

# Winter 2022 Newsletter

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## President's Message:

Happy New Year everyone! With a New Year brings an opportunity for a fresh start and we hope that you had a wonderful time with family and friends during the holidays.

Before Christmas, U.S. Representative Chrissy Houlahan from the 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District did a town hall to discuss the recent passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). We thank Rep. Houlahan and her staff for their continued support.

As I have mentioned in previous newsletters, the 2022 Pennsylvania Infrastructure Report Card will be released in the summer by the ASCE Pennsylvania State Council. Over the past several editions, the report card was released simultaneously by the four Pennsylvania Sections. After discussions with both the Lehigh Valley Section and PA State Council, the Reading Branch will join the four sections in releasing the report card with them. We are considering where to have the release, but if you have any suggestions, please feel free to reach out to me.

In addition to the report card being released. The Lehigh Valley Section is celebrating their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Throughout the year, the Section will be hosting events to commemorate the anniversary.

We are saddened to hear about the Fern Hollow Bridge collapse on, January 28, 2022, in Pittsburgh. The ASCE Pittsburgh Section released a statement on the collapse which is provided in the link below. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the victims.

<https://www.asce-pgh.org/page-1812318>

As ASCE members, our code of ethics states that first and foremost, we are to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. This is why it's so important to educate the public, as well as our elected officials the need to provide infrastructure that is reliable and safe.

We thank you for your participation and look forward to seeing you at a future Branch or Section meeting.

*John Caperilla, ASCE Reading Branch President*

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## ASCE Reading Branch Board of Directors

### President

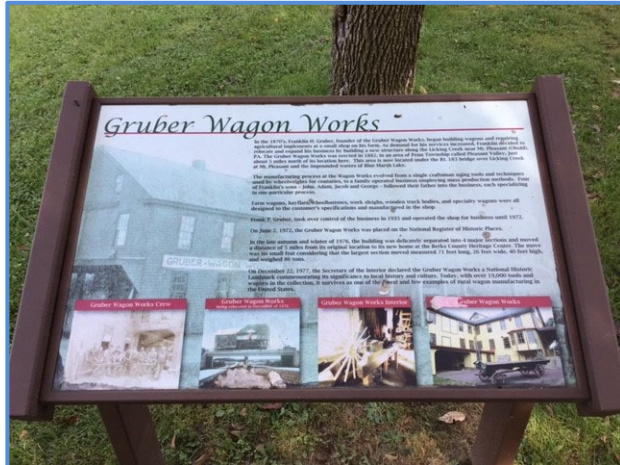
John Caperilla, McTish, Kunkel & Associates

### Directors

Chris Antoni, STV ● Jan Dobinsky, Advance Geoservices ● Phil Harter, Worley  
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Kyle Turner, CEDARVILLE Engineering Group

## Historic Civil Engineering Sites Across the Reading Branch:

As the Lehigh Valley Section celebrates the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of their section in 2022, the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee is traveling around the Section to identify key sites and landmarks. While the Reading Branch was founded in 1975 by the Philadelphia Section, in 2017 the Reading Branch was transferred to the Lehigh Valley Section, and we are pleased to be part of their celebration and this assignment. Over the next several newsletters we will highlight a couple of sites here in the Branch and provide some background information along with some photos.



### Gruber Wagon Works – Bern Township, PA

The Gruber Wagon Works is located at the Berks County Heritage Center in Bern Township. However, this is not the original location of this historic building. Erected by Franklin H. Gruber in 1882 in Mount Pleasant, just outside of Leesport, the Gruber Wagon Works was active for almost 100 years. At its peak in the 1920's, the Gruber Wagon Works employed over 20 men and built over 100 wagons a year. As the automobile became more popular, the need for wagons decreased significantly. Even with the change in how people traveled, the Gruber family continued to provide wooden truck bodies and socket wrenches as a supplement to building and repairing wagons in addition to continuing to make wagons, primarily for the Amish Community. The Gruber Wagon Works closed its doors for good in the early 1970's.

Around the same time, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, under authorization by Congress, was working on a flood control project for part of the Schuylkill River Valley. The construction of Blue Marsh Lake began in 1974. In order to protect the rich history of the Wagon works, The Corps, moved the Wagon Works to a new location. During the winter of 1976-77, the Gruber Wagon Works structure and its machinery was moved to its current location in Bern Township. In 1978, the Gruber Wagon Works was designated as a National Historical Landmark.

There is a video which is about a half an hour in length that explains how the move was completed. Please see the link below to watch at your leisure. Also provided are a couple of websites that provide a more detailed history about the Wagon Works.

<https://www.bctv.org/video/moving-of-the-gruber-wagon-works-5-18-21/>

<https://goreadingberks.com/gruber-wagon-works/>

<https://www.co.berks.pa.us/Dept/Parks/Pages/GruberWagonWorks.aspx>

<https://www.loc.gov/item/pa0102/>

## **Legislative Affairs Minute – What is the Reapportionment Process?**

As some of you might be aware, Pennsylvania is currently going through the reapportionment process and we wanted to provide an overview this important legislative process. How does this affect you, per se? Well, for some, this will mean your Congressional Representative along with State Representative and Senator may change as part of the re-districting.

Article 1, Section 2, of the United States Constitution requires that a Census be taken every ten years for the purpose of apportioning the United States House of Representatives. Census results are used to determine the number of congressional seats apportioned to each state. As a result of the 2020 Census, Pennsylvania's population, while growing by 2.1%, grew more slowly than the country, and subsequently resulted in a reduction of one seat to 17 from 18. The redistricting process is handled through legislative action through a bill that is approved by both chambers of the General Assembly and then signed into law by the Governor.

For the redistricting of the state legislative boundaries, this is done through a different process. The Constitution of Pennsylvania requires that the legislative districts for the House of Representatives and the State Senate be redrawn each decade following the federal census. This process is mandated by the Pennsylvania Constitution so that each citizen's vote ultimately carries the same weight in the ballot box. The General Assembly in Pennsylvania has 50 senatorial and 203 representative districts. Article 2, Section 17 of the Pennsylvania Constitution provides for a Legislative Reapportionment Commission to redistrict both chambers (the state Senate and the state House) in the year following the Federal decennial census. The Commission consists of five members: the four caucus floor leaders, or deputies appointed by each of them, and a chairman to be selected by those members or, if they cannot reach agreement, by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

During this time, public hearings are conducted along with a public comment period. The public comment period concluded on January 18, 2022.

For more information on the process, please visit <https://www.redistricting.state.pa.us/>.

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### **We want to hear from you!**

If you have a topic that you might think would be good for a technical presentation at an upcoming meeting, please reach out to us. We want to highlight all the great projects that are currently going on in the Branch. Also, if you are interested in getting more involved with the Branch at a Board level, please contact us as well.

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### **Contact Us:**

The ASCE Reading Branch sends out a newsletter on a quarterly basis to inform our membership of events and happenings within our Branch. If you have news items for future newsletters, please feel free to contact us.

John Caperilla | President ASCE Reading Branch | [jcaperilla@mctish.com](mailto:jcaperilla@mctish.com)

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