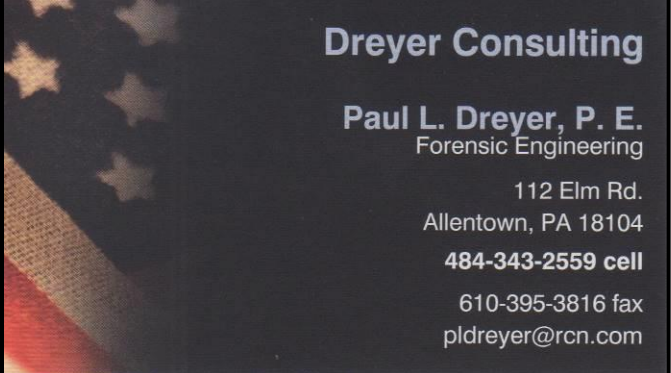
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**Congratulations to all the Scholarship Award recipients.**

**You are about to enter a most noble profession,  
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Thank you, for being you.**

**Alfred Gruenke, PE, MBA**

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A photograph of a large industrial facility, likely a cement or mining plant. The image shows a complex network of grey steel beams and supports. Two workers in orange safety vests and white hard hats are standing on a yellow metal walkway with railings. Large, cylindrical industrial tanks are visible in the background. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights.

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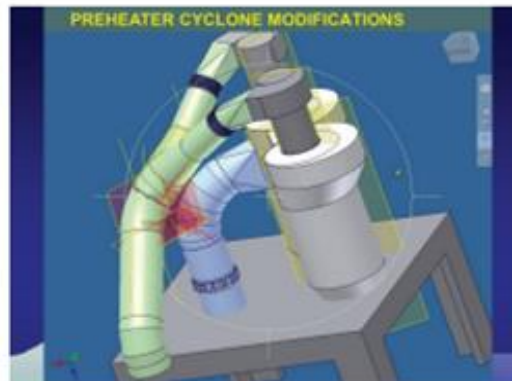


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SEPTEMBER 2024



The Joe Sommer Memorial is a registered 501 (c)(3) organization

## **The 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Joe Sommer Memorial Golf Tournament is almost upon us.**

Joe was a valued employee of H.T. Lyons who touched the hearts of everyone he encountered. He loved to give back to the youth in the Lehigh Valley, the community and those interested in the trades. Each year, thousands of dollars are donated to various community organizations; Northampton Police Department, Friends of Bethlehem Mounted Police, Northampton Area Food Bank, Northampton Police Equipment Fund, The Boys and Girls Club of Bethlehem, PA Canine Search and Rescue, Beat the Streets/Concrete Barbell and Blue Star Mothers LVPA 20, just to name a few.

Please consider donating gift cards, money, or donations in kind to this great event!

If you require any other information, please contact Lee Millward at:

[MILLWALG@airproducts.com](mailto:MILLWALG@airproducts.com)

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## Internet Addresses

### National Society of Professional Engineers

[www.NSPE.org](http://www.NSPE.org)

### Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers

[www.PSPE.org](http://www.PSPE.org)

### Lehigh Valley Chapter – PSPE

[www.LVPSPE.org](http://www.LVPSPE.org)

## 2023– 2024 State Officers

### State officers

State Director – Michael Basta PE. F-NSPE

[Directors@LVPSPE.org](mailto:Directors@LVPSPE.org)

Alt State Director – Angelika Forndran, PE  
[Directors@LVPSPE.org](mailto:Directors@LVPSPE.org)

### VP Northeast

Marleen Troy, PE, PhD  
570-408-4615

## Board of Direction Meetings

The monthly Board of Direction meetings are 6:00 PM on the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) Monday of each month. Open to all members;

## 2022 – 2023 Chapter Officers

### Chapter Officers

President-Alexa Rooney, EIT, JD  
[ARooney@pplweb.com](mailto:ARooney@pplweb.com)  
610-774-6011

Vice President – Vacant

Treasurer – Ray Szczucki, PE  
[Treasurer@LVPSE.org](mailto:Treasurer@LVPSE.org)  
610-614-1245

Secretary – Cody Callahan, EIT  
[ccallahan@barryisett.com](mailto:ccallahan@barryisett.com)  
610-398-0904

Past President – Jeff Kutz  
[kutzj@zapecs.com](mailto:kutzj@zapecs.com)

### Chapter Directors

Director – Mary Rooney, PE  
[Directors@LVPSPE.org](mailto:Directors@LVPSPE.org)

Director – Frank Walsh, PE  
[Directors@LVPSPE.org](mailto:Directors@LVPSPE.org)

Director – Angelika Forndran, PE  
[abf@cowanassociates.com](mailto:abf@cowanassociates.com)

Director – Robert Peruzzi  
[peruzzi@rperuzzi.com](mailto:peruzzi@rperuzzi.com)

Director – Aaron Cali  
[aaron.cali@htlyons.com](mailto:aaron.cali@htlyons.com)



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

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Minutes for the November 13, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting  
6:00pm on Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Alexa Rooney, Ray Szczucki, Al Gruenke, Cody Callahan, Al Dezubay, Frank Walsh, Jeff Kutz, Mike Basta, and Mary Rooney

**A. Call to Order: 6:05**

- If you didn't get the meeting invite for October/November, email Alexa.

**B. Programs**

- December - Holiday party confirmed for December 14, 2023 @ Kingfish.
  - We are still looking for a speaker for dinner. Contact Alexa with any suggestions.
  - Cody will coordinate with Tracy from Isett regarding putting the dinner information on the website and will send email invites out to members. Event, title, when, where, cost (\$45.00 last year), optional \$10 PDH for members, \$20 for nonmembers.
- January – Nothing currently scheduled
- February – Engineers Banquet February 23, 2024 at SteelStacks
- March – Dorney Park? (Cody will reach out to Dorney Park)
- April – Center City/Haines Mill?
- May - Scholarship Dinner
- Newsletter – Alexa will send Al a write up discussing the holiday party and our monthly programs, Cody will send Al the meeting minutes so that Al can send the newsletter out before Thanksgiving.

**C. MATHCOUNTS**

- Looking for a new countdown round moderator.
  - Cody will discuss with Chris Williams (Isett) regarding potential candidates or tips for the position. Cody will have Kevin or Chris call Al Dezubay about the position responsibilities.
  - Reach out to Alexa if you are interested.

**D. Lehigh Valley EOY/YEOY & Scholarships**

- Frank will send out first round of emails/phone calls to past donors and potential donors in December.
- We are looking for a cosponsor to help Frank out and take over the scholarship funding in the future.



- No objections from the board to having a nominee from Berks County for engineer of the year.
- Nominations for engineer of the year due by December 14, 2023.
- Al Gruenke wants to nominate Ray Szczucki for engineer of the year. Al Dezubay will call Ray regarding the nomination.

#### **E. Treasurer – Ray Szczucki**

- Balance as of 10-31-23
  - Checking \$1,622.62
  - Savings \$8,012.01
  - Potential 2024 Atlas lab visit during operating hours (work-day hours).
  - Mary stated that last year’s gold sponsorships will be getting a \$200 credit.
  - Ray submitted an application for a grant towards updating the LVPSPE website.
    - We need to get info regarding what we want to do, how we’re going to do it, and how much we think it will cost.
    - Alexa reached out to her sister and the estimated cost for her to update the website is \$800. Monthly fee varies depending on how much storage and what we want to do. Estimate is around \$50.00/month and domain fee is \$9.00/month (sometimes this comes with the monthly fee).

#### **F. State Director – Mike Basta**

- Marleen Troy detailed the status of the Task Force and moving forward with the Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion initiative.
- PSPE has been looking at its finances and Jen Summers and John Wanner identified a grant opportunity through the PA Department of Labor and Industry’s Industry Partnership Grant that bridges industry and education. The intent is for PSPE to prepare a grant application to utilize the funds for the FE Exam preparation, education, and awareness.
- Jennifer Summers would like to see directions at the board level to identify where PSPE and its staff spend their time. Volunteering is generally down and maintaining a presence in MATHCOUNTS doesn’t hit the exact audience for PSPE. Jen asked if direct communication with universities or students would serve better purpose for the Society. Would a state-wide initiative to encourage connectivity between Chapters in PSPE be worthwhile? Jen stressed the connections between PSPE members beyond individual local Chapter events.
- 2024 NSPE PECon is planned for Aug 7-9 in Raleigh, NC.
- Jennifer and Dave Williams will continue to plan for the 2024 Conference, to be held in the Pittsburgh area. A committee has been formed for planning.

#### **G. Past President – Jeff Kutz**

- None

#### **H. Old Business/New Business**

- Add website discussion here.
- Open positions: Vice President and Scholarship Chair (Co-chair 23-24 and Chair 24-25)
- Board of Directors meetings for the 2023-2024 year:
  - December 14, 2023 – Holiday Party
  - January 8, 2024
  - February 12, 2024

- March 11, 2024
- April 8, 2024

**I. Adjournment on motion by Alexa, seconded by Frank at 6:55.**

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