



# The Philadelphia Engineer

Founding Chapter 1934 – March 2017 issue

John Nawn, PE  
State President PSPE  
Elected 2017 Delaware Valley  
Engineer of the Year  
[Click here for more details](#)

## Philadelphia Chapter Program 2016-2017

Our program for 2016-17 is provided below. We continue to look to our Members for suggestions and to volunteer to share knowledge with your peers. Please contact our leadership at [President@PSPE-Philly.org](mailto:President@PSPE-Philly.org).

2016-17 Chapter Program  
The Pennsylvania Society of  
Professional Engineers  
Philadelphia Chapter

Thursday, April 6, 2017  
[Comcast Tower Tour](#)

**5:00 – 5:15 Arrive and Meet**  
on the 14th Floor 1717 Arch Street  
**5:15 – 6:00 BIM Presentation**  
**6:00 – 7:00 Building Tour**  
**7:15 – 8:15 Social Hour**  
at Pagano's Market and Bar, 2001 Market St.

**Cost is \$30 including  
Pizza and Soda at Paganos**  
**Tour is limited to 25 - Absolute deadline for  
reservations for tour is 1PM on April 4th**  
**All are invited to walk in to Social Hour at Paganos**  
[Click here for reservations](#)

## MATHCOUNTS

MathCounts is Saturday, February 4th  
MATHCOUNTS is a program sponsored by the National Society of Professional Engineers (NSPE) and its state and local Chapters, promoting excellence in mathematics. Each year, there are competitions to engage 6th, 7th, and 8th graders and recognize the best schools and students on a local, state, and national level.  
For those not local to Philadelphia but interested in helping at a MATHCOUNTS competition near you, please consider volunteering with a great program.  
To volunteer or for more information contact Abraham El  
O: 215-254-7778 | M: 215-796-5261 | [AEI@Pennoni.com](mailto:AEI@Pennoni.com)

To Donate to Mathcounts:



## Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers Philadelphia Chapter 2016-2017 Program

Date	Event
Sep. 8, 2016	Tour of Crescenz VA Medical Center 6MW Mission Critical Gen System
Sep. 21-24, 2016	PSPE State Conference in Valley Forge
Oct. 4, 2016 Joint Delco	Engineering Software and Licensure
Oct. 6, 2016	Phila L&I Special Inspections Trends in Photovoltaics - Residential
Nov. 3, 2016	Urban Site Storm Water Management Programmable Logic Controllers
Dec. 1, 2016 <a href="#">SE Regional Event</a>	Delaware Valley Region Outstanding Engineering Achievement Presentations
Dec. 7, 2016 <a href="#">Multi-Society</a>	Annual Multi-Society Meeting (Organized by the Engineers' Club)
Jan. 5, 2017	Philadelphia Shipyard Tour
Feb. 2, 2017	Legislative Round Table at Chart-House
Feb 4, 2017 <a href="#">MathCounts</a>	Phila Chapter MathCounts Competition at Temple University
Feb 17, 2017 <a href="#">ECP eWeek Luncheon</a>	Luncheon by Engineers' Club of Phila Loews Hotel, 1201 Market Street
Feb 21, 2017 <a href="#">ECP Young Engrs</a>	Networking Event by Engineers' Club 2nd Story Brewing Company
Feb 23, 2017 <a href="#">ECP Awards</a>	Awards Reception by Engineers' Club Dave & Buster's 401 N. Columbus Blvd
Feb 25, 2017 <a href="#">NSPE Engineers' Week Banquet</a>	<b>Greater Philadelphia and Delaware Valley Regional National Engineers' Week Banquet Springfield Country Club 5-10pm</b>
Mar 9, 2017	Roadway Lighting Programmable Logic
Apr 6, 2017	Comcast Tower Tour
May 4, 2017	Annual Meeting & Officers Installed
May 24, 2017 <a href="#">STEM Awards</a>	STEM Awards Night at CBS3

To Donate to STEM Scholarships:



Outstanding Engineering Achievement  
Winners from 2016:

Outstanding: Maida Engineering  
[3000 HP Wind Tunnel System](#)

Notable: Pennoni Associates  
[Comcast 18th Street Tunnel](#)

Honorable: Michael Baker International  
[Willow Grove Avenue Bridge Over SEPTA](#)

Also: Urban Engineers  
[North Delaware Avenue Extension](#)

Click projects above for PDFs of presentations  
Also from Chapter website [www.pspe-philly.org](http://www.pspe-philly.org)



## NOMINATIONS

Pursuant to Bylaw 12, Section 6, Nominees for Officers and our Board, as provided by the Nominations Committee (or by petition) are provided below:

<b>Erik Hoet, PE</b> automatic succession from President-Elect	<b>President</b>
<b>Robert Cargill, PE</b>	<b>President-Elect</b>
<b>vacant</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>Robert Cargill, PE</b>	<b>Past President</b>
<b>Abraham El</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Abraham El</b>	<b>Membership Secretary</b>
<b>Jake Medendorp, IV, EIT</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Thomas Friese, PE</b> this is a three year position completing in May 2019	<b>State Director</b>
<b>Soheila Rahbari, PE</b>	<b>Alt State Director</b>
<b>Justin Alexander, PE</b>	<b>Chapter Director, 2018</b>
<b>Rick Parisi, PE</b>	<b>Chapter Director, 2018</b>
<b>Yefim Gudesblat, PE</b>	<b>Chapter Director, 2019</b>
<b>Chris Fell, PE</b>	<b>Chapter Director, 2019</b>
<b>Ed Pluciennik, PE</b>	<b>Chapter Director, 2020</b>
<b>vacant</b>	<b>Chapter Director, 2020</b>

## From the President

Thank you for being a member of our society and for your interest in what we do for the profession and our members. This is my final message as president. It has been a great year thanks to the tireless efforts of your officers and members.

Our meeting program and tours have been topical and of interest to all engineering disciplines. Our legislative roundtable was a great opportunity to share our thoughts on the direction of the license and profession in PA.

May will see the new president installed and then our celebration of our STEM award recipients at the CBS3 station. Leading up to that is the April tour of the Comcast building in Philly (sorry there are no more spaces left!)

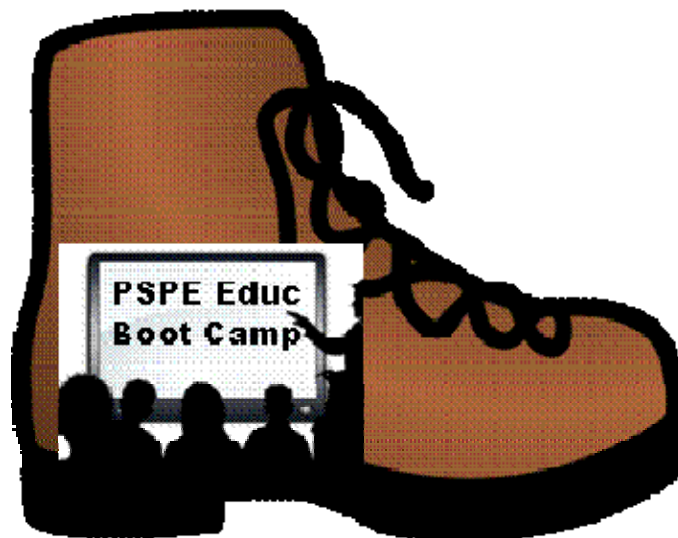
Although we have had another successful year, we are in need of your help. A small percentage of the licensed engineers in the Philadelphia area are members on the PSPE and an even smaller number of those are active in the society. If you are a member, please consider using some of your professional time to participate in our activities or in actually leading the profession into the future. If you can't afford that, then convince your Licensed colleagues to join and participate.

Without your time and effort, from your perspective, the future of your profession will be directed by someone else.

Sincerely,  
Bob Cargill, PE

[CLICK for CBS3 Photo Op for Engineers' Week](#)  
(look for this app on our website)

NSPE's Open Forum Digest for Tuesday January 31, 2017, Stuart Walesh had posted a message (presented below) on licensure and the industrial exemption. A direct link to the article by Liberty University law professor, Paul Spinden, may be accessed at [http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/lusol\\_fac\\_pubs/72/](http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/lusol_fac_pubs/72/)  
The report is 51 pages with numerous citations and footnotes and is a fascinating read.



For up to full 24 credit hour requirement  
PSPE Education Boot Camps  
<https://www.pspe.org/events/2017-pspe-24pdh-boot-camps/>  
May 7-9 Harrisburg - June 25-27 Valley Forge

## Letter to the Editor

As a matter of introduction, my name is Chris Fell...I'm a current member of the Philadelphia Chapter of PSPE. I joined the Chapter a few years ago at the urging of a lifetime member, Joe Maida. I've had me PE since 1983. Unlike many of the membership, I have not work in the pure engineering / design service sector. There was no need to have a PE Licensure to execute my job duties....I wanted the PE licensure as a matter of professional pride and for future consulting flexibility. My participation and attendance @ Philadelphia Chapter meetings has allowed me to learn what is happening in the area and gain a true appreciation of the excellent work Professional Engineers perform for the safety and improvement of the community.

I've had the pleasure to serve on the Board since September 2016. One item that has become clearly apparent to me is the dedication and commitment of the current Chapter leadership and Board members....what a terrific group of professionals. Unfortunately, I've also come to appreciate a very limited participation and involvement of the active membership in the Chapter. It was not too long ago that the Chapter boasted over 500 active members. Today, the total number is 112 active members – 37 are lifetime members. Active members are defined and paying their annual membership dues. The monthly dinner meetings are attended by the same core group of people and the total participation maybe approaches 25...that's a push!

As a relatively new member....I asked myself why is membership dropping on an annual basis and what is preventing active members from being more active? I decided to seek some insight from the currently "active" membership. Who best to provide frank and honest feedback? There is significant concern on the part of Chapter leadership that further reduction in membership will jeopardize the continued viability of the Chapter from both a professional exchange and financial perspective. At this point...it is almost impossible to staff officer and board slots. It is more a function of shuffling the deck and the same group taking on the work.

I would really appreciate you to reflect on the following points and provide me your feedback. I will attempt to summarize this feedback and provide a report to the officers / board members.

- Why are you an "active" member of the Chapter?
- What prevents you from participating more actively at monthly meetings and other events?
- What, in your opinion, should the Chapter be doing to maintain and grow its membership?
- We have a really enjoyable annual dinner in February. What may be impacting on your attendance (e.g., location, cost, speaker ...)?
- Do you find having a PE licensure provides a tangible value to the Engineering community?
- Do you feel it is important that the Philly Chapter continues to exist?
- Are the current method(s) of communication to membership effective and informative?
- How can the Chapter attract the next generation of Engineers to participate and earn a PE?

There is a full recognition that many "active" Chapter members are heavily involved in their careers and other professional / community organizations....people are spread thin and need to be selective on participation and involvement. How can the Philly Chapter be one of the premier professional organizations in the City? Philadelphia is a major hub for design and engineering services....our Chapter should be in a growth mode and enjoy the participation and support of many of the Flagship organizations with a strong presence in the city.

Thanks for taking the time to review this information....I look forward to your timely and active feedback. Please send your response to my personal e-mail @ fell1@aol.com. I would appreciate this feedback by the end of March if at all possible.

BTW.....there is an excellent Chapter event planned for 4/6/2017.....tour of the Comcast Building in Philadelphia currently under construction. The monthly newsletter provides all of the details....a great opportunity to re-engage with the Chapter

## Letter from the Editor

When I was President in the 1989-90 Chapter year, we were comprised of 500 Members. Today our Chapter has only 163 Members. But our Chapter serves as great or even greater role in protecting the Public Health Safety Property and Welfare than in that time gone by.

Today there are 13500 licensed Professional Engineers in the state of Pennsylvania, of which 5000 reside and work in our SouthEast Region. Only a few years ago there were 22000 licensed engineers, many perhaps semi-retired and willing to drop the designation once the requirements for continuing education became effective.

Then as now, NSPE/PSPE Membership has been about 10% of those having a license. While our Chapter has 163 Members, our Region has 567 Members. In 1990 we had 80 Life Members (who are no longer required to pay dues but may still have an active practice) while today we have only 37, which also speaks to the trimming due to requirements for continuing education. We are still an active force for good.

Today, more than ever, our Society must educate our legislators and the general public they represent as to the need for our engineered works to be designed, installed, erected and supervised by a person with education, hands-on training, and an OATH to protect the public even above the dictates of an employer or client. All those reference letters and background checks and inquiries relating to even the smallest of criminal infractions. They are all only part of the underlying credential of licensure which is beyond mere competence but rather to character.

Would a Professional Engineer have assisted, signed off, or failed to whistleblow the issues we read about with major automobile companies. Perhaps that is why we are now so insistent that we be involved in the "soul" as well as the "guts" of the self driving car.

Our local Chapter of PSPE deals in far less weighty issues. We help Members and non-member professional engineers obtain continuing education. We did this long before it became mandated; now it has become a larger segment of our program. We meet with our State Society lobbyist to discuss what we engineers would suggest our legislators to do to best serve the public. In all of the discussions I have attended, not once did I hear we need to protect or enhance our livelihoods – these are secondary to how we should be better regulated to assure our livelihoods serve the public.

We work to bring an understanding of what we do – and the necessary education to support the technical underpinnings of our efforts – to the general public and especially our youngest audience – with our direct support of MathCounts and indirect support of so many other K-12 and college programs.

Our Chapter leadership, and the leaderships of our adjoining regional chapters, are now spread thin. We need YOU – our 567 regional members – to step up and join in with us, maybe even to take over our leadership. We need you also to enlist the other 4500 licensed Professional Engineers of our region to join us.

How did you get involved to join? How did I get involved to join? A few weeks into my first job, my boss's boss – head of office – invited me out to lunch at the Engineers' Club. This is an invitation one does not refuse. His secretary walks up to my desk a few moments later and hands me a tie – this is required to dine at the Club. [Note to self – bring a tie to the office and leave in drawer – you're not a kid anymore.] It was made clear that advancement at work would require not just joining but being an active member in one or more technical or professional organizations. Oh – and when I would attend a meeting I did see (and was seen by) my boss's boss.

How can YOU get that new engineer in your office to join us? One you must ask. Two you must also be there when she or he makes that first visit.

Looking forward to seeing you all in our new Chapter Year

Sincerely,  
Fredric L Plotnick, PhD, Esq, PE, PLS