

Anniversary Luncheon
4/16 Just \$15.
Register by 4/7.
...
Summer Picnic 6/18.
Just \$12.
Register by 6/10.
...
St. Michael's Bus Trip
6/24. Register by 5/27.



MERA

HOMETOWN NEWS

AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS
Items of interest to MERA Members
April 2026

Want to know more?
Check us out at
merasite.org

A Note from MERA's President

We need your help! A bus trip has been cancelled due to lack of interest and at present the reservations for the Anniversary Luncheon seem to be low. One positive is the attendance at the monthly meeting has increased. There have been great programs and more scheduled.

Forward any suggestions that you feel will attract more interest. The board is open to ideas.

HAPPY SPRING!
Jim

MERA Calendar of Events

You won't want to miss any of these great MERA events!

- **Anniversary Luncheon, April 16***, 11:00 am at Victor Emmanuels, 311 Hazel Street. Buffet includes salad, pizza, chicken parmesan, pasta, and beverages. Price:\$15. Bring a dessert to share! We also will be collecting nonperishable food items to donate to Helping Harvest. Check your pantry! **Deadline for reservations is April 7.** Call **Gary Pleiss** at 610-927-7590. ***NOTE date change.**
- **Happy Hour and Hike, April 29.** Hike 2pm on the Exeter River Trail. Park at the lot off of Gibraltar Road. 4pm Happy Hour at Island Pizza, 3060 Limekiln Road, Birdsboro
- **MERA General Meeting May 18**, 1:00 at the Muhlenberg Rec Center located at 3025 River Rd, Reading, Pa. 19605. Historian Paul Miller will present a program on the history of the South Mountain resorts. A light lunch will be provided!
- **Happy Hour and Hike, May 27.** Hike at 2pm at Shiloh Hills 303 Sage Drive, Sinking Spring. Happy Hour at 4pm at Paolo's, 2480 Lancaster Pike, Reading
- **Happy Hour, June 17. (Please note date change due to MERA bus trip on June 24)** No hikes planned for the summer. Happy Hour at 4pm at the Valley Bar and Grill, 4741 Penn Ave, Sinking Spring (formerly the Bar-B-Q Pitt)
- **MERA Annual Picnic June 18, 11:00am** at Jim Dietrich Park. \$12 per person. **Deadline to register is June 10.** Questions? Reach out to **Rob Kehr**, 540 N 6th St., Hamburg, PA 19526. 484-388-0024

- **MERA Bus Trip, St Michael's, Maryland. June 24.** The day includes lunch at the Crab Claw Restaurant, free time to stroll through this quaint little town and a cruise taking in the beauty of the Chesapeake landscape. Transportation, lunch and cruise included in the price of \$174/person. **Registration deadline is May 27.** If you have questions, reach out to **Barb Seidel** at 484-794-0857 or baseidel3523@gmail.com.
- **Happy Hour, July 29.** 4 pm at Ozgood's Neighborhood Bar and Grill, 4 Lincoln Rd, Kutztown
- **Happy Hour, August 26.** 4 pm at Trooper Thorn's Irish Beef House, 451 Morgantown Rd, Reading

Volunteer Spotlight: Roger Levesque and the Reading Civic Theatre

“Just as good as Broadway in New York but easier to get to and a lot cheaper,” claims MERA Member and Reading Civic Theatre (RCT) volunteer **Roger Levesque**. Roger has been part of Reading Civic Theatre for about 15 years. It’s a family affair as his wife, Karen, is on the board and his son was a performer. Roger does everything from acting in bit parts, building sets and serving as the treasurer of the board.

The Reading Civic Theatre has been a keystone of the Berks County performing arts scene for literally centuries. Today, their mission is to perform Broadway-style musicals for local theatre-lovers. In addition, RCT conducts a two-week summer camp for youth. This program helps to prepare young students for their future activity in theatrical arts.

When you look at their 2026 Season, you can see they are living up to their promise! The year’s lineup offers an abundance of laughs, music, drama and satisfying live theatre experiences.

The musical comedy **Sister Act** is on stage this month – tickets still available!

Also on stage this year:

- **A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum** – June
- **Rent** - August
- **Carrie** - October
- **Christmas Carol** - December

Shows are performed at 4650 Perkiomen Avenue. The organization converted the old Fox Theatre East in Boscov’s Exeter shopping center from a film venue to a live theatre space. Evening performances start at 7:30 and there are Sunday matinees at 2:00. Shows generally last 2 -2.5 hours. “We have modern light and sound equipment and there isn’t a bad seat in the house,” Roger proudly proclaims. “And there is plenty of easy parking too!” Tickets are available online at readingcivic.org. For seniors, the price can be as low as \$30 a ticket.

Reading Civic Theatre is all volunteer and showcases local talent in quality productions for a reasonable price. Roger sums it up: “We do it for the love of the theatre.”

Stronger, Smarter Power Grid to Improve Reliability for 6,000+ Customers in Berks County

A major upgrade to the electric grid is underway to bring more electricity to the region and support faster power restoration for more than 6,000 FirstEnergy Pennsylvania (FE PA) customers in Berks County. Led by Mid-Atlantic Interstate Transmission LLC (MAIT), a FirstEnergy Transmission company, the Van Reed 69-kV Transmission Project includes constructing a new substation in Bern Township and adding a nearly four mile, high-voltage power line on a combination of wood and steel poles that add additional strength to the system. The work is designed to reduce outages around Reading, Bern Township and Leesport and support growth in southeastern Pennsylvania. Construction began in early January, and the project is expected to be in service before the end of this year.

Sunshine Remembrances

MERA sent condolences to Sue Perez, wife of member **Lori Lobb** who passed away in March.

MERA Member Milestones Happy April Anniversary!

Steve & Marti Berry
Curtis & Arlene Bonanni
John & Alma Felix
Donald Fix & Nancy Rapak
Roy & Barbara Gehris
Kent & Lisa Hatt
Kathy & Rick Heffner
Theresa & Harold Klineyoung
Joel & Ann Lebo
Stewart & Tina McDonough

Nelson & Betty Moeller
Dennis & Morena O'Brien
Diane & Richard Pawling
Terry & Barbara Sarangoulis
Glenn & MaryBeth Speicher
Earl & Theresa Suchomelly
Cathy & Michael Thomas
Barbara & Mike Witman
Jim & Joyce Zeiber

Happy April Milestone* Birthday!

*A milestone birthday is one that ends in "0" or "5."

Karen Bigelow
Gary Heffner
Susan Hendricks
Sharon Hrabak
Terrence Norman
Barbara Nuhfer
Louise Pammer
Anita Zawada

My doctor recommended I buy orthopedic insoles. I didn't think they would work, but now I stand corrected.

