

AMERA HOMETOWN NEWS

A compilation of items of interest to MERA Members April 2022

A Note from MERA President

Our MERA: a Bright and Shining Light

In January, I wrote about this vision for our MERA, and we are on our way!

For our MERA Members: Monthly Member newsletters, packed with fun events, information and Member spotlights; notes of comfort when we need some Sunshine; our Website, merasite.org, overflowing with humor, inspiration, event information, photos of Members, and always more...the one stop for all information MERA; Monthly Member gatherings always with comradery, fun and laughter and SNACKS. And hikes and happy hour gathering plus trips and picnics!!!

For our Community: Talking with Scott Wyman, President PA Operations, about joint volunteer projects with FirstEnergy; sharing information with Easton and Lebanon Retirees Associations; supporting our local schools, like music from Muhlenberg High School at our May meeting.

Tell me what you are thinking.

In what ways can MERA be a Bright and Shining Light for our members and our community?

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AMERA Communications News

Over the past couple years, MERA member communications have improved and expanded. We have learned a lot from member feedback and we know that consistent communications is key to your connection to MERA. The monthly mailings include program and event flyers; Hometown News has grown to offer member profiles, company information and milestone birthdays; and our website, merasite.org, has an amazing amount of information both useful and fun and it is barely two years old! Additionally, we have been testing digital delivery of our monthly mailings to a subset of our members over the past six months. So we'd like to *communicate* a few upcoming changes to our communications!

1. Met-Ed generously provides the copying for a monthly mailing. Unfortunately, color copiers are not as available as they once were. So, beginning with this month, our materials will be in black and white.
2. The digital format of our monthly mailing has been improved to allow for quick downloads, easy reading and selective printing of targeted sections.
3. Beginning in July, every member for whom we have an email address will receive the monthly mailing in their post office box (hard copy) AND in their email in-box (digitally). We'll send you a test email in June. Nice to know that our digital versions will still be in COLOR!

To write, design, produce, mail, test, send, address, fold, stuff and generally oversee the production of our monthly mailing takes a great team effort including nearly every board member. Special thanks to Barb Seidel and Debbie Guigley at Met-Ed and the digital communications team Walt LaSota and Kathy Seyler for making this happen every 30 days or so!

AMERA Member Profile

Art Salyards is one of those guys you can always count on to show up...and he can prove it. At the time of his retirement he held the Accounting Department's record for the longest period without a sick day - 22 years. Art only took 6 sick days in his entire 38 years with the company! An achievement he is still proud of and a trait his family, friends and the organizations he volunteers for (Spring Township, Wilson Food Pantry, for example) still deeply appreciate.

Art and Dee are one of 9 couples who are both retirees from FirstEnergy and both members of MERA. They went to rival high schools but when they met at a dance at their hometown fire hall in 1966...well, what's the opposite of rivalry? They will celebrate their 52nd wedding anniversary in May. They have a daughter, a son and three grandchildren. Art and Dee were part of the Great Johnstown Migration triggered by the merger of Penelec and Met-Ed in 1995. More than 100 families relocated to Reading from Johnstown. "We were competing for housing," said Art. "We'd pass each other during tours of homes for sale!"

Art started in the duplicating department in 1965 but by the time he retired as a staff analyst he was running the corporate financial models for New Jersey, Penelec and Met-Ed. (Does anyone remember Lotus 123?) He started when he was still in high school for \$1.26/hour and his job title was “Temporary Part-time Intermediate Junior Clerk.” Art says, “The title was better than the job!”

Dee spent years working for an insurance company but eventually the pull was too hard to resist and in 1997 she started with Met-Ed. She began in data cleanup then moved into the Call Center. Her calm demeanor, sense of humor, intelligence and genuine caring made her a perfect candidate for handling customers with high bill complaints. Not everyone is cut out for that kind of work!

Art likes to fish for trout and salmon and he has a pretty extensive wood shop in his basement. He was called to active duty in the National Guard, 1966-67 and stayed with the Guard for 6 years eventually becoming a Staff Sargent. Dee loves to read and craft...and at one time was very proficient with decorative stenciling. Both like to exercise regularly. Art walks every day and Dee takes Rock Steady Boxing classes at Body Zone. If you are a VERY LUCKY person, you’ll get to taste one of their apple pies or apple cakes. And, if you are an EXTREMELY LUCKY person, you may get invited to a pie baking class in their kitchen.

Their advice to fellow retirees: Enjoy every day. Stay active. Volunteer your time and talents. And if you work up an appetite doing all that...Art and Dee heartily recommend the Chicken Florentine Pizza from Mama’s Pizza on State Hill Road.

Company News

FirstEnergy Invests in Venture Capital Fund Targeting Decarbonization Technology

To help advance a sustainable energy future, FirstEnergy Corp. recently announced a \$2.5 million investment in Energy Impact Partners’ (EIP) Frontier Fund, which targets early-stage, innovative decarbonization technologies. Through this fund, EIP works closely with industry entrepreneurs and leading utility, energy, environmental, and finance companies to identify and invest in decarbonization technology that can help accelerate the world’s transition to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions.

The relationship with EIP aligns with FirstEnergy’s pledge to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, with an interim goal of achieving a 30% reduction in greenhouse gases within the company's direct operational control by 2030. In 2020, FirstEnergy made progress toward this goal, with a 19% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from its 2019 baseline.

Welcome New Members!

Welcome new member **Ken Bunting** and thank you **Nelson Moeller** for bringing Ken on board! And, **Becky Wingenroth** brings us brand new retiree **Nina Beverly**! So happy to have you!

In the past, the MERA Membership Drive has been confined to a couple months in the fall. In 2022, we are trying something different. This year anyone who recruits a new member any time during the year will be entered into a drawing for gift certificates at the Holiday Luncheon. If you know someone who should be a MERA member, please, invite them to join! It will be a win/win/win! The new member form can be found on merasite.org or send an email to KBaxter@ptd.net.

April MERA Member Milestones

Happy April Anniversary!

Marti & Steve Berry-47
Arlene & Curtis Bonanni-45
Barbara & Roy Gehris-54
Marianne & George Kline- 60
Tina & Stewart McDonough-56

Barbara & Steve Modrick-35
Betty & Nelson Moeller-49
Morena & Dennis O’Brien-45
MaryBeth & Glenn Speicher-47
Theresa & Earl Suchomelly-58

Cathy & Michael Thomas-44
Jean & John Walter-64
Catherine & Richard Wentzel-64
Joyce & Jim Zeiber-56

Happy April 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.

Greg Gillotti	Clair Kramer	MaryBeth Speicher
Dean Fenstermacher	William Pammer	Elizabeth Uliasz
Nelson Moeller	Lucile Yenser	

*The best time to plant a tree was
20 years ago.
The second best time is now.
Ancient Proverb*

Established in the late 1800s, Arbor Day is on April 29. Plant a tree and dedicate it to someone special!

