

AMERA HOMETOWN NEWS

A compilation of items of interest to MERA Members January 2022

A Note from MERA President

Wishing you a Joy-Filled New Year!

I did New Year resolutions, but they only lasted a couple of months.

For many years, I have developed a Vision, which serves as a guiding light for the whole year.

My personal Vision for 2022:

Help Bill, Scooter and my Family have a Great Life; Become a Published Author; Help reduce domestic violence;
Be a Leader who appreciates individuals' talents and inspires Greatness; Walk on the Beach every day.

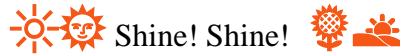
And my draft of the 2022 MERA Vision:

💡 Be a Bright and Shining Light 💡

For our Members: having fun together, connecting with each other, and supporting and caring for each other.

For our Community: making a positive contribution of our time and talents to improve the conditions of our Community. Always with integrity and respect and kindness

So whatever your Vision is for 2022,



Shine! Shine!

Sandy

AMERA Board of Directors...Transitioning and Moving Forward Goodbye 2021

With a deep sense of gratitude we say goodbye to departing MERA board members Larry Biehl, Barry Rentschler and Ken Speicher. Each of them contributed a lot of time and considerable talent to our organization. Larry was, of course, a long time board member who worked on many key projects to professionalize our association. Barry, as treasurer, kept our books and our member database on target. Ken will forever be known as the Father of the MERA Website. We deeply appreciate their contributions and hope we continue to see each of you at MERA events.

Hello 2022

Congratulations and welcome to MERA's 2022 Board of Directors and officers.

A special salutation to our newly elected directors (highlighted in red).

President: Sandy Myskowski

Vice President: Jim Zeiber (also luncheons)

Secretary: Cindy Thomas

Treasurer: **Dean Hollenbacher**

Asst. Treasurer: Larry Lenhart (also trips)

Auditor: **Vince Schimoler**

Emeritus Honorary Board Member: Henry Robidoux

Past President: Larry Lenhart

Directors:

Karen Baxter (Membership)

Stu Degler (Operating Procedures, Bylaws, Nominating)

Clair Kramer (Picnics)

Nelson Moeller (Website)

Becky Wingeroth (Programs)

MERA Member Profile

Nancy Speicher is a farm girl from Pike Township, Berks County who worked for a number of different companies once she graduated from Oley Valley High School until finding her home at Met-Ed. In fact, she calls it her “Met-Ed Family.” She started in 1984, holding various administrative positions, and retired in 2004 as a Human Resources Rep. Her favorite role at the company was managing the company’s organizational chart.

Growing up on a dairy and produce farm developed her strong work ethic and the value of self-sufficiency. Nancy says, “You can take the girl off the farm but you can’t take the farm out of the girl.” She remembers fondly going into the city with her father to sell their produce door to door. She still loves to garden and every inch of her “yard” is either a vegetable or flower garden.

Nancy’s retirement is filled with family and friends, travel, hiking, cooking, gardening, following environmental issues and volunteering at the Liederkrantz and her church’s food pantry. She has one son and two grandchildren. She has traveled to most of the 50 states, parts of Europe and cruised the Panama Canal. “I’m heading to Bermuda in the spring of 2022 if all goes well!” An accomplished potter, Nancy is a juried member of the Reading-Berks Guild of Craftsmen. She proudly counts among her many accomplishments the ability to understand the Pennsylvania Dutch dialect.

When asked for a recommendation or advice for fellow MERA members, Nancy encouraged everyone to get involved with the Association. As a board member and secretary for seven years, she saw firsthand how much work goes on behind the scenes. “MERA is a wonderful organization filled with great people. Get involved!”

Membership Renewal Time - DON'T MISS OUT!

Renewing your membership is simple and inexpensive! Just \$5.00! What can you get for five bucks, these days, that delivers this much value?

In 2021, the MERA Board of Directors waived dues for all members because of the restrictions placed on us by COVID. But to continue your membership, you will need to pay your \$5 dues for 2022. Just complete the membership form (in last month’s mailing or download it from merasite.org/printable/forms/membership_renewal). Enclose a check made out to MERA for \$5 and send it to Karen Baxter, 2 Belgian Lane, Wernersville, PA 19565.

We look forward to seeing you at all the great picnics, walks, concerts, gatherings, bus trips, luncheons and more in 2022! (And if you have a friend who is a fellow retiree but not a member, urge them to join too!)

January MERA Member Milestones Happy January Anniversary!

Dennis and Nancy Nagle...62 Years
Robert and Sandra Eidle...58 Years
Victor and Carol Rodriguez...57 Years
Bill and Suellen Maurer...56 Years
Gene and Christine Leshner...55 Years
Martin and Sandra Christman...54 Years
Ronald and Linda Reddy...54 Years

Bob and Judy Stump...52 Years
Gary and Lisa Pleiss...42 Years
Richard and Carol Morganti...41 Years
Randy and Michelle Collins...6 Years

Happy January Milestone Birthday!

A milestone birthday is one that ends in a “0” or a “5.” We don’t have this data for every member, so feel free to let us know if we missed you.

Donald McKinney
Charles Bealer
Marlin Seyler

Fun Fact
January is named after the Roman god Janus, the god of beginnings and transitions.



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Next meeting on January 17, 2022 at 1:00 pm at Muhl Rec Ctr



Membership Meeting Minutes

Dec 16, 2021

The meeting was called to order by Stu Degler in Sandy Myskowski's absence at 11:45 AM at the DoubleTree Hotel with 157 members in attendance. Stu read comments from Sandy wishing everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holiday and Joy Filled New Year! Sandy passed on thanks to the great luncheon team including Larry Lenhart, Sharon Marshall, Gary Pleiss and Henry Robidoux. Stu asked the board members, leadership team and committee members to stand to be recognized. He also thanked our Met-Ed/FirstEnergy partners: Barb Seidel, Debbie Guigley, Anika Niehans and Jennifer Rivera for all they do to support MERA. Everyone stood for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence to remember those who passed.

Treasurer's Report: Larry Lenhart reported for Barry Rentschler that the bank balance as of Nov 30th was \$12,766.96. Larry reminded us that FirstEnergy contributes \$10 for each member which is used to subsidize our luncheons and picnics.

Programs: Becky Wingenroth thanked the program committee: Larry L., Stu, Bob Peace & Marie Wright. Becky encouraged everyone to provide ideas for programs. Becky stated that programs are typically the 3rd Monday of the month. The following programs have been planned and will be held at the Muhlenberg Rec Center at 1:00pm:

Jan 17 – Survivor Training for Seniors by Berks Emergency Group

Feb 21 – Let's Talk Travel led by Stu Degler & Marie Wright

Mar 21 – TBD – some ideas are Estate Planning, Master Gardening or Genealogy

The Muhlenberg Jazz Band performance is being moved to May and will be held outdoors at Jim Dietrich Park.

The last Tuesday of each month will be a hike starting at 3:00pm and happy hour at 4:00pm.

Jan 25 – hike at Jim Dietrich Park and happy hour at Shirley's

Feb 22 – hike at Exeter Trail and happy hour at Island Pizza

Mar 29 – hike at Museum/Wyomissing Trail and happy hour at Third & Spruce

The Super Bowl contest entry form is included with this mailing. This is something everyone can participate in even if you don't know football.

Becky handed out Berks Jazz Fest flyers and encouraged all to attend or volunteer for the event which is April 1 – 10, 2022.

Trips: Larry Lenhart reminded everyone to visit our website, merasite.org, to view trip information. The first trip of 2022 will be April 27 – 29 to Virginia for the International Tatoo. We need at least 35 attendees or the trip will be cancelled. Just like for all trips, your check will not be cashed prior to knowing the trip will be held.

Membership and Member Communications: Karen Baxter reported membership currently stands at 450. Karen reminded everyone that now is time to renew membership for 2022. For everyone that joins for \$5, FirstEnergy pays \$10 to the organization. The membership drive yielded 7 new members. The winners of gift cards for recruiting new members are Larry Lenhart, Don McKinney & Stan Miller. If you have any items you are interested in seeing in the newsletter, contact Karen.

Sunshine: Sympathy cards were sent to families of Tony Nigrelli, Ruby Smith & Jake Mitchell. Sympathy cards were sent to Stu Degler and Debbie Guigley who had family members pass. Thinking of You cards were sent to Steve Rathman & Walter Frith.

Nominations: Stu Degler asked the secretary to cast the ballot for the election of the following board members effective January 1, 2022 since there was no opposition:

Sandy Myskowski: President

Jim Zeiber: Vice President

Dean Hollenbacher: Treasurer

Cindy Thomas: Secretary

Clair Kramer: Picnics Director - assuming Jim Zieber's remaining 2 years

Nelson Moeller: Website Director – 3 year term

Karen Baxter: Membership and Member Communications – 3 year term

Board members continuing in 2022:

Becky Wingenroth: Programs

Stu Degler: Bylaws and Operating Procedures

Larry Lenhart: Past President

Henry Robidoux: Emeritus Board Member

Invocation: Stu asked Avalion Bossler to give the invocation. Avalion gave a moving prayer prior to eating lunch.

Luncheons: Larry Lenhart reported the 2022 April Anniversary Luncheon is not yet scheduled.

Website: Ken Speicher encouraged the members to visit merasite.org website and to visit the Photos, Humor and Inspiration sections.

Today's Program: Gary Pleiss introduced today's entertainment, Dave Reinwald with Lee Schappell. Dave is the pastor at Kissinger's church and played guitar with Lee playing bass guitar. They described their music as Country Gospel. They started with Burl Ive's song "A Holly Jolly Christmas". Attendees sang along to many of the tunes like "Joy to the World" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas". They ended with a patriotic tune "God Bless the USA" and yes, everyone stood up! Dave also told a joke: "What does an elf learn at school?" Answer: the elfabet

Stu concluded the event with a poinsettia giveaway. 1 person at each table whose birthday was closest to Sept 16th took home the centerpiece poinsettia.

Next meeting on Jan 17th will be at Muhlenberg Rec Center at 1:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Cindy Thomas, Secretary



Metropolitan Edison Retirees Association-2022 Tour Preview*

Virginia International Tattoo

April 27-29, 2022

Tattoo offers an astounding display of inspirational military music, majestic massed pipes and drums. Also, you'll enjoy the Victory Cruise, Military Aviation Museum and Oceanfront lodging in Virginia Beach.



Baltimore Dine Around

Thursday, June 9, 2022

We begin our dine-around with soup and salad at Miss Shirley's. From there we meet our step-on guide in Baltimore City for a driving tour. Enjoy the main course at Phillip's Seafood followed by a harbor cruise. We wrap up the day with a driving tour of Fells Point and delicious Cannoli for dessert!



Mystery Trip

Wednesday, July 27, 2022

Come join the fun of the unknown. We'll keep you guessing all day long. An adventure awaits you at every turn!



Annapolis, Maryland

Tuesday, September 13, 2022

Set aboard the Harbor Queen for a narrated cruise, lunch and free time to explore the Historic District.



Penn's Peak - Islands in the Stream - A tribute to Dolly & Kenny

Wednesday, October 12, 2022

"Islands in the Stream" brings together Karen Hester as Dolly Parton and Mark Hinds as Kenny Rogers to recreate the onstage magic of two superstars! This high energy, fun loving performance will entertain audience members and make them feel as if Dolly and Kenny are right there in front of them! Enjoy a hearty family-style lunch.



Christmas in Cape May, NJ

Thursday, December 8, 2022

Enjoy a day in Victorian Cape May on a Holiday Lights Trolley tour through the Historic District. Enjoy a lovely tour of the Physick Estate House Museum. Lunch and time to shop on Washington Street Mall.



**All trips subject to change. Additional flyers to be distributed for each trip destination. For additional information & questions, contact Henry Robidoux Phone: 610-929-4059 or Email: robidoux4@gmail.com*

NERA Programs: 1st Quarter 2022

*******January*******



Senior Emergency Preparedness! Join us on **Monday, January 17th at 1pm at the Muhlenberg Rec Center**, located at 3025 River Road for a session to learn about emergency preparedness being presented by the Berks County Department of Emergency Services.



Winter Hike and Happy Hour! Join us on **Tuesday, January 25th for our Winter Wonderland hike at 3pm at Jim Dietrich's Park followed by Happy Hour at Shirley's** (starting about 4pm). You choose whether you participate in the hike, the happy hour or both! Leashed, calm pets are welcome for the hike.

*******February*******



MERA Super Bowl Pick'Em Contest! See other side with questions for an opportunity to win a gift card. You do NOT have to be a football expert to win!!



Let's Talk Travel! Join us on **February 21st at 1pm at the Muhlenberg Rec Center**

located at 3025 River Road for an interactive discussion with Stu Degler and Marie Wright, exploring tips on traveling, how to prepare for domestic and international travel, and discover interests of potential travelers in MERA independently or in a group.



Winter Hike and Happy Hour! Join us on **Tuesday, February 22nd** for another Winter Wonderland hike at 3pm at **Exeter Scenic River Trail** followed by **Happy Hour at Island Pizza** (starting about 4pm). You choose whether you participate in the hike, the happy hour or both! Leashed, calm pets are welcome for the hike.

*******March*******



Muhlenberg Jazz Band! Join us on **March 21st at 1pm** to hear the Muhlenberg High School "Spoilers" entertain us with jazz music. The Spoilers Jazz Band of MHS is a by-audition big band that learns and performs traditional big band swing, Latin, Fusion, and other jazz forms. The group represents Muhlenberg in and around the county, and performs at various festivals and concerts. Come out and support these talented young people! Location TBD.



Spring Hike and Happy Hour! Join us on **Tuesday, March 29th** for a Spring hike at 3pm at **the Wyomissing Creek** (meet at the Reading Museum) followed by **Happy Hour at 3rd & Spruce** (starting about 4pm). You choose whether you participate in the hike, the happy hour or both! Leashed, calm pets are welcome for the hike.

Call or text Becky Wingenroth at 610 451 5567 if you have any questions related to these programs.

Participant Name _____ Phone Number: _____

Prize preference (if you win). Please check one: _____ Hershey Harvest Gift Card (fasnachts, etc.)
_____ Dunkin Donuts Gift Card



2022 MERA Super Bowl Pick 'Em Contest!

The questions:

- _____ 1 Which team will win the game?
 - _____ 2 Was the coin toss heads or tails?
 - _____ 3 What is the combined final score of both teams?
 - _____ 4 Which team will score first in the second half?
 - _____ 5 What will be the combined score at half time?
 - _____ 6 Which team will call the first time out?
 - _____ 7 What team will score the first field goal?
 - _____ 8 What team will score the first touchdown?
 - _____ 9 What team forces the most quarterback sacks?
 - _____ 10 Which team will cause the most interceptions?
 - _____ 11 Which team will have the most first downs?
 - _____ 12 Which team will score the first defensive or special teams touchdown?
 - _____ 13 Which team will have the first penalty?
 - _____ 14 Which team will have the longest touchdown?
 - _____ 15 Which team will be leading at halftime?
 - _____ 16 Will there be any onside kicks attempted?
 - _____ 17 Will any extra points or field goal attempts be blocked or missed?
 - _____ 18 Will the score ever be tied during the game (other than 0-0)?
 - _____ 19 Will the game go into overtime?
 - _____ 20 Will the first pass be a completion?
- _____ Tie breaker: What will be the final score? (Closest wins)
- _____ Bonus question (separate gift card): What will be the actual final score?

Participate in the **2022 MERA Super Bowl Pick 'Em Game**. The top ten total scores win gift cards. Bonus gift card for winner(s) of actual final score. Send your picks for the questions above (or obtain from the MERA website at merasite.org) to Becky Wingenroth at rwingenroth@juno.com **no later than 10 pm Saturday, February 12th**. If you prefer to mail in your picks, please mail to Becky Wingenroth, 236 New Castle Drive, Shillington, PA 19607. **Post marks for all mailed entries must be dated no later than February 5, 2022.**

Met-Ed Retirees Association
Virginia International Tattoo
April 27 - 29, 2022

Day One: Wednesday, April 27

We depart at 8:00 AM and make our way to Virginia making appropriate rest stops in route. We arrive at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Virginia Beach. The hotel is only steps from North Beach and the boardwalk. Dinner this evening will be at the hotel. After dinner take a leisurely walk on the boardwalk or relax in your room.

Day Two: Thursday, April 28



Begin the day with breakfast at the hotel then depart for Norfolk to board the Victory Rover for a Naval Base Cruise. You'll have a front row seat to the naval fleet. See destroyers, submarines, and other vessels while taking in the sights of the harbor.

Following our cruise we visit the Military Aviation Museum. The Military Aviation Museum is home to one of the largest private collections of World War I and World War II era military aircraft in the world. Each of the planes have been beautifully restored to its prior military condition, using original parts whenever possible. Most of the planes are airworthy and flown at the museum during flight demonstrations and at air shows throughout the year. Some being the last flight-ready aircraft of their time, and all of them being one of a kind. A light fare lunch will be served while at the museum.



We return to the hotel to relax before our evening at the International Tattoo Performance.



Dinner this evening will be at Bravo Italian Kitchen. The group will enjoy an authentic Italian family-style meal.

We make our way to the Scope Arena where the Virginia International Tattoo will be held and the Hullabaloo. Enjoy Happy Hour Tattoo style! The Hullabaloo includes pipers, dancers, drill teams and drum lines. It's a perfect opportunity to shake hands with an active duty member of armed forces and take a selfie with a highland dancer. The Tattoo performance begins at 7:30 PM. Sit back and be prepared to be dazzled by the largest spectacle of music and might in the United States. The Tattoo offers an astounding display of inspirational military music, majestic massed pipes and drums, show stopping drill team maneuvers, colorful and elegant dancers, and much more. Each year's Tattoo is

different, with new performers from across the globe, new themes of honor and patriotism, and new sights and sounds to amaze you--don't blink or you might miss something!

Day Three: Friday, April 29

Begin the day with breakfast at the hotel. We'll have a leisurely morning, check out and depart for home at 10AM. We'll make appropriate rest and meal stops in route home. Returning approximately 5:30 PM.

All tour components are subject to change without notice

Price per person: Double: \$555 Triple: \$511 Quad: \$489 Single: \$689

Includes: Motorcoach transportation, 2 nights lodging, luggage handling, 2 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 2 dinners, admission to Victory Rover, Military Aviation Museum, International Tattoo performance and driver's gratuity

Individual cancellations received after the Final Count & Payment Due Date will be subject to a \$20 per person per day cancellation fee, plus any non-refundable costs (such as admission tickets, show tickets, meal and lodging expenses, etc.) incurred by Elite Coach in advance of the trip. Any refunds given will be processed after the trip has been completed. No refunds will be made for cancellations received less than 7 days prior to departure.

For questions call: Larry Lenhart 610-582-5212

Make checks payable to: Met-Ed Retirees Assoc. of Berks County. We will not cash your check until 3/11/22 (deadline for payment date) and we are assured we will have the minimum number of people for the trip.

Mail to: Larry Lenhart, 240 Meeting House Rd. Douglassville, PA 19518

Departure: 8:00 AM on Wednesday from REAR parking lot of the Met-Ed Building at 2800 Pottsville Pike, Reading. Use the far end of the lot to the left of the helicopter pad.

Return: Approximately 5:30 PM on Friday.

Deadline for registration and payment: March 11, 2022

Virginia International Tattoo – April 27 – 29, 2022

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____ email: _____

Special needs or requests: _____

Are you or your spouse a member of MERA Yes or No

Dinner entrée choices: Fried Flounder Broiled Flounder Chicken Alfredo Grilled Pork Chop

Lunch entrée choice: Turkey Sandwich Roast Beef Sandwich Vegetarian