



MARCH - APRIL 2025

MONTHLY

MEN ENJOYING LEISURE

About MEL, Melmen and their activities



FROM THE EDITOR



This issue recounts MEL's recent visits to the National Museum of the American Sailor and The Fermi Lab, two fine examples of our exceptional programming. There are also short features about Bill Gurolnick's 94th Birthday and about our pool sharks. Included are plenty of photos and birthday mentions plus a look at some terrific upcoming events and activities. You can tell the season is, at long last, changing as outdoor activities and events are starting to pop up.

Enjoy! Gerry



MEL GOES TO SEA—VICARIOUSLY - By Gerry Linda



On February 28, 2025, 27 Melmen visited the National Museum of The American Sailor, located on the grounds of the Great Lakes Naval Station. On our way to a private tour at 1:00 PM, we stopped at Gus' Grille in Lake Bluff for a delicious early lunch.

The museum's mission is to "collect, preserve and interpret the history of the U.S. Navy's enlisted sailors." The current collection includes items from the 1770's to the present. Our docent-led tour lasted about an hour and focused on two main topics--the beginning of the United States Navy, 1775-1865, and the surprisingly extensive history of tattoos in the U.S. Navy.

Designed to duplicate the below decks feel of an 18th Century ship, the rightmost exhibit above showcased the life and work of enlisted sailors from the American Revolution through the American Civil War. We saw how little private space a sailor had, how bad the food was and how they spent what little spare time they had by creating music and art—designs on their canvas bags and scrimshaw carvings on fish bones, horns, and teeth.



As we moved from exhibit to exhibit, we were treated to the museum's collection of uniforms, hats, blouses, and status insignia. And we saw model ships including the USS Gerald Ford, the newest aircraft carrier, and Old Ironsides herself, the USS Constitution.



The heart of the museum's public space, however, was devoted to a wide-ranging exploration of the history of tattoos in the US Navy. Modern tattoos are rooted in the nautical world, beginning with British sailors in the early eighteenth century, who got the idea from Polynesians, and spreading to sailors in the U.S. Navy. We followed the history and culture of sailor tattoos through every American war and conflict, delved into the meaning behind common tattoos, and explored how sailor tattoo culture cultivated the current broad mainstream acceptance of inked body art.

Naval tattoos are deeply meaningful to their owners: "This tattoo keeps me grounded. It reminds me of the obligation I have taken on to this country. It reminds me to be steady and ready; it lets me know that we can do this." (HM2 Tracy Blackmond-Mills in the right picture.)



MEL PLAYS POOL - *By Steve Wasserman*



As they do every Monday from 12:00 to 2:00, the MEL 8-ball pool players enjoy two hours of relaxed competition at the Arlington Lanes in Arlington Heights. There are 15 bar-size pool tables so most of the games are one-on-one. They switch partners after the first hour of play to have more opportunities to interact.

New players are always welcome. Everything needed is provided by Arlington Lanes. Current players' skill sets range from OK to Very

Good. A recently initiated bonus activity is lunch an hour before play starts.

In the picture: Efen Reyes, Willie Mosconi, Ralph Greenleaf, Shane Van Boening, Paul Newman, Jackie Gleason and Gene Chaiken. AKA (left to right) Bob Savin, Nick Brown, Gene Chaiken, Sheldon Kail, Bill Blustein, Howard Katz and Steve Wasserman (behind the camera). Contact Gene Chaiken, gchaiken@yahoo.com, to join or just show up!

SURPRISE BIRTHDAY PARTY FOR THE WORLD'S OLDEST (PROBABLY) WATER VOLLEYBALL PLAYER - *By Steve Wasserman*



The MEL Water Volleyball group feted our longtime leader, Bill Gurolnick, on his 94th birthday in March. Every active volleyball member attended lunch at Max & Benny's; one coming from as far away as the Carolinas to join in the celebration.

Rick Gurolnick, Bill's now retired son and a new volleyball player, hosted the event - complete with cupcakes, candles (that refused to be blown out) and a volleyball signed by everyone present. Bill, along with being a MEL founding father, was also in the original group that started an exercise class at the JCC, which morphed into water volleyball - the sport that MEL members have been playing for over 20 years.

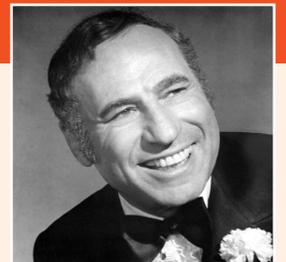
Bill remains an active player with a skill set other players still strive to achieve. A great guy who inspires us every Wednesday.



MAY SPEAKER



Barry Bradford will be discussing the career of Mel Brooks. Barry has been recognized as one of America's best teachers and most dynamic public speakers and has the awards to prove it. He has appeared on over 75 media outlets around the world, and he twice led teams of students to open two of the most infamous cold cases from the civil rights era. He likes to quote Anne Frank: "How beautiful it is that no one need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."



PHOTOS OF THE MONTH



BEST COMPOSITION

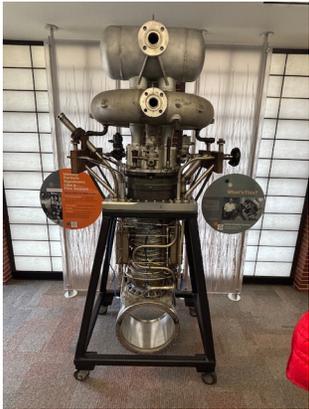
"We Are Not Alone," taken 2/19/2025 by Carl Rosenthal; "Our shadows are always around us."



BEST IMAGE

"White on Black," taken 3/5/2025 by Howard Katz; "White orchids at current Botanical Garden show."

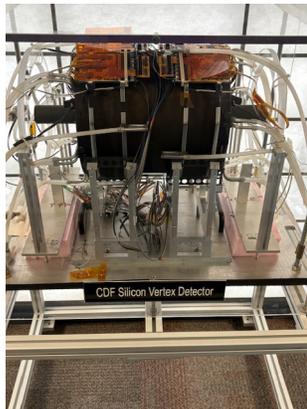
MEL VISITS FERMILAB



On March 27, nearly 30 Melmen trekked 47 miles southwest to Batavia to visit Fermilab, a sub-division of the US Department of Energy, and one of the world's premier centers for the study of particle physics and accelerator research. Fermilab began in 1967 and is set on a 6800-acre natural wonderland. Its 2600 employees join with more than 3500 scientists and engineers at 500 institutions in 44 countries to build experiments to solve the mysteries of matter, energy, space, and time. Fermilab is world-famous for being the place where three of the 12

particles in the "Standard Model" of matter were discovered: the top quark, the bottom quark, and the tau neutrino!

Lest you think pure science research has little practical value, this has never been the case--going back to WWII (radar, sonar and the bomb), or the early days of the so-called space age (too many examples to mention) and today. The World Wide Web was invented to allow internationally located scientists to collaborate. Medicine's MRI scanning machines are a direct result of particle physics research, as are the scanners Homeland Security uses to remotely examine cargo. And the need for ever more powerful computers to sense and analyze particle physics data have led to quantum computing.



Our tour began at the Lederman Science Center where we not only saw some of the actual equipment used, but also could, via hands-on displays, better understand what the study of particle physics entails. In addition, we were able to enter their natural science laboratory to



explore the remarkable local animal ecology (bison, antelope, beavers, red-tailed hawks, insects, frogs, turtles, etc.). We also viewed a site-specific, multi-material sculpture of a tree that told the story of Fermilab (if you understood all the clues).

We then visited Wilson Hall, an architecturally beautiful building with a dramatic atrium. Wilson houses the scientists, engineers, computer experts and support staff and has an art gallery. It is also where we ate lunch at Fermilab's cafeteria. Not being scientists, many of us struggled with

how to use the self-serve payment system.

Many thanks to Nick Brown and Bruce for organizing this interesting excursion!



MEL PHOTOS



Salits and Kails at Pacifica Seafood in Palm Desert after enjoying BNP Paribas Tennis Tournament at Indian Wells.



MEL PALM BEACH AREA SNOWBIRDS FLOCK TOGETHER

Photo courtesy Larry Kominsky, March 23, 2025. In counterclockwise order: Lou Epstein, Jerry Ezgur, Larry Kominsky, Ken Kirsner, Karen Goldberg, Joel Goldberg, Mitch Weiss, Sharon Weiss, Fern Bloom, Harlie Ezgur, Dale Epstein (Marshall Goldsen not shown).



Karlinskys and their grandsons at Mickey's House.

UPCOMING SPECIAL AND SEMI-REGULAR EVENTS

- Apr. 10 Bocce at Pinstripes (Les Sgnilek)
- Apr. 18 Roadster event tour (Mickey Baim)
- Apr. 21 Mini- Golf weather permitting (Bruce)
- MAY 15 Marriott Theater "Titanic" (Bruce/Walter Brown)
- MAY 20 McCormick Place Food Depository Event (Bill Gurolnick)
- MAY 23 New Member Presentation at Demetri's (Bruce/Sheldon Kail)
- MAY 30 Annual Cubs Game (Bruce/Bob Shuman)
- JUNE 12 Union Railroad Museum (Bruce)
- JUNE 27 Kayak Adventure at Independence Grove (Mike Stricker)
- JULY 23 Annual Dinner (Bruce/Bob Greenberg/Dave Marcus)
- JULY 30 American Family Field Cubs-Brewers (Bruce/Bob Shuman)
- Oct. 8 Casino Night at Beth El Temple (Bob Stein/John Simon/Bruce)



MARCH - APRIL BIRTHDAYS



MARCH

APRIL

3 Mickey Drachler	80	2 Ansel Eedin	85
5 Ken Davidman	73	7 Richard Horwood	84
11 Neil Bergman	92	14 Jerry Schwartz	77
12 Yale Gordon	76	16 Steven Wolf	71
13 Bill Gurolnick	94	19 Fred Nathan	86
13 Jerry Schecter	79	21 Al Simon	88
18 Bob Stein	75	25 John Bravos	82
19 Fred Strauss	90	27 Rich DeLevitt	77
20 Irwin Fischman	94	27 Ron Sandler	84
23 Dan Forman	73	28 Bill Keroff	81
26 Lou Epstein	87	29 Stab Ascher	84
28 Morry Glicksman	74	29 Peter Cohen	82
28 Don Horwitz	78	29 Lonnie Klein	80
28 Marty Krawitz	77		