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“HELPING YOU BREAK NEW GROUND.”
As we await details on the president’s federal transportation program, we take some comfort in knowing that we have begun to address some of our transportation funding needs in Pennsylvania. Act 89 of 2013 raised an additional $2.3 billion for transportation needs, and although we need to tighten up how we use that additional revenue, the funding act puts our state on firmer footing.

At the federal level, a funding dilemma remains. Although federal highway and public transportation investment has been temporarily stabilized, thanks to budgetary maneuvers that were part of 2015’s “Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act,” this most-recent temporary infusion will be exhausted by the time the FAST Act expires in 2020.

 Whatever else is contained in the president’s infrastructure initiative we strongly urge that it includes a long-term funding solution to support the federal Highway Trust Fund.

Should the federal government play a role in funding infrastructure, or should states be left on their own to deal with the issue? We were curious how Pennsylvanians felt about that, so we asked the question in a public opinion poll several weeks ago. By a ratio of nearly 2½ to 1, Pennsylvania registered voters believe the federal government should help to pay for building and maintaining bridges and highways.

Pennsylvania needs to continue to rebuild its highway and public transportation system, and is not looking at billion-dollar, toll-financed highway expansion projects. Certain private investment and partnerships can be good for infrastructure and for the public. However, in the case of highway improvement, the bottom line is that you can’t have financing without funding.

President Trump kicked off “Infrastructure Week” in May. Earlier, APC members traveled to Washington to meet with our congressional delegation. Here is the long and short of it from our perspective.

Fiscal conservatives have been reluctant to support conventional federal spending on infrastructure. House Republican leaders have signaled that increasing the federal gas tax is a non-starter, even though it has not been increased in more than two decades and is diminished as national energy policy discourages consumption. Instead, Congressional Republicans have also supported using “private-sector dollars” to address the country’s transportation needs.

We do not doubt that privatization can offer efficiencies and cost advantages, as well as shift some of the investment risk away from taxpayers. Privatization does not, however, make the costs for infrastructure improvements magically disappear.

Somehow, the improvements must be paid for, and in the case of privately built and financed projects, there must also be a fair return on the investment. This requires a revenue stream, either from user fees such as tolling, or government-collected tax, or user-generated revenue, or both.

Privatization does not make the costs for infrastructure improvements magically disappear.
On Friday, June 9, 2017, APC members, staff, and guests gathered to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the incorporation of the Associated Pennsylvania Constructors and its service to the transportation construction industry. Charlie Gerow, CEO of Quantum Communications, served as the master of ceremonies.

APC’s evolution was recalled in a video that included testimonials to its ability to adapt throughout nine decades of change while maintaining the same core goals, vision, and values that APC’s founders avowed 90 years ago.

The video can be viewed on the association’s website, www.paconstructors.org.

During the program, Rich Wagman, representing those members whose volunteer service to APC have spanned decades, shared his family’s deeply rooted history and commitment to the association. He expressed great pride in the fact that the fourth generation of Wagmans remain engaged and supportive in representing the industry at the state and national level, and he urged all members to encourage future leaders in their own firms to become involved in the association.

Former PennDOT Secretary Barry Schoch praised APC’s leadership role in the passage of Act 89-2013, the historic, comprehensive transportation funding legislation, noting the association’s ability to forge partnerships and coalitions to get the job done.

As the evening drew to a close, APC Vice President Max Hempt turned the focus toward APC’s second century of service, where he believes emerging technologies will create our greatest challenges and opportunities. Be assured – your association will be up to the task.

Please enjoy the photos of this celebratory evening. A link to an online gallery can be found at www.paconstructors.org.
The silent auction raised $13,400, with the proceeds being donated to The Transportation Policy & Education Foundation.
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As part of a PennDOT initiative to evaluate replacement/rehabilitation strategies for 37 Engineering District 8 bridges, STV is performing preliminary and final design and construction consultation services for three York County structures. One of these is the historic stone masonry arch bridge carrying SR 4016 over Bennett Run in Newberry Township. Built in 1915, the existing arch spans 61 feet 9 inches, has a rise of approximately 13.5 feet and provides a minimum 14-foot-7-inch-wide single lane of traffic in a rural, wooded setting. Bridge approaches have a T-intersection with Roxberry Road northeast of the structure and a private drive to the northwest.

STV recommended re-pointing and repairing the existing masonry arch, reconstructing the stone masonry spandrel walls with a concrete support wall and slab, waterproofing the stone masonry, replacing the arch fill and reconstructing the bituminous pavement. Approach roadway work comprised new approach pavements, including intersection reconstruction to improve sight distances. Not navigable, the stream is classified as a warm water fishery and migratory fishery, a Chapter 93 designation. In addition, an unnamed intermittent Bennett Run tributary parallels the western approach roadway, and an ephemeral stream will need study and delineation. A Level 2 Categorical Environmental Evaluation is necessary, and STV performed a Phase 1 Bog Turtle Habitat Survey, required in York County.

Among the challenges STV addressed were the impacts to cultural resources, including the bridge and an adjacent residence listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places. The bridge, house and mill remains all contribute to the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission-defined Rural Historic District.

The bridge rehabilitation was programmed for approximately $2.6 million in construction costs.


Reaching the century mark isn’t easy – you have to be quality-driven, client-focused, and have a vision for the future. At 100+ years, STV is looking ahead. As an employee-owned firm, our planners, architects, engineers and construction managers have a stake in the business, and are committed to quality performance. We provide personal attention and timely solutions, with an eye toward sustainability. And with more than 40 offices, we are a local firm with national resources.

When it comes to getting your project delivered right, choose the firm that has the drive and vision to be the best.
Recent years have witnessed an explosion of activity — and of public interest — in the development of connected and autonomous vehicles, collectively known as Highly Automated Vehicles (HAVs). During this time, Pennsylvania has emerged as one of the premier locations where HAVs are being developed and tested.

As test HAVs have been introduced on Pennsylvania’s roadways, first in Pittsburgh and lately more widely across the Commonwealth, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) has been actively engaged in this process with the principle aim of balancing this rapid march of innovation with ensuring the safety of the traveling public.

If implemented in that balanced manner, HAVs offer the prospect of a transformative revolution in how the world travels and transports goods. First and foremost, this technology brings the promise of a much safer transportation system. Last year in our state, 1,188 people died in vehicular crashes and a great many more were gravely injured, often permanently. The vast preponderance of those crashes was the result of human error. So as automation reduces and eventually removes the human element from driving, that toll of carnage is expected to dramatically decrease.

Other prospective benefits include greater mobility for the elderly, disabled, and indigent; new, expanded and more affordable transit services; greater fuel efficiency and reduced emissions; and increased throughput on our capacity-limited infrastructure.

Pennsylvania’s leading role in the vehicle automation arena does not come out of the blue. Our great research universities, notably Carnegie Mellon, University of Pennsylvania and Penn State, have been seedbeds of innovation. In fact, the world’s very first autonomous vehicle, a little six-wheeled character called the “Terregator,” was built at Carnegie Mellon in the 1980s.

While PennDOT has been involved with these innovations for many years, 2016 marked a milestone with the formation of the Autonomous Vehicle Policy Task Force. Comprised of diverse stakeholders from industry, government, academia, and advocacy organizations, the task force operates as a collaborative, consensus-seeking group of experts who make recommendations for proper HAV on-road testing to balance innovation and safety. PennDOT also is working closely with legislators and their staff on both sides of the aisle to craft new law that will safely promote HAV testing on Pennsylvania roadways.

Meanwhile, PennDOT has been out in the field, undertaking a range of development activities on several fronts:
PennDOT spearheaded a coordinated proposal that led U.S. DOT to name Penn State and the City of Pittsburgh as official HAV proving grounds, one of 10 such designations in the country.

Working with our academic partners and the Pennsylvania Turnpike, we have joined with Ohio and Michigan to create the “Smart Belt Coalition” to promote coordinated, multi-state development and testing of HAV technology, particularly as it affects trucks and freight movements.

Pittsburgh was a runner-up in U.S. DOT’s “Smart Cities Challenge” competition last year, leading to the award of about $20 million in public and private funding, primarily to deploy connected vehicle (CV) infrastructure to create “smart spines” along some of the city’s critical corridors.

CV infrastructure, including adaptive traffic signals and vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) two-way communications capability, also has been deployed at test-beds in Cranberry and Ross townships in Butler County, and in Harrisburg, with additional locations planned for future deployments.

This past April, a delegation from Australia, representing its top public and private officials working on CV technology went on a worldwide fact-finding tour of best practices, with only two stops in North America, California and Pennsylvania, where the group met a senior PennDOT team led by Transportation Secretary Leslie S. Richards.

On Philadelphia’s massively congested Schuylkill Expressway, an integrated corridor management plan is being developed that combines peak-period shoulder running with real-time communications, adaptive signalization, and alternate route information to relieve incident-related congestion, and to divert traffic to transit parking when it’s available.

The new Amtrak station in Middletown, now under construction, is being evaluated for possible deployment of a fully autonomous people-mover to connect the station with the nearby Harrisburg International Airport passenger terminal and the campus of Penn State-Harrisburg.

Just as important as these initiatives, PennDOT officials are actively engaged in increasing public awareness and understanding of the potential benefits, as well as the critical challenges and issues the Commonwealth faces as HAV technology advances. These activities include scores of public speaking events, media interviews, and participation in conferences, roundtables, webinars, and peer exchanges with other leaders in this field.

As a firm believer in meaningful public participation in shaping the future of our transportation system, Secretary Richards places a high premium on ensuring that the process of developing and shaping our automated transportation future is transparent and responsive to the needs and will of the public.

In that spirit, PennDOT is joining the HAV Summit in State College, September 11 and 12, to discuss regional and community planning efforts and workforce development needs and opportunities that all Pennsylvanians will have to work collaboratively if we are to reap the maximum future benefits of the HAV technology revolution.

HAVs will not only affect how we move and transport things, it will profoundly affect our lives, whether we are urban, rural or suburban Pennsylvanians. PennDOT is committed to remain at the forefront of this transportation revolution that is such an exciting opportunity for the entire Commonwealth to come together to improve the quality of life for all our citizens.

Roger J. Cohen is the Policy director at PennDOT. He is also the co-chair of the Autonomous Vehicle Policy Task Force.

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Construction Innovation Conference

On June 9, more than 100 transportation construction professionals attended the inaugural Construction Innovation Conference (CIC) at the Hershey Lodge. This full-day event, hosted by APC, brought together industry innovators who are reshaping business as usual and are at the cutting edge of highway and bridge construction.

Informative and thought-provoking, the conference featured a broad range of topics and presenters who examined new trends and developing technologies.

Dan Corey of AECOM and PennDOT’s Mark Kopko detailed how connected and automated vehicles will impact the industry.

Following lunch, the group was informed on the “do’s & don’ts” of drone use by Derek Lau, aideM Media Solutions, and Craig Peck, Flying Media. Dan Farley of PennDOT covered the Department’s use of large vehicle probes and crowdsourcing data to improve traffic flow and safety in work zones.

The conference closed with Kara Luzik Canale, of Sacunas, and Kelley Kaufman, of McNees, Wallace and Nurick LLC, who described effective use of social media as well as potential legal ramifications of its use.

Joe Brenner of WSP USA and Nick Seman of Gannett Fleming Inc. demonstrated advancements in 3D Bridge Design. A steel fabricator’s view of Bridge Information Modeling (BrIM) was presented by Brad Dillman of High Steel Structures LLC.
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For those unable to attend, presentations from the conference are available on the APC website at www.paconstructors.org.

Contact Joe Mulvihill at the APC office at jmulvihill@paconstructors.org to learn more about joining the ITC team!

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Connected/Autonomous Vehicles (CAVs), driverless vehicles, vehicle-to-infrastructure (V2I) and vehicle-to-everything (V2E) will play a more predominate role in our industry as we continue to prepare the roadways owned and operated by PennDOT, the PA Turnpike, and local municipalities.

By advancing the research and technical work being done by Carnegie Mellon, Uber, Delphi, ARGO AI, and Volvo across the Commonwealth, we will begin to see the proliferation of CAV more and more in our daily lives. Right now, our vehicles have Level 2 automation, which integrates detection and response actions, such as lane tracking, adaptive cruise control, and collision avoidance. Starting in 2018 with Tesla and then in 2020 with Ford, Toyota, Mercedes, Google, and Nissan, these large automobile manufactures will be offering for public purchase Level 3 fully automated cars in which the driver can take control during emergency situations.

Recent studies by MIT (Boston), ITF (Lisbon) and the VDV (Stuttgart) have shown that it would be possible to take every citizen to their destination with at least 80 percent fewer cars if using automated vehicles. Removing four out of every five cars would have a significant positive impact for cities and affects not only the environment, traffic efficiency (reduction of traffic signals, ramp metering), and parking, but also frees up a lot of urban space. This also introduces a greater mobility as a service, a new market of riders (physically incapable, elderly, those under the legal driving age).

How are Pennsylvania’s contractors going to help advance the state’s CAV program?

**Infrastructure and Network Communications Readiness**
- Updating/upgrading pavement striping and markings to allow for more effective vehicle recognition.
- Design and installation of roadside units (RSU), such as dedicated short-range communications (DSRC) or micro-cellular sites, which will provide vehicles with important traveler and roadway information.
- Installation of mission critical fiber optic communications to convey the thousands of data points between RSUs and command/control facilities, such as traffic management centers for PennDOT and the PA Turnpike.

**Infrastructure Changes**
- Developing new roadway geometric design standards that incorporate CAV use, such as reduced lane widths and greater per-lane vehicle capacity.
- Development of segregated infrastructure to aid in the introduction and integration of CAVs on existing roadways.
- Redevelopment of unused parking facilities.
- Installation of smart lighting that also allows for WiFi and other wireless communications.
- Preparing roadways for electric vehicles (EV) by installing continuous charging lanes.

**Work Zones**
- Utilizing autonomous truck-mounted attenuators (TMA) to reduce the risk of driver injury.
- Promotion of DSRC safety vests that alert workers of vehicles intruding into established working zones. Notification to drivers of workers outside of work zone limits.
- Auto speed reduction of vehicle speed approaching and within work zones.
Workforce

- Contractors will need to dynamically train their employees on the latest technology for installation and maintenance, as the rapid change of new generation electronics will be continuous.
- Data acquisition and fusion will help propel agencies into better operations and maintenance procedures. These specialists will be critical to this advancement.

The next two to three years will provide a more defined glimpse into the future of CAVs, but for now, the Pennsylvania construction and design community needs to prepare for these changes that will not only affect us, but the country and the world. Let’s continue to build on the foundation we already have in place to make Pennsylvania a best-in-class state for the implementation of CAV technology.

Dan Corey is AECOM’s deputy ITS practice leader. He can be reached by email at daniel.corey@aecom.com.
3D bridge models have been underutilized as an engineering and construction tool for years. We have all seen the visually impressive flyovers and drive-thru videos that show models of proposed bridges for signature projects. (Some are so life-like you have to look twice to make sure it’s not a photo!) This is an important and useful tool for visualization and public outreach, but these models are not traditionally developed beyond the planning phase. However, the adoption of a model-centric design approach can extend the usefulness of bridge models through final design and even post-design applications, and, more importantly, broaden the spectrum of projects which can benefit from these models to the common “workhorse” bridges seen all over the country.

Model-centric design is not new. Other industries have used this concept, a central repository of three-dimensional data stored in a model, to their advantage for decades. Consider the recent shift to the Building Information Modeling (BIM) environment in the adjacent industry of vertical construction. However, infrastructure, and especially the bridge industry, has not embraced this workflow with typical projects. There are several reasons for this (some better than others), but we’ve reached a tipping point where technology has improved to the point that we have to recognize the limitations of the current processes. The software now exists and is sufficiently mature to handle the complex geometry and analysis required in bridge design and detailing.

There are clear benefits to creating a single-source of information that is then simply reflected in the necessary documentation and deliverables for design. Because the process becomes more effective with additional uses, the value of a model grows when it is started as early in the planning process as possible. The data is revised and enhanced with more detail as the design progresses. In a sense, the model development is front-loading the design to reap the benefits on the back-end. Obviously, there is a balance to strike between the amount of effort and detail put into the model vs. the resulting outputs. In general, however, the more detail that is included in the model, the more resources and opportunities are accessible for quality improvements and efficiency throughout the process. Benefits to the design phase include:

- Generation of contract drawings directly from the model, including reinforcement and parametric annotations
- Inspection of all bridge components in three dimensions, both visually and utilizing clash-detection features in the software, to essentially virtually construct the bridge in design
- Ability to efficiently respond to unforeseen changes by tying drawings, quantities, schedules, etc. directly to the model so all documentation is automatically updated as the information is revised one time, and in a single location
Development of a structural analysis model for a refined analysis can also be used for additional design activities mentioned above.

Creation of “template” models of common components that can be efficiently re-used and modified for specific project and site constraints.

This is only a snapshot of the ways models can be used to add value to bridge design and detailing. We have realized these benefits in multiple real-world projects. For us, the question of model-centric as a viable process for bridge design has been answered. However, using a model exclusively in design still only taps into a small amount of its potential over the bridge lifecycle. In order for the industry to maximize the benefit of a model-centric process, it must be used beyond the design phase.

Potential downstream applications of these models are very apparent. In many cases contractors and fabricators are manually recreating the information on our plans to have a digital copy for their use; in some cases they are even developing their own models. The models we are currently developing in design should be passed on for construction and fabrication and then further utilized for asset management applications such as automatically populating bridge databases, and documenting future bridge inspection findings.

There are, of course, challenges in sharing this digital information between phases and stakeholders. Many of the issues revolve around ownership and assuring quality of the information in the model at the different stages of use. However, it is important to note that the information included in creating a 3D model is the same information engineers are currently supplying in their contract plans only in a different form. It is up to each entity to adapt and ensure the quality of the data for which they are responsible.

The faster our industry evolves and starts to embrace this technology, the sooner the full potential of these models will be realized. We want to see these models being used as the basis for efficient steel girder and rebar fabrication, as the starting point to develop a virtual construction site to enhance work zone safety, and as the digital medium to help inspectors collect accurate and detailed information in the field. It is time for our industry to come together and figure out a way to make it happen.
With the passage of new drone regulations for commercial use in 2016, business owners now have a powerful new marketing tool at their disposal – aerial drone footage. Video and photos captured by drone allow business owners to highlight their products, projects, and services in ways that would once have been too cost prohibitive using traditional camera-equipped aircraft. Now, even the smallest of businesses can afford the benefits of commercial drone footage.

The benefits of using drone-captured video and photographs are numerous. At aideM Media Solutions, we know that high-quality video tells a better story because it engages customers on all levels, and allows them to retain 75 percent more of the message they are seeing and hearing.

Aerial drone footage immerses viewers into the message, drawing them in and allowing them to experience every aspect of the product, project, or service being featured on-screen. Drones allow you to capture shots that would be incredibly expensive using traditional means.

For example, aerial shots are typically captured by camera-equipped aircraft, such as helicopters. Renting a helicopter might be feasible for a movie or perhaps even a Fortune 500 company. However, it is cost prohibitive for most businesses, especially for simple commercial use. Using a drone to capture the same shot is much more affordable, and every bit as compelling as traditionally captured footage.

At aideM Media Solutions, we have employed drone footage for a number of different clients and various projects including:
- MD 200 Bypass (Kiewit Southern & Corman Construction)
- Maris Grove (Erickson Construction)
- PA College of Health Sciences (The High Companies)
- Kemper Equipment
- Terex Equipment

Whether you are looking to capture footage for marketing, promotions, archives, time-lapse projects, or commercials, aerial drone footage adds that extra something special.

It is important to note, however, that obtaining drone footage is not as simple as buying a camera-equipped drone. In fact, a drone can be a dangerous tool when operated by inexperienced hands.

Common mistakes made when operating drones often include not maintaining a safe distance from people and property, failing to attend drone flight school to become a licensed pilot, flying too close to power lines, and flying in prohibited areas.
lines, not familiarizing oneself with controls prior to flying, failing to perform a pre-flight checklist, and loss of signal or interference.

Hitting or injuring someone with a drone is the most dangerous and liable act that can occur, which is why this tool should only be operated by a professional, licensed pilot. Under Part 107 of the new FAA rule governing drones for commercial use, anyone operating a drone must have a remote pilot certificate (license) or be under the direct supervision of a pilot who holds the certification. All drones used for commercial purposes must also be registered with the FAA.

Drone blades can cut, slice, and maim, causing serious harm. Hair, clothing, and body parts can become stuck in the drone’s rotors. Drones can crash into people and objects, causing injuries. Drones may also catch on fire after a crash. Craig Peck, owner and operator of Flying Media, offers these tips for using drones safely:

1. Always make sure your drone pilot is licensed and insured.
2. Thoroughly inquire about your pilot’s background and training. Ask for references and check his or her qualifications.
3. Know your emergency procedures and areas, and ensure a pre-flight risk assessment is performed before each flight.
4. Have the proper documents and permissions for the air spaces in which you will be filming.
5. Be mindful of the weather and never ask your pilot to fly in unsafe conditions.
6. Be respectful of those around you and fly only where you have permission.
7. Always use the right equipment for the job.

In the right hands, a drone will safely capture unique perspectives and video that will enhance your messaging. Although drones are not likely to replace traditional video, they are an incredibly effective tool that is steadily gaining popularity.

*Derek Lau is aideM Media Solutions’ executive producer/owner.*
We’re familiar with social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. But do we know how to use them to our advantage? That is, do we recognize which channels work best for certain content? Are we setting social media goals to meet our business objectives?

If you’re wondering whether social media is the right fit for your company, the short answer is, yes. A 2012 study of architectural, construction, and engineering firms concluded that, “Social media marketing helps your firm grow faster and become more profitable.” The importance of social media has been clearly proven. The new question is, “How do I get it right?”

Social media is a highly strategic marketing technique. It’s not something to throw at the youngest person in the office, or the person who uses Facebook most often. To reach success, it must be integrated into a company’s overall marketing plan and connected to key business objectives.

Social media has several key strategic uses. First, it’s a great way to develop a business. Social outlets allow us to get our name in front of large, targeted audiences in highly cost-effective ways. Social media also helps boost your credibility. In fact, a lack of a social presence can contribute to negative perceptions about your company. People want you to meet them where they are: on social media.

The cost-effective uses of social media are countless. In the past, the only way to network was to spend money. If you wanted to attend an event, there was an entrance fee. If you took someone out for drinks, there was a tab. Today, you can easily meet people online through social media with no cost attached. The same is true for mass advertising. Never has it been so cost-effective to reach such a wide audience.

There are several things to keep in mind when developing a social strategy:

**Set clear goals.**

If you’re walking down the social path without an end goal, you’re wasting your time. Social media goals should clearly relate back to your key business objectives. For example, if one of your business objectives is to increase sales, you can use social media to generate leads. Content can work to drive people to your website and motivate them to contact you.
Recruiting is also a great use of social media. If you're focused on workforce development, social media can help you find the talent you're looking for. Some companies have even created Facebook pages or Instagram accounts for the sole purpose of recruiting new talent.

**Define your audience.**
You can't be everything to everyone. Your target audience should be defined by your goals. If you're looking to recruit talent, take time to understand what that talent pool might have in common. Then, match those demographics to the proper social channels.

**Pick channels with purpose.**
Your audience and goals should lead you to the proper channels. For example, LinkedIn is a business-to-business focused network; its audience is wealthier and more educated than audiences on any other social channel. In addition, it has built-in tools for recruiting and lead generation. This tells us that LinkedIn would be an ideal place to reach key decision makers for new business opportunities.

**Match your message to the channel.**
Each social channel serves a different purpose and connects you with a different audience. It's important to ensure that messaging on each channel connects back to your audience and goals. It may seem beneficial to push one button and send the same message to multiple channels. However, that would water down your highly strategic plan and make it much harder for you to find success.

For example, Facebook is a conversational channel. Any topic that would be discussed around the dinner table tends to perform well on Facebook. In contrast, LinkedIn is highly focused on workplace discussions. A single message performs very differently on each channel.

**Create engaging content.**
The best social content has a few common elements. Consistency stands above all others. It is very important to keep content timing consistent. A lack of activity for more than a week can send a negative signal to audiences.

In addition to timing, social content must be visual. Photos and videos have great success in grabbing attention. The written content is important, as well. Clear, concise posts are most engaging.

**Stay the course.**
It takes time to build a strong social media program. No one has ever found success overnight. Once you begin, continue to put in the necessary effort. Following through with a highly strategic plan will help you find success in social media.

*Kara Luzik Canale is the public relations director at Sacunas, a Harrisburg-based marketing and advertising group.*
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SAFETY ORANGE IS THE COLOR OF SUMMER AT THE PA TURNPIKE

Safety orange is probably the most well-known color on a construction site, and OSHA requires that certain equipment be painted safety orange.

This summer the PA Turnpike is going ORANGE in support of field workers. Roadway maintenance and construction crews and toll collectors work feet from traffic each day. In 2016 there were 354 crashes in work zones along the Turnpike.

“Safety is essential in every workplace,” says Turnpike CEO Mark Compton. “However at the PTC our workplace is our roadway and in this instance safety is quite literally a matter of life and death.”

The PA Turnpike’s summer of safety kicked off in June with a week-long employee engagement campaign June 5 to 8.

The week began with a system-wide memorial observance to remember colleagues who lost their lives on the job. A formal ceremony was held at the PA Turnpike Central Office building in front of the Worker Memorial Plaque and adjacent to a memorial erection of cones and hard hats to represent each of the 35 PA Turnpike workers who have been lost over the past 75-plus years. The ceremony was streamed to the three Turnpike office locations and was followed by a moment of silence that was introduced and concluded by Compton and broadcast over all radio channels for PA Turnpike field workers to participate.

Employees were encouraged to sign a Safe Driving Pledge and to take a few moments to take a photo at the Work Zone Safety selfie station and share their support on social media. Pledges were sent to all field locations including maintenance sheds and fare collection locations for each and every employee to have the opportunity to sign. The Safe Driving Pledge can be found on www.operationorangesqueeze.com, can be signed electronically and currently has more than 1000 signatures.

An I Drive Orange t-shirt sale was held for PA Turnpike employees and more than 400 tees were sold throughout the week. These shirts are now on sale for the public at www.paturnpike.com/OrderOrange.

The events culminated in GoOrangePA Day, when the majority of PA Turnpike employees wore orange in support of all field workers who...
put their lives at risk each day. Workers in the office locations as well as maintenance sheds and fare collection facilities all joined in, as well as many industry partners.

While the issue is a serious one, employees were enthusiastically engaged and greatly enjoyed the week’s activities.

GoOrangePA activities will continue throughout the summer to give this critical safety issue the priority it deserves with travelers on the PA Turnpike.
Over the last 10 to 15 years, PennDOT has made increasing use of the design-build method of project delivery, whether it be for entire projects or for just limited portions thereof. The use of the design-build method of project delivery, as opposed to the traditional design-bid-build method on public projects, has both its supporters and its detractors. Regardless of one’s position with respect to the wisdom of the use of the design-build process, one of the primary problems inherent with the design-build method of project delivery on a public project is that there is very little statutory guidance as to the rights and liabilities of the various parties under design-build agreements. One such issue is whether a design professional has the right to bring a payment bond claim in the event the contractor with which the design professional has a contract fails to make payment.

In a recent unreported Commonwealth Court decision, the Court held that design professionals do not have payment bond rights. The Pennsylvania Supreme Court is currently considering whether or not to hear an appeal of that decision. The case in question is Widmer Engineering, Inc. (“Widmer”) v. Five-R Excavating, Inc. and the Pennsylvania National Mutual Casualty Insurance Company (“Surety” or “Penn National”). In that case, Five-R entered into a contract with PennDOT on a $3.9-million bridge replacement project in Westmoreland County. Five-R provided payment and performance bonds to PennDOT as required by law, and hired Widmer to perform design services. The scope of Widmer’s services included roadway, structural, geotechnical, right-of-way, and traffic-control engineering services.

Between April and December 2010, Widmer provided design services to Five-R, but eventually ceased performance of the work due to the alleged nonpayment of approximately $400,000. Widmer filed suit against both Five-R and the Surety in the Court of Common Pleas of Beaver County in 2011, alleging that Five-R breached its contract by failing to pay amounts due and owing, and that Penn National breached its obligations under the bond by not making payments to Widmer when Widmer requested. Eventually, Widmer filed a Motion for Partial Summary Judgment with respect to its claim against Penn National and the trial court subsequently issued an opinion that denied that motion and ruled in favor of the Surety. Widmer subsequently appealed the trial court’s decision with respect to the payment bond issue. In the interim, Widmer eventually also proceeded directly against Five-R and obtained a judgment in excess of $800,000 against Five-R. Five-R then subsequently filed for bankruptcy, making it extremely unlikely that Widmer would recover any funds from Five-R. Thus, Widmer’s only recourse was to pursue claims against the Surety on appeal.

In March 2017, a three-judge panel of Commonwealth Court issued an unreported opinion that ruled in favor of the Surety. In so ruling, the Court considered statutory provisions in both the Commonwealth Procurement Code (“Procurement Code”) and the Pennsylvania Bond Law, as well as the exact language of the payment bond itself. For many decades, statutory payment bond rights for claimants on all public projects in Pennsylvania were governed by the Public Works Contractors Bond Law (“Bond Law”) of 1967. The overall purpose of the Bond Law was to ensure that subcontractors and suppliers on public projects would be paid, as those entities typically do not have mechanic’s lien rights on public jobs since no mechanic’s liens can be filed on projects with a purely public purpose. The PA Bond Law of 1967 is also sometimes referred to as a little “Miller
Act” as it is similar to the Federal Miller Act (“Miller Act”) which provides payment bond rights on federal contracts. The importance of the Miller Act to the Court’s decision in Widmer will be discussed below.

Notably, when the General Assembly passed the Commonwealth Procurement Code in 1998, the PA Bond Law was actually repealed by the Procurement Code with respect to Commonwealth agencies. However, Section 903(a) of the Procurement Code contains very similar language to the Pennsylvania Bond Law. Additionally, inasmuch as the payment bond at issue in the Widmer case made reference to the Public Work Contractors Bond Law, the parties to the dispute agreed that the Court should apply the Pennsylvania’s Bond Law provisions to the case it was considering.

The primary inquiry that the Court considered in Widmer was whether or not professional engineering services are “labor” for the purposes of the Bond Law. Unfortunately, neither the Procurement Code nor the Bond Law defines the term “labor” as it was used in the statute. Additionally, while one section of the Procurement Code technically authorizes “design build” contracts, there is very little guidance in the Procurement Code as to how such contracts are to be treated. Thus, Commonwealth Court was forced to look beyond the terms of the Bond Law and the Code to interpret what the General Assembly meant by the term “labor.”

In support of its position, Widmer made several arguments. On the face of the statute, presumably “labor” could and/or should be construed to include labor provided by engineers. Widmer also noted that professional engineering services were not specifically excluded from any definition of “labor,” and also noted that the Bond Law’s definition of the term “claimant” did not expressly exclude architects and engineers. Moreover, Widmer argued that since both the Procurement Code and the Bond Law require payment bonds to provide “100% coverage of the contract price,” that it was the intent of the General Assembly to include these entities that provide design services that are part of that contract price as potential payment bond claimants.

Conversely, Penn National argued that while the term “labor” was not defined by the Bond Law or the Procurement Code, that term had been consistently interpreted in the context of several other statutes, including both state law mechanic’s lien claims as well as claims brought under the Federal Miller Act, to exclude professional engineering services from their coverage. Penn National argued that the term “labor” had been defined in mechanic’s lien claims and Miller Act claims to include only physical labor rather than technical and professional skill and judgment, and therefore argued that Widmer had no payment bond rights. Penn National further argued that the scope of the payment bond coverage under the Bond Law should be no greater than the Mechanic’s Lien Law, and that since engineers are not entitled to submit a lien, they should similarly not be permitted to submit a claim under the payment bond.

In considering the positions of the parties, Commonwealth Court first noted that no cases had specifically examined the question of what the term “labor” means in the Bond Law. Thus, Commonwealth Court noted that the lower court was correct in interpreting the Bond Law by looking to how courts have interpreted comparable statutes such as the Mechanic’s Lien Law and the Miller Act. Moreover, Commonwealth Court noted that the Mechanic’s Lien Law specifically defines “subcontractor” as not to include an architect or engineer who contracts with a contractor or subcontractor. Commonwealth Court also discussed several cases decided under the Federal Miller Act, all of which held that while the Miller Act does not define “labor,” the term “labor” referred to “physical labor rather than technical and professional skill and judgment.” Finally, Commonwealth Court addressed Widmer’s argument that since the bond that Five-R provided was for 100 percent of the contract price, and since that contract price included professional engineering services that Widmer provided, the Bond Law should be interpreted to include professional engineering services. Commonwealth Court agreed with Widmer’s argument that it was “troubling” that the contractor was required to provide a bond for the full amount of the contract, which included professional engineering services. However, the Court noted that such a disparity was not determinative given the longstanding and consistent interpretations of the term “labor” under the comparable statutes. Thus, the Court concluded that Widmer’s professional engineering services were not covered by the Bond Law.

While Commonwealth Court ruled in favor of the Surety and against Widmer, inasmuch as the Court issued an unreported opinion, its precedential value is limited. However, Widmer subsequently filed a Petition for Allowance of Appeal to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. Inasmuch as the appeal is not an appeal as of right, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court will have the option of either hearing the appeal or allowing Commonwealth Court’s decision to stand. Unless the decision is overturned, design professionals should be aware of the risks they face in the event the prime contractor becomes insolvent.
In Memoriam

John Wallace, one of the founding partners of Wallace Montgomery (WM), passed away at the age of 88. His legacy is evident every day at WM — and not simply because his name graces the company's doorway. It lives in a work culture that values family and community, and treats clients as key members of that community. Wallace brought a high level of technical acumen and precision to his work on some of the most significant highway, bridge, and utilities-related projects in the region. He served as an inspector on the first Chesapeake Bay Bridge, and a structural engineer on projects for the Washington, D.C. metro system; so his work continues to touch lives, whether someone is driving to the Eastern Shore for a beach day, or taking the Blue Line to go see the cherry blossoms.

Even before he founded Wallace Montgomery, Wallace built an impressive and substantial engineering career. He started his career in 1952, taking a position at JE Greiner Company as a construction inspector and resident engineer. However, his innate talent and drive propelled him to bigger titles and responsibilities, and he eventually became the chief of construction inspection for the Anne Arundel County Department of Public Works; a structural and civil project engineer for Whitman Requardt & Associates; and senior vice president for Kidde Consultants. In 1985, Wallace joined Jim Montgomery’s bridge remediation firm, and together, they formed the firm Wallace, Montgomery & Associates LLP. His reputation as a seasoned construction manager solidified the company’s reputation and relationships with public agencies, and helped to drive the growth of bridge and bridge replacement projects, as well as roadway design, and civil engineering work. He was involved in some of the company’s most significant early projects, including the Brighton Dam Bridge, Glendale Road Bridge over Deep Creek Lake, and numerous water and sewer projects throughout the state. He also shepherded the firm through great periods of growth and expansion — particularly the additions of new services and disciplines.

This continued expansion didn’t change the spirit of mentorship and collegiality that distinguishes Wallace Montgomery as a truly great place to work — and one large part of this is that Wallace always instilled a sense of humor, creativity, and verve into everything he did. He was a Renaissance man, able to discuss opera and ancient history along with the most technical aspects of any given project (and before weaving in a joke or two). Anyone who has had the honor and the pleasure to collaborate with him will miss his stories and his guidance; and of course, they will miss his warm, hearty laugh.

EHS Promotes Magdefrau to VP

Eastern Highway Specialists Inc. (EHS) announces the promotion of Christian Magdefrau, P.E., to the role of vice president. Magdefrau joined EHS in 2010, and has a total of 15 years of highway and bridge construction experience. A registered professional engineer in Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, he has a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering and an MBA from the University of Delaware. In his new role, Magdefrau will still be involved with daily operations on the projects EHS performs for its client base. New responsibilities will include government relations, workforce and management development, and assisting with long-term strategic planning for the company.
Peitz Hired as Drilled Shaft Manager

Wagman recently welcomed Greg G. Peitz to the team as drilled shaft manager. Peitz brings more than 35 years of caisson and drilled shaft experience to the geotechnical construction operation of the company.

Starting his career in the industry as a yard/shop foreman and project superintendent, Peitz worked his way up through positions including managing the Caisson Division at a construction company outside of Pittsburgh. He then became the vice president of caisson operations and special projects, where he was responsible for high-profile foundation projects with geographical emphasis in the Southeastern States. Most recently, he was the operations manager of the Mid-Atlantic and Midwest regions for a construction company, where a majority of his responsibility was foundation projects with an emphasis on drilled shafts.

Greg Andricos, president and COO of Wagman Heavy Civil, said, "Wagman's geotechnical capabilities have continued to expand over the years, and Greg Peitz's leadership and experience enhances our capabilities to perform deep foundations. Expanding Wagman's geotechnical expertise allows us to offer more comprehensive and cost-effective geotechnical options and solutions to our clients and projects."

McMahon Associates Expands Western Pennsylvania Focus

McMahon Associates Inc., a transportation engineering and planning firm, announced that David C. DiGioia, P.E., is the new office lead for the firm's Pittsburgh office. With nearly a quarter century of experience in a full range of traffic engineering services, from traffic studies through Highway Occupancy Permits (HOP) and Plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) plan designs, for both public- and private-sector clients, DiGioia is charged with expanding McMahon’s Western Pennsylvania market presence.

Throughout his career, DiGioia has been responsible for managing the planning, design, and delivery of multi-phase transportation projects in Western Pennsylvania from inception through construction, as well as coordinating client interface, programming, design development, construction document development, and construction management services. His experience encompasses all facets of transportation engineering, including design for site, signal, highway, street, structure and drainage, traffic impact studies, stormwater and erosion control, environmental impacts, right-of-way acquisition, and preparation of plans, specifications, and estimates for construction. DiGioia has provided services for a wide variety of municipal and private development firms, as well as PennDOT and the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

DiGioia also has experience with geotechnical and software design for electric transmission line projects. He lent his technology skills to upgrading, and subsequent license management, of the Foundation Analysis and Design (FAD) software for the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI).

During his professional career, DiGioia has been very active in professional societies, including serving the Mid-Colonial District and Mid-Atlantic Sections of ITE as a past president. He currently serves on the Board of the Pittsburgh Chapter of ASHE and is the chairman of the Transportation and Development Institute (T&DI) for the Pittsburgh section of ASCE.
Cessna Joins Michael Baker International

Michael Baker International announced that H. Daniel Cessna, P.E., has joined the firm as senior vice president and Pennsylvania Headquarters regional director. In his new role, Cessna will oversee all engineering, business, marketing, and financial operations related to the firm’s Allentown, Fort Washington, Harrisburg, Middletown, Moon Township, and Philadelphia offices. He also will leverage Michael Baker’s comprehensive capabilities and talent base in Pennsylvania to support the pursuit and execution of new work across the U.S. within state, private, and federal markets in the areas of planning, engineering, architecture, and GIT. Cessna will be based in the firm’s Moon Township office.

Cessna brings 24 years of industry experience in transportation planning, design, construction management, asset planning and management, and public involvement to his new role. During the last 12 years, he served as PennDOT’s district executive for District 11, serving the Pittsburgh Metro Region, which is one of the largest and most complex districts in Pennsylvania. With PennDOT, he led a team of 800 professionals and tradespeople and was responsible for the planning, design, construction and maintenance of the state’s transportation system, including: 1,802 bridges; 2,576 miles of highway; and four tunnels in Allegheny, Beaver, and Lawrence counties. His experience also includes the delivery of a $3.7 billion capital program, construction management of new alignment highway projects, and leading community-based infrastructure enhancements, statewide asset management and materials testing teams. Prior to his role as district executive, Cessna held numerous roles of increasing responsibility with PennDOT, including: assistant district executive, assistant construction engineer, Jefferson County maintenance manager, and as a civil engineer.

Cessna is an adjunct professor at the University of Pittsburgh’s Swanson School of Engineering in Pittsburgh. He also supports numerous causes through membership and volunteering his time as president of the Engineers’ Society of Western Pennsylvania, as a member of the board of directors for the American Society of Highway Engineers-Pittsburgh Section, and as vice-chair of the Industrial and Professional Advisory Council for the Department of Civil Engineering at The Pennsylvania State University. In addition, he serves as a trustee of Shadyside Presbyterian Church.

Cessna holds a Master of Engineering degree in Civil Engineering and a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from The Pennsylvania State University, and a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Pittsburgh’s Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business.

Truxel Succeeds Bussanmas at High Steel

After 19 years as the senior vice president of sales, marketing and estimating, Steve Bussanmas will be retiring effective this summer. Bussanmas joined High Steel in May 1998, having spent his previous career in sales management at New Holland Farm Equipment. He joined the company at a pivotal time; during his first few years at the company, their facility in Williamsport was expanded to double its capacity, and they were in the midst of fabricating a series of very large projects for the Mon-Fayette Expressway. The TEA-21 transportation funding bill was also coming into effect, which meant gearing up for more projects by adding to the workforce. High Performance Steel and Weathering Steel were also gaining popularity during this time.

Under his leadership, High Steel has been awarded an impressive array of major bridge projects, most notably the Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge cable stay bridge in Charleston, S.C.; the Virginia HOT Lanes; the Lake Champlain Arch Bridge replacement in New York; and High’s largest project to date, the 50,000 ton contract for the new Tappan Zee bridge north of New York City.

Bussanmas has also devoted countless hours to providing leadership to the industry in the Mid-Atlantic states, including his service on the Board of Directors at APC and the Highway Board of Governors at the Associated General Contractors – New York State.

Sales Manager Rich Truxel has been promoted to vice president of sales, marketing and estimating, succeeding Bussanmas. Truxel has served as a sales manager for 10 years, having joined High in 2007. He holds a bachelor’s degree in business from Penn State University and an MBA from the University of Pittsburgh.

Truxel was born and raised in the Pittsburgh Metro Area and has an extensive background in the steel industry in sales and marketing roles. He can be reached at rtruxel@high.net or 717-207-4303.
Navarro & Wright Consulting Engineers Acquires Raudenbush Engineering

Navarro & Wright Consulting Engineers Inc. (N&W) is pleased to announce the acquisition of Raudenbush Engineering Inc. (REI), a full-service civil engineering firm servicing the Pennsylvania and Maryland markets.

As a wholly owned subsidiary of N&W, REI will continue to operate out of its main office in Middletown with branch offices in Pittsburgh and New Stanton and Hagerstown, Md. REI will continue to operate under its current leadership and management team.

REI was founded in 1999 with the goal of providing exceptional quality services to the central Pennsylvania marketplace. The firm has grown to include all aspects of civil engineering including site planning, land development, structural engineering, landscape architecture, transportation design, geotechnical engineering, soils and materials testing, surveying, and environmental engineering services. REI is a natural fit with N&W, which offers similar services and share the same commitment to client satisfaction it has strived to achieve over the past 20 years since the company was founded in 1996.

TPD Welcomes Meitzler, Regional Planning Expert

Traffic Planning and Design Inc. (TPD) welcomes Alex Meitzler, P.E., PTOE to the firm as a senior project manager in its Transportation Planning Department. Meitzler will serve as the office manager for a new TPD office to be located in Maryland. Utilizing his broad technical, managerial, and public speaking experience, he will help to expand TPD’s services in Maryland, Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and beyond.

Meitzler brings 26 years of industry experience to his new position. His expertise covers all facets of traffic and operations, including strategic planning, traffic impact studies, traffic engineering analyses, traffic signal designs, and preliminary/final design. Throughout his career, he has provided services for a wide range of clients, including public agencies (e.g., MdSHA, DelDOT, VDOT, PennDOT, FHWA), municipalities and counties (e.g., City of Wilmington, City of Newark, Del.) and private developers. Meitzler’s recent experience includes traffic task management for a $70-million design/build project improving Route 1 near Fort Belvoir, Va., and for a Diverging Diamond Interchange project in Blacksburg, Va.
TPD Hires former PennDOT Transportation Expert

Traffic Planning and Design Inc. is welcoming David J. Azzato, P.E., to the firm as senior transportation leader. He is working in the Harrisburg office.

Azzato joins TPD after a 36-year career at PennDOT, mainly in PennDOT’s Central Office. After serving in various roles in the Highway Delivery, Contract Management, and Design Services divisions, and the Bureau of Construction and Materials, Azzato was promoted to chief of the Highway Design and Technology Section within PennDOT’s Bureau of Project Delivery. He has experience managing policies and procedures related to highway design and technology, providing quality reviews, and overseeing project schedules.

Azzato has earned several prestigious awards throughout his career, most recently the Governor’s Award for Excellence and the Secretary of Transportation’s Award for Excellence. A Penn State graduate, he is a registered professional engineer in Pennsylvania, and a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers and the American Society of Highway Engineers.

In his new position with TPD, Azzato will provide oversight for highway engineering processes and procedures, conduct quality assurance reviews, and assist in the development of new projects. He will assist with project deliveries and serve as a project liaison. Azzato will take a lead role in pursuing and developing public projects in Pennsylvania, with a focus on the central and western areas of the Commonwealth.

Parsons, MIT Host Infrastructure, Smart Cities & Transportation Workshop

In early March, Parsons and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s (MIT) Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering hosted the Infrastructure, Smart Cities, and Transportation workshop. The day-long event brought together leadership representatives from Parsons and faculty, postdocs, and alumni from cross-cutting MIT programs to explore the parallels between ongoing research and current industry needs.

Gibran Hadj-Chikh, Parsons’ director of Innovative Transport, said, “Parsons’ Smart City solutions are fueled by combining resources from academia and the engineering industry. These solutions can solve major infrastructure and transportation problems, and ultimately create a safer and more sustainable world.”

The Infrastructure, Smart Cities, and Transportation workshop represented a continuation of a 50-year relationship Parsons has had with MIT, beginning with Ralph M. Parsons’ donation of the funds to double the size of MIT’s laboratory in 1965. Parsons has been spearheading and supporting STEM programs in the communities where its employees live and work to help foster the development of the next generation of engineering and technical professionals.

For more information about the event, visit: http://bit.ly/2mume1j.
Navarro & Wright Consulting Engineers Inc. has announced that Kenneth S. Jones, P.E., has joined the firm as a senior project manager – bridges, and will be responsible to expand the firm’s Highway Bridge Unit.

With more than three decades of structural engineering experience, Jones brings with him an expansive skillset of design and construction experience in the public- and private-sector markets, managing bridge design and bridge inspection projects throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region. His experience also includes highway and railroad bridge designs, construction services, and diverse civil engineering projects, in addition to teaching FHWA courses for both bridge design and safety inspection of in-service bridges.

Jones was selected as the Central Pennsylvania Engineers Week Council (CPEWC) Engineer of the Year in 2013, and is a Model Law Engineer. He is a past president, state director and events coordinator for the Pennsylvania Society of Professional Engineers. He is also an active member of numerous professional organizations, such as CPEWC, American Society of Highway Engineers, American Society of Civil Engineers, Associated Pennsylvania Constructors, American Council of Engineering Companies, Association for Bridge Construction & Design, and National Society of Professional Engineers.

Jones is an FHWA/NHI instructor for LRFD Bridge Superstructure & Substructure Design courses. He is a licensed professional engineer in Pennsylvania, Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware, and Ohio. Jones received a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from Purdue University. Prior to joining N&W, he was a senior technical manager at GAI Consultants.

Meet High Steel’s New President

High Steel Structures LLC’s new President John O’Quinn, was born in Canada, but came to the United States after high school to attend college. It was during that time that he became acquainted with the steel industry, learning the business from the ground up at Carolina Steel as a maintenance worker, fitter, shear operator, and welder. O’Quinn stayed with the company through a period of substantial growth, while earning promotions to positions of greater responsibility.

In 1993, he left to form O’Quinn Enterprises, a steel fabrication and erection company. His wife, Sherrie, took an active role in the company at a time when few women were involved in the steel industry.

In 2006, O’Quinn accepted an offer to return to Carolina Steel/Hirschfeld as part of a succession plan that led to being named president in 2015. “I spent a lot of time in airports commuting between the offices in Dallas, Texas, and Greensboro, North Carolina, and then my family home in Knoxville, Tennessee. Not only did coming to High Steel give me the opportunity to work for a well-rounded and grounded company at the pinnacle of the industry, it gave me back a home base and a quality of life,” said O’Quinn. “High was also attractive for its culture; a family owned business that respects its co-workers, supports the community, and has a long-term view to position the company for the future.”

O’Quinn describes his approach to the job as being one member of the team. He looks forward to future growth for the company, and setting even higher standards that would allow the company to expand and continue to be the foremost bridge fabricator in the United States.
N&W Welcomes New Senior VP

Navarro & Wright Consulting Engineers Inc. (N&W) has announced that Scott A. Summers, P.G., has joined the firm as senior vice president, responsible for business development for N&W’s expanded Construction Services Division, including field and laboratory materials testing, drilling services, geotechnical, and environmental services with a focus on private-sector clients.

Summers has more than 20 years of experience developing solutions for a broad spectrum of clients throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region in the related fields of environmental consulting and remediation, geotechnical engineering, construction materials observation and testing, mineral resource exploration and characterization, hydrogeologic studies and groundwater modeling, IAQ/IH studies, and field exploration services.

He is a Licensed Professional Geologist in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Tennessee, and holds a Bachelor of Science/Geology degree from Kutztown University of Pennsylvania and Master of Business Administration from Penn State University.

Prior to joining N&W, Summers was regional director of Business Development at ECS Mid-Atlantic in the Philadelphia/N.J., Central PA, Pittsburgh, N. Maryland and Delaware regions.

Bruce & Merrilees Reaches Safety Milestone

April 2017 marked a major safety milestone for Bruce & Merrilees Electric Company: 2-million hours on the job without a single Lost-Time Incident (LTI). An LTI is defined by OSHA as any injury or incident that causes an employee to miss one or more working days.

Bruce & Merrilees is an electrical construction & services firm headquartered in New Castle. Given the nature of electrical work and the high risk that can be involved, reaching 2-million man-hours without a single LTI is a significant accomplishment.

Bruce & Merrilees’ employees – more than 300 people – receive regular safety training throughout the year. The company encourages employees to report “Near Miss” situations, which improves communications between teams and prevents future incidents and injuries. Bruce & Merrilees also teaches its employees the concept of Human Performance and the role that human error plays in safety incidents.

“Our commitment to safe work comes before everything else we do,” said Bruce & Merrilees President/CEO Jay Bruce. “Safe is our very first core value. The first measure of any successful day or successful project is whether it was safe.”

Bruce & Merrilees commends its team members for their hard work and dedication in achieving this momentous milestone.
The I-276/I-95 Interchange Section D10 reconstruction in Bristol, PA is currently underway, with completion slated for Summer 2017. When completed, the massive Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission/PennDOT project will expand both the east and west bound lanes of I-276.

Originally, T-WALL was the ‘as-designed’ system for three of the ten project walls. PennDOT specified T-WALL for the three walls due to their location in a high flood plain. The contractor, PKF Mark III, Inc., decided to bid T-WALL as an alternate on five of the additional seven MSE walls as it was the "best-fit" and best economic value for the site conditions.

With a smaller base width than MSE, the T-WALL System significantly reduced the amount of necessary excavation and backfill. Less excavation also meant less temporary shoring and less impact on existing traffic lanes. T-WALL allowed the contractor to balance cuts and fills by using onsite excavated material behind the stems.

T-WALL installed easily and rapidly with no bracing, battering, or clamping. Top-of-wall units custom designed to follow the grade eliminated the need for a PennDOT required cast-in-place leveling course to support the planned precast barrier. PennDOT specifications require an HDPE membrane, but all-concrete T-WALL units have no buried metal, eliminating the need and producing further cost savings.

Successfully used throughout Pennsylvania since 1988, the T-WALL Retaining Wall System offers a long-lasting, set it and forget it solution. Contact The Neel Company or visit our website to learn more about how precast modular T-WALL works.

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