



# Valley Engineer Newsletter

February, 2014

## UPCOMING PROGRAMS

- February 21 – Engineers' Week Banquet
- March 20 – Dorney Park
- May – Lehigh Valley Health Network, Cedar Crest & I-78, joint event with GBC
- May 8 – Banquet, DeSales University
- June – IronPigs tour followed by game



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## **30<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL LEHIGH VALLEY MATHCOUNTS® COMPETITION PITS EAST PENN VS. PARKLAND**

Francee Fuller

Aryaman Khandelwal, an eighth grade student at Springhouse Middle School and Bruce Wu, a seventh grader at Eyer Middle School, took first and second place honors at the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Lehigh Valley MATHCOUNTS® on Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup> held at Trexler Middle School, Allentown, PA. In a gripping Jeopardy-style countdown round held before an audience of 500 on-lookers, Bruce took to the stage in 10<sup>th</sup> place and out-answered eight competitors to advance to second place. Bruce and Aryaman were among the 250 students from 25 schools from Lehigh, Northampton, Monroe, Carbon and Luzerne Counties who participated in the regional "Olympics of Math" organized for the 30<sup>th</sup> year held by the Lehigh Valley Chapter, Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers.



Aryaman and Bruce will be joined at the Harrisburg state competitions on March 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> by third-place finisher Ishaan Lai, a sixth grader at Eyer, and fourth-place winner Linda Mao, an eighth grade student at East Hills Middle School. All members of the first place team from Springhouse Middle School,

coached by Kevin Hallman, will also participate in the state championship. The four top state winners will move on to the 2014 National MATHCOUNTS® Competition in Orlando, FL on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Raytheon Corporation is the title sponsor.

Almost 6,000 schools nationwide participate in the competition co-sponsored by the National Society of Professional Engineers, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics and a host of industries that see the importance of making math excellence as challenging, exciting, and prestigious as participation in sports.



Alfred Gruenke, P.E., center, presents awards to the top team from Springhouse Middle School and their coach, Kevin Hallman

The Eyer Middle School team, coached by Julie Hummell, placed second. Other top ranking teams were: Nitschmann Middle School, third, coached by Nadine Novatnak; Moravian Academy, fourth, coached by Alison Overdorf; and Pocono Mountain West Junior High School, fifth, coached by James Feuerstein.

The students spent the morning taking written tests with questions like:

*A set of distinct positive integers has a total of 11 digits, and all the digits are 1s. What is the smallest possible sum of the integers in the set? (Answer 11,234)*

Completed tests were sent to a scoring room for grading and ranking. The afternoon session featured the top ten ranking individuals paired in a lightning-round stage competition to determine final ranking. The top 10 individuals were:

- First place:** Aryaman Khandelwal, eighth grade, Springhouse Middle School
- Second place:** Bruce Wu, eighth grade, Eyer Middle School
- Third place:** Ishaan Lai, sixth grade, Eyer Middle School
- Fourth place:** Linda Mao, eighth grade, East Hills Middle School
- Fifth place:** Sandhya Sriram, eighth grade, Eyer Middle School
- Sixth place:** Justine Dell, eighth grade, Moravian Academy
- Seventh place:** Alan Guo, eighth grade, Nitschmann Middle School
- Eighth place:** James Kim, eighth grade, Springhouse Middle School
- Ninth place:** Julia Zheng, seventh grade, Nitschmann Middle School
- Tenth place:** Andrew Wang, eighth grade, Springhouse Middle School

The three top-scoring young women will receive a course in math or science at Cedar Crest College. Moravian College, Lafayette College, Lehigh Carbon Community College and Northampton Community College also provided top winners with scholarships for mathematics courses to be taken in their senior year of high school.

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 1,500 years ago, everybody knew that the Earth was the center of the universe. 500 years ago, everybody knew that the Earth was flat. And 15 minutes ago, you knew that people were alone on this planet. Imagine what you'll know tomorrow.  
 -Agent K in the movie Men in Black

## Protecting our Bridges . . . and More

Alfred Gruenke, PE



A couple of hundred feet from the hustle and bustle of West Tilghman Street in Ruppsville, Upper Macungie Township, is Michelman Steel Enterprises, LLC, Structural Steel Fabricators. Over a dozen members of the Lehigh Valley Chapter, Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers toured this facility recently, guests of Eric Michelman.

One of the pleasant aspects of tours such as this is an appreciation for the breadth and diversity of industries in the Lehigh Valley. One of the newer entries is Michelman Steel Enterprises, founded by Eric Michelman. Eric invested \$5 million in the facility and required a number of variances from the Upper Macungie Zoning Board in order to be viable. Barry Isett & Associates assisted with the site modifications and represented the firm to the Zoning Board.

Eric is a third generation steel fabricator. His grandfather and father have had similar businesses in Brooklyn since the 1930s. Eric moved to the Lehigh Valley in the early 1990s, moving onto the present enterprise in 2011.

Michelman Steel is a steel fabricator. It turns steel plate and beams into ready-to-install structural steel for bridges. All the steel is

sourced in this country, with Nucor Steel in Arkansas a primary source. Eric explained that due to rigid engineering specifications, all the steel has to have traceability throughout the process and back to the pour.

Michelman's presented projects include rebuilding and shoring steel for the Pulaski Skyway, and blast proofing local bridges. The latter was a surprise for many of us, that there are ongoing projects to protect bridges from bomb laden trucks, and that there are ways that they could be terrorist proofed! Here we are, in the serene Lehigh Valley, and participation in the War on Terror is ongoing almost in obscurity.

Michelman Steel employs 23 people and has \$7 million in annual sales. 3,000 tons of steel move through the shops every year. There are two large bays; the 50' x 200' bay has two 5 ton cranes, the 50' x 150' bay has two 10 ton cranes. There are two Peddinghouse CNC drill lines, and a new FICEP CNC angle line. The former was fascinating to see, as it moved the work and the tool as it drilled a steel plate according to pre-programmed instructions. All welders are certified. Michelman Steel is certified by New York State DOT, New York City DOT, Massachusetts DOT, New Jersey Turnpike, and Pennsylvania DOT. It is AISC Certified for building structures, major steel bridges, advanced steel bridges, and fracture critical endorsements.

It was pleasing to see such an enterprise in the Lehigh Valley, and an education for all of us.

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Success is not measured by the heights one attains, but by the obstacles one overcomes in its attainment.

-Booker T. Washington

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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, Ph.D., P.E.**  
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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>. The deadline for applications is Sunday, March 9th, 2014. Any questions regarding scholarships can be directed to

Alex Dezubay, PE  
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## 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; they are held at the office of Barry Isett & Associates, 85 S Route 100, Allentown, PA.

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## Final Thoughts

Alfred Gruenke, PE

Earlier in this Newsletter is an article by Francee Fuller on the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Lehigh Valley MATHCOUNTS®, held at Trexler Middle School in Allentown. Many thanks to the small army of volunteers, contributors, and participants who made this another great success.

This was my fifth year assisting, in various capacities. This year I had the honor to present the awards to the winners, and an honor it was.

I have always been impressed by these fine young people and their performance under stressful situations. The gutsy performances by Bruce Wu and Aryaman Khandelwal kept everyone at the edge of their seats.

However, the brilliance of these students is not what impresses me the most. It's their manner, and their character. I'm giving them probably the most difficult math test of their lives, and so many of them look up to me, smile, and say "Thank You"! At my age I'm used to people being polite and giving me deference, but not with such sincerity and overall politeness. For someone from the Old School, it was heartwarming.

The Moravian Academy team had matching sweatshirts with the school's name and "MathCounts" on the front, in the school colors. Many of the teams displayed an enthusiasm of a school pep rally before the big game, with a lot of hootin' and hollerin' during the Countdown round.

As special as these young people were, they reverted to just ordinary kids at lunch time, gobbling up pizzas with an enthusiasm that caused me to blink, and shake my head in disbelief.

Nothing personified the mindset of these kids than a t-shirt one of the girls wore. It said,

"Friends don't let Friends divide by Zero".  
What other gathering of young people can you think of that someone would wear a t-shirt with such a logo?

-----  
True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic. It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever the cost, but the urge to serve others, at whatever the cost.

-Arthur Ashe

-----  
If we aren't willing to pay a price for our values, then we should ask ourselves whether we truly believe in them at all.

-Barack Obama

-----  
All I was doing was trying to get home from work.

-Rosa Parks

-----  
The true measure of a man is not how he behaves in moments of comfort and convenience but how he stands at times of controversy and challenges.

-Martin Luther King Jr.

## Everything I need to know, I learned from Noah's Ark.

**ONE:** Don't miss the boat.

**TWO:** Remember that we are all in the same boat!

**THREE:** Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.

**FOUR:** Stay fit. When you're 60 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.

**FIVE:** Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.

**SIX:** Build your future on high ground.

**SEVEN:** For safety's sake, travel in pairs.

**EIGHT:** Speed isn't always an advantage.

The snails were on board with the cheetahs.

**NINE:** When you're stressed, float awhile.

**TEN:** Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.

**ELEVEN:** No matter the storm there's always a rainbow waiting.

**Minutes for the February 10, 2014 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**At the Office of Barry Isett & Assoc. 85 S. Route 100, Allentown, PA**

Attendees: Kevin Campbell, Angelika Forndran, Al Gruenke, Frank Walsh, Ray Szczucki, Peter Staffeld, Don Kohn, Nicole Gasda and Chris Williams.

**Call to Order:** Kevin Campbell called the meeting to order at 5:56 PM

**President – Kevin Campbell**

**Programs**

- January 30<sup>th</sup> – Michelman Steel: Event was great and well attended. Followed by dinner at Paese Mio.
- February 21<sup>st</sup> – Engineers’ Week Banquet: LVPSPE will be handing out two awards for Engineer of the Year. Recipients will be David Toler and Don Kohn. Both also receive complimentary dinner at the banquet for themselves and a guest. All were in agreement that the Chapter should put an ad in the LVBJ at cost of \$500.
- March – Dorney Park: Behind the scenes tour featuring roller coaster maintenance.
- April – Lehigh Valley Health Network
- May – LVPSPE Banquet: Tentatively scheduled for Thursday May 8<sup>th</sup> at DeSales University.
- June – IronPigs: Tour followed by game. Considering early June.

**Mathcounts**

- Approximately 50 volunteers assisted in planning and running the event. Kevin received good feedback from many people who were involved. Received donations from 12 local firms to make the event a success.
- Tracy Torres has been instrumental in organizing the event. All were in favor of Tracy receiving a \$100 gift card and ‘Friend of the Chapter’ recognition at the May banquet.
- Ned Schillow has been a judge for all 30 years of Mathcounts. All were in favor of recognizing Ned as a ‘Friend of the Chapter’ at the May Banquet.

**Scholarships**

- Raised \$7,325 so far from direct solicitation, plus money received for monthly events.

**Valley Engineer – Al Gruenke**

- Dec/Jan issue is out. February issue will include a section on Mathcounts prepared by Francee Fuller.

**Treasurer – Ray Szuzcki**

- Small interest from PayPal, no 1099 received from them.
- Ray recommended moving monthly event revenue to attempt to separate Mathcounts & scholarship funds from other chapter accounts. Peter transferred \$5,000.00 out of 5,330.90 balance from PayPal account during meeting. Peter and Ray will review statement to determine how much came from monthly PDH sessions.
- Ray received a bill from Wild Apricot (Chapter website) for \$257.00. This will be/was charged to Peter’s credit card. Peter will be refunded in full.



- An audit of the Chapter's finances is due. We should discuss further with Mike Basta and Harry Garman to determine the appropriate way to handle the audit.
- Ray may create a transactional spreadsheet to show a detailed report of Chapter finances for each fiscal year. Important to show exactly where each transaction came from and what it went towards (Mathcounts, scholarship, general fund, etc).

**State Director – Angelika Forndran**

- NSPE conference to be held in Washington D.C. this year. Would be appropriate to have someone from the Chapter in attendance.
- PSPE conference to be held in Fogelsville on September 18-20<sup>th</sup>.
- State is conducting a survey of Chapters to find out how they coordinate with new members.
- State transportation bill passed (with lobbying from PSPE). Tolls expected to rise on the Turnpike; however, the bill creates jobs for engineers and provides for repairs of infrastructure throughout the state.
- There has been a push to eliminate the industrial exemption (allows for design of various items by non-PEs). Frank mentioned that the rules vary state to state, but typically the design of products and equipment is exempt from needing a PE seal. The installation/implementation of the product requires the engineer's seal because that aspect involves public health and safety. Some feel that companies in certain industries may be getting away with not using a PE when they should.

**Past President – Peter Staffeld**

- State budget shows a deficit. State has had an issue with decreasing membership over the last four years. Big push for increasing membership now.
- Wanner Associates remains under contract for assisting in management of PSPE.

**Adjournment** at 7:25 PM on a motion by Kevin, seconded by Al. All were in favor.