



President's Message – Past & Future



Dear ASCE Northwest Branch,

Happy Spring! Now is a great time for the start of something new or the re-involvement into something from the past. With that thought in mind, would you consider becoming involved or re-involved with the Northwest Branch Board? The Board is looking ahead to the new officer elections later this year and we'd be thrilled to welcome more people who have an interest in leadership, planning events and activities, and promoting the Northwest Branch.

Speaking of involvement and elections, please read through Mr. Tom Walther's biography and qualifications. Mr. Walther is one of the candidates for the position of the 2015 ASCE President-Elect and he is representing the Northwest Branch. Please mark your calendars and vote for the President-Elect candidate of your choice online from May 1st through June 1st.

The Branch is partnering with many other groups on April 18th in Stevens Point to reach out to K-12 students and the community about creativity and STEM-related activities, which of course includes civil engineering. More details are located within the newsletter. The Northwest Branch planners are looking for a few good people to help out that day, as 1,800 students are expected to attend the Creativity Expo this year.

This winter was a busy one. We are still floating high after hosting four fabulous and fun socials over Engineering Week as well as an incredibly successful first Spring Technical Conference. A big "THANK YOU" goes to all of you who joined us to enjoy good food and conversation during E-Week. We appreciate you taking the time despite your busy schedules to come and spend time with other engineers outside of work. The Spring Technical Conference went off without a hitch and a lot of new ideas that were tried for this conference will most likely be repeated with other Wisconsin Section events.

In closing, I am grateful for the wonderful leaders we have in the Northwest Branch. There are a lot of fabulous events and projects going on in our region, and I hope you will consider participating on some level. Civil engineers have the opportunity to make a big difference in the smallest of ways, most likely more than any of us will realize in our lifetime. Please join us in making a difference.

Sincerely,

Teresa L. Davis

Northwest Branch President
Email: brunnete.80@gmail.com

As always, the views expressed in the president's message are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official positions of ASCE.

MEMBER NEWS

2015 ASCE President-Elect Elections: Your Vote Counts May 1st through June 1st

According to information taken from ASCE's website, www.asce.org/elections, starting in 2015, the election will be conducted electronically and paper ballots will no longer be sent to the membership.

Requirements for President-Elect Nominees:

President-elect candidates must have had prior service on the Board of Direction.

Geographic Region Director candidates must have an Address of Record within the Region they wish to represent and have served as a Region Governor.

Technical Region Director candidates must have served as a voting member on an Institute Board of Governors.

Region Governor candidates must have an Address of Record within the Region they wish to represent and have prior service as a Section or Branch officer, a member of a Section or Branch committee, or as a member of a Society-level committee.

A candidate must be a member in good standing.

Individuals wishing to pursue an elected office should review the Society's governing documents for filing deadlines and required election materials.

How can I participate in the election?

Members at the grade of Associate or above may vote in the election.

Members must pay their dues no later than March 15 and have a valid email address on file.

Election credentials will be sent by email to eligible members on May 1.

Voting will be open from May 1 to June 1.

2015 President-Elect – Official Nominees

Thomas W. Walther, P.E., F.ASCE ([Mr. Walther's Bio](#))

Norma Jean Mattei, Ph.D., P.E., F.SEI, M.COPRI, M.ASCE ([Ms. Mattei's Bio](#))

Please carefully consider each candidate and exercise your voting right by making your choice in the President-Elect for 2015.



Mr. Thomas R. Walther, P.E., F.ASCE
2015 President-Elect Official Nominee

The Northwest Branch is proud to have Mr. Walther represent the Northwest Branch and Wisconsin Section as he campaigns for the distinguished position of ASCE President-Elect. Please read on about Mr. Walther's experiences in education and industry, as well as his vision for ASCE. Congratulations on your official nomination, Mr. Walther! We wish you all the best with the upcoming election and thank you for representing the Northwest Branch so well.

PAST EVENTS

Engineering Week Social Events

February 22nd - 28th

Thanks to everyone who came out and celebrated Engineering Week! We ate a lot of good food and enjoyed a few adult beverages. The conversation was great and it was fun to network. The Northwest Branch Board sincerely hopes that those of you who participated enjoyed the time spent with other ASCE members. The Branch held a gift drawing for all members who participated in the socials. **Chris McMahon** from the Eau Claire area, you were chosen as the winner and you will be contacted soon about receiving your gift. Congratulations!



Hudson Social: Monday, February 23rd



La Crosse Social: Tuesday, February 24th



Eau Claire Social: Tuesday, February 24th

2015 ASCE Wisconsin Section Spring Technical Conference

By Mike Binsfeld

The 2015 ASCE Wisconsin Section Spring Technical Conference (STC) was held in La Crosse for the first time ever on March 12th. This year's event at the La Crosse Center attracted more than 150 people to the sunny west coast of Wisconsin. The weather allowed for eagle watching and Mississippi River viewing right from the venue's windows. The event was a smashing success for the Northwest Branch, which was chosen by the Wisconsin Section as this year's host. Photos of the event are included at the end of this article.

For those who may have missed it, the Spring Technical Conference is held annually to provide an excellent forum for ASCE members to learn about a broad array of topics relating to various engineering disciplines. The keynote speaker at this year's event was Mark Gottlieb, the Wisconsin Secretary of Transportation, who provided an outstanding presentation on current transportation projects, state budget forecasts, and new regulations. During the lunch hour, Richard Kyte, Director of the D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics and Leadership at Viterbo University in La Crosse, gave an excellent ethics presentation regarding decision-making in work and life. He described the four-way method for ethical decision-making, including truth, consequences, fairness and character.

Mr. Mark Woodson, national ASCE President-Elect, was the general session speaker. Mr. Woodson presented on the status of ASCE, Raise the Bar initiative, and Sustainability. His presentation was a great look inside the current workings of ASCE and where the organization plans to take its next steps. Will Kratt, event organizer, suggested that Mr. Woodson drive through "Bluff Country" along the Mississippi River on his way to Minneapolis; we sincerely hope that Mr. Woodson enjoyed the beautiful scenery of Wisconsin and Minnesota.

Awards and recognition were presented after the general session. Wisconsin Section Outstanding Civil Engineering Scholarships were awarded, and ASCE Life Members were recognized. The event ended with award recipients enjoying a photo opportunity with Mr. Woodson.

Throughout the course of the day, there were three breakout sessions, each showcasing four speakers who presented on topics that included unique trends in the industry, recently completed or ongoing and challenging projects, and new governmental compliance and regulations. The topics included water resources and environment, sustainability, transportation, structures, geotechnical, and construction.

The event had 16 individual sponsors, each of whom exhibited their respective company's products and services with booths. The STC affords sponsors an opportunity to engage and showcase with the Midwest's top engineering and consulting firms, construction material suppliers, contractors, and government agencies. It was a great opportunity for vendors to promote their organization's abilities, increase product familiarity, and make strategic contacts at the STC. We are especially appreciative for platinum sponsorships by Brennan and ADS, as well as gold sponsorships by ACH Foam Technologies, HOBAS pipe, Mathy Construction, and StormTrap.

Thank you to all event attendees and special thanks to the event sponsors. We're looking forward to hosting future ASCE Wisconsin Section Spring Technical Conferences and Annual Meetings, ultimately bringing more Wisconsin Section ASCE events to our branch locations!

An especially large thank you goes out to the STC core planning committee consisting of Will Kratt, Mike Binsfeld, and Kris Roppe. Because of their hard work and determination, the Northwest Branch made a stellar first impression to the rest of the Wisconsin Branch. Well done, Will, Mike and Kris!



The La Crosse Center was a fantastic venue.



Dan Borchardt, Wisconsin Section President-Elect, welcomed everyone to the conference.



Secretary Gottlieb had a wonderful presentation about Wisconsin's transportation system.



The STC had excellent technical sessions.



Break times allowed for networking with other engineers and the conference sponsors.



Mr. Kyte's presentation was a big part of the conference and was well received.



Mr. Woodson, 2014 ASCE President-Elect, discussed the direction of ASCE, the Raise the Bar initiative, and sustainability.



Congratulations to the newest ASCE Life Members! Pictured from left to right: Mark Woodson, Patrick Ries, Randolph Videkobich, Neal Gruber, David Pantzloff, and Dan Borchardt.



Your friendly and hardworking Northwest Branch Board: Teresa Davis, Kris Roppe, Mike Binsfeld, Will Kratt (STC Chair), and Andrew Walters (Jess Felix not pictured).



The dedicated and phenomenal Spring Technical Conference planning committee, from left to right: Kris Roppe, Mike Binsfeld and Will Kratt. They represented the Northwest Branch and worked above and beyond what had been done at other similar conferences in the Wisconsin Section. Excellent work!



Beautiful La Crosse civil engineering landmarks (Cass Street bridges) were another highlight of a great day!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Goodell Scholarship – Applications Due May 1st

This spring, the Northwest Branch will be awarding one scholarship for a civil engineering student who exemplifies the character of Mr. Goodell and who meets the requirements outlined in the scholarship application. The Northwest Branch of the American Society of Civil Engineers annually awards one \$1,000 scholarship to a civil engineering student that lives within the boundaries of the Northwest Branch. This year only, the scholarship is \$2,000. This scholarship is to recognize the unselfish contributions to the civil engineering profession that were made by Mr. Harvey Goodell. Mr. Goodell provided leadership to the Branch for many years having been a La Crosse area director from 1976-1984. ASCE most notably recognizes him for his efforts in initiating and promoting the “Eminent Board” concept, which proposed methods for allowing private sector input in public engineering works. The hope of the Northwest Branch is that by awarding this scholarship, the spirit and enthusiasm shown by Mr. Goodell will be perpetuated.

Applicants must have permanent residence within one of the following counties (which comprise the Northwest Branch limits): Adams, Barron, Buffalo, Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Eau Claire, Iron, Jackson, Juneau, La Crosse, Lincoln, Marathon, Monroe, Oneida, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Portage, Price, Rusk, St. Croix, Taylor, Trempealeau, Vilas, or Wood.

Applicants must have completed, or will complete in the present semester/quarter, at least one full academic year of study in the engineering curriculum.

Applicants must be attending, or plan to attend in the following semester/quarter, one of the following ABET accredited engineering institutions: University of Wisconsin – Madison, University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee, University of Wisconsin – Platteville, University of Minnesota—Twin Cities, University of Minnesota — Mankato, Michigan Technological University, Marquette University, or Milwaukee School of Engineering.

The scholarship will be awarded to one applicant, selected by the Northwest Branch Scholarship Committee, from all applicants meeting the eligibility criteria. Selection will be based on the applicant’s demonstrated interest in the profession as reflected by the application responses and the letter of recommendation. The selection will be made no later than May 8, 2015.

Application materials and more information can be found on the Northwest Branch’s scholarship [website](#).

Creativity Expo – April 18th at UW-Stevens Point

The Northwest Branch is one of several sponsors of this year’s Creativity Expo at UW-Stevens Point. The event features STEM-related activities for students in grades K-12. The Branch is eager to reach out to these students and to show them how fun and cool civil engineering can be.

In addition to the sponsorship, the Branch is hosting an activity booth these students and we need your help! Would you consider volunteering with us on April 18th? Please see the information below for more details about the expo. If you are interested in being a volunteer, please contact Dan Borchardt at danborchardt83@gmail.com or Andrew Walters at awalters@amengtest.com. Dan and Andy are looking for 3 to 6 more volunteers to help supervise an activity related to civil engineering.



You're Invited! To the Largest Gathering of Creativity in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Destination Imagination (WIDI, Inc.) invites you to participate in our annual Affiliate Tournament, a gathering of over 6,000 creative problem solvers. Each year at our statewide event, we feature a Creativity Expo, an exhibitor hall in which organizations and groups can present and display information to our participants.

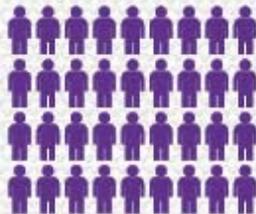
As a potential exhibitor, we recognize and embrace the fact that many different approaches to problem solving exist and, as a creative problem-solving organization, we develop programs that teach a creative process for students to build confidence and skills to work with a diverse group of people to solve any challenge. We invite you to consider exposing our DI students and their spectators to your opportunities to learn, have fun, and engage in creative problem solving. Whether your organization's focus is on science, technology, engineering, math (STEM), creativity, performance, and/or teamwork, there is a special place at the Creativity Expo for you. Come join in the fun!

- Date/Time:** Saturday, April 18th, 2015; 10AM to 3PM
- Location:** University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point; Quandt Gym
- Cost:** Free! Exhibitors Must Provide Interactive Activity
- Audience:** K-12 Students and Families
- Attendance:** 1,800 Student Participants, 5,000 Spectators
6,000+ Total Attendees

Interested exhibitors please contact Samantha Pech, Continuing Education and Outreach, by **April 1st** to reserve a spot: **P:** (715) 346-4593 or **E:** spech@uwsp.edu

Wisconsin Destination Imagination Quick Facts

4,000+
PARTICIPANTS ANNUALLY



75,000+
WISCONSIN ALUMNI



2,000+
WISCONSIN VOLUNTEERS



5
AGE GROUPS- Pre-K, Elementary,
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St. Croix Crossing Tour



The St. Croix Crossing project is back in full swing. After last year's tour cancellation due to the early winter, a site visit is currently being planned, tentatively for May. Please watch your email for the official invitation.

NORTHWEST WISCONSIN CIVIL ENGINEERING HIGHLIGHTS

WisDOT's first "J-turn" intersection, USH 53 / County B, Douglas County

By: WisDOT Northwest Region

In October 2011, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) finished construction of an innovative "J-turn" concept at the intersection of US 53 and County B, located in rural Douglas County in the state's far northwest corner. This is Wisconsin's first "J-turn" on a 65 mph, four-lane, divided expressway.

A "J-turn" intersection prohibits left turn and crossing traffic from the minor side road. Instead, drivers turn right from the side road, accelerate and make a left lane change, then perform a "U-turn" at a median crossover located about 1600 feet from the side road. Left and right turns from the main road, and right turns from the side road, remain at the original intersection. The term "J-turn" references the "J" shape of the arched U-turn median crossover and its preceding median-side deceleration lane along the main road. "J-turns" are also referred to as Restricted Crossing U-Turn (RCUT) intersections.

The original intersection had a history of severe, right-angle crashes. Nearly all occurred as "far" side crashes, when County B drivers fail to yield to traffic in the "far" lanes of US 53 after crossing the median. The median was posted with "yield" signs. The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volume on US 53 is about 7,000, with higher traffic occurring during the summer tourist season. The AADT on County B ranges from 1,000-2,000.

WisDOT considered at-grade geometric and grade-separated improvement alternatives. The "J-turn" concept was the only alternative that resulted in meeting the threshold for funding through the state's Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). The "J-turn" was expected to provide significant reduction in crash frequency and severity at a relative low cost compared to other alternatives, including high-cost interchange or grade-separation alternatives.

The "J-turn" concept did generate some local opposition. Business owners and residents were concerned about the additional travel time required to navigate the "J-turn" and the exposure of County B crossing traffic having to merge and change lanes on the high-speed expressway. However, through the support of

local officials, especially the Douglas County Board's Highway Committee, the project moved forward to construction.

The final project design included the U-turn crossovers and deceleration lanes, as well as channelized left turn lanes and offset right turn lanes at the original intersection. A wide median on US 53 allowed the U-turn crossovers to accommodate a WB-65 design vehicle track without additional shoulder widening and no additional right-of-way was acquired. LED street lighting was added at the original intersection and the U-turn crossovers. Narrow median openings were constructed to allow for bicycles or pedestrians crossing USH 53 on County B. The project construction cost was \$1.7 million, with significant cost due to poor subsurface conditions at the U-turn crossovers.

Construction was complete on October 8, 2011.



Street view of the J-turn construction and signage.

After more than 3 years of operation, the J-turn safety improvement has been very successful in reducing crashes and crash severity at this intersection. Total crashes have been reduced by 70% and injury crashes have been reduced by 100%. There were no fatal crashes in the before or after study periods. Based on this success, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation continues to evaluate the J-turn concept as a cost-effective safety improvement alternative at intersections on high-speed rural expressways. Two J-turn projects in eastern Wisconsin were constructed in 2013 and about eight locations statewide are in the design stage or about to be constructed.



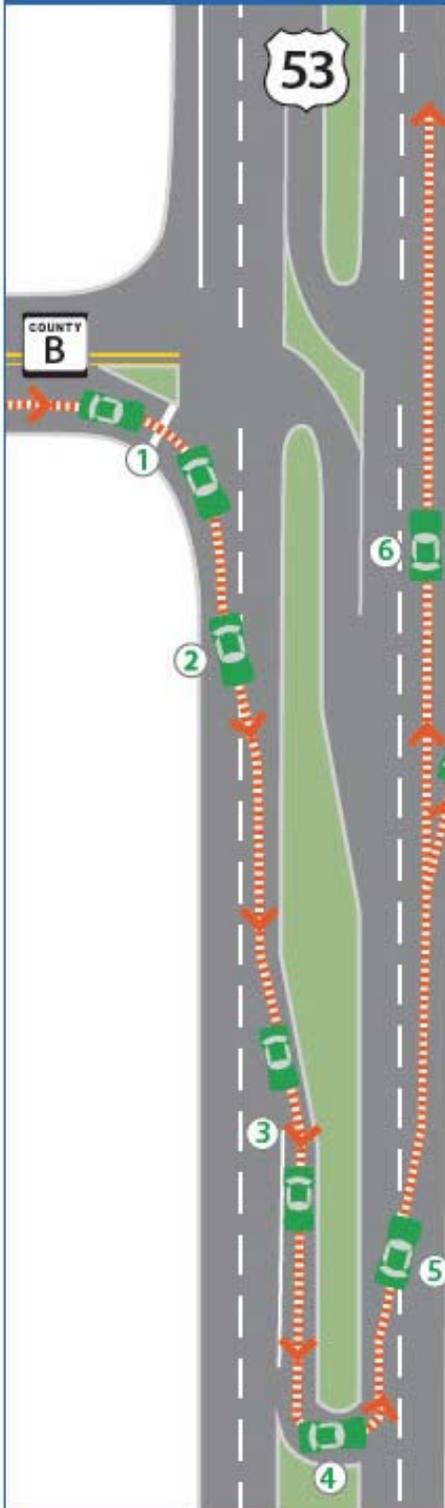
Project overview: J-turn in Douglas County.



Driving a J-turn intersection

Left and right turns from US 53 and right turns from County B can still be made directly at the existing US 53/County B intersection.

However, left turns and crossing movements from County B need to be made indirectly by using one of the two J-turn crossovers, each located on US 53 about 1/3 mile either side of County B.



How to drive a J-turn crossing US 53 or turning left

1. On County B, stop as you reach US 53. Look left for a safe gap in traffic. Turn right from County B into the right lane of US 53, increasing your speed as you merge.
2. Look for a safe gap in the left lane of US 53, signal, and change lanes.
3. As you approach the "J-turn" crossover lane, signal left and enter the left turn lane.
4. Stop or yield as indicated when you reach the far lanes of US 53. Look to your right for a safe gap in traffic. Turn left and enter the left lane of US 53, increasing your speed as you merge.
5. Look for a safe gap in the right lane of US 53, signal, and change lanes.
6. Continue straight on US 53 or turn right to County B depending on your destination.

Some rules to remember

- » Always look for safe gaps in US 53 traffic before entering or changing lanes.
- » By law, turn into the nearest lane.
- » Always use your turn signal to indicate your intention.
- » Watch for directional signs for US 53 and County B to help you navigate.

<http://www.dot.wi.gov/projects/nwregion/53countyb/>

Renew your ASCE Membership for 2015



Online, in person, and wherever your membership takes you, ASCE benefits every Civil Engineer. See the ways you benefit from your ASCE membership, such as **5 free PDHs**, savings with car rentals and United Parcel Service (UPS), and technology discounts with HP and DataSource Mobility. Keep your benefits and [renew today!](#)

UPDATE ASCE ONLINE PROFILE REGULARLY

Please update your ASCE online profile with current E-mail and mailing addresses to guarantee you receive ASCE newsletters and important information. As a reminder, those of you that have passed your PE exam, make sure to change your account with ASCE National. To update your ASCE profile, go to www.asce.org or call (800) 548-2723.

2015-2016 Calendar of Events

The calendar is simply a guide and may change throughout the year.

APRIL 2015:

- April 12 – PE, PS, and SE Vertical Exam (offered in Madison, Milwaukee and Platteville)
- April 13 – SE Lateral Exam (offered in Madison, Milwaukee and Platteville)
- Northwest Branch Board Meeting
- April 18 – Creativity Expo at UW-Stevens Point

MAY:

- Voting for ASCE President-Elect begins May 1st
- Goodell Scholarship Applications due May 1st
- Northwest Branch Board Meeting
- Tour of the St. Croix Crossing Project in Houlton, WI and Stillwater, MN; social to follow

JUNE:

- Voting for ASCE President-Elect ends June 1st
- Northwest Branch Board Meeting

JULY:

- Northwest Branch Board Meeting

AUGUST:

- August 14-15 ASCE Region 3 Assembly, Minneapolis, MN
- Northwest Branch Board Meeting

September:

- ASCE Wisconsin Section Annual Meeting
- Northwest Branch Board Meeting

October:

- October 30 – PE, PS, and SE Vertical Exam (offered in Madison, Milwaukee and Platteville)
- October 31 – SE Lateral Exam (offered in Madison, Milwaukee and Platteville)
- Northwest Branch Board Meeting

November:

- Northwest Branch Board Meeting

CURRENT NORTHWEST BRANCH OFFICERS

President: [Teresa Davis](#), WisDOT Northwest Region: Eau Claire; (715) 836-7277; brunnete.80@gmail.com

President-Elect: [Mike Binsfeld](#), J.F. Brennan Company: La Crosse, WI; mikebinsfeld@jfbrennan.com

Secretary-Treasurer: Andy Walters, American Engineering Testing, Inc., Wausau, WI; awalters@amengtst.com

Past President: [Jessica Felix](#), WisDOT Northwest Region: Eau Claire; (715) 225-9302; jessica.felix@dot.wi.gov

Wisconsin Section Northwest Branch Representative: [Jessica Felix](#), WisDOT Northwest Region: Eau Claire; (715) 225-9302; jessica.felix@dot.wi.gov

Northwest Branch Directors-At-Large:

1. [Kris Roppe](#), I&S Group, Inc.: La Crosse; kris_roppe@is-grp.com
2. Position Available
3. Position Available
4. Position Available

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