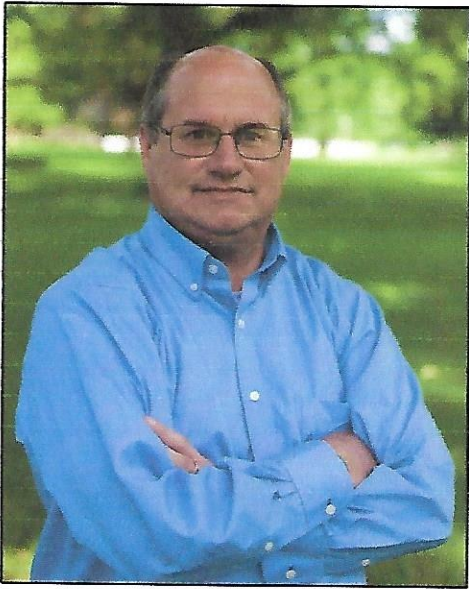


# JOHN BUERKLE



A 1985 graduate of Freedom Area High School, John Buerkle is the son of John and Lorraine Buerkle and grew up on North Gross Street in Conway. Early on, John was inspired by Mr. Guzzo and his drafting class. During high school, John attended the Beaver County Vocational Technical School where he placed second in the Pennsylvania Vocational Industrial Clubs of America drafting and design competition as a senior. Although vo-tech was not a traditional path to college, John was encouraged by his parents and his early mentor and vo-tech teacher Mr. Fred Fiumara to attend a four-year college. After graduation, John was offered a position with Ryan Homes, Inc. However, his mom convinced him that a four-year degree would most likely serve him better. Like any good son, John followed his mom's advice and is thankful that he did.

John began his college career at Penn State Beaver. After a successful first year, he transferred to University Park, but not for his first choice of major, architecture, but rather for his second-choice: landscape architecture. At the time, John had no idea what the profession entailed. However, because it had 'architecture' in its title, he assumed he would be interested. He was more than interested, and it has become a passion. John graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Landscape Architecture from Penn State in four years, a task deemed impossible for a transfer student.

Between his junior and senior year at Penn State, John was fortunate to secure a paid internship with Jim Pashek, who had started Pashek Associates. After graduating in 1989, Jim offered John an entry-level position. John accepted, joining Jim and Nancy Lonnett Roman.

In 1993, John married Jean Bonaparte, whom he dated early in high school. The two went separate ways in college but fell in love when they returned home and together raised three wonderful children: Zach, Hannah, and Steven. In 1994, John became a Registered Landscape Architect. John also holds certificates as a planner from the American Institute of Certified Planners and Urban Power to Prosper/Streetwise MBA program from the University of Pittsburgh's Katz Business School.

Over the years, Pashek Associates grew from a staff of three working out of Jim's home to a 14-person firm with an office on Pittsburgh's Northside. In 1997, Jim invited John and Nancy Lonnett to join him as partners. Jim, Nancy, and John established the endowed Pashek, Lonnett, Buerkle Scholarship in Landscape Architecture at Penn State to recognize graduate and undergraduate students majoring in Landscape Architecture with an interest in environmental issues and who have a demonstrated financial need.

John is indebted to his friend and mentor Jim Pashek for taking him under his wing and mentoring him to continue the firm's legacy and to his friend and colleague Nancy Lonnett Roman with whom he's had the pleasure of working with over the years. It isn't often one can say they've worked at the same place with the same people for 30 years.

In 2017, Pashek Associates merged with MTR Landscape Architects, bringing a portfolio of nationwide work that includes national cemeteries for the Veterans Association throughout the United States, including the Cemetery of the Alleghenies, and work at prominent public and private gardens. With the merger, John and his partners continue to expand the type and breadth of work completed by the firm.

John's greatest professional satisfaction is seeing people enjoying the results of the firm's work as he travels, which includes local work at the Rochester Flag Plaza; Penn State Beaver; Beaver County Community College; Bradys Run, Old Economy, and Brush Creek Parks; and many local municipal parks. John often assists communities with applying for and securing funding for planned projects, and his work has resulted in over \$3.5 million in improvements just in Beaver County's parks.

John has been equally passionate in serving his alma mater, community, and church, including work with the Freedom Band Boosters, Freedom High School Marching Band pit crew, Freedom Drama Club set building, Freedom Boys Soccer Boosters, Conway Borough Planning Commission, Conway Borough Council, Conway Community League T-Ball Coach, Freedom Area Soccer Assistant Coach, Cub Scout Pack 427 leader, St. Felix Parish Eucharist Minister, St. Felix Parish Holy Name Society Man of the Year, and St. Felix Holy Name Society President.

John notes that he is honored to be inducted into the Freedom Area Education Association's Hall of Fame and is humbled to join the ranks of those he has admired and looked up to during his time at Freedom. He looks forward to continuing his professional journey, continuing to serve the community he loves, and continuing to watch his children begin their life journeys.