PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Fourth of July, picnics, fireworks, and the beach are now giving way to football games, the turning of the leaves, and all things pumpkin flavored!

I enjoyed seeing many of you at the ITE Mid-Colonial District Annual Meeting in Arlington, Virginia in April. Many of our MASITE members served on the committee and supported the event. I was also able to attend the ITE Annual Meeting in Hollywood, Florida in August. The International Annual Meeting is highlighted later in this newsletter.

Hopefully you all had the chance to attend the MASITE Annual Meeting in King of Prussia at the Radisson Hotel Valley Forge on October 4th and 5th! Lori Bickerdyke from Dawood Engineering and Peter O’Halloran from Urban Engineers served as this year’s co-chairs. The welcome reception was held Sunday evening which had two invigorating rounds of Kwizo and then a great technical program was arranged for Monday, including an opening session on the World Meeting of Families – The Papal Visit to Philadelphia. We highlighting the MASITE awards during Monday’s lunch, including the Project of the Year. Please refer to the MASITE website to see pictures of the events (www.masite.org).

As always, please be sure to check out the calendar of events on the MASITE website – www.masite.org – for the most updated information. We have a wonderful group of volunteers, and are always looking for more, so feel free to contact me any time to get involved, nkline@mcmahonassociates.com.

Sincerely,

Nicole Kline
2015 MASITE President
2015 MASITE BOARD MEMBERS

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2015 MASITE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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<th>Email</th>
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Mid Colonial District Election –
The Mid Colonial District congratulates and welcomes Melody Matter onto the Board starting in 2016 as the Secretary/Treasurer. Other District election results included Abi Lerner as the 2016-2018 District Director, Dan Goldfarb as District Vice President and Jeff Riegner as District President for 2016.

MASITE Technical Committee
The MASITE Technical Committee is looking for help from you...if you are interested in getting involved with our technical committee please contact:
JOE FIOCCO
215-355-2089
joe@fioccoengineering.com

2015 ITE Annual Meeting Highlights – Nicole Kline
The 2015 ITE Annual Meeting was held on August 2nd through 5th at the Diplomat Resort and Spa in Hollywood, Florida. I was honored to be able to attend this meeting on behalf of the Section as the 2015 MASITE President, and also to attend as the Mid-Colonial District’s selection for the inaugural 2015 ITE Rising Star Award.

The plenary session, which opened the meeting, featured keynote speaker The Honorable Manny Diaz, former mayor of Miami, Florida and author of Miami Transformed: Re-building America One Neighborhood, One City at a Time. Diaz became mayor of Miami during a critical time, and under his leadership the city was transformed into a livable and thriving community. Much of the success of the Miami transformation can be attributed to the focus on investments in infrastructure, including transportation, both on a regional level and within individual neighborhoods. A variety of technical sessions followed, with a broad range of topics. A panel discussion on Traffic Signal Clearance Intervals provided a lively conversation between members of the engineering safety research community and a physicist, who has his own view on the procedures within the ITE recommended practice.

The Traffic Bowl Competition was a great source of entertainment during the meeting. It was great to see the excitement within the student teams, proud to represent each of their schools. Penn State University represented the Mid-Colonial District well and we are very proud of their efforts! This year’s traffic bowl winner was California Polytechnic State University – San Luis Obispo. Sixty-one student chapters participated in District traffic bowl events in 2015, which is a testament to the success of this program. MASITE is proud to be a part of it, and support our student chapters within the Section.
Please click the following links to review the meeting program and traffic bowl details.

http://library.ite.org/pub/5a882744-049f-2ea6-f614-558b43068b20
http://www.ite.org/trafficbowl/default.asp

Central Area – Steve Palmer

Central Area’s August event was the annual PennDOT District 8 lunchtime seminar. Jason Bewley and Rich Deen presented on Freight movement and truck design vehicles, and on Incident Management Plans, respectively. We had a great turnout for this event.

Watch for more information on our next events, to include a lunch session at the Pennsylvania Turnpike headquarters on October 30, with presentations on Emerging Ops and Work Zone Safety Updates. We will also be having a happy hour at Al’s of Hampden on November 2.

MASITE SPONSOR NEWS

JMT news includes:
Key Hires...
JMT is pleased to announce 3 recent key hires in the traffic group, Rick Mishura in Delaware, James Carr in Delaware & Charlie Denny in Philadelphia.

Richard (Rick) Mishura will help with expanding JMT’s traffic study group in Delaware. Rick has over 20 years of experience in traffic planning, modeling, design, and safety. He has project experience with DelDOT, PennDOT, the City of Philadelphia, and NJDOT where he took the lead role in various traffic engineering, signal timing optimization, and signal design projects. He is currently a member of the Mid-Atlantic Section of ITE (MASITE) and American Society of Highway Engineers (ASHE).

James Carr will be leading the effort to grow the traffic engineering practice in JMT’s New Jersey office. With 9 years of experience in various aspects of traffic engineering and analysis, Mr. Carr has experience in preparation of traffic engineering and planning studies, travel demand and roadway network modeling, and safety evaluation and analysis. James has various project experience with NJDOT, New Jersey Townships and Counties, and the Port Authority of NY & NJ. He is currently a member of the ITE Metropolitan Section of New York and New Jersey.

Charlie Denny retired from the City of Philadelphia in November, 2014 after 39 years of service. He spent the last 15 years as the Assistant Chief Traffic Engineer in the Traffic Engineering and Street Lighting Division. In that role, Mr. Denny was responsible for coordination with PennDOT, SEPTA and other agencies, for major projects and programs such as the reconstruction of I-95. Mr. Denny also reviewed and approved over 22 major traffic and highway projects that affected over 600 signalized intersections in the City’s 3,000 signal system. Charlie also oversaw all traffic studies and multi-modal safety reviews for the City that came from public requests. It is estimated that they received approximately 10,000 requests which resulted in about 8,000 work orders per year. Charlie will helping to grow JMT’s Philadelphia Traffic Group.

Congratulations...
Congratulations to James “Bo” Smith, from JMT’s Pittsburgh office recently obtained his PE license.

Congratulations to Joanne Maulit Arellano, P.E. and Gillian Bruno, P.E. of the Traffic Department in JMT’s Newark, Delaware office, who recently obtained their Professional Traffic Operations Engineer (PTOE) certification.

JMT also congratulates Adrienne (Warhola) Young (New Jersey) who had a baby girl, Janelle Marie Young, born on September 12, 2015 (her sister’s birthday). Mom, Dad, Madeline and baby are doing well.
McMahon Associates, Inc. Expands Web & Social Media Initiatives

McMahon recently launched a new website at www.mcmahonassociates.com. Also, please follow the firm on Twitter (@mcmahonassoc), LinkedIn (McMahon Associates, Inc.), Facebook (McMahon Associates Inc.), Instagram (mcmahonassociates), and YouTube (McMahon Associates).

MASITE HELP WANTED

The following job openings have recently been posted to MASITE's "Career Search" webpage. Please visit http://masite.org/careers.html for more information and to view additional job openings.

Johnson, Mirmiran & Thompson

JMT is seeking an experienced Traffic Engineer in our Philadelphia and Allentown Pennsylvania offices. The position will support the project manager and/or lead with traffic engineering activities, with an emphasis on traffic analysis and studies. Work duties include traffic analysis using software such as Synchro, HCS, and/or VISSIM. Experience with VISSIM modeling preferred. Other duties include the performance of various traffic engineering studies such as determining the need for traffic signals, performing crash analysis, traffic impact studies and improving signal timing.

Required Experience:

• Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from an ABET accredited engineering program
• EIT is required (PE is preferred)
• Experience using analysis and simulation modeling software such as SYNCHRO, HCS and/or VISSIM is preferred
• Existing relationships with local transportation clients is preferred
• Excellent written and communication skills are preferred

http://www.jmt.com/careers/

AMT is seeking a skilled professional SENIOR TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER with 7-10 years of experience in Maryland working on Highway Design projects to assume a key role at the firm's Baltimore office. Duties would include preparing roadway concepts and final design plans for highway improvement projects (widenings, resurfacing, intersection improvements, etc.). Experience working on roadway projects for the Maryland State Highway Administration and/or local jurisdictions including Maryland counties or municipalities is preferred. Project experience in D.C. and Virginia is also desirable.

AMT is seeking a highly motivated ENTRY-LEVEL TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC ENGINEER to join its Transportation Engineering group at the firm’s Baltimore office. The selected candidate will perform as a Traffic Engineer, and will be responsible for a wide variety of tasks involving traffic analysis, including traffic impact studies, feasibility studies, design studies, traffic data collection and processing, safety analyses and some report writing. Other responsibilities may include signal design. This person will have a minimum of 0-3 years of experience working on transportation or traffic projects in Maryland. Project experience in D.C., Pennsylvania and Virginia is also preferred.

http://www.dawood.cc/careers/

Drive Engineering, Inc.

Drive Engineering is currently seeking a highly motivated ITS/Traffic Engineer with 5-10 years of experience performing varying tasks related to traffic, ITS, and transportation management associated with roadway construction projects. Successful candidates will be expected to coordinate and manage a variety of traffic related engineering projects or task assignments including

http://www.dawood.cc/careers/
but not limited to: traffic signal plans, signing and pavement marking plans, ITS plans, crash analysis, planning studies, traffic analysis and studies (TIS, HOP, TMP), maintenance and protection of traffic plans, ITS systems engineering and architecture, and simulation modelling. Construction Management and Inspection skills are a plus. Successful candidates will be expected to effectively oversee and mentor staff. The candidate will also be expected to coordinate with and manage design staff in Blue Bell and Williamsport offices. Coordination with clients, contractors, outside consultants, government agencies and project stakeholders will be key to successful project delivery.

Please send resumes to Allie Slizofski, PE, PTOE.

Fairfax County Department of Transportation

Fairfax County, a diverse, dynamic and growing jurisdiction in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, is seeking a highly motivated and qualified Transportation Planner with a background in transportation and land use planning, multimodal planning, including bicycles, pedestrians and/or transit, a familiarity with context sensitive solutions and complete streets, and traffic operations to work on a wide range of transportation planning issues, including long range multimodal transportation planning, sub-area and corridor studies, land use studies and transit analyses. Fairfax County faces significant transportation challenges and is seeking innovative solutions, transitioning away from single occupant vehicles as the primary means of transportation.

http://agency.govemmentjobs.com/fairfaxcounty/default.cfm

McMahon Engineering Co.

McMahon Engineering Company, a provider of engineering and consulting services since 1960, has a position open for Manager of Traffic Engineering. The minimum requirements include 10-years of experience in all facets of traffic engineering, registration as a professional engineer in Pennsylvania, experience with PennDOT projects and with the automated PennDOT HOP process. The ideal candidate will also have extensive experience in Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission projects, and have the ability to provide common sense solutions and recommendations to clients.

Please send resumes in confidence to employment@mackinengineering.com

McCormick Taylor, Inc.

McCormick Taylor is looking for experienced candidates for the position of Transportation Engineer for our Exton, PA OR our Philadelphia, PA office. The primary duties of this position include working as part of a project team, under the direction of the project manager on a variety of traffic forecasting, analysis and design needs for transportation projects. Work will include reviewing Highway Occupancy Permit applications for PennDOT to transportation projects ranging from concept development and preliminary engineering studies to final design. The position will entail traffic engineering design, traffic signal design, capacity and operational analysis, crash/safety analysis, highway design and understanding of stormwater design.

McCormick Taylor is seeking an experienced Highway Design Engineer to assist with the design and preparation of highway engineering projects and plans from inception to construction in the Mount Laurel, New Jersey office. Successful candidate must be well versed in NJDOT and NJTA design criteria and standards. The position will entail the layout of horizontal and vertical geometries, design of ADA compliant facilities and assisting with the preparation of NJDOT PS&E packages.

McCormick Taylor is looking for experienced candidates for the position of Traffic Engineer for our Mount Laurel, NJ office. The primary duties of the Traffic Engineer include working as part of a project team, under the direction of the project manager on a variety of traffic forecasting, analysis and design needs for a variety of transportation projects. Projects are likely to range from concept development and preliminary engineering studies to final design projects. The position will entail traffic engineering design, traffic signal design, traffic impact analysis, capacity and operational analysis, traffic simulation modeling, and crash/safety analysis.

https://careers-mccormicktaylor.icims.com

McMahon Associates, Inc.

McMahon Associates, Inc., is seeking qualified candidates for the following positions:

Design Project Engineer in Yardville, NJ - The Project Engineer in this position will assist with work on a variety of transportation design projects in NJ and PA under direct supervision of an experienced professional engineer.

ITS/Signals Project Manager in Exton, PA - The Project Manager plans, designs and directs transportation projects. This person will be responsible for managing all aspects of assigned projects, including budgeting, staffing, scheduling and client management. Supervises staff, including Senior Project Engineers/Planners, Project Engineers/Planners, Staff Engineers, and Technicians.

ITS/Signals Engineer in Camp Hill, PA - The Staff Engineer is a 0-3 year professional who will assist in McMahon’s Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) group on a variety of projects under direct supervision of an experienced professional.

http://www.mcmahonassociates.com/careers
Michael Baker International

Michael Baker Jr., Inc., an engineering unit of Michael Baker International, LLC, is seeking a Traffic Engineer (Civil Associate I). The position may sit in our Hamilton, NJ location. Under the direction of a Department Manager/Project Manager, lead Traffic/ITS engineering design efforts and traffic engineering analysis on projects such as traffic signals, ITS, roads, airports, bridges, etc.

Michael Baker Jr., Inc., an engineering unit of Michael Baker International, LLC, is seeking a Traffic Engineer (Civil Associate I). The position may sit in our Hamilton or Newark NJ location. Under direct supervision, assists Civil Engineers and Project/Task managers with traffic engineering design plan development and traffic engineering analyses on civil engineering projects such as traffic signals, ITS, roads, airports, bridges, etc. In particular, the work will primarily involve traffic engineering design.

Pennoni Associates, Inc.

Pennoni Associates Inc., a leading engineering and design consulting firm is looking for a qualified professional for the position of Traffic Engineer / Designer to join our Transportation Division in our Mechanicsburg, PA office. The Mechanicsburg office serves as a base for multiple engineering disciplines including: Municipal, Structural, Survey, Site/Civil, and Traffic giving the candidate a chance to interact with a wide variety of experienced professionals.

Pennoni Associates is seeking an enthusiastic and outgoing Senior Engineer to join the Transportation Division in Mechanicsburg, PA. The Mechanicsburg, PA office serves as a base for multiple engineering disciplines including: Municipal, Structural, Survey, Site/Civil, Highway, and Traffic, giving you the chance to interact with a wide array of experienced professionals. Responsibilities will include: project management of highway/traffic projects, assisting project engineers with the completion of highway/traffic assignments. Other duties will include working on various highway/traffic related assignments in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland.

Rybinski Engineering

Rybinski Engineering is seeking a Traffic Engineer with 5-10 years of experience, able to manage a diverse workload, possessing traffic engineering expertise that can be used to perform engineering and check others’ traffic engineering work with a high degree of quality. Candidate must be knowledgeable about engineering practices and design standards in Delaware, Pennsylvania and Maryland. Work to include, but not be limited to studies, design plans, research, project management in both traditional traffic engineering as well as innovative technology solutions. Excellent communication and organizational skills are a firm requirement.

To apply, e-mail resume to info@rybinski.com with “Traffic Engineer” in subject line of e-mail.

HDR

Plymouth Meeting, PA

HDR has partnered with clients to shape communities and push the boundaries of what’s possible since 1917. We specialize in engineering, architecture, environmental and construction services. With nearly 10,000 employees in more than 225 locations around the world, we think global and act local.

HDR is in search of a talented Traffic Engineer to join our growing Plymouth Meeting office. The primary duties of the Traffic Engineer include working as part of a traffic team, under the direction of the senior project engineer/manager on a variety of traffic forecasting, analysis and design needs for a variety of transportation projects. Operational traffic analysis may include using a variety of modeling tools ranging from highway capacity software to complex micro simulation models in order analyze everything from isolated intersections and roundabouts to urban arterials and freeway segments. Traffic design may include accident analysis and mitigation strategies, signing, striping, traffic signals, lighting, and Intelligent Traffic Systems (ITS) including real time traffic information, adaptive signal control, closed circuit television (CCTV), and variable message signs (VMS).

Qualifications:

Bachelor’s degree in Civil Engineering required, Master’s degree preferred. PE required, Pennsylvania preferred. 5+ years related traffic experience or roadway design. Computer skills using Microsoft office, Synchro/Sim Traffic, HCS, AutoCAD and Microstation preferred. Strong verbal and written skills. Ability to multi-task while working on many projects at once. An attitude and commitment to being an active participant of our employee-owned culture is a must.

Apply Online:

https://hdr.taleo.netcareersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=139239
Central Area Technical Lunch  
Where: PTC Large Boardroom, Middletown, PA  
When: Oct 30, 2015

Central Area Happy Hour  
Where: Al’s of Hampden, Enola, PA  
When: Nov 2, 2015

Check www.masite.org for regular calendar updates for 2015

FIocco Engineering will help you meet FHWA’s requirement for safe speed curve signage

Fiocco Engineering (Fe), a Pennsylvania-based engineering firm with a safety-first focus, introduces its partnership with Rieker Inc., the leader in ball-bank instruments, to provide a complete service for establishing uniform safe advisory curve speeds along a roadway.

Fe is proud to be the only authorized service provider in Pennsylvania to utilize Rieker Inc.’s proven scientific Curve Advisory Reporting Service (CARS) to determine safe running speeds on curves. This partnership can help state, county, and local government agencies meet the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) mandate for surveying all roadway horizontal curves by 2019.

For more information on this target compliance date, please refer to Page I-4 and Pages 110 to 114 of the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

Rieker’s CARS service reflects the operating procedures of Federal, State, and local roads and highways, based upon the “Speed Zone Theory” and “85th Percentile Speeds,” as defined in the MUTCD, and adopted by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE). Although FHWA is mandating the safe running speed requirement, the motorists in your jurisdiction deserve your consideration of this vital low cost safety improvement!

Fiocco Engineering has certified and experienced engineers that can effectively and efficiently help you and your jurisdiction improve highway safety along a section of roadway or throughout your entire roadway system to satisfy the requirement for all roadways’ horizontal curves to be properly signed and posted with accurate and current safe running speeds.

Additional information on this service can be found at www.fioccoengineering.com or by calling Joe Fiocco at (215) 355-2089.
Roadway legislation fails in Delaware Senate


Months of bipartisan discussions proved unproductive on Thursday when Senate lawmakers rejected legislation to provide new revenue for Delaware’s Transportation Trust Fund that would begin to address a $780 million, six-year deficit in Delaware’s roadway funding system.

Political gridlock won out, as Democrats were unable to persuade a single Republican to vote for the legislation, which would have raised a variety of motor vehicle fees to provide $24 million in new trust fund revenue.

The funding measure needed at least one Republican vote in the Senate to achieve the three-fifths majority necessary to pass higher taxes and fees under Delaware constitutional language.

After the vote, Transportation Secretary Jennifer Cohan left the Senate chamber carrying a block of concrete that had fallen from I-495, a prop wielded by Democrats as proof that Delaware’s roadway infrastructure is crumbling.

"We need courage," Cohan said. "This is what we need to do for Delawareans. It’s not about politics at this point; it is about doing what's right for Delawareans."

The legislation, which passed the Delaware House with only Democratic support last month, might still have life. Democrats could strike a deal that would bring Republicans to the table before Tuesday, when lawmakers adjourn the current legislative session in Dover, and bring the legislation back to the Senate for a second vote.

But negotiations over raising new funding for transportation have been an unmitigated disaster that raises questions about whether Democrats, who control majorities in both legislative chambers, are able to work across the aisle and pass significant reforms through the General Assembly.

Gov. Jack Markell initiated infrastructure talks in mid-2013, but lawmakers were unable to reach a deal. Facing re-election last year, Democrats roundly rejected Markell’s plan to raise Delaware’s per-gallon gas tax by 10 cents to pay for road and bridge improvements.

For weeks, Republicans have demanded reforms in exchange for their support on the fee legislation that failed in the Senate on Thursday. They wanted to substantially reform Delaware’s prevailing wage program, raising thresholds before higher wages apply on public works projects.

Republicans also sought a lock-box amendment that would force state officials to use new revenue on capital projects, not administrative costs. But top lawmakers from both parties were unable to reach an agreement before Thursday’s vote.

"What we have before us is a bill with no reforms associated with it," Senate Minority Whip Greg Lavelle, a Sharples Republican, said in Senate floor testimony. "We have promises. We're not here to vote on promises. We're here to vote on solid reforms to fix a system that there is widespread agreement on is broken."

Top House Democrats said Republicans walked away from fee increases they helped negotiate.

"Today they showed their colors and they made public safety a partisan issue," said Democratic House Majority Leader Valerie Longhurst.

In his own floor testimony, Sen. David Sokola, a Newark Democrat, said lawmakers "have a responsibility to start to act" to fund Delaware’s transportation system. Delaware needs more funding over the next six years to break ground on 45 unfunded projects. Those projects include safety improvements at the intersection of U.S. 40 and Del. 896 in Glasgow, a widening to relieve congestion on Del. 1 from Tybouts Corner to Del. 273 and a new interchange along Del. 1 in Milford at Northeast Front Street.

Markell and lawmakers have contributed to the funding gap by shifting millions in revenue from the Transportation Trust Fund and into Delaware’s operating budget to cover higher operational expenses. The current-year budget moved $40 million from the transportation program to cover higher health care and education costs.

Delaware’s next budget, which will likely pass the Legislature on Tuesday, contains a legal provision that would permanently redirect the $40 million from roadway projects to cover operational expenses.

"We are abusing the trust fund," Lavelle said.

Senate President Pro Tem Patricia Blevins, the Senate’s top Democrat, held out hope Thursday that the legislation could pass by the time lawmakers adjourn on Tuesday.

"The roads, bridges and rail lines in our state are aging and it’s disappointing that we were unable to come together to address that today. Investing in our infrastructure is critical," Blevins said in a statement. "I remain confident that ultimately, leaders from all four caucuses will come together in good faith and find a workable solution that moves Delaware forward."
DRPA boss finds improv comedy good for more than just laughs
Chuck Darrow - June 26, 2015 – Daily News

IT'S PROBABLY safe to assume that most folks who take up improvisational comedy do so with the intent of making audiences laugh. John Hanson had other ideas.

By day, you can find Hanson in the Camden waterfront headquarters of the Delaware River Port Authority, where he serves as the CEO of the entity that oversees such crucial regional assets as the ports on both sides of the Delaware, the PATCO Hi-Speed Line and the Ben Franklin, Betsy Ross and Walt Whitman bridges.

But, recently, the 55-year-old Cherry Hill resident has been spending some of his evenings at the Adrienne Theatre complex, on Sansom Street, where he has been studying improvisational comedy - the discipline that is based on creating spur-of-the-moment gags - at Philly Improv Theater (or, as it is known, PHIT). And, while Hanson, who admitted to being the "class clown" in his youth, has no problem with the entertainment aspect of improv, that wasn't his primary motivation for taking the classes.

During a recent phone call, Hanson explained that a favorite author of his, Daniel Pink, has written about "improvisational music and long-form improv [comedy] as a way to foster collaboration and stimulate creativity."

Pink, he said, sees improv as a way to "build teamwork and mutual support. In the business world, you want to change an organization. And that's what we're trying to do at the [DRPA]. "I just decided I wanted to do it."

Hanson was likewise inspired by author Robert Greenleaf's philosophy of "servant leadership," which, the DRPA chief explained, means "the way that you lead is by serving, so your power comes not from hierarchal authority, but through your ability to provide value regarding the stakeholders or constituents you're supposed to serve.

"You build the organization around this idea of stewardship and service to the community. What you're really doing is imagining a new and different world, at least in the context of your organization. And that's the skill set you get in improv.

"You're constantly establishing a base reality and envisioning all these new and different worlds, and I thought I can learn that skill set [at PHIT]."

Hanson happily admitted that studying at PHIT has wrought some fundamental changes in the way he conducts himself in the executive suite.

"The biggest thing for me," he said, "is that I find that I am more patient. Not that it's been this dramatic transformation. However, I'm an accountant, and I'm a guy who was given to [saying], 'Just get to the bottom line,' or, alternatively, 'Just give me the punch line.'

"And one of the things that my instructors at PHIT really beat out of me was my desire to throw one-liners or puns out there. I realized, every time you do that, you sell out the scene, you sell out your scene partner. It's not good. The power in an improvisational scene is [to] let it build, see what direction it goes in and let everybody contribute and see where the scene goes to in its own natural, organic end.

"So now I find myself in a meeting where I would tend to interrupt and say, 'What's the punchline?' Now I consciously say to myself, 'Just let this play out.'"

One unexpected result of his classes has been the sheer delight he finds in working with his PHIT classmates, most of whom are in their twenties and thirties. Another is that doing improv has transcended his original goals.

"It's no longer about me trying to get an edge in the business world," he said. "This is now what I do for a hobby, this is what I do for fun. I enjoy playing with the teams I play with, and I enjoy the relationships I've developed.

"I just enjoy the whole PHIT community and I would encourage anybody who's thinking about trying to develop a sense of community in their life, or even just looking for something fun to do, [to consider improv classes]. It's a great, great thing to do."

$5 Port Authority ConnectCard fee runs into opposition

June 30, 2015 by Jon Schmitz / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Port Authority's plan to charge a one-time fee of up to $5 for ConnectCards, the smartcards used by riders to pay their fares electronically, got less than rave reviews at a public hearing Tuesday.

But it seemed unlikely that negative comments from riders would dissuade the authority board from approving the fee. The effective date already has been set for Aug. 1, and the budget adopted by the board for the coming fiscal year assumes a small amount of revenue coming in from the fee.
“No decision has been made,” board Chairman Robert Hurley said after hearing from several riders who thought the fee would be counterproductive. The full board is scheduled to vote July 24.

About 350,000 ConnectCards have been issued for free since the authority launched the system in 2012, and those riders won’t be charged. Anyone who gets a ConnectCard this month also will avoid the fee, which would be charged for new and replacement cards starting next month. Cards can be obtained at the authority’s Downtown Service Center on Smithfield Street and at most Giant Eagle supermarkets.

Once a fee is in place, the cards will be available for purchase at vending machines at major stops and stations on bus and rail routes, authority CEO Ellen McLean said.

If a card needs to be replaced because it malfunctions, the rider won’t be charged for the new card, authority spokesman Jim Ritchie said.

Several speakers at Tuesday’s hearing noted that the cards, which the rider taps at the farebox, are benefiting riders by speeding up boarding and alighting and saving the authority money by reducing its cash handling expenses.

“Any charge for new ConnectCards, particularly a charge as exorbitant as $5, would be a great disincentive to persuading new and occasional riders to pay via ConnectCard,” said Glenn Walsh of Mt. Lebanon, a longtime transit activist.

“I not only oppose the $5 ConnectCard fee, I believe we should be getting a discount for using them,” said Edward Wagner of Brighton Heights. That is an idea that the authority has under consideration as it reviews all of its fare policies.

Earl Pearson of Munhall said if a fee is charged, it should be returned as cash value on the rider’s card if the rider registers it with the agency. Such an incentive is in place in Chicago, he said.

Linda Warman of Duquesne, who has used a card since February 2014, said she researched the issue and learned that ConnectCards cost about $3 to produce. “So where’s the extra $2 going to go? I think it’s a travesty to charge anyone $5 to replace these,” she said.

Molly Nichols of Pittsburghers for Public Transit urged the authority to seek a sponsorship to cover the cost, and if a fee is imposed, to waive it for lower-income residents and people with disabilities.

Credit – billypenn.com

Poll shows national divide over increasing money for transit

By JOAN LOWY and EMILY SWANSON The Associated Press June 30, 2015

WASHINGTON — A slight majority of Americans prefer living in a single-family house in the suburbs or a rural area with more land, even if it means driving long distances to get to work or run errands, according to a poll by The Associated Press-GfK.

However, a significant minority, 44 percent, would choose an apartment or smaller house in an urban area that comes with a short drive to work or the opportunity to use public transportation, bike or walk. The split also has a political aspect: Sixty-seven percent of Republicans and 53 percent of independents prefer suburban or rural living, while 55 percent of Democrats prefer urban areas.

The share of Americans who prefer suburban or rural living — 53 percent — is identical to the share who say the government should increase spending to build and improve roads, bridges and interstate highways. About 1 in 3 think current spending levels are about right, while just over 1 in 10 would like to see less money spent on roads.

Many states are struggling to maintain current spending levels, and Congress has been unable to come up with a long-term plan to pay for highway aid that closes the gap between current spending and federal gas tax revenue.

Americans are more divided over building and improving public transportation such as rail and bus systems. Four in 10 say spending on public transportation should be increased, but just as many say current spending is about right. Only 18 percent say transit spending should be cut.

Contrary to the widely held notion that the millennial generation is flocking to cities and giving up their cars, younger people are not significantly more or less likely than older people to prefer urban living with a shorter commute and access to public transit, the poll found.

Matthew Wild, 33, an airline pilot living in the Los Angeles suburb of Hawthorne, said he favors increasing spending on public transit and highways. The region’s freeways “take a real beating” from the traffic and need to be maintained, he said, but no new lanes should be added.
“We definitely don’t need to be expanding freeways anymore,” Wild said. “We’ve maxed out.”

He cited a highway near his home that was recently widened and now is as full as ever. He does, however, strongly support building more light rail transit locally and high-speed rail between California cities.

Wild said he’d much rather take a convenient local train than fight traffic in his car. He currently takes trains only a few times a year because there are no direct routes from where he lives to the places he wants to go, and indirect routes take too long, he said.

“The big problem with L.A. is that, given the lack of public transportation, sitting in traffic in your own car is still faster than taking public transit,” Wild said.

Jane McEntire, 62, who lives in Cartersville, Georgia, on the northwest fringe of the Atlanta metropolitan area, says traffic is horrible and getting worse.

Even so, she’d rather keep spending on roads and cut spending on public transportation. She says she’s lost confidence in the ability of state and local transportation officials to make improvements and not fritter money away on wasteful projects.

She is particularly incensed that officials used federal transit aid to build a slow-moving streetcar line in downtown Atlanta that is used primarily by tourists.

“They look really cute, but as far as usefulness — no,” she said. “When you have federal dollars that are coming into a state that are available and you spend it on these cars in Atlanta that go six or eight blocks back and forth ... Why didn’t they take that money and spend it on something to help commuters?”

The AP-GfK Poll of 1,077 adults was conducted online from April 23-27 using a sample drawn from GfK’s probability-based KnowledgePanel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 3.4 percentage points.

Respondents were first selected randomly using phone or mail survey methods and later interviewed online. People selected for KnowledgePanel who didn’t otherwise have access to the Internet were provided access at no cost to them.

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**City plans to produce $100,000 safety video on bicycles, pedestrians**

$25,000 in local tax dollars would match federal grant, if city council gives OK

By Bob Mayo - http://www.wtae.com/

PITTSBURGH — The city of Pittsburgh wants to spend up to $100,000 to produce a bicycle and pedestrian safety video, but City Council wants more information about the plan from the Peduto administration before authorizing it.

Legislation set for a preliminary vote in council Wednesday would match $75,000 in federal money channeled through the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation with $25,000 in city taxpayer money. The federal grant money is from the U.S. Transportation Department's C-MAQ (congestion mitigation and air quality) education program. The city would hire a yet-to-be determined contractor to produce the video.

“So that we can have safer streets in Pittsburgh. This is about how we are going to share the streets. How bikes and cars and pedestrians are going to share the streets of Pittsburgh,” said city planning director Ray Gastil, who will return before council to answer more questions about the plan Wednesday. Council delayed a vote after some council mentions questioned the spending.

“I think not at this time. I think the timing couldn’t be worse, to be quite honest with you,” said Councilwoman Theresa Kail-Smith. "$25,000 can go a long way in building maintenance, so I think, at this time, it may not be the best use."

Smith and some others on council say the city's proposed matching money could be better spent on other capital needs, including repairing police stations and firehouses. The advocacy group Bike Pittsburgh supports the idea and believes public education on bike, pedestrian, and driver safety is needed.

“We think it’s fantastic. There’s clearly a disconnect between people using our streets and the rules of the road,” said Scott Bricker, Bike Pittsburgh executive director.

The city's planning director said spending $100,000 to produce the video would be an effective use of the funding.

“We have a lot of challenges. We have narrow streets, we have challenging topography. All of that is part of what we’re going to try to make sure we address in this video,” Gastil said. "I think if we do it right, if we hold the right type of meetings, raise a lot of consciousness about it, it'll make sure people get to (see) it."

Some pedestrians on the street of downtown Pittsburgh were skeptical.

"You can make all the videos you want. This is Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh has one rule: the rules apply to everybody but me," said William Billings, from Brookline.

He says many Pittsburgh area drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians ignore existing signs and traffic signals.

Gastil said the federal funds were part of the city's 2013 capital budget.

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**Can Funny Traffic Signs Save Drivers' Lives?**

Highway agencies are increasingly using humor and wit to try to get people to drive safer.

By Daniel C. Vock | JULY 13, 2015 www.governing.com/

Utah transportation officials call the three months between Memorial Day and Labor Day the state’s “100 Deadliest Days,” because of a surge in highway deaths that regularly...
occur when residents take summer trips. The fatality rate is 35 percent higher during that time than during the rest of the year.

Utah officials are also worried because the number of traffic fatalities in the state, which hit the lowest point in half a century in 2012, has been inching up for the last two and a half years. So this summer, Utah will begin a tactic that’s increasingly popular among transportation agencies: Using electronic highway signs to display catchy, and sometimes even funny, messages to make motorists focus on highway safety.

Every Monday, it’s a new message. One week signs displayed “Steering wheel: not a hands-free device.” Another week, they showed “Turn signals: the original instant message.” To discourage speeding, the agency used “It’s not a race, leave some space.”

The lines alone won’t get Utah to its goal of zero road deaths, but officials in the state -- like their counterparts elsewhere -- hope the messages will get people talking and thinking about highway safety.

“I don’t know that anybody is going to say that an electronic message board is going to change the world, but it can be part of that plan,” said John Gleason, a spokesman for the Utah Department of Transportation.

A study commissioned by the Federal Highway Administration shows that drivers in four cities responded positively to more straightforward safety messages, such as “Click it or ticket” and “Slow down, save a life.” Survey respondents said the on-road messages would be more likely to change their behavior than messages shared in other media, such as TV commercials. The study did not track drivers’ actual behavior in response to the signs. The messages were less effective for younger drivers, those with lower education levels and those who received a ticket or were in a crash in the last five years, according to the survey.

Utah launched its effort this spring with “That seat belt looks good on you,” which is still the message that received the most positive feedback. The state only displays the safety messages on Mondays, but it also shows the year-to-date count of road deaths every Friday.

Gleason said Utah got the idea, along with some of the messages, from other states. Massachusetts, for example, got a lot of attention last year for a campaign that played off of the regional dialect, with signs such as “Changing lanes? Use yah blinkah” and “Make yah ma proud, wear yah seatbelt.”

Iowa focused most of its messages on five driver behaviors: distracted driving, sober driving, drowsy driving, seat belt use and speeding. But the agency will also address seasonal topics, such as work zone safety and awareness of pedestrians and cyclists.

Iowa road deaths in the last two years, while the Transportation Department has displayed the signs, are lower than in prior years. At this point it’s impossible to say how much of a role the messages played in that decline, but Iowa recorded 365 road deaths in 2012, compared with 317 in 2013 and 321 in 2014.

“Our more attainable goal is to get recognition in people noticing the boards, talking about the boards,” Henry said. The agency hopes the messages will “enter [drivers’] consciousness as they’re getting behind the wheel.”

The Illinois Tollway, which operates a number of highways primarily in the Chicago region, asked residents this spring to propose safety messages and then, using an online vote, to choose which ones would end up on electronic message boards. More than 22,000 people participated in the contest.

“The new safety messages have only been displayed along our roadways for about two and a half months, so it’s too soon to have any measurable results,” said spokesman Dan Rozek. “But the contest in and of itself was successful in focusing media and public attention on the public safety challenges.”

Rarely used Pa. Turnpike call boxes could be phased out

July 13, 2015, By Michael Hyland http://fox43.com/

Every time you drive onto the Pennsylvania Turnpike, you see a reminder that they’re there. More than a thousand call boxes line the highway, ready in case you have an emergency.

You pull the cover down, push the button that corresponds with the issue you’re having, and then someone drives to your location to deal with it. If that sounds antiquated, it is.
Last year that number dropped to just 1,206. It costs the
Back in 2000, the call boxes were used 18,571 times. But,
quickly.

Cameras, cell phones and an smartphone app call Waze
find out whether there’s an incident on the Turnpike.
Nowadays the call boxes are just one of several ways to
useful as they used to be.

The call boxes were first approved in the late 80s, but
are among the many ways employees at the Turnpike
Commission can find out about incidents much more
quickly.

Back in 2000, the call boxes were used 18,571 times. But,
last year that number dropped to just 1,206. It costs the
Turnpike about $200,000 a year to maintain these boxes.
On average, that’s $165.84 per call.

“In most cases we’ve already been informed by a
cellphone call either before or right after that,” said
DeFebo.

So, some state legislators are asking why not just get rid
of them? The law says the Turnpike Commission can’t.

“The Turnpike Commission must maintain those call boxes
even if no one uses them, and clearly that’s a waste of
money,” said state Rep. John Lawrence (R-
Lancaster/Chester)

Lawrence says the solution is simple. He’s sponsored a
bill (click here) that would change one word in the state
code, giving the Turnpike Commission the choice to use
the call boxes as opposed to the mandate to use them.

“Clearly it’s something the public has shown that there’s
not as much demand for as there once was,” said
Lawrence.

Turnpike staffers are working on a plan to phase out the
boxes. Likely, it wouldn’t happen all at once, said DeFebo.
There may be a few left in operation along parts of the
Turnpike where cell service is poor.

“Certainly, we’ve got some work to do on that to identify
how that would happen and do some more studying but,
we plan to present some options to Turnpike
Commissioners at some point and allow them to decide on
what the next step would be,” said DeFebo.

Rep. Lawrence’s bill recently passed the House
Transportation Committee unanimously. There’s no
indication how soon the full House will consider the
proposal.

Toll collectors to disappear on Beaver Valley
Expressway
By Jon Schmitz / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette 8/3/2015

The Pennsylvania Turnpike hopes to do away with toll
collectors and tossing coins into baskets on the 16.5-mile
Beaver Valley Expressway next summer.

Plans call for implementing all-electronic collection on the
expressway, which is the tolled portion of Interstate 376
stretching from Chippewa in Beaver County to New Castle
in Lawrence County.

People with E-ZPass would be billed the same as today,
but those without the transponders would have their
license plates photographed. They would be billed monthly
by mail for the equivalent of the former cash toll.

Cash tolls are about 40 percent more than E-ZPass tolls.

The Beaver Valley conversion is one of two on the
turnpike’s schedule for next year. Beyond that, it has no
specific plans to expand all-electronic tolling on the 550-
mile toll road system, spokesman Bill Capone said.

Shortly after the first of the year, the turnpike expects to
begin all-electronic tolling at the Delaware River Bridge at
the eastern end of the turnpike mainline. Westbound
drivers would pass under a gantry at highway speed, with
E-ZPass drivers billed $5. Those without E-ZPass would
have their license plate photographed and a bill mailed.
They will pay $6.75 per trip.

“There’s no cash option, no toll collectors there,” Mr.
Capone said. No tolls will be charged on the eastbound
side of the bridge. Toll plazas at the bridge will be
removed.

At the same time, a new eastern terminus for the
turnpike’s ticket system will open about 6 miles west of the
bridge, with the debut of the Neshaminy Falls toll plaza.
The change is similar to one made several years ago here,
when a new toll plaza at Cranberry became the western
end of the ticket system, Mr. Capone said.

At Neshaminy Falls, drivers in both directions who have E-
ZPass will be able to maintain highway speed in passing
the plaza. Cash customers will stop to either get a ticket or
pay a toll.

The debut of cashless tolling on the Beaver County
Expressway will depend in some respects on how well the
rollout of the all-electronic system goes at the eastern end
of the turnpike. “The schedule’s highly dependent on how
things go with the conversion of the bridge,” Mr. Capone
said.

When the expressway conversion does happen, drivers
will still have to slow down at the mainline tolling points, as
the plan does not call for installing gantries that can read
the transponders of cars moving at highway speeds.

Conversion of the entire turnpike system to cashless
tolling is still a long way off, Mr. Capone said. While all-
electronic collections are in use on dozens of toll facilities
in the U.S., “no one has tried converting a 500-mile
system,” he said. “To say you want to do it is one thing,
but it’s a pretty significant undertaking.

“We’re going to proceed cautiously and slowly and make
sure we get it right before we even think of expanding.”

Almost All "Safe" Drivers Do This Terrifying Thing
Behind the Wheel
By Hannah Orenstein - http://www.seventeen.com/

If you didn't get the message during Driver's Ed., let me
remind you: Using your phone while driving is not safe.
The potential for getting distracted is too high — why risk it? But, I know, I know, it’s tempting to just steal a glance at your screen when you hear a new text come in, or just quickly check how many new likes you’ve gotten on Instagram. Trust me, I get it. But one in four car accidents involves a distracted driver using a cell phone. Car crashes are the number one cause of death among teens. Those two seconds you take to check your phone could kill you — but unfortunately, most teens aren’t taking that risk seriously.

According to a new study by Liberty Mutual Insurance and SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions), 88 percent of teens who consider themselves “safe” drivers admit to using apps on their phone while on the road. The most popular apps to use behind the wheel are Snapchat (38 percent of teen drivers), Instagram (20 percent), and Twitter (17 percent). Yikes! The study blames the alarming stats on FOMO.

In other terrifying news, the study found that 56 percent of teens have fallen asleep or nearly fallen asleep behind the wheel. The leading cause of feeling sleepy while driving is a busy schedule, which should come as no surprise to anyone who’s had to juggle homework, extra-curriculars, and an after-school job, yet most of us don’t think twice about jumping in the car after a crazy busy day to drive home. (Partying only accounts for 10 percent of sleep-related driving scares, which goes to show that teens are way more responsible than adults give them credit for.)

Please, stay safe. If you have a friend or sibling in the car with you, they can answer your incoming texts; if you’re driving solo, pull over on the side of the road, or even better, find a rest stop or parking lot, if you absolutely need to check your phone in the middle of a drive. Whatever’s on your phone just isn’t worth your safety.

Pennsylvania Turnpike to test out cashless interchanges next year

E-ZPass and license plate-scanner program will be rolled out at Beaver Valley Expressway and Delaware River Bridge - [http://www.wtae.com/](http://www.wtae.com/) 9/28/2015

PITTSBURGH — Pennsylvania Turnpike officials plan to launch a pilot program next year in which two busy interchanges will convert to a cashless system.

The Pittsburgh Tribune-Review reports the program will require drivers at the Beaver Valley Expressway and the Delaware River Bridge in Bucks County to use E-ZPass or have their license plates scanned by cameras and pay a monthly bill.

Turnpike Commission Chairman Sean Logan says the cashless system will require upgrades to interchanges, technology and safeguards to protect drivers’ data.

Logan says he’s not sure eliminating toll collector jobs will save money. They earn between $19.76 to $22.69 an hour.

A spokesman with the International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association says electronic tolling helps free the flow of traffic.
2015 MASITE SPONSORS
Like the previous issue, showing a brief historical pictorial view of Delaware’s transportation ‘early’ years...

More from New Jersey, and West Virginia in future editions!

Respectfully submitted,

Dean J. Kaiser, P.E., PTOE

2015 MASITE Newsletter Editor