

There's no such thing as bad weather...just the wrong clothes! Kick the winter blues by joining MERA's walk around the Berks Nature Center on January 29 at 2pm.



MERA HOMETOWN NEWS

AND CALENDAR OF EVENTS
Items of interest to MERA Members
January 2025

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

Note from MERA President

Christmas and it's festivities all now in the past. Now we look forward to New Year! 2025, can you believe it! It may be good to have a crystal ball to see what this coming year holds...or maybe not.

Think of adding to your resolution list to join us at our monthly meetings to enjoy some good entertainment and socializing with your fellow retirees. The next meeting is on January 20th at the Rec Center on River Road. Meeting starts at 1:00.

I look forward to seeing you!
Jim

MERA Calendar of Events

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

- **January General Membership Meeting, Monday, January 20 at 1 p.m. at Muhlenberg Rec Center.** Musical Bingo with Rich Weilacher of TGE Entertainment. Prizes and snacks! That will take the gray out of January!
- **Hike & Happy Hour, Wednesday, January 29, 2 p.m. Hike on Angelica Creek Trail.** Park at the Berks Nature Center parking lot, 575 St. Bernardine St, off of Morgantown Road. We will walk around the Nature Center gardens, then on toward the Ken Grille pool, about one mile each way. Then we will head back at **4 p.m. to Trooper Thorns**, 451 Morgantown Rd for our Happy Hour.
- **February General Membership Meeting, Monday February 17 at 1 p.m. at Muhlenberg Rec Center.** Brent Erb, Director, Nolde Forest Education.
- **Hike & Happy Hour, Wednesday, February 26 (date tentative for Snow Goose migration)** Let's try to catch the snow goose migration at its peak this year. The date may be a last minute decision, hopefully around the end of February. We will meet at **2 p.m. to hike to Willow Point, Middle Creek Wildlife Management Area.** The path is flat gravel, about one-half mile each way. We will spend our time enjoying the snow geese and tundra swans, if they agree to stick around for us. Then we will reconvene to warm up and refresh at our **Happy Hour at 4 p.m. at the K-ville Tavern**, 2647 Heidelberg Ave, Kleinfeltersville.
- **March General Membership Meeting Monday, March 17 at 1 p.m. at the Muhlenberg Rec Center.** Sue Moyer, Associate Professor of Nursing, Millersville University; Self-care for physical and mental health.

- **Hike & Happy Hour, Wednesday, March 26 2 p.m. Hike on Muhlenberg Rail Trail.** Join us as well for our **4 p.m. Happy Hour at Joe's Place**, 5 Spring Valley Road, Laureldale.
- **Trip to Toby's Dinner Theatre Wednesday, April 16.** Enjoy the great All-American musical, "The Music Man!" performed in the round at Toby's Dinner Theatre Columbia, MD. The trip includes motorcoach transportation, live show and buffet lunch inclusive of taxes and gratuity. Cost is \$166 price per person. Deadline for registration is February 20. For questions, reach out to **Barb Seidel** at 484-794-0857 or bseidel3523@comcast.net.
- **Anniversary Luncheon Thursday, April 24 at 11:00 a.m.** Location TBD
- **Hike & Happy Hour, Wednesday, April 30 2 p.m. Hike at Union Meadows East Park, Birdsboro**, 100 Campbell Ford Rd, Douglassville. Join us for this pleasant walk in a beautiful setting as well as at our **4pm Happy Hour at Island Pizza** 3060 Limekiln Rd.

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'd love to hear from you. Submit your items by emailing meraberks@gmail.com.

On her 77th birthday, **Sandy Myskowski** scored a 7-point buck, her 7th buck in her 10 years of hunting. Her husband Bill stood by as her guide and teacher. Celebrations followed, comprised of honey buns and chocolate milk and included the adorable Scottish Terrier, Snuggles. Congratulations, Sandy!

MERA Member Profile

written by guest columnist **Larry Lenhart**

So, who is **Roxane Hartman**...and what are NUGS?

Roxane is one of the longest serving employees of the GPU and First Energy Companies, starting her long career in Generation at Met-Ed in 1977 and retiring from Rates in 2018. Sounds like 40 years of your life!

Let's start at the beginning. Roxane grew up in the Temple area, graduating from Muhlenberg High School in 1974. During high school and business school, she had a part-time job at Famous Recipe Chicken on the 5th Street Highway, where she met her future husband, Mark. During this timeframe she also attended The McCann School of Business, receiving her associate degree in 1976.

Met-Ed hired Roxane in 1977 for a clerical job in Reading in the Generation Department. That placed her in the perfect position to be transferred to TMI, three days after the March 28, 1979 accident. She initially worked a 12 hour night shift and spent the next three years at TMI.

In the meantime, she and Mark got married in October of 1980. She and Mark would bring two sons into the world and now have four grandchildren, three girls and a boy. Fortunately, one of her sons still lives in the area so Roxane can spend quality time with her young grandchildren who are four years old and 16 months old!

You may have noticed that I still haven't talked about NUGS... Depending upon your company work experience, you already know that NUGS stands for Non-Utility Generation. In November of 1982 Roxane joined System Operations which was part of the Power Services Department. By 1991

Roxane was involved with administering NUG contracts, which she really enjoyed. Looking back over her four decade career, this was her favorite job ever! Two years later in 1984, she resumed her college education, this time at Albright College, and earned a BS in Finance in 1990.

In 2003, Roxane joined the Met-Ed Rates Department. She retired from that department in 2018, after working in Generation Dispatch for a few years between 2012 and 2015. She decided to take early retirement on October 1, 2018, in order to spend more time with her family. Coincidentally her husband died on October 1, 2018, after battling cancer for much too long.

After her Met-Ed retirement, Roxane immediately started working at Raymour and Flanigan as a customer care rep. She still works there, 25-30 hours a week, but has finally decided that it's time to cut back. What she will miss most is mentoring her younger co-workers who regularly shared their personal problems with her and asked for advice. Roxane has a passion for helping people and feels that she has definitely made a difference in their lives. This role has added value to Roxane's life. Most recently, she has volunteered to provide medical transportation out of our area for an associate with health issues. Speaking of "giving back," she and a friend cook for the women, men and children who are housed at Safe Berks. This is a monthly job which she really enjoys.

So, what advice does Roxane Hartman have for retirees? Stay active, lead a healthy lifestyle, enjoy your retirement time, travel as much as you can AND do what makes you happy! Coincidentally as I was writing this up Roxane is vacationing in Sicily! Thank you for sharing your story Roxane!

FirstEnergy Announces Gifts of the Season

The FirstEnergy Foundation has granted surprise "Gifts of the Season" totaling \$70,000 to six local Pennsylvania nonprofits that are working to make lives better in communities served by FirstEnergy Pennsylvania. The recipients of this year's gifts are organizations that provide support services to underserved and vulnerable individuals of all ages across Pennsylvania.

Met-Ed service area recipients:

- **Barrio Alegria (\$10,000)** – Barrio Alegria is a community transformation organization located in Reading that utilizes the arts as a platform for community engagement and the development of social and multicultural awareness. Barrio Alegria uses dance, acting and painting to build, empower and strengthen communities through individuals and is also involved with neighborhood cleanups and micro-business development.
- **Glenn Hope Care Farm (\$10,000)** – Situated on 43 acres in Felton, York County, Glenn Hope Care Farm promotes the physical and mental health of veterans and their families through on-farm activities such as horticulture therapy, animal husbandry, agricultural classes and special events. Everything grown and produced on the farm is done so by veterans. A portion of the nutritious food produced on the farm – produce, free-range eggs, poultry, pork and grass-fed beef – is donated to veterans and veteran organizations.

Sunshine Report

MERA Sunshine sympathy cards were sent to the families of members **Russell Thomas** and **Richard Britigan** who recently passed. A sympathy card also was sent to **Gerry Day** on the passing of her father.

NERA Member Milestones Happy January Anniversary!

Martin & Sandra Christman
Randy & Michelle Collins
Robert & Sandra Eidle
Terrilyn & Markus Flasdick
Michael & Suzanne Knarr
Gene & Christine Leshner

William & Suellen Maurer
Richard & Carol Morganti
Gary & Lisa Pleiss
Ronald & Linda Reddy
Merrill & Edith Wixon

Happy January Milestone* Birthday!

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

Dave Forrer
Michael Krepps
Daniel Wurster
Earl Suchomelly

*"Adults are always asking children
what they want to be when they
grow up because they're looking
for ideas."*

Paula Poundstone

