



MERA HOMETOWN NEWS

Items of interest to MERA Members
November 2023

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merasite.org

MERA Member Bits & Pieces

Welcome to a new HOMETOWN NEWS feature, **MERA Member Bits & Pieces**. 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 would especially like to hear from MERA members who don't typically attend MERA events. Please share a little bit of what you've been up to!

Stu Degler has a younger woman living with him. His granddaughter Abigail has temporarily left her home in New Hampshire to move in with Stu so she can take an intern position at an architectural engineering firm in Lititz, PA. **Barb Seidel** has been elected treasurer of her church, Renewed Spirit Church of Reading. **Ralph & Bonnie Paparelli** visited their grandson, Logan, at Syracuse University where he's studying Biochemical Engineering. **Pat & Don McKinney** drove to South California to see their grandson, Matthew. Matthew made a quick visit home once he'd finished his Marine training and will soon be returning to California to be stationed at Camp Pendleton. **Sandy & Bill Myskowski** (and Snuggles) just returned from Dewey Beach. **Maxi & Fred Shirey** recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a party at Reading Liederkrantz. **Walter & Maryellen LaSota** welcomed their 6th grandchild, also named Walter. The score is tied now: three granddaughters and three grandsons. In October, **Irv Godboldte** was inducted into the Berks County Military Hall of Fame for "...devotion to duty and personal bravery in keeping with the finest traditions of the military service..."

Got something for next month's column? Please send it to meraberks@gmail.com

MERA Member Profile

In her early 80s, Erma Miller bought a new pair of skis. In a way, that tells you almost all you need to know about Erma Miller. But the details are pretty interesting so we'll dig into them anyway!

Erma grew up on a farm in Limekiln with her seven siblings (the first six were girls and the last two boys – her parents were determined). She and her first husband, Jan Hoffman, graduated from Oley High School in 1956 and were married in 1958. Erma, then a student at the Reading Hospital School of Nursing, had to get permission to marry from the Hospital's Director of Nursing.

Erma graduated as a Registered Nurse and began her career. She worked as a Berks Visiting Nurse, in the Reading Hospital's orthopedic department (and many others), and as a private duty nurse (when her kids were little). Following retirement, she worked at the Berks Surgical Institute then volunteered at Reading Hospital for about 13 years.

Jan and Erma were married for 40 years and for 28 of those years, he was a Met-Ed lineman. "A lineman's wife spends a lot of time on her own," Erma acknowledged. "They get called out in all kinds of weather, holidays, and long trips out of town to communities hit by storms." Always independent and self-reliant, Erma admits, "I didn't really mind."

Her son, Jeffrey, was a senior engineer at Met-Ed for 18 years and now works at the regional transportation organization, PJM. She also has a daughter who is a government affairs manager for FedEx in Memphis. She has three grandchildren.

Erma and Jan divorced. Eventually Erma remarried Allan Miller who sadly passed away after 20 years of marriage.

In her retirement she spends time with beau Larry Spayd and does volunteer work for her church, Friedens UCC in Oley. She's a member of the Alumni Association of Tower Health School of Nursing and the Oley Women's Club. She loves to garden, a legacy from her childhood on the farm. And, of course, she skis.

She reminds all of us, "*Don't sit still!* You'll live longer and be happier!" With a grin she admits, "People say I show up everywhere. I do like to get out and about!"

FE Plans to Merge PA's Electric Distribution Companies

FirstEnergy Corp's subsidiaries – Met-Ed, Penelec, Penn Power, West Penn Power, Keystone Appalachian Transmission Company (KATCo) and Mid-Atlantic Interstate Transmission, LLC (MAIT) – have filed a settlement agreement with the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PaPUC) regarding their joint application to merge FirstEnergy's four Pennsylvania electric distribution companies into a single consolidated operating company with a continued focus on delivering safe, reliable electricity to more than two million customers in the state.

Under the terms of the proposed settlement, income-eligible customers would receive a total of \$650,000 in bill assistance over five years. In addition, the settlement outlines a mechanism for tracking cost savings realized through consolidated operations, which would be returned to customers as part of future base rate reviews.

The settlement, if approved by the PaPUC, helps enable the path forward for the companies' March 2023 application filed with the PaPUC that would consolidate the subsidiaries into a single legal entity called FirstEnergy Pennsylvania Electric Company (FE PA). The distribution companies will continue to do business publicly under the existing local brand names that are familiar to customers – Met-Ed, Penelec, Penn Power and West Penn Power.

By consolidating to a larger, combined company, FE PA anticipates gaining greater access to capital at more favorable interest rates to invest in projects to improve customer service and further enhance the energy grid.

It's Time to Renew your MERA Membership!

Renewing your membership is simple and inexpensive!

MERA dues are still just \$5.00! What can you get for five bucks, these days, that delivers this much value?

MERA connects you to a community of fun-loving and caring seniors. Meet up with workplace friends and meet some new ones! Most retirees will tell you they do not miss the work but they do miss the people ...MERA is the answer! There's always something new at MERA...walks, history talks, picnics, bus trips, luncheons, live music...and lots of laughter! MERA gets you out of the house and smiling! **DON'T MISS OUT!**

Just follow these easy steps:

- **Complete the renewal membership form. To find the form, just click on the image included in this email or you can find it on the website under "printable forms." If you don't have a printer, simply write down the information requested on the form on a piece of paper and send it in!**
- **Make a check out to MERA for \$5.**
- **Send the form and the check by December 31, 2023 to**
Karen Baxter, 2 Belgian Lane, Wernersville, PA 19565

THANK YOU!

The Sunshine Report

MERA's own Sunshine Chair, **Cindy Doaty**, sends cards and notes to members who are feeling under the weather or need a kind word. Recently, MERA sent sympathy cards to Bob Houlihan on the death of his wife Elizabeth and to the family of Randy Blatt.

If you know of a MERA member who needs some sunshine, please let Karen Baxter know at kbaxter@ptd.net.

Welcome New Members!

A very warm MERA welcome to four new members: **Cheryl Fick, Kim Scaffidi, Mario Scaffidi and Del Somerville**. 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!

November MERA Member Milestones Happy November Anniversary!

Leon & Lenora Adam
Robert & Jeanne Ann
Arthur
Peter & Judy Culshaw
Richard & Susan D'Angelo
Brian & Christine Gasser

Greg & Kris Gillotti
Andy & Peggie Hunter
Clair & Edna Kramer
Michael & Judy Krepps
Kim & Jim Krotulski
Scott & Darlene Moyer

Barry & Geri Seidel
Glenn & Judy Sillhart
James & Teresa Strock
Sam & Bonnie Thomas
Bernie & Carrie Whitmoyer
James & Helen Wilhelm

Happy November Milestone Birthday!

Sheila Faust
John Fedorko
Tim Goughnour
Lisa Hughes
Stew McDonough
Pat McKinney

Barbara O'Brien
John O'Brien
Charles O'Neill
Rory Pfeifer
Rose Rahn
Lois Stilwell

Terry Troop
Thomas Witman
Clarence Yenser
Joyce Zeiber

Do you have any comments or recommendations for MERA? A program? Newsletter article? Please email MERA at meraberks@gmail.com.

Q: Why does Humpty Dumpty love autumn?
A: Because Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
Q: What kind of music did the Pilgrims listen to?
Q: Plymouth Rock

