

Don't miss  
live music  
at the May 20 MERA  
Meeting, 1:00  
Jim Dietrich Park!



# MERA HOMETOWN NEWS

Items of interest to MERA Members  
May 2024

Want to know more?  
Check us out at  
[merasite.org](http://merasite.org)

## A Note from MERA President

SPRINGTIME!! We look forward to the gifts of nature and the many outdoor activities. For our group, May means the start of the general meetings outside at Dietrich's Park and some interesting programs. There are also bus trips scheduled for your enjoyment. The Washington DC trip was interesting; the meal was great. (See Denis's article below for more details.) Check in for the upcoming trips. You won't be disappointed. Look forward to seeing you!

Jim

## MERA Member Bits & Pieces

**Tim & Donna Goughnour** celebrated the wedding of their son Drew to Sarah Olesneovich. The couple were introduced to each other by the bride's mother. "Just give it a chance!" And the rest is history! **Bill & Uta Hexamer** journeyed to Amsterdam to see the glorious fields of spring tulips. **Ron & Janet Bortz** laughed themselves silly at their 5-year-old great grandson's first T-ball game. It was all about having a good time and not so much about following the rules! **Ralph & Estelle Fehr's** granddaughter will appear in a Broadway show this summer. She's only 12 but active in her school's theatrics. **Curtis & Arlene Bonanni** recently set sail on Royal Caribbean's brand new cruise ship the Icon. Arlene said she'd go again in a heartbeat. Stops included Cozumel, Roatan, Costa Maya and Nassau. **Barb Seidel** and her sons (ages 42 & 36) went off to The Big Apple for a day to lunch at Margaritaville and see *Aladdin* on Broadway.

*One thing we know, MERA members are busy people. This column is all about keeping us connected by reporting quick snapshots of MERA member activities. We'd love to hear from you. Submit your items by emailing [meraberks@gmail.com](mailto:meraberks@gmail.com).*

## MERA Spring & Summer Events

*TIP: Don't miss out on any of these great activities! Print this page and put it on your bulletin board or put the dates in your calendar now (while you're thinking about it!).*

### **MAY 20, 1:00 pm: General Meeting at Jim Dietrich Park**

*Live music* by Steve Barth. Steve has been an entertainer for many years. He will play the guitar and sing some of your favorite tunes from the past. Be ready to sing along (no judgement here) and have fun! And, of course, refreshments will be served by our president Jim and his able and devoted staff. Remember to bring a jacket in case it's chilly.

### **May 29 Hike, 2pm: Blue Marsh Lake Border Trail**

Let's check out the other direction of this pleasant trail. Meet at the Sheidy Boat Ramp, off Rt 183 between Bright School Road and Old Church Rd. We will walk north toward Robesonia Road this time, about 2 miles in each direction, or less if you wish. Then we will reconvene for **Happy Hour at 4pm at Blue Marsh Italian Restaurant**, 5027 Bernville Road/Rt 183

### **June 19, 2pm: Walk at Reading Museum Arboretum**

Let's take a stroll through the gardens at the Reading Museum to see what's in bloom, and perhaps farther along the creek as time allows. Then we will gather again at **4pm at Sly Fox Wyomissing Tap House**, 820 Knitting Mill Way for refreshment and fellowship.

### **JUNE 20, 11:00: MERA Annual Picnic at Jim Dietrich Park**

Feast on typical summer fare: cold cuts, salads, baked beans and hamburger barbecue, a winning combination! And don't forget the ICE CREAM! Please take note that we are able to slightly reduce the price to \$15 per person. Hurrah! Arrive early starting at 11:00 a.m. to get your preferred seats. Bring a few bucks along and take a chance on the money raffle. There will be 4 prizes if the total collected will be in excess of \$100. First prize gets 40% of the total. Inquiries & registration: contact Clair or Edna Kramer at 610-683-8342 or 484-256-7168 cell.

### **JUNE 26: Sails & Rails! Daytrip**

Includes: Motorcoach transportation, lunch cruise on the "Proud Mary Showboat" at Raystown Lake and trolley ride at the Rock Hill Trolley, and an ice cream treat! Price is \$185 per person. Inquiries & registration: contact Larry Lenhart at 610-582-5212 or 610-207-3026 (cell phone) or email [wisserl@aol.com](mailto:wisserl@aol.com). Registration deadline is May 21.

**July 31, 2:30pm (note time change):** Let's meet in the parking lot at the **Berks County Agricultural Center**, 1238 County Welfare Rd, Leesport, for another garden tour. Becky Wingenroth will guide us as we explore 10 or more differently themed gardens cared for by the Master Gardeners of Berks County. We will see flowers in bloom as well as vegetable and herb plots. The tour will take about 30 to 45 minutes. Following our walk, we will regroup to cool off and refresh during our **Happy**

**Hour beginning at 4pm at Jimmy G's Railroad House**, 152 Woodrow Avenue, Sinking Spring. Hope you can join us for either or both!

### **No General Meetings in July or August**

Have a great summer!

**August 28, 4pm: Happy Hour at CRAFT 2700 @ FREYMOYER's**  
2700 Kutztown Rd.

### **Fall Preview:**

- Sept 12 Mystery Trip
- September 19 Annual Chicken Bake at Jim Dietrich Park
- Sept 25 Hike & Happy Hour

## **MERA Bus Trip to Washington D.C.** by Denis Dorward

The first stop in Washington DC was the National Cathedral located on Wisconsin Ave. in the Northwest part of the city. We enjoyed the sights in the Georgetown area as we rode to our destination.

Construction of the National Cathedral began in 1907, when President Theodore Roosevelt helped lay the foundation stone. President George H.W. Bush oversaw the laying of the final stone 83 years later atop the towers, in 1990. The Washington National Cathedral is about 83,000 square feet, the sixth largest in the world and the second largest in the United States. It can seat over 4,000 people. (The largest Church in the world is St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The largest cathedral in the United States is Saint John the Divine in New York City.)

One of the most visually distinct elements of the Cathedral is the Gothic architecture. The pointed arches, flying buttresses (supports that help hold up the heavy walls by pushing from the outside), and the more than 200 stained glass windows. Nine chapels tracing the life of Christ are located within the Cathedral. Since its construction, Washington National Cathedral has seen many significant services connected to its national profile. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. preached his final Sunday sermon from the Cathedral's pulpit, just days before his assassination in 1968. It has hosted three state funerals: Eisenhower, Reagan and Ford. And one president laid to rest: Woodrow Wilson.

Lunch was served at Tony and Joe's Seafood Place at Washington Harbor. The quality and service were excellent; nobody went away hungry. My first try at Mahi Mahi was very good and won't be my last.

Next, we headed to Arlington National Cemetery. Nearly 400,000 people are buried in its 639 acres overlooking the Potomac River across from Washington, D.C. The burial

ground was established on May 13, 1864, on land confiscated from Confederate General Robert E. Lee. An average of 25 burials are performed each day. We boarded the Hop-on-Hop-off tram, which circled the cemetery, narrated by a tour guide, pointing out the significant gravesites of each section. The most popular is the gravesite of John F Kennedy along with the eternal flame, and of course The Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers which is guarded 24-hours a day by soldiers from the 3rd Infantry Regiment. What qualifies you to be buried at Arlington? In general, to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery individuals must be a) members of the Armed Forces who die on active duty; b) retired members of the Armed Forces, including Reservists who served on active duty; c) former members of the Armed Forces who have been awarded the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross (Air Force or Navy), Silver Star or Purple Heart. Former Presidents are entitled to be buried at Arlington. Only two U.S. presidents, William Howard Taft and John F. Kennedy, are buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

As we headed home, we caught a glimpse of several Washington landmarks, including the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument, Capital Building, and the White House.

For great pictures check out our website and click on "Photos."

## Welcome New Members!

A very warm MERA welcome to new member: **Scott Berglund**. We hope to see you at a MERA event soon! Remember, anyone who brings a new member to MERA during the year will be eligible to win a gift card drawing held during the annual Christmas luncheon. Help us grow by bringing new members to the fold!

## May MERA Member Milestones Happy May Anniversary!

Robert & Linda Bannon  
William & Patricia Barrick  
Mike & Marianne Benioff  
Joe & Lesley Bruce  
MaryBeth & Dan Clark  
Linda & Mark Coutts  
Gerry & Keith Day  
Pankaj & Pragna Doshi  
Karen & Ron Fisher  
Dave & Chris Forrer

Brian & Suzette Frantz  
Julia & Walter Frith  
Tim & Donna Goughnour  
David & Nola Henry  
Dean & Monie Hollenbacher  
Rob & Corie Kehr  
James & Robin Kelly  
Walt & Maryellen LaSota  
Sharon & William Marshall-Davis

Dave & Sharon Murphy  
Jeff & Marlene Rathman  
Judy & Jack Seidel  
Rob & Lois Stillwell  
Harold & SueAnn Webber  
George & Martha Weida  
Ann & Douglas White  
Oliver & Diana Wilson  
Daniel & Doris Wurster  
Clarence & Luccill Yenser

Our apologies to Donald Fix & Nancy Rapak. We missed their April anniversary.

## Happy May Milestone Birthday!

Robert Bannon	Barbara Lapachinsky
Robert Daniels	Walt LaSota
Judy Fair	Michael Phile
Deborah Fegley	Philomena Robidoux
Ron Fisher	Ellen Schwartz
Alexis Green	Cathy Thomas

"Don't look at me in that  
tone of voice."  
Dorothy Parker

