



great lakes REPORTER

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dan Sorek, Prein&Newhof

Happy Spring fellow Michigan Chapter Members!

As days get longer, snow piles melt and new life springs forth, the work of public works continues with new seasonal challenges. There is a lot of excitement in the air with the Michigan Chapter as we get ready for our next Great Lakes Expo at Boyne Mountain. I look forward to seeing many of you there soon!

It seems like just a week ago the gavel was handed to me at last year's GLX and I have been honored to serve the state membership this past year and meet so many of you across the state. There will be many opportunities to continue to serve as our Chapter gets ready to host the National APWA North American Snow Conference in April 2025. I encourage you to get involved with your Branch at the local level to share knowledge, develop relationships, network with others and mentor our next generation of public works leaders. This can be done through social events like sporting events or lunches or educational and leadership events, like classes.

If you know me, you've heard me say that I've learned a lot through my mistakes, and I do like to share these with others so that they don't have to learn the hard way like I have. We don't build watches and we aren't inventing wheels, so nothing needs to be held close to the chest as trade secrets. I love sharing what I've learned, both good and bad. I've been extremely blessed throughout my career to have been exposed to so many different experiences and practices and it is important to share these experiences with others through organizations like APWA.

As I get ready to pass on the gavel to our next President, I am truly grateful for my opportunity to lead and represent the Michigan Chapter this past year. We are set up financially for the future and I look forward to continuing to offer input as our Chapter looks at strategic planning and continuing to reach out to our next generation of leaders with our excellent Young Professionals Committee.

Thank you for all you do and thank you for the honor to serve you over the past year. I appreciate each one of you.

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SIDEWALKS: PROVIDING SAFETY AND ECONOMIC VALUE TO YOUR COMMUNITY

By Mark Bonkowski, President, Precision Concrete Cutting

Sidewalks are an essential part of our communities; they are public spaces that promote the health, safety, and social interaction of our residents in which they serve. In addition to being a nod to the culture and sophistication of city management, good sidewalks are raising property values. If you are not familiar with “Walk Score” or “Walkability” rankings, you will be soon.

The physical necessity of sidewalks is clear from a compliance and safety standpoint. “Sidewalks play an important role in transportation, as they provide a safe path for people to walk along that is separated from the motorized

preventable; providing good sidewalks that are separated from the travel lanes could prevent up to 88 percent of “walking along roadway crashes.”³

Sidewalk compliance and safety should be a given for your community. However, today our sidewalks and pedestrian walkways also reflect the progressiveness of a community and its leaders. A walkable community is important to our seniors, youth, and everyone in-between. This became a big focus during the COVID-19 pandemic and has only grown since. The sidewalks are an infrastructure for social connectivity, health maintenance and even

“To move your community forward with walkability you need a program to assure quality walkways. A good municipal sidewalk program typically has four components: Where you start, how you gather information, how and who performs repairs, and where to go with the data and asset information on your walkway maintenance program.”

traffic.”¹ Compliance really came to be with The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), passed in 1990, which set out to assure that people can be mobile and traverse sidewalks without barriers and reduce the risk of trips and falls. Even though it was adopted in the 90’s, most communities are still trying to upgrade sidewalk infrastructure to be compliant. ADA compliance is for everyone, evident to most of us, personally, as we age. As for safety, the statistics speak for themselves. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reported that in 2021 there were 7,388 pedestrians killed and an estimated 60,000 injured in traffic crashes in the United States.² Tragedies like these are

economic growth. The real estate industry has taken note of this, using the term “walkability” to incorporate the value of quality sidewalks with the sale of homes in your communities.

Zillow Real Estate (Zillow.com) has the “Walk Score” ranking on their listings to help buyers make choices based on walkability:

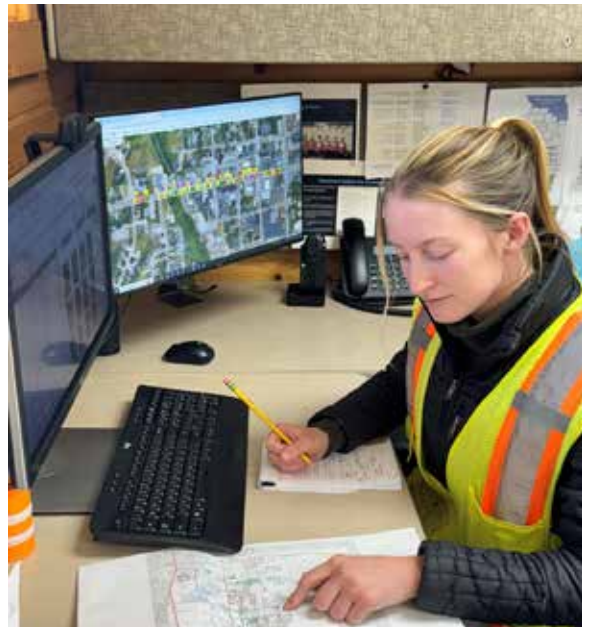
“How walkable is it? Are there sidewalks and pedestrian-friendly crosswalks, or will you be walking to the dog park along a busy street with no shoulder?”



It's best to start with small, focused areas when planning for sidewalk repairs.

Walk Score (WalkScore.com), originally launched back in 2007, uses an algorithm that awards points based on the distance to the closest amenities to determine the walkability of an individual home. For buyers, this offers a way to gauge how walker-friendly a home is. For sellers, they must consider the conditions of sidewalks around them when pricing and marketing their home. A visit to www.walkscore.com will allow you to see how properties in your community rank. The walk score has a significant impact on the value of homes; every point on the walk score increases the value of a home by almost 1%.⁴ Buyers are clearly willing to pay more for properties that have higher walkability rankings. The increase in property values directly increases property tax revenue for communities that enable walkability. This benefits the local economy and promotes overall community health.

“Walkability reflects overall walking conditions in an area. Walkability takes into account the quality of pedestrian facilities, roadway conditions, land use patterns, community support, security and comfort for walking. Walkability can be evaluated at various scales. At a site scale, walkability is affected by the quality of pathways (sidewalks), building accessways and related facilities. At a street or neighborhood level, it is affected by the existence of sidewalks and crosswalks, and roadway conditions.”⁵



Data management and GIS mapping of your sidewalk inventory is a helpful tool when deciding what to repair.

The younger generation is especially attracted to walkable communities, as they place less importance on automobile ownership and are more environmentally conscious than generations prior. A 2023 survey by the National Association of Realtors shows that “young adults prioritize walkability the most, with 90% of Gen Z and Millennial respondents indicating they’d pay more for a home in a walkable community; one-third say they’d “pay a lot more...”⁶ The demand for these walkable communities is predicted to grow as our country’s young adults move into the real estate market.

To move your community forward with walkability you need a program to assure quality walkways. A good municipal sidewalk program typically has four components: Where you start, how you gather information, how and who performs repairs, and where to go with the data and asset information on your walkway maintenance program.

APPROACH: Your municipality may feel overwhelmed with the number of sidewalks you have to repair. It’s best to start with a small, focused area, confirm your walkway specifications, and determine how you will fund the program. Some ordinances require property owners to fund repairs, whereas others have formal millage funded programs. Whatever the case, criteria for sidewalk defects and specifications for new sidewalks must be determined and documented.

ASSESSMENT: The first step in assessing the state of your sidewalks is knowing what you have. Map out high-traffic areas and areas of special needs, such as senior centers and school routes. These will provide guidance on where to start assessing the state of your current sidewalks as well as what needs to be done to bring them into compliance. From there, perform field surveys to identify specific locations of noncompliance with your municipalities' specifications and or ADA requirements.

REPAIR: While many communities have competitively-bid sidewalk replacement contracts administered by Public Works, there are sidewalk repair/maintenance solutions beyond demolish and replace that should be considered. The alternatives to replacement will allow you to maximize the budget in a small focus area. This budget and repair solution can later be expanded and extrapolated to the rest of your community when you determine what works best for you. There are numerous options available for repairing your sidewalks including grinding, mud-jacking, patching, and saw cutting. When considering which option is best for you, it is important to keep in mind cost per area, aesthetics, compliance, and time as well as the overall cost of repair. Shutting down sidewalks for long periods of time or producing slurry that contaminates storm sewers are hidden indirect costs not factored into bids for traditional sidewalk repair methods.

DATA MANAGEMENT: Data management is often overlooked when choosing a sidewalk repair program. Knowing what to repair, when it was repaired, and where the repairs were done is important in maximizing the effectiveness of your program and assuring budget compliance. Good data management typically involves GPS mapping, readability and easy access to data. Ultimately having the information put in your GIS will enable asset management and reporting.

As the seasons warm and citizens become more active, your walkway traffic will increase, ESPECIALLY this year with the mild winter we had (although our official spring now appears to be our "winter" in Michigan). Making sure sidewalks are walkable and well maintained is an important part of your infrastructure, by which you are judged every day. When available and properly maintained, quality walkways will increase the health, welfare, and the value of the communities they serve.

www.MichiganSafeSidewalks.com

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ROADS SCHOLAR PROGRAM IMPACTS LIVES

By Steve Ludwig, Program Facilitator



Hopefully you have already heard of the great things the APWA Michigan Roads Scholar Program is doing for frontline public works employees in our state. The amazing variety of technical and practical knowledge gained in three years of attendance is helping teammates from across the state become much more valuable in their roles.

While the professional knowledge gained is impressive, I'd like to speak a bit about how the program is impacting our teams on a personal level. Part of the model for our program is to help teammates look at who they are on team, and how they might think differently about themselves and the people they work with. Each year we have sessions that cover some type of personal growth topic such as the Real Colors personality instrument, which helps them understand personality types and how best to get along with others by understanding we do not all process the same way.

“From speaking about communication and choices, to what it is like to be a front-line leader, the program is changing lives, not only technically, but personally as well.”

We also speak about the actions and behaviors it takes to be a good teammate. From speaking about communication and choices, to what it is like to be a front-line leader, the program is changing lives, not only technically, but personally as well. I can share many stories of teammates that have attended, and in their time with us have been promoted at least once, or shared stories about how their home life was improved by something they learned. While the program cannot take the credit for these



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successes, we are sure that the time spent with the passionate committee for this program is fostering the perspectives, growth, and motivation of many attendees.

In 2023, I came home from the program. My wife handed me a folded piece of paper. She said someone from the class handed it to her on the last day and said, "Please give this to Steve when he is having a bad day." When I opened the note, it simply said, "Thank you, Steve. You make me want to be a better person..."

While this program does an excellent job of offering impactful training, it also cares for your teammates in a nurturing manner that shows many of them a new way to be successful in their careers, and possibly their personal lives. What better way for an organization to show their teams the care our new generations are demanding than to send them where we understand who they are, what their challenges are, and how to mentor them to a better reality on your team?

We are so grateful to be able to provide this opportunity for some of the most valuable people in our buildings. We are grateful you trust us with this mission. And hopefully, together, we will continue to raise the professionalism and the culture of our teams statewide.

If you'd like more information on how we can help your teammates learn in all aspects of their role, you can find us at <http://www.apwamrsp.com/>, or feel free to send me a note at steve@ludwigspeaks.com.



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YOUNG BLOOD HELP BUILD THE NEXT GENERATION OF APWA



By Tyler Kearly, P.E., ROWE Professional Services Company

Last December, I attended my second holiday meeting for the MI-APWA Midwest branch at New Holland's Zeppelin Lounge. I caught up with some longtime members who offered positive feedback about the enthusiasm of the Young Professionals (YP) Committee that I co-chair. They expressed their appreciation for our investment in Michigan APWA this early in our careers. However, looking around the room, I saw a lot of managerial staff — and only a few young professionals.

The state chapter events usually only have a handful of YPs, and the conference is mostly represented by the committee members. The dedication of YPs is a force to be reckoned with and a huge benefit to our organization's cause, but we are not fully utilizing all the young people we can.

We need the help of active members to increase YP engagement. Recruit them, encourage them, and help smooth out the barriers that keep them from getting involved early in their careers.

With potential achievements such as Lifetime Membership recognition or serving on the state chapter executive board, there are clear benefits to getting involved early. Having watched the passing of the torch from president to president-elect twice now, it sure is motivating to see what is possible if you stay involved with APWA.

For me, the ice was broken when my supervisor brought me to the Great Lakes Expo (GLX). Before attending this first event, I preferred to stay in my lane, keep my headphones on, and get my job done. LinkedIn alone seemed like enough networking for me, but my mentor encouraged me and brought me into the fold. Because of his encouragement, I became energized, and committing more time to APWA did not take a second thought. I realized that being part of a tight-knit professional organization is an experience that you will not

understand until you take part in it. If we want more YPs in attendance at these kinds of events, we need those who are already involved to guide them there.



Kearly

In the YP committee, we are getting to know more people as regular attendees at our events in the Southeast Michigan and Grand Rapids areas. Though we are proud of what our group is becoming, we aim to keep growing and integrate our current members even more. The committee is sponsoring two young professionals' GLX registration costs, and we hope to make this a regular initiative. Also, new YP members are expressing interest in helping with our committee's efforts, so we hope to have new faces volunteering at events like the GLX golf outing and welcome reception.

Our YP group has come a long way in the past few years, with unwavering support from all our mentors in the chapter. To me, our upward trajectory would look like a larger pool of dedicated members under the age of 35. These energetic YPs are in our industry, but we need your help getting them rolling within APWA. Consider the goal of bringing at least one of your younger staff members to an event this year. Why not fill our chapter with people you would vouch for? Because, in time, we are the ones to whom the torch will be passed.

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LITHIUM-ION BATTERY DISPOSAL

Kristen McCue, GCSI Association Services

Editor's Note: The following article contains quotes and information originally provided by the Resource Recovery and Recycling Authority of Southwest Oakland County.

Lithium-ion batteries are increasingly becoming fire hazards, and according to a 2021 EPA report, “fires are happening across the full spectrum of the waste management process.”

In Michigan, recycling and waste operations have experienced fires due to lithium-ion batteries being improperly included with waste or recycling materials.

“On a daily basis, we identify and remove lithium-ion batteries or items containing lithium-ion batteries from our material stream,” said Darwin Baas, director of Kent County Department of Public Works. “However, due to the significant increase of these batteries we are often unable to find them until they create a fire.”

And, in the last five years, Oakland County has experienced four fire incidents due to the batteries, resulting in equipment damage and destroyed product, according to Michael Csapo, general manager, Resource and Recycling

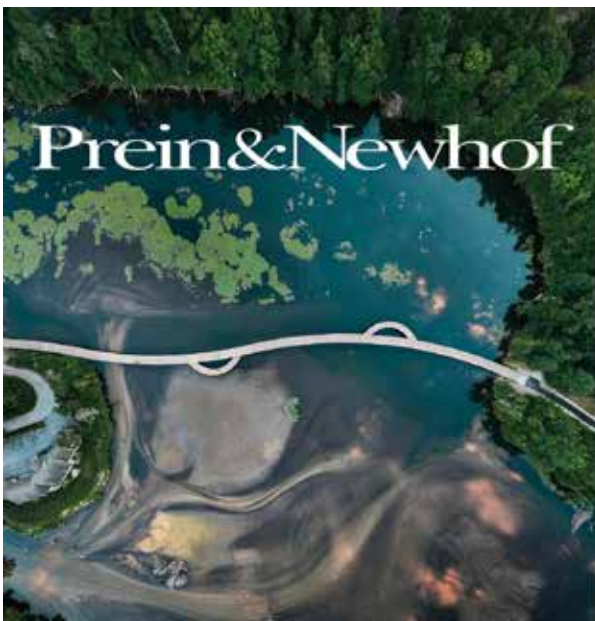
Authority of Southwest Oakland County (RRRASOC).

And while the onus should be on the manufacturers, retailers and consumers of the batteries, local governments and private waste/recycling companies are still mitigating the risk.

That’s why MI-APWA supports the battery statement created by RRRASOC.

“The statement is part of an effort to encourage legislators, policymakers and the battery industry to craft and deploy a statewide framework that can reduce the threat batteries pose to the health, safety and welfare of consumers and workers in the waste and recycling industry,” Csapo said.

MI-APWA encourages you to share this statement with your lawmakers and local decisionmakers.



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BATTERY STATEMENT

Batteries have become an important and nearly unavoidable aspect of our modern economy. Businesses, institutions, and homeowners rely on a myriad of products, tools, and devices that are powered by an ever-growing variety of batteries. Indeed, batteries have become an integral component of many items that have made our lives more productive and convenient.

However, for all the benefits of batteries, they also represent a significant risk when improperly used, stored, or managed at the end of their useful life. In particular, when mismanaged, certain batteries present a dangerous fire hazard that poses a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of residents and workers. The improper storage, transportation, and/or disposal of batteries constitutes a substantial fire threat to homes, businesses, and vehicles. In fact, such fires have become increasingly common in homes and businesses.

While there is some education and programming around the proper use, storage, and disposal/recycling of batteries, the incidence of battery-related fires continues to grow. The need for more robust education, training, and management solutions is evident.

The problem is particularly acute in the waste and recycling industry. When batteries are improperly included with material to be disposed or recycled, those batteries create a fire risk for the containers in which they are placed, the vehicles that collect the material, and the facilities to which the material is delivered. Fires caused by batteries being improperly discarded jeopardize the investment and livelihood of both public and private operations. But more importantly, such fires endanger the health, safety, and welfare of employees, people who live or work nearby, and the first responders upon whom we rely.



The undersigned stakeholders believe that there should be improved policies and funding, and legislation if necessary, concerning the following areas:

- ▶ Increased consumer and employee education regarding the proper use, storage, and end-of-life management of batteries;
- ▶ Increased programming for the proper end-of-life collection and disposal/recycling of batteries;
- ▶ Enhanced detection and capture technology, as well as employee training, to ensure that batteries that are improperly discarded with waste and recycling materials are identified and properly managed when received at waste and recycling facilities;
- ▶ More robust deployment of on-site response equipment and training to ensure a safe, swift, and effective response to fires caused by batteries.

This call for improved policies, funding, and legislation is not new or unique to Michigan. In the U.S., 10 states and the District of Columbia have enacted product stewardship or extended producer responsibility (EPR) laws for batteries. Globally, similar laws and policies for batteries are found in countries such as Australia, Japan, India, and Canada, as well as the European Union. Moreover, a product stewardship or EPR framework is not new to Michigan. Our state has already adopted such an approach for items such as consumer electronics, lead acid batteries, scrap tires, and used beverage containers, among others.

It is the view of the undersigned that in order to protect the health, safety, and welfare of Michigan residents and workers, to protect Michigan's environment, and to reduce the risk to private and public sector investment in equipment, facilities, and operations, a product stewardship or EPR framework for batteries should be established in Michigan.

GREAT LAKES EXPO 2024

2024 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

YOUR WORLD THEN. YOUR WORLD NOW.

By Lewis G. Bender, Ph.D. - Michigan Public Services Institute (MPSI) Facilitator and Instructor

So, public works leader-supervisor, as you drove to work this morning, yesterday, or whenever, how many times did you say to yourself: "I am going to get A, B and C done today"? Then, 10 or 12 hours later, as you drove home, not only did you not get "A, B, C" done, you didn't even get a chance to think about, let alone do, A, B, and C. Sound familiar? Welcome to the world of public works leadership!

In the approximately 40 years that I have watched you, this and other phenomena have happened to you. Your world and realities are very different today than four decades ago. And in many ways, "you" are different. To be sure, you and the teams you lead continue to be successful despite any new or old challenges that may come your way.

In the following paragraphs, I would like to focus on just a few changes that have influenced your world and impacted you and the people you lead. If you attend the Michigan APWA Chapter GLX Conference at Boyne Mountain, we will have a chance to discuss these and other changes in greater depth.

REACTIVE VS. PROACTIVE

Your past does not have to be long in public service to realize that the demands on you and the people you lead are much higher today than they were even 10, let alone 40, years ago. On many occasions, I have asked public works leaders at MPSI and other venues: Please name one area where the demands on you and your people are less now than when you started work. Crickets! The truth is you can't. We expect more from you and your teams at every level than we do from your predecessors. The public

wants faster, better, more ... fill in the blank. And by golly, "I want to talk to the boss right now" is the demand of the dissatisfied resident. Or "The mayor or manager called. People are upset about the trees being trimmed on Elm Street. She wants you to handle it right away."



Bender

So, handle the reports, requests, and performance appraisals piling up on your desk or computer and be responsive and transparent to your bosses, the staff, and most certainly the citizens simultaneously. "And yes, please give us your plans for improving services over the next five years."

Clearly, reactive mode has always been present in any public works operation. You are the first responders to the biggest and most disastrous events - storms, floods, etc. That type of reactive mode has not changed. In fact, because of technology and planning, we have improved in that area. What has changed and intensified greatly are your day-to-day operations and schedules. Many contributing changes have helped intensify reactive mode for public works leaders. Some of these include the following.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Your predecessors were able to hide. You can't so much. Think about how we can access you, from cell phones to text messages to email. Back then, we had pagers, landlines, pay phones and radios. Many of them were defeated by living or being in remote areas. Today, we reach you

at all hours of the day and night and virtually anywhere in the world. What does that do to you? Answer: You rarely relax and breathe down to your belly button. You can be on the most wonderful beach in Maui, drinking your umbrella drink and getting that text – “We need you to call in.” Relaxation quickly becomes tension. Unlike your predecessors, you carry your work in your pocket everywhere you go. Of course, one of the upsides is greater flexibility and mobility.

In the early days of the digit-verse, the speculation was that technology would make our work easier and we would have lots of free time. The easier part is true. What was not anticipated by many prognosticators was how much more work we would be doing. Productivity has been up everywhere, and so have the demands to track, record, analyze work patterns, and respond to increased requests, regulations,

ago. Still, they are providing more services and doing more work than they did a decade and a half ago.

The obvious impact has been increased pressure and stress on everyone – especially leaders. Contributing to this is the reality that most of you in leadership don't have a key word in your vocabulary. That word is NO! Rather, your motto tends to be “Get ‘er done.” Typically, you get it done without much complaining or educating elected leaders in City Councils, Road Commissions, etc. As a result, they don't really know or understand what you do or that you and your team are stretched, and they often allocate needed resources elsewhere.

A second factor is the work-related mindset of many of the critters that have joined your organization today compared to the past.

“Your world and realities are very different today than four decades ago. And in many ways, “you” are different.”

policies, and protocols. This has been true especially for non-bargained for employees. Rather than deal with a contract, we turn to leaders and ask or order them to do this extra job. Indeed, because you can, you may be doing the work of several past team members.

STAFFING

Another big contributor to your intensified reactive mode level is staffing and the confluence of three staffing factors. First, staffing levels have proportionally dropped in many DPWs. As we increased people's digital abilities, we proportionally decreased the number of people in our DPW organizations. The big drop occurred in the 2009-10 recession. Because of budget exigencies, many teams across the state pushed early retirement, didn't fill positions, and let people go. Today, most organizations have not regained the staffing levels they had 15 years

Comparatively, young staff are more demanding and have more employment rights and expectations than their counterparts of another era. They take more time and attention. Many younger workers (please, not all) expect to be given explanations and do not have the fear or regard for their bosses that previous generations had. This can be very good. Nonetheless, this is a huge, time-consuming change in the workplace. Combined with the historically ever-present older, problem employees and low performers, the new group's expectations and demands can be daunting to over-extended supervisors. The bottom line, however, is that the time it takes to deal with all of their demands and expectations, plus handling the questions from HR, can be huge distractions from the mission for leaders and supervisors. Correspondingly, it is also true that many young workers continue to be great contributors to the success of the teams that you lead.

GREAT LAKES EXPO 2024

A third staffing factor contributing to increased reactive mode is work-life balance issues. Most of our home lives have changed over the past four to five decades. In the mid-1970s, the workforce started to change. Mom went to

Smart planning and technology have helped fill some of the gaps in personnel. GPS is great for planning everything from snow routes to daily work. Citizen requests/demands are often handled with an A.I.-based technology program.

“Stop the engine every once in a while. Buy some bagels and donuts and talk for a while longer before taking on the day. Cook burgers and hot dogs in the summer back at the shop.”

work outside the home. The rise of two-income families peaked in the early part of this century. As a result, time became everything. In society, we saw the rise of quickie oil changes, fast food emporiums everywhere, and the local grocery store changed to a pick-up the evening meal place. Everyone was/is in a hurry. The annual Christmas party and organizational family picnic disappeared in the workplace, as did the after-work socializing and “painting Sam’s house” events. We just don’t have time.

Unlike in the past, now, many workers avoid overtime. They prefer repayment with comp time rather than money if they must work overtime. This trend has put all kinds of stress on everyone. In already short-staffed operations, tensions between members within the team have increased. In some cases, it has pushed supervisors into asking workers and themselves to provide coverage that is overwhelming personal lives. And in some cases, potential employees have been discouraged from applying because of the time commitment.

Younger employees feel less vulnerable to the boss’ demands in many ways. “My wife-girlfriend-husband-significant other has a great job. I can always get another job somewhere” becomes the refrain of some employees. The result is leaders who must cover more demands with fewer people. This can become very problematic during periods of high demand, such as major snow events, storms, or system failures.

Computers aid in scheduling people and crews much more efficiently and effectively. These are all good changes. Yet overall stress levels and burnout rates among leaders continue to increase.

SO, WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT? FOUR IDEAS

Sometimes, when working with you and your team, I am reminded of the boiling frog story. As the story goes, you throw a frog in boiling water, and it immediately jumps out. You throw a frog in tepid water and incrementally increase the heat and it boils to death. Are you and your team boiling to death? You might consider doing the following.

1 Share the Challenges-Discuss them with Your Team. We humans hate being out of control. If we are in a non-influential position (team member), we sometimes overreact or act badly when we feel controlled, as opposed to valued. The days of top-down decision-making – do what I tell you – started a slow death in the 1960s. Start involving your team. Discuss issues and challenges, listen, and then decide. Then share your reasons and expect 100% follow through, no games. Today, effective teams are built on involving team members before making decisions.

2 Create/Find your Islands. Your predecessors from decades past had natural built-in islands. They were harder to reach when they left work or went on vacation. Where and when are your islands? In many cases, you are your own worst enemy. When you came home from

school as a child, your mother may have said: “Change your clothes, do your chores and your homework, and then you can go out and play.” Well, that message may have stuck with you as an adult. So, you think you can’t go out and “play” or relax until the work is done. The problem is that your work will never be done. You will never leave your office with a “clean desk.” That is your reality.

So, get your digital calendar out and identify your islands. Identify when you will eat lunch away from your desk, take a four-day weekend, or use those vacation days you have accrued or lost. Islands can be short and long. If you don't identify and take them, who will? The work will always be there. It will never get all done.

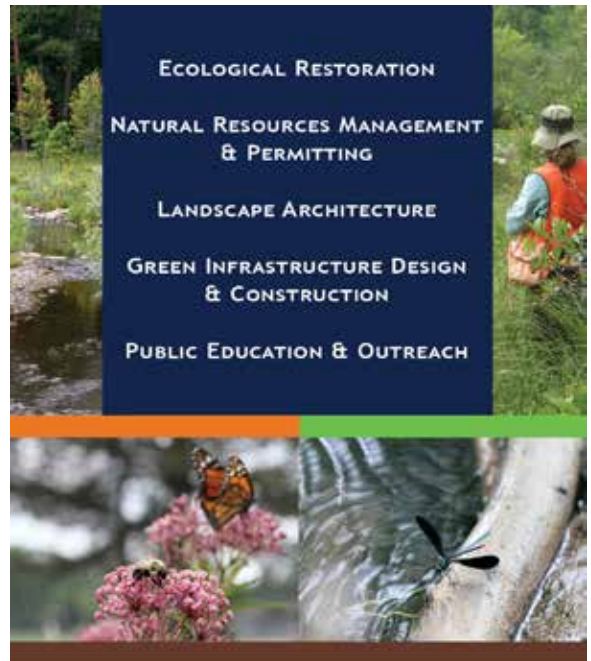
Create Team Islands. Stop the engine every once in a while. Buy some bagels and donuts and talk for a while longer before taking on the day. Cook burgers and hot dogs in the summer back at the shop. “Last week was insane. You guys did an amazing job. Thanks.” What a powerful message coming from the boss. Clearly, you have to deal with a person when they mess up. Recognize them when they do the job. At MPSI, I frequently play a game with one of the participants. I ask them to pretend that I am their boss and that I am passing them in the hallway. We have another person time the interaction while the rest of the Institute observes. So, as I pass the person, I compliment them about something they did. Average elapsed time: 24 seconds! If it goes to 30-plus seconds, it becomes excessive and embarrassing. Get it? Those twenty-four seconds will make their day and help you to stay balanced.

Cards on the Table. So, you give everyone in your team, including yourself, a stack of large index cards with instructions to write their name in the corner of each card and the major jobs/functions they do on each card. Using the copy machine would not be a major job in this exercise. Now, get a large table or tables and have everyone put their cards on the table. Everyone walks around the tables for a while, then ask these and other questions:


- Are all of the cards necessary anymore?
- Are the cards in the correct hands? Should some cards be moved?
- Is there an unnecessary overlap?
- What cards are high, medium, and low priority?
- Are there times when one team member will be better equipped to help another member?

This is a terrific exercise in defining a new position or filling a vacated one. It will also give you and your team a greater appreciation for each other and a greater sense of control over the jobs that you all do.

Change is inevitable. I look forward to seeing you at Boyne Mountain on May 22, 2024, to discuss these and other strategies for thriving in these changing, challenging and exciting times.



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YP COMMITTEE SPONSORS ASPIRING YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AT GLX 2024

Congratulations to Mirani Alexander and Jake Irwin, the recipients of the first Young Professionals Sponsorship for GLX 2024.

Alexander and Irwin, who are both young professionals, will attend GLX 2024 for free and will work the golf outing at the event.

Alexander is a civil engineer for the City of Farmington Hills, where she's been working for over three years. Originally from Tecumseh, Ontario, Canada, she moved to the U.S. nearly five years ago when she married her husband.



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Alexander completed her bachelor's degree in civil engineering and master's in environmental engineering at the University of Windsor. Outside of work, she enjoys snowboarding and golfing.



Alexander

Irwin graduated from Michigan Technological University, where he was president of the Fishing Club, in December of 2023 with a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering. He works for Rowe Professional Services Co. on their Design Services team. Irwin says, "Consulting is an exciting industry and servicing the public is a fulfilling experience, and there will always be more to learn!"



Irwin

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

TUESDAY, MAY 21

| | |
|----------------|----------------------|
| 11:30am—6:30pm | Exhibitor Set-up |
| 12:30pm | Golf Outing |
| 1:00—6:00pm | Wine & Spirits Tour |
| 7:30—9:30pm | YP Welcome Reception |

WEDNESDAY, MAY 22

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| 7:30—8:30am | Registration Open |
| 7:00—10:30am | Exhibitor Set up |
| 7:30—9:00am | Breakfast |
| 8:00—8:30am | Annual Meeting - Branch President & Past President Awards |
| 8:30—9:30am | MML Update |
| 9:30—11:00am | Keynote Speaker |
| 11:00am—5:30pm | Exhibit Floor Open |
| 11:00—11:30am | Break - Visit Exhibitors |
| 11:30am—12:30pm | Concurrent Sessions |
| 12:30—2:00pm | Lunch with Exhibitors |
| 2:00—3:00pm | Concurrent Sessions |
| 2:30—3:00pm | Break - Visit Exhibitors |
| 3:30—4:30pm | Concurrent Sessions |
| 4:30—5:30pm | Social Hour on Exhibit Floor |
| | Dinner on your own |

THURSDAY, MAY 23

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 7:30—8:30am | Breakfast on Expo Floor |
| 8:00—9:45am | EJ Foundry Tour* |
| 7:30am—2:00pm | Exhibit Floor Open |
| 8:30—9:30am | Concurrent Sessions |
| 9:15—11:00am | EJ Foundry Tour* |
| 9:30—10:00am | Break - Visit Exhibitors |
| 10:00am—12:00pm | Concurrent Sessions |
| 12:00—2:00pm | Lunch with Exhibitors |
| 2:00—4:00pm | Concurrent Sessions |
| 5:00—6:00pm | Cocktail Hour |
| 6:00—7:00pm | Awards Ceremony |
| 7:00—10:00pm | Casino Night |

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2023 BRANCH PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Following are awards given by APWA Michigan Chapter Branches in 2023.

DETROIT METRO BRANCH – PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Category: Environment \$1 - \$5 Million
Project: Red Run Drain Habitat Restoration and Trail Connector
Owner: Red Run Intercounty Drain Drainage District
Engineer: Hubbell, Roth & Clark, Inc.
Contractor: L.J. Construction Inc

Category: Quality of Life Less than \$1 Million
Project: West Commerce Road Underpass Improvements
Owner: Village of Milford
Engineer: OHM Advisors
Contractor: Artisan Contracting

Category: Quality of Life \$1 - \$5 Million
Project: Farmington Road Streetscape
Owner: City of Farmington
Engineer: OHM Advisors
Contractor: Warren Contractors & Development

Category: Transportation \$1 - \$5 Million
Project: Farmington Road Rehabilitation
Owner: City of Farmington Hills
Engineer: Hubbell, Roth & Clark, Inc.
Contractor: Pro-Line Asphalt Paving Corporation

Category: Transportation \$5 - \$25 Million
Project: South Old Woodward Avenue Reconstruction (Phase 3)
Owner: City of Birmingham
Engineer: Nowak & Fraus Engineers
Contractor: Angelo Iafra Construction Company

DOWNRIVER BRANCH – PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Category: Quality of Life \$1 Million to \$5 Million
Project: Huron River Drive Reconstruction
Owner: City of Ypsilanti
Engineer: OHM Advisors
Contractor: Fonson Company

Category: Environmental Less than \$1 Million
Project: Advanced GIS Analysis for FOG Maintenance and Prevention System
Owner: City of Livonia
Engineer: OHM Advisors
Contractor: Eganix

Category: Environmental \$1 to \$5 Million
Project: Joy Road Water Main Loop and PRV Removals
Owner: Canton Township
Engineer: OHM Advisors
Contractor: Bidigare

Category: Environmental \$5 to \$25 Million
Project: Eastern Outfalls CSO Elimination Phase 1
Owner: City of Inkster
Engineer: Benesch
Contractor: DVM Utilities

Category: Transportation Less than \$1 Million
Project: Brandt Road Concrete Paving CDBG Project
Owner: City of Romulus
Engineer: OHM Advisors
Contractor: Great Lakes Contracting

Category: Transportation \$1 to \$5 Million
Project: South Main Street Water Main and Road Improvements
Owner: City of Ann Arbor
Engineer: Wade Trim
Contractor: Bailey

BRANCH AWARDS CONTINUED

Category: Transportation \$5 to \$25 Million
Project: State Street Redevelopment
Owner: City of Ann Arbor
Engineer: SmithGroup
Contractor: Fonson Company

Category: Disaster or Emergency Repair Less than \$1 Million
Project: Whispering Willows Golf Course Channel Improvements
Owner: City of Livonia
Engineer: Hubbell, Roth, & Clark, Inc.
Contractor: Sole Construction

PRESIDENT AWARD

Ryan Kern, President Award for 2023

MIDWEST BRANCH – PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Category: Structures – More than \$1 Million
Project: Kent County Road Commission New Central Complex
Owner: Kent County Road Commission
Engineer: Hobbs+Black Architects
Contractor: Owen-Ames-Kimball Co.

Category: Environmental – More than \$1 Million
Project: Lakewood Transmission Main
Owner: Holland Board of Public Works
Engineer: Prein & Newhof
Contractor: Kamminga & Roodvoets

LISA BARNES SERVICE AND DEDICATION AWARD

Purpose: Recognition of service and dedication of a member of the Midwest Branch, who has put forth countless hours into public works.

Recipient: Dave Plooster, EJ



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SOUTHWEST BRANCH – PROJECT OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Category: Transportation \$500,000-1,000,000
 Project: N. Franks Avenue Roundabout
 Owner: City of Sturgis
 Engineer: Fleis & VandenBrink
 Contractor: Kamminga & Roodvoets, Inc.

Category: Transportation \$1M- \$2M
 Project: Parkview Avenue Roundabouts
 Owner: Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
 Engineer: Hubbell, Roth, & Clark, Inc.
 Contractor: Milbocker & Sons, Inc.

Category: Transportation More than \$2,000,000
 Project: Portage Road Reconstruction
 Owner: City of Portage
 Engineer: Abonmarche
 Contractor: Michigan Paving & Materials Co.
 Peters Construction Co.

Category: Intergovernmental Cooperation \$1M- \$5M
 Project: Skyline and Hill Brady Roundabout
 Owner: City of Battle Creek
 Contractor: Hoffman Brothers, Inc.

Category: Intergovernmental Cooperation More than \$5,000,000
 Project: N 33rd Street Transmission Main
 Owner: City of Kalamazoo
 Engineer: Jones and Henry Engineers, Ltd
 Contractor: Lounsbury Excavating, Inc.

Category: Environment \$500,000 - \$1,000,000
 Project: Rubber Modified Chip Seal Trial
 Owner: Road Commission of Kalamazoo County
 Contractor: Entech, Inc.

Category: Environment More than \$1,000,000
 Project: Milwood Pipe Lining
 Owner: City of Kalamazoo
 Contractor: Fer-Pal Construction USA, LLC
 Hoffman Brothers, Inc.

Category: Governmental Cooperation Greater than \$1,000,000
 Project: Big Rock Watermain Extension
 Owner: City of Kalamazoo
 Engineer: Prein & Newhof
 Contractor: SWT Excavating



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2023 SPOT & FLEET RECAP

By Kristen McCue, GCSI Association Services



Last October, public works professionals gathered in Novi for the Snowplow Operator Training (SPOT) and Fleet Maintenance Seminar.

With 150 participants, it was the largest program to date.

The unique train-the-trainer event covered snowplowing basics, motor carrier regulation overview and best practices for more efficient, economical, and environmentally friendly winter operations. At the same time, fleet managers and technicians learned preventative maintenance processes, covering advances in snow and ice control, small engine repair and maintenance and tie down and extraction methods.



“In a world where regulations and work processes are changing at all times, this training helps to ensure the workforce is ready to meet the demands that mother nature can throw at us,” said Noah Mehalski, director of public works for Bloomfield Township. “In addition, this shifting environment places more importance on proper equipment operation and maintenance to maximize response efforts and efficiency.”



The program is for designed for all levels of public works professionals, Mehalski said.

“If you are a manager looking for training for new and experienced drivers, this program is for your staff,” he said. “If you are a middle manager looking to learn about Best Management Practices and new trends in your industry, this program is for you. If you are looking to stay ahead of recent advancement in the fleet maintenance industry, this program is for you.”

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS
2024 SPOT & FLEET
EARLY NOVEMBER
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BECOME A PARTNER WITH APWA MICHIGAN

APWA exists to support our public works professionals. Our objectives include the development and education of the people and organizations that plan, build, and maintain the core infrastructure of our communities. As a partner with APWA, you will network with the professional people and agencies that our citizens/residents count on to maintain and improve the public works components of our communities. Partners become part of the larger organization that the public counts on.

We invite you to become a 2024 partner (sponsor) of the APWA Michigan Chapter to help the organization to further achieve our mutual goals. As a partner with the state Chapter, you are also a partner in each of our six Michigan local branches of APWA. There are numerous branch activities throughout the year that you can also participate in: benefit golf outings, conferences, equipment shows, lunch and learns, municipal snow rodeos, and various networking events, including the up-and-coming APWA Young Professionals.

The APWA Michigan Chapter has a long history, as it was established back in 1936. The Chapter is built on the success of the past and engages in the same educational, networking, and public service activities as the national parent APWA organization. Nevertheless, we do so close to home where members can easily take advantage of our programs. The flagship of our networking and educational events is the annual Great Lakes Expo (GLX), held the third week of May in Northern Michigan. With attendance exceeding record levels, members find great value participating in GLX as they can earn CEUs by attending numerous formal education sessions, networking during a golf scramble or wine tour, and browsing the expo floor where partners can share their latest offerings and learn what their customers really need. Attendance includes public works directors, superintendents, project managers, engineers, consultants, and other professionals. Hands-on equipment, trucks, and site tours are also typical.

APWA Michigan also publishes “Great Lakes Reporter,” which is released three times a year. The publication includes stories on public works current events, educational segments, what’s new, and advertising opportunities for our partners to increase exposure to public works.

The cost to be an APWA Michigan Partner is only \$250/year (plus your cost of being a National APWA member). Your partnership promotes and enables the educational mission and goals of the Michigan Chapter. It enables you to enhance relationships with existing clients, facilitate new relationships with potential clients, and strengthen your exposure to the statewide public works sector. Additional opportunities exist once a partner, and we have packaged partner levels that provide savings for being actively involved with the Chapter. Upon reviewing the different levels of partnership, consider the one that best fits your offering and marketing budget for the calendar year.

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- Chapter Partner (Sponsorship) \$250
- Company name and link on Website \$250
- Half Page Color Ad in Great Lakes Report \$1,350
- Great Lakes Expo Exhibit Booth (or an ad in Program) \$350

Package Value \$2,800

Gold - \$3,300

Includes Silver Level Package Plus

- Full Page Color Ad in Great Lakes Reporter \$300
- Great Lakes Expo Exhibit Booth & Great Lakes Expo Program Book Ad \$350
- Lunch Sponsor at Great Lakes Expo \$500*
- Sponsorship at PWX Michigan Night \$500*

Package Value \$4,250



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Platinum - \$5,400

Includes Gold Level Package Plus

- Great Lakes Expo Dinner Sponsor \$1,000*
- Great Lakes Expo Special Event Sponsor \$1,000*
- Operations & Fleet Maintenance Expo Sponsor \$300

Package Value \$6,550

*Includes table tents/easels and other recognition at the event

For more information, please email Tracy Spencer, MI-APWA Chapter Administrator, at chapteradmin@michigan.apwa.org.

We appreciate your consideration in being an APWA Michigan Partner.

*Mark Bonkowski
APWA Michigan, Partner Relations Chair
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In Memoriam

Russ Gronevelt Jr., who was an active member of MI-APWA, passed away on April 5, 2024.

Russ was honored by the APWA in 1994, as one of the top 10 public works leaders in America. He also served on several national committees of APWA.

Russ earned his bachelor's degree in civil engineering from Michigan Technological University and a master's degree in civil engineering from Wayne State University. A proud Michigan Tech alumnus, he was a member of the university's Board of Control, and eventually served as chairman of that board.

Originally from Livonia, Russ began his career in the Engineering Department for the City of Livonia, followed by Wayne County and ending with Orchard, Hiltz and McCliment, a consulting engineering firm.

A celebration of Russ' life was held on April 12.

In addition, a memorial scholarship has been set up at Michigan Tech. For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/mtu-russ-g>.

MI-APWA expresses our condolences to Russ' wife, Charlene, and his sons Ryan, Rhett and Rory.



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Eric Scott Fishing Tournament
May 15
Grand Haven, MI

2024 Great Lakes Expo
May 21-24
Boyne Falls, MI

**Dan Brooks Annual Scholarship
Golf Outing**
June 5
Taylor, MI

**25th Annual Detroit Metro Branch
Scholarship Golf Outing**
June 14
Auburn Hills, MI

**Rod Korhorn Memorial Scholarship
Golf Outing**
July 17
Alto, MI

2024 Public Works Expo
September 8-11
Atlanta, GA

MPSI Fall Session
September 22-27
Mt. Pleasant, MI

Road Scholar Program
October 23-27
Mt. Pleasant, MI

Visit our website, michigan.apwa.net,
for details on these events and more!

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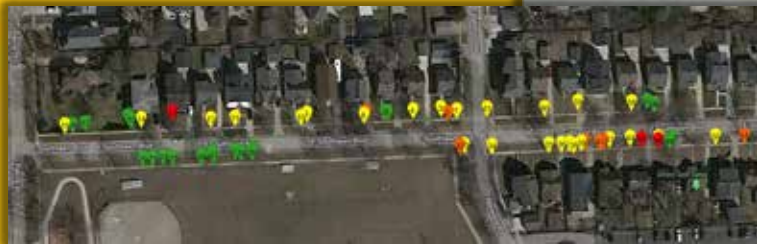


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