

TAKE NOTE:
It's the Dog Days of Summer!
There will be NO MERA meeting in July or August. And there will be NO August newsletter either!
See you in September at The Chicken Bake!



MERA HOMETOWN NEWS

AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS
Items of interest to MERA Members
July 2024

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

MERA Calendar of Events

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!

August 28, 2pm: We have rescheduled our walk at the **Reading Museum Arboretum**. Let's hope the weather cooperates for us to take a stroll through the gardens to see what's in bloom, and perhaps to wander farther along the creek as time and temperature allow. Then we will meet again at our **4pm Happy Hour at CRAFT 2700 @ FREYMOYER's 2700 Kutztown Rd.** to cool off and enjoy good food, drinks, and conversation. Hope to see you there!

No General Meetings in July or August Have a great summer!

Fall Preview:

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

FREE Reading Phils Tickets Available

Feel like going out to the Ballpark for some peanuts and Cracker Jacks? We've got you covered! Met-Ed has given MERA a limited number of free general admission tickets to the August 13 Reading Fightin' Phils game at FirstEnergy Stadium. The Fightin' Phils will take on the New Hampshire Fisher Cats. The first 2000 adults will receive an Alec Bohm Head with Walk Up Song. If you would like 2-4 tickets, please let **Larry Lenhart** know **by July 31**. Contact Larry at 610-582-5212 or 610-207-3026 (cell phone) or email wisserl@aol.com

FirstEnergy Restores Matching \$\$ Grant

The MERA Board of Directors is happy to report that FirstEnergy has reinstated their annual matching gift to MERA retroactive to 2022. For each member who paid or pays his or her \$5 dues, FirstEnergy will provide a matching gift of \$10. The gift had been on hold for several years while FirstEnergy reviewed their giving/donation policies. In order to qualify, MERA Treasurer **Dean Hollenbacher** had to amass quite of a bit of paperwork including filing for official tax exempt status with the IRS. MERA is deeply grateful to Dean and the other board members who made this happen. Also, special thanks to our Met-Ed contacts Jenn Rivera and Marisela Fuster for helping to advance our cause. Stay tuned for more information!

MERA Member Bits & Pieces

Everyone has a bad day now and then. **Larry Lenhart**, despite his effervescent personality, is no exception. If you were at the Annual Picnic, you know Larry forgot the sound system. He did remember the bingo apparatus (which sits on top of the sound system in his garage, but never mind). The day gets worse. After the picnic his truck wouldn't start and then pretty soon Larry wasn't feeling too good either with a touch of sunstroke. Larry and his truck are both working now. Says Larry, "Did you ever have such a bad day, you just had to laugh?" **Deb Hoover** and her entire family headed to the beautiful island of Bermuda for a glorious change of scenery. **Cathy and Michael Thomas** headed to Big Pine Key and Siesta Key in Florida for seven leisurely weeks. "We like to go to Florida in April and May after the snowbirds fly home and it's not so crowded." **Brian and Christine Gasser** went off to Europe visiting Budapest and Amsterdam among other stops. Wonder if they ran into **Nancy Speicher** who was in France? On another kind of adventure entirely **Bob and Barbara Mark** are babysitting their grandkids ages one and six. Bob says it is giving him an excuse to act like a kid again! **Cindy Rowitz** traveled south recently with family and friends. They traveled the Kentucky Bourbon Trail and still managed to find Churchill Downs where they watched the ponies and dined on Millionaire's Row. **Ken Speicher** joined fellow members of the Skyline Drive Corvette Club for a 6-night trip to Kentucky. The trip celebrated the Club's 60th anniversary. The convoy consisted of 22 cars. The group visited Maker's Mark Distillery, Lost River Cave, The National Corvette Museum, the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory, and Churchill Downs (wonder if he ran into Cindy?) among other stops. By the end of the adventure, Ken had traveled 1,666 miles with an average speed of 58 mph and fuel economy of 28.2 miles per gallon. Who said Corvettes don't get good gas mileage!

MERA on the Airwaves

MERA received a big thanks from Jack Holcomb, host of the long running and very popular WEEU show "Jack's Backyard." The "thanks" was prompted by an email from one of Jack's fans who wrote in to say how much he appreciated the bluebird houses assembled and installed by MERA volunteers throughout Jim Dietrich Park. (Presumably, the blue birds appreciate us too!) The bluebird boxes were the brainchild of MERA member **Henry Robidoux**. Henry was inspired by retirees Dean Boyer and

Eric Ulrich. Many MERA members helped with the installation at Jim Dietrich park.
Great job, everyone!

2024 Field of Honor

United States Flags will fly at the Wyomissing Stone House Pond the week of July 4. The Field of Honor is organized by the West Reading-Wyomissing Rotary Club. Each US flag dedication tells a story. MERA is proud to, once again, sponsor a flag to honor our many members, past and present, who served our country. Stop by and witness this moving tribute. The display is open through July 6, 2024 at the Stone House Pond, 1216 Parkside Drive North, Wyomissing. Many thanks to MERA Member **Doug Myers** and **Gail Landis** who are key Rotary volunteers helping to make this project a reality for our community.

Welcome New Members!

A very warm MERA welcome to new member: **Deb Hoover**. Great to see you at the Annual Picnic! Remember, anyone who brings a new member to MERA during the year will be eligible to win a gift card at the annual Christmas luncheon. Help us grow by bringing new members to the fold!

July & August MERA Member Milestones Happy Summer Anniversary!

July Anniversaries

Bob & Jean Bonneville
Cheryl & Jeff Fick
Janice & Brian Grill
Cheryl & Paul Haring
George & Barbara Kunder
Richard & Marcia Laedlein
Donald & Rosemary Ludwig

Kimberly & Gerald Lutz
Larry & Carol Miller
Beverly & Larry Moyer
Kevin & Lisa Straub
Cindy & Jeff Thomas
Nancy & Allen Wenrich

August Anniversaries

Robert & Theresa Bates
Stephen & Eilene Bauer
Richard & Vivian Faust
Dean & Jackie Fenstermaker
Alexis & Harold Green
Alan & Barbara Harris
Bob & Debi Hartz
Paul & Sharon Henry
Willard & Louise Lutz
Georgine & Joe McCool
Edwin & Barbara Ogden
Barbara & Barry Patterson

Robert & Manice Peace
Robert & Marion Reber
Russell & Jane Rogers
Henri & Mike Santoro
Kim & Mario Scaffidi
Leonard & Ruth Ann Schlegel
Paul & Marie Sensenig
Ken & Pat Snyder
Robert & Priscilla Steger
Roselyn & Carl Strassner
David & Sue Topper
Thomas & Linda Woleslagle
Gary & Patricia Wright

Happy July & August Milestone Birthday!

July Birthdays

Steve Berry
Cheryl Fick
Jeff Fick
Suzette Frantz
Drew Keiser
Doug Myers
Ted Noll
Donna Peters
Debra Rutter
Priscilla Steger
Dick Tracy

August Birthdays

Sandra Christman
Doris Flowers
Gloria Hatt
David Rutter
Robert Steger
Jon Storch
Carl Strassner
Kitty Wise

*I'll be alone each and every night.
While you're away, don't forget to write.
Bye-bye, so long, farewell.
Bye-Bye, so long.
See you in September.
See you when the summer's through.*

*~ The Tempos (1959) and
The Happenings (1966)*

