

Commissioner's Corner



The month of March is set aside each year to celebrate the extraordinary achievements and contributions of women in our country. Therefore, DEP has chosen to pay tribute to trailblazing engineer and civil rights activist **Nora Stanton Blatch Deforest Barney** by naming one of the world's most advanced tunnel boring machines in her honor.

Nora was a noted suffragist and the first woman in the United States to earn a civil engineering degree. She also worked as a draftsman on the City's first reservoir and aqueduct in the Catskill Mountains, and was the first female member of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

To commemorate her pioneering career, DEP has emblazoned "NORA" on the \$30 million tunnel boring machine (TBM) that will be used to repair the Delaware Aqueduct, the world's longest tunnel. The name was selected after DEP held a naming contest and solicited ideas from employees. More than five dozen employees submitted names for the TBM. The name "Nora" was sent in by **Sarah Acheson** of the DEP Archives, who was familiar with Nora's past work with

the Board of Water Supply, the historical context of her achievements, and her deep roots within the women's rights movement.

Nora attended Cornell University and earned a bachelor's degree in civil engineering in 1905. She was the first woman in the United States to earn a college degree in civil engineering. That year, she also became first woman to join the American Society of Civil Engineers. After she graduated from Cornell, Nora worked as an engineer and draftsman for the American Bridge Company, Radley Steel Construction Company, and the New York Public Service Commission. Later in life she became a developer and architect on Long Island and in Greenwich, Connecticut.

From 1906-1908, Nora worked as a draftsman for the New York City Board of Water Supply, which was developing the first parts of the Catskill Water Supply System. She was paid \$1,200 per year for her work—the highest salary for draftsmen at the project. All the others fulfilling that job were men. A 1908 story from The New York Times said she had "done much difficult work on dams and weirs" for the project—an explanation that would suggest she drafted some of the infrastructure for Ashokan Reservoir and the headworks of the Catskill Aqueduct.

Nora was also noted for her work in the women's rights movement. She took inspiration from the other women in her family. Her grandmother, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, authored the "Declaration of Sentiments"

that was presented at the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848, marking the start of an organized push for women's rights and women's suffrage in the United States. Nora's mother, Harriot Stanton Blatch, was also a noted suffragist who injected new energy by broadening the movement to include working-class women in New York City, and by organizing parades up Fifth Avenue, protests at Carnegie Hall, and lobbying efforts at the State Capitol in Albany.

Nora continued in that tradition. She founded a suffrage club at Cornell, became president of the Women's Political Union in 1915, and led the charge for an Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would have guaranteed women equal rights in the workplace. The amendment was not ratified, but it has been debated in Congress almost every year since it was introduced, including as recently as 2015.

Nora Stanton Blatch Deforest Barney died in 1971 at the age of 87.

I'd like to thank Nora's wonderful family, including her daughter, Rhoda Barney Jenkins, her granddaughter, Coline Jenkins, and her great grandson, Eric Jenkins-Sahlin, all of whom were elated to learn of the honor and eager to share stories of Nora's remarkable life and persevering personality.

Her achievements will provide considerable inspiration as we forge ahead with the largest repair in the history of New York City's water supply.

Spotlight on Safety

March 2017 is National Ladder Safety Month

Ladder safety is particularly important for preventing fatal or serious falls from heights. In fact, for fiscal year 2016, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) indicates that ladder related violations are ranked number 7 out of OSHA's top 10 most cited standards. In recognition of the dangers associated with improper ladder use, the American Ladder Institute designated March 2017 as National Ladder Safety Month.

Ladder related injuries commonly occur as a result of:

- improper ladder setup for performing job tasks
- not using ladders for their intended purpose
- using the top of a step ladder as a step or work platform

- using damaged or structurally defective ladders
- carrying loads on ladders and losing balance

Employees should follow manufacturers' requirements for use and setup of ladders. Facilities using ladders should routinely cover requirements of ladder safety in their job training, and should have a ladder inspection program. Defective ladders should be immediately removed from service for repair or disposal.

For more information visit the [National Ladder Safety Month website](#). See the [OSHA Quick Card](#) for more portable ladder tips.



At DEP, everyone is responsible for safety. If you or anyone on your team is concerned about your working conditions, it's okay to ask your supervisor or your bureau's EHS liaison how they can help. If you've still got questions, you can call the EHS Employee Concerns Hotline. It's DEP's responsibility to acknowledge and fix unsafe situations, procedures, and practices. With your help, we'll not only get the job done, we'll make it safer for ourselves, our coworkers, our families, and our city. CALL (800) 897-9677 OR SEND A MESSAGE THROUGH [PIPELINE](#). HELP IS ON THE WAY.

New Fleet Garage Opens in Kingston



DEP recently celebrated the opening of its new fleet maintenance garage in upstate Kingston. DEP invested more than \$100,000 in the garage on Flatbush Avenue, which will be used to maintain more than five dozen vehicles that are driven by employees who operate, maintain and protect the city's water supply. The two-bay garage was completely remodeled as a modern repair shop by DEP employees, including electricians, carpenters and mechanics. The garage had been part of the U.S. Army Reserve Center, which used it mostly for storage. DEP assumed ownership of the former reserve center in 2015. Its main building is now home to the Staff Sgt. Robert H. Dietz DEP Police Academy.

Kudos Corner



Assemblywoman Aravella Simotas, Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz, Jr., Eleftheria 'Effie' Ardizzone, State Senator Michael Gianaris, and Councilman Costa Constantinides

Congratulations to **Eleftheria 'Effie' Ardizzone** of the Bureau of Public Affairs and Communications on being honored at this year's [Greek Heritage Celebration](#), held March 9 at St. Peter the Apostle Greek Orthodox Church in the Kingsbridge section of the Bronx. The gala highlighted the contributions of exemplary Greek American community leaders.

Out of the Archives



To celebrate March Madness, here is a photo of the 1922-23 Board of Water Supply basketball team and their coach, 10-time Olympian gold medalist **Ray Ewry**. Ewry, an Indiana native, overcame polio as a child and went on to captain the track team for Purdue University while earning a degree in mechanical engineering. During his competitive years, he was nicknamed "The

Human Frog" for his incredible leaping ability and notched Olympic wins in the standing high jump, standing long jump and standing triple jump. After his highly successful athletic career, he moved to New York and worked as a lead engineer designing DEP's complex aqueduct system.

\$25 Million Sewer Upgrade for Rosedale



Construction has begun on a [\\$25 million sewer project](#) in the southeast Queens neighborhood of Rosedale that will improve drainage and help to mitigate flooding. Most of the roadways in the area of Hook Creek Boulevard lack adequate stormwater infrastructure, including catch basins and storm sewers, and heavy rain events can cause flooding. As part of this project, approximately 12,000 linear feet of storm sewers, 8,500 linear feet of combined sewers and 140 catch basins will be installed throughout the surrounding neighborhood. Additionally, more than 2.5 miles of new ductile iron water mains will be built to replace the older cast iron pipes. As part of this improved drainage system, stormwater collected in area sewers will be discharged through three new outfalls along Brookville Boulevard into new natural stilling basins adjacent to Twin Ponds. This project is part of **Mayor de Blasio's** commitment of \$1.7 billion to address flooding in southeast Queens.

Welcome Aboard!



Yesterday 14 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter** and Director of Planning and Recruitment **Grace Pigott**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Miriam Suero with BCS; **Amil Paul** with BEDC; **John Brophy**, **Robert Gonzalez Jr.**, **Richard Ratton**, **James Rivard** and **James Sullivan** with BWS; **Karina James** and **Sentwali Nanton** with BWSO; **Malcolm Ashford**, **Dwayne Gilmore** and **Lester Sykes** with BWT; **Mohamed Zakaria** with FDC/EO; and **George Garcia** with Police and Security.

We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: newsletter@dep.nyc.gov.