



LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER
 PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY OF
 PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS

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

Valley Engineer Newsletter

September 2023



**PENNSYLVANIA SOCIETY
 OF
 PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS**

**LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER
 (ORGANIZED 1935)**

CARBON, LEHIGH, MONROE, & NORTHAMPTON COUNTIES

President’s Message!

Alexa Rooney, EIT, JD, President

I would like to introduce myself to those members who may not know me. I went to Missouri University of Science and Technology (Formally University of Missouri – Rolla) where I received my degrees in Architectural Engineering and Civil Engineering along with minors Business and Math.

While working for a consulting engineering firm during the day I attended law school at night.

For eight years I worked in transmission and distribution engineering consulting firms before joining the electric utility in PA. My career has taken me from New Mexico to Missouri, Kansas, Michigan, and finally to Pennsylvania where I joined PPL.

Before moving to PA and joining LVPSPE I was a member of the Michigan Society of Professional Engineers (MSPE) and Society of Women Engineers (SWE), and held the positions of Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Within PSPE I have been a Chapter Director, Vice President, and now President.

2023 - 2024 brings what will hopefully be a more back to normal year for LVPSPE. We will continue to hold our monthly meetings on the second Monday of each month, with a hybrid approach of

in-person and virtual meetings. This change in the status quo allows the flexibility of remote attendees while maintaining in-person interactions.

This year we are also looking to bring back the technical tours and provide more opportunities for LVPSPE members to receive PDH through eligible presentations and fundraising initiatives.

Continuing our Covid-modified service to the engineering community and the community at large, we will continue sponsoring MATHCOUNTS; awards for Engineer of the Year and Young Engineer of the Year at the LVEC Engineering Week banquet in the spring; and award scholarships to high school seniors starting their engineering education in college.

I appreciate all those who have contributed their time, resources, and monetary donations to making these events a success every year. Please follow us on LinkedIn at Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers - Lehigh Valley Chapter for the latest news and updates. If you are interested in getting more involved, please don't hesitate to reach out to any of the chapter officers. We are always happy to welcome new members that can help build our chapter.

I look forward to the great year ahead.

2023 PSPE Conference

Angelika B. Forndran

The PSPE conference was held September 21 to September 22 at the Radison Hotel near Trevoise in Bucks County. The conference provided continuing education of up to 16 PDHs.

The Order of the Engineer ceremony inducted five new members who received a stainless steel ring to wear on the 5th finger of the working hand. All members of the order of the engineer present at the ceremony joined in the recitation of the Obligation of an Engineer. A P.E. is not required.

The President of NSPE, Bill Atkinson, attended the conference and presided over the swearing in of the new PSPE officers.

The PSPE President's gavel was handed over from Marleen Troy, PE Ph.D, of Wilkes University and Keystone Northeast Chapter to Nicole Wilson, PE, of Bucks County Chapter with David Williams, PE, of the Beaver County Chapter becoming President-elect.



State officers being sworn in by NSPE President Bill Atkinson

Slate of State Officers:

Nicole Wilson - PSPE President
David Williams - President Elect
Frank Falzone - Secretary.
Tom Friese - Treasurer
Dan Cook - Vice President Northeast Region
James Dilouie - Vice President Central Region
Fred Plotnick - Vice President Southeast Region
Brian Kurl - Vice President Western Region
Marleen Troy - Immediate Past President
Joe Boward - NSPE House of Delegates

The Engineer of the Year award and Young Engineer of the year were awarded to Brian A. Krul, PE, PTOE, and Thomas Monda, PE, respectively.

The structural tours included the Bryn Athyn Cathedral and the behind-the-scenes infrastructure of the Parx Casino.

The numerous sessions for continuing education invited discussion of very timely topics including use of electric vehicles, assessment of resilience to climate change, implementation of township climate action plan, Schuylkill river passenger rail design considerations and entrepreneurship. The ethics session covered the legal basis for the expert witness/forensic engineer's analyses, opinions, and testimony.

The closing dinner was a cheerful event with the Avalon String Band playing tradition Philadelphia mummies strut music. A raffle for numerous gift baskets and items was also much fun.

Continued on page 3



The Lehigh Valley Chapter State Representative Mike Basta and his wife Cynthia enjoying dinner.

Karachi, Pakistan

Alfred Gruenke PE

Of all the countries I have been to, Pakistan is the most exotic. It's hard for me to explain why, but I found it to be fascinating, and yes, exotic. It was also one of the scariest places I've ever been to.

Karachi is located in the south of Pakistan, on the shores of the Arabian Sea. It is the capital of the state of Sindh. During the British Raj era it was the capitol of Pakistan.

There is a state-owned cement plant near Karachi which I visited a number of times. Accommodations were more than acceptable; a five star Holiday Inn with all the amenities. A car picked me up in the morning and dropped me off in the evening. There was a long-time company resident in Karachi who lived in the guest house of another Pakistani customer who taught me the ropes on how to get around in Pakistan.

A five star hotel, but it was still Pakistan. To make a long-distance call I had to go through the hotel switchboard. One time the operator told me that she would call me when an international line was available. I waited and waited. I called again and was told no lines were available.

About a half hour later she called me and said that if were to pay say, \$10.00, the call could be completed faster. I agreed; ten seconds later there was a knock on my door. I gave the gentleman \$10.00. A minute later my call went through. Try explaining that expense to the Accounting Department!

The Holiday Inn was close to the American consulate, the gathering place for many expats. It

offered Western food, drinks, and a congenial atmosphere. Please note that the American consulate or embassy always seems to be the favorite gathering place for expats of many nationalities. I've never heard of people going to the Spanish or Russian embassies! The bar area is often referred to as the "Marine House," a place where the Marines who guard the embassy can hang out. This consulate offered a pool table and a dart board and hosted competitive events. It was the social center of the Karachi expat community.

I became pretty good friends with the plant manager, Jameel, who hailed from Chennai, formerly Madras, India. When India became independent in 1947-1948 Moslems fled north to Pakistan, and Hindus fled south to India. We often ate lunch together. If we had chicken, he would call it "Kentucky fried." He gave me the ins and outs of Karachi.

The official language in Pakistan is Urdu, but Karachi is a diverse city with lots of ethnic languages. It is a veritable melting pot with local Sindh mixing with Pashtuns and Pathans from the northwest territories; Afghans fleeing the Afghanistan war; Punjabi from east central Pakistan and India; a smattering of Central Asian peoples; and others. In the 1970s over a million Bihari from east Pakistan added to the mix.

Karachi at that time was a rather dangerous place. These groups were in constant warfare, especially the Pathans and Bihari. Jameel described it not merely some yelling and name calling but shootings, bombings, and just plain murders. Naturally, any such act led to revenge acts. Add to that the police, who generated their own violence.

The police owned a bus company that featured yellow minibuses. Locals referred to them as "Yellow Devils." Jameel told of a recent incident involving two minibuses which were racing. A couple of people were in the way and the busses struck them, killing several and severely injuring others. They were taken to a hospital where family/friends of the injured shot up the emergency room and a couple of police. This led to a general 6:00 curfew in the affected neighborhoods, enforced by the police. We made sure that we were far from these areas!

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 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

PEF SCHOLARSHIPS

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

The purpose is to help nurture future engineers.

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William Erdman, PE
Ray Szcuzucki, PE
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www.morganstanley.fa.com
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F-NSPE**

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William Erdman, PE

Angelika Fordran, P.E.,

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Thank you, for being you.**

Alfred Gruenke, P.E., 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 structures, possibly silos or storage tanks, are visible in the background. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows and highlights.

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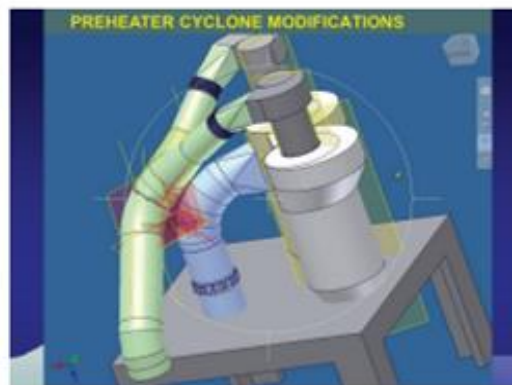


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Please consider donating gift cards, money, or donations in kind to this great event!

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Internet Addresses

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Lehigh Valley Chapter – PSPE

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2023– 2024 State Officers

State Officers

State Director – Michael Basta PE. F-NSPE

Directors@LVPSPE.org

Alt State Director – Angelika Forndran, PE

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 (2nd) Monday of each month. Open to all members; they are held via Zoom meetings in 2022 until further notice.

2022 – 2023 Chapter Officers

Chapter Officers

President-Alexa Rooney, EIT, JD

ARooney@pplweb.com

610-774-6011

Vice President – Vacant

Treasurer – Ray Szczucki, PE

Treasurer@LVPSE.org

610-614-1245

Secretary – Cody Callahan, EIT

ccallahan@barryisett.com

610-398-0904

Past President – Jeff Kutz

kutzj@zapecs.com

Chapter Directors

Director – Mary Rooney, PE

Directors@LVPSPE.org

Director – Frank Walsh, PE

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Director – Angelika Forndran, PE

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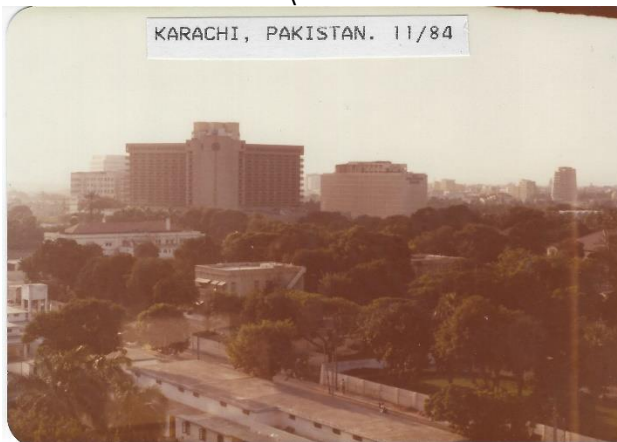
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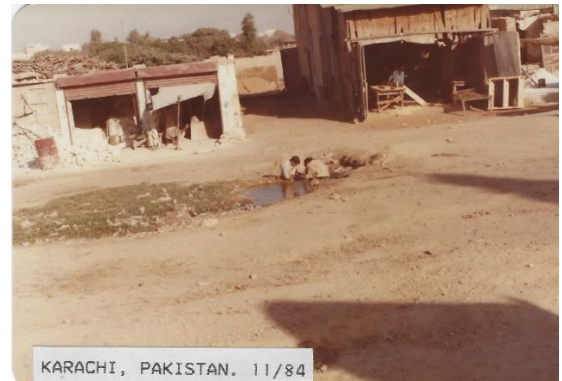
As the attached photos show, Karachi had its good neighborhoods and bad. The homes in good neighborhoods had stone walls with broken glass on top, and a rather sturdy gate. A person called a "chuckador," also a bodyguard, lived inside the walls and opened the gate for the owner and approved guests. I suspect that the chuckador was armed. Most of the populace lived less opulently. Apartment buildings had door men that also appeared to be armed.



Home delivery. Amazon Prime?



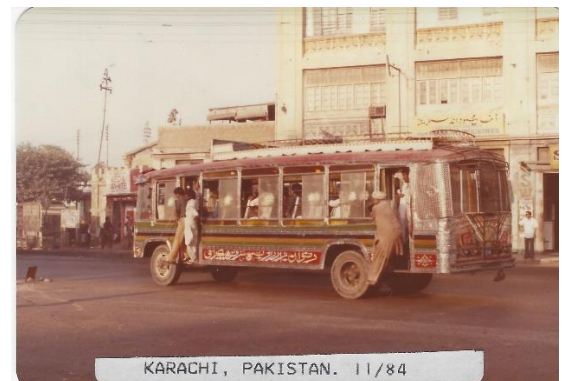
High-rise apartment buildings



Children playing

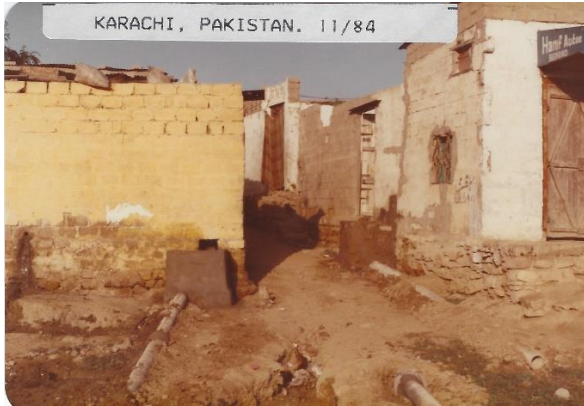


A common mode of transportation in Pakistan. Three wheeled scooters with two-cycle engines. They are also popular in India.



Buses are decorated, sometimes lavishly (Note passengers hanging on)

Continued on page 16



Karachi neighborhood.

Not everything in Karachi was dismal. The Holiday Inn was a turn-around for Swiss Air, so it had a continual traffic of airline personnel. I met up with a number of expats and often dined in some rather good restaurants. No libations, of course. The American consulate was the center of most activities.

Also, we went crabbing for blue crabs in Karachi Harbor!

We hired a bunder boat with two attendants. Once out in the bay we were given a rod and reel, with a piece of fish tied to the line. We lowered it until it hit bottom, then bobbed it up and down. When we felt something, we slowly reeled it up. The crab would hang on to the piece of fish until it came out of the water, then it would let go. So the trick was to keep the crab in the water, put a net under it, and bring it on board,

The attendants supplemented our meager catch. When we had a number of crabs caught the attendants cooked them with a small stove on board. They were delicious! Maybe because they were freshly caught, or how they were prepared, but those crabs were in a class by themselves. I've had crabs in Maryland, Delaware, South Carolina, and, of course crab patties here in Allentown, but they don't remotely taste as good as Karachi Harbor blue crabs!

Karachi at times was pretty bad, and according to the news the last twenty years it's become more violent. But I adhered to the message I deliver during my MSHA training sessions. Always be in Condition Yellow, always be aware of your surroundings. And SLAM; Stop, Look, Analyze, Manage. A hazard managed is no longer a hazard.

A giant ship's engine broke down and no one could repair it, so they hired a Mechanical Engineer with over 30 years of experience.

He inspected the engine very carefully, from top to bottom. After seeing everything, the engineer unloaded his bag and pulled out a small hammer. He knocked something gently. Soon, the engine came to life again. The engine has been fixed!

A week later the engineer mentioned to the ship owner that the total cost of repairing the giant ship was \$20,000. "What?!" said the owner, "You did almost nothing. Give us a detailed bill."

The answer is simple:

Tap with a hammer: \$2. Know where to knock and how much to knock: \$19,998.

The importance of appreciating one's expertise and experience...because those are the results of struggles, experiments, and even tears.

If I do a job in 30 minutes, it's because I spent 20 years learning how to do that in 30 minutes. You owe me for the years, not the minutes.

Only a man who knows what it is like to be defeated can reach down to the bottom of his soul and come up with the extra ounce of power it takes to win when the match is even.

-Muhammad Ali



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

Minutes for the September 11, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting
6:00pm on Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Alexa Rooney, Jeff Kutz, Al Gruenke, Cody Callahan, Mike Basta, Angelika Forndran, Mary Rooney, Jonathan Kiechel, and Ray Szczucki.

A. Call to Order: 6:04

B. Welcome Officers

- Discussed updating emails for all the new officers. Cody will coordinate with Tracy at Isett.

C. Programs

- Discussed registering for PSPE 2023 conference. Registration ends on the 14th. The PSPE Conference provides 12 PDH credits.
- Alexa is working on organizing tours. If anyone has contacts, please reach out to help coordinate. Al suggested setting up a tour for Haines Mill, Atlas Lab (Lehigh University, Ray will reach out to his contact), Dorney Park (would have to be in March, Cody will also look for a contact at Dorney). Mike mentioned the possibility of touring Penn Stainless in Quakertown (Angelika might have contact).
- Holiday Dinner at Kingfish. December 14th (Thursday) as tentative date.
- Newsletter – Al will continue to write the newsletter and publish after the PSPE Conference. Al requested a letter from Alexa, minutes from Cody, and a summary of the PSPE Conference from Angelika by the 23rd.

D. Mathcounts

- Chris Williams and Kevin Campbell at Isett will still be the contact for coordination. We will follow up with them as the date gets closer.
- Jeff mentioned that we will need to fundraise for both Mathcounts and the scholarship fund.
- Past year expenses - \$480 entry fee for Springhouse and state competition, \$160 for Nitschmann, \$56 to East Penn School District. \$520 expenses for Merchandise/Pizza. \$2,313.00 total MathCounts 2023 expenses.

E. Lehigh Valley EOY/YEOY & Scholarships

- Discussed fundraising for both Mathcounts and the scholarships.
-

F. Treasurer – Ray Szczucki

- Balance as of 8-31-23
 - Checking \$1,902.62
 - Savings \$8,010.01
- Discussed recent transactions including Chapter Dues (\$90), Website Fee (\$140), PEF Checks (\$2,200).
- Received notice from Wild Apricot that our password expires.
- Discussed annual IRS Card needing to be sent in.
- Discussed utilization of the website. We currently spend \$140/month. We don't use membership functions besides logging distribution list and signups for tours.
- Star Chapter (like Apricot) reached out to Alexa, \$44/month with \$400 startup fee for 50 people.
- Alexa will reach out to her sister regarding other website resources.
- Our website needs consist of: a member distribution list, managing distribution list, and a pay function for our website.
- Jeff will look into cleaning out member list to get under 250-member fee threshold.
- Mike said we can't link into the PSPE website because they are tied into the NPSPE. He will double check with Jennifer Summers at the PSPE conference.
- Jeff mentioned donating to high school or college design programs to help us design something.

G. State Director – Mike Basta

- Valley proposition task force has been established. Joe Boward and Marlene Troy.
- PSPE has been looking at its finances and identified a grant opportunity through the PA Department of Labor to help fund the costs of PE Exam.
- Nicole Wilson (President Elect) Conference Planning, dates, sessions, and tours September 21st and 22nd at Radisson Hotel Philadelphia Northeast. Board meeting on 23rd.
- 2023-2024 Budget – \$250,000 for Grant Funding. Might be able to get \$2,000-3,000 out of grant funding.

H. Past President

- None

I. Old Business

- Jeff will send out social media post. Social media following is growing. A new LinkedIn page was created so that the public can see. Currently only people in the group can see posts.
- The next meeting on October 9th will be a Zoom Meeting.

J. Adjournment on motion by Ray, seconded by Jonathan at 7:00.