



Buckingham Fountain at night. Chicago, IL.



AUGUST / SEPTEMBER 2026



FROM THE EDITOR

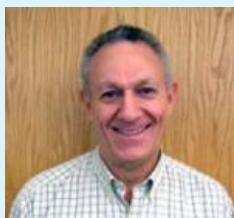


Hi all,

This month's six-page Special Edition recaps our Annual Dinner and celebrates the 2026 Gurolnick Founders Awardee, Aaron Hershinow. In addition, we recount our recent visit to the Air Classics Museum of Aviation and there's a terrific article on why our Adventure Walks are important. We recall our Spa Day and have lots and lots of photos. And, of course, the regular Upcoming Events and Birthday features are included.

Enjoy! Gerry

MEMBER HIGHLIGHT - By Gerry Linda



This month we profile **Aaron Hershinow** (not later), MEL's 2026 winner of the **Gurolnick Founders Award**.

Aaron joined MEL in 2008. He was sponsored by a MEL co-founder, Mort Greenberg. Aaron has been consistently active during his 18 years as a member. He currently facilitates the Bridge group and the Pickleball group

and is an avid member of the weekly Water Volleyball gang. Plus he plays (and keeps score at) our gin game and plays poker including Texas Hold 'Em. And he was a regular walker. That's a MEL activity a few times a week! Plus, he occasionally attends special events and rarely misses a monthly meeting. Aaron is proud of having sponsored Melmen Bruce Edelson and Paul Schiff—both of whom were the youngest members of MEL at the time.

Aaron was born to Harry and Eva at Michael Reese Hospital on May 22, 1944, and the family moved to Winnetka when he was one month old. Harry was a senior executive with Eva's brother at a company that made food ingredients. And Eva worked as a bookkeeper for Richard Himmel, one of the leading interior designers in the country. Aaron had two brothers, both now deceased. Lester was four and a half years older and was a Highland Park police officer and Sheldon was one and a half years older and was an English professor at a junior college that was part of the University of Hawaii system.

He went to The Greely School, Skokie Junior High and New Trier. Aaron began college at Drake University in Des Moines but returned home in his second year after his father got cancer. The bad news was his dad passed six weeks before he married; the good news was, although the original prognosis was six weeks, he lived three years. Later, his mother, Eva, married George Johnson, who worked at the same interior design company. "I had a dad for 20 years and a stepdad for 31."

Aaron met Susan Ludwig at a high school mixer when he was 17 and she was 16. They got married when he was 20! In fact, his mother had to go with him to obtain the marriage license and give her permission because he was underage. They first lived in an apartment in Evanston, then a co-op in Skokie, and then purchased a two-story, four-bedroom home in Buffalo Grove, where they raised their three

sons. Scott, now 60, is married to Rachel and has Anna (28) and Lilah (25). Greg is 57, married to Robin, and has Bailey (22). And Rob, married to Jeanell, is 54 and has Carlie (32) and Josh (21). Currently, Aaron and Sue live in a two-bedroom condo in Buffalo Grove.

After he returned home from Drake, he needed a job and so went to work at the food plant, but he wanted to follow his own path. His resume made its way to the desk of Alvin Horwitz, who owned Ellegant Pharmacy Paper Box Company and was looking for an office manager. Years later, when Alvin wanted to retire, Aaron bought the company with a partner. They renamed it Elegant Paper Box Company and moved the factory and offices from Chicago to Cicero. Subsequently, he bought out his partner.

There is one activity about which Aaron is particularly proud. "Working as a volunteer for a private adoption agency, for several years I was a 'cuddler.' I held them, loved them, and fed them. And didn't have to change them." (The nurses did that to monitor their output.)

Aaron shared his personal philosophy, which very much characterizes how he behaves in MEL. "I love MEL."

- There is no such thing as a stranger; there's just someone I haven't met yet.
- Life is short; you've gotta' have fun.
- Keep your mind active.



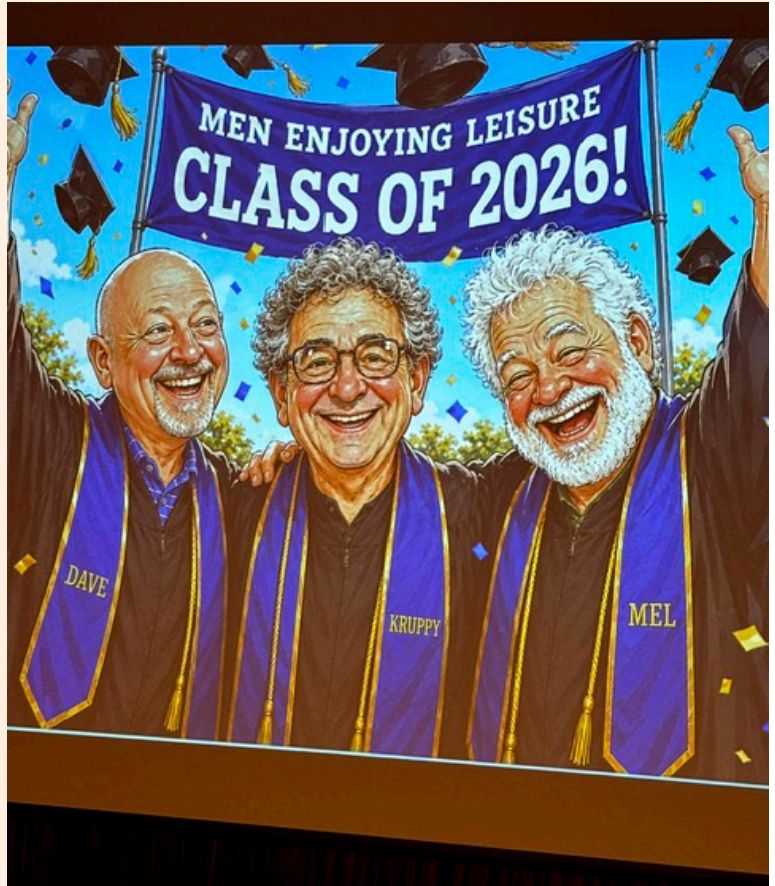
MEL CELEBRATES AT THE ANNUAL DINNER - BY Gerry Linda

On July 22, the largest ever group of Melmen and guests--204!--met at the Chevy Chase Country Club in Wheeling to celebrate our MEL community. This was the third year in a row at this venue and they did not disappoint--well-made drinks, passed and tabled appetizers, four satisfactory meal selections, competently served. As is our norm, all the tables were deliberately a mix of old and newer members to encourage camaraderie. MEL President, Bruce Edelson, acted as host, welcomed everyone and, after dinner, emceed the evening's program.

The first highlight of the evening was naming the 2026 winner of the Gurolnick Founders Award. The Gurolnick Award honors a member of MEL, who has exhibited an exemplary level of participation, leadership, and fellowship *over an extended period of time*. The winner was chosen by a committee of Melmen, who were broadly representative of our membership. This year's committee was led by Board member, Gerry Linda, and included fellow Board members, Jerry Ezgur and Sheldon Kail, plus four other Melmen: Don Brooks, Lou Rosen, Alan Esterman, and Jerry Schechter. They reached a unanimous decision.

Joining Bruce in announcing this year's winner was every past winner: Bill Gurolnick, the first recipient and for whom the award is named, Bruce, who won it two years ago, and Buddy Kalsih, who won last year. **The 2026 Winner of the Gurolnick Founders Award is Aaron Hershinow.** (His impressive biography can be found elsewhere in this issue of **MEL Monthly**.) Aaron's brief remarks were humorous, a little bit corny and heartfelt—just like always.

And the second highlight was a wry presentation written, designed, and delivered by Board member, Joel Karlinsky, with a boost from Alan Esterman, Dave Marcus and Larry Krupp. They humorously discussed the many travails of retirement. At the end though, Joel asked all Melmen to stand up and then to look around the room. He meaningfully noted that these were the guys with whom we were spending our "Golden Years."



MEL SOARS TO NEW HEIGHTS - *BY Gerry Linda*



On Friday, August 14, 39 Melmen travelled to the Air Classics Museum of Aviation in Sugar Grove, IL. For most of us, the trip took a little less than an hour, (but Abby Hans inadvertently entered “no freeways” into his Waze app and so added at least 20 minutes to the trip). This simple, all volunteer, conceived and operated outpost had several real jet planes, a propellered fighter, at least one “shell” of a plane and two large helicopters on site. And two of the jets and one helicopter had scaffolding attached so that we could climb up and look inside. The planes were simply placed on a small field, which was adjacent to four trailers connected to each other. The “head”—always important to Melmen—was in an out-building.

Upon arrival, two volunteer docents divided us into two groups by—one began inside and the other outside and then later switched.

Each trailer had exhibits inside, including many models of planes, life histories of famous Chicagoland aviators, two examples of Word War II bomb sights, a Cold War-era camera system and a 500-pound bomb of the sort used in WW II and beyond. By far, the best exhibit was a simulated cockpit, donated by United Airlines, used to train pilots in the operation of the Airbus A320.

Around 11:30, we simply walked across Route 56 to have our choice of breakfast or lunch at the Sugar Grove Café. The two service staff and kitchen served us all with yummy alacrity—very impressive.

Many thanks to Alan Esterman who managed this event!



MEL PHOTOS OF THE MONTH

The three winners for this month are:
“Sculpture” by Don Horwitz,
“Street Paving” by Harvey Orlov, and
“Artist in Japan” by Yale Gordon.



GENTLEMEN, LET'S TAKE A WALK - *By Richard Spitzer*



The Origins of the MEL Adventure Walk

In the beginning, before pickleball, gym memberships, canasta, and brunch—there was walking. Walking is the oldest, simplest and most universal form of exercise. Humans have been walking since our beginnings because we had to. We walked to find food, explore, and survive.

And then humans got restless and tried to improve it. Walking faster became running. Walking while swinging a piece of wood became tennis/pickleball/etc. But walking never needed an upgrade. Walking is still the most recommended and safest activity you can do for your body and your brain. Thus, the Adventure Walks started in 2025 and Melmen gave them a great response. A different walk twice a month, interesting places to eat after, and our only limitation has been the weather.

A Short History of Walking

- Hunter-gatherers commonly walked 5–10 miles a day or more searching for food and shelter.
- 2,000 years ago, Hippocrates, the father of medicine, called walking “man’s best medicine.”
- Ancient Greek philosophers taught while walking, known as peripatetic philosophy—believing that a moving body could help produce a moving mind.
- Roman soldiers marched 15–20 miles a day while carrying heavy equipment. Suddenly, our walk around the neighborhood doesn’t seem so ambitious.
- By the 18th century, doctors were recommending “constitutional walks” for health, and public parks were designed partly to encourage walking.
- Walking eventually changed from something we had to do to something we chose to do for our health.

The Biology of Walking

- Walking looks simple; it isn’t. Walking is a full-body activity.
- Each foot contains 26 bones, 33 joints and more than 100 muscles, tendons and ligaments—more moving parts than most cars. A single step uses nearly 200 muscles.
- Every step is also technically a controlled fall. We lean forward, catch ourselves with the next step, and repeat the process thousands of times.
- Our arms naturally swing opposite our legs.
- The brain continuously coordinates movement and balance.
- The heart and blood vessels increase circulation.

So walking isn’t simply moving your feet. It is a remarkably coordinated partnership among your brain, heart, lungs, muscles, bones and nervous system.

Fun Facts

- Humans are the best long-distance walkers on Earth. Most animals would rather nap.

- The average healthy adult walks at a speed of around three mph.
- Over a lifetime, the average person may walk 75,000–100,000 miles—enough to circle the Earth three or four times.
- The famous 10,000-step goal began as a Japanese pedometer marketing idea in the 1960s and somehow became accepted as gospel. So, while the 10,000 steps might be a myth, the benefit of regular walking is real.
- Walking is inexpensive and portable. A comfortable pair of shoes and a safe path are all you need—no memberships, no exotic equipment, no new models every year.
- Walking can provide what’s often hard to find: time to think. Some of our best ideas, best conversations and quietest moments happen while walking. Problems can seem smaller. Decisions can become clear. And walking with friends can make the miles seem shorter.

Walk for Health and as Seniors

Walking is even more valuable as we get older because it helps preserve something we all want: Independence. Regular walking is associated with important health benefits:

- Heart: Improves cardiovascular fitness, circulation and blood-vessel health.
- Brain: Walking increases blood flow to the brain and aids memory and cognitive health.
- Bones and muscles: Weight-bearing activity helps maintain bone strength and muscle function.
- Balance: Walking helps maintain the coordination between our brains and muscles to stay steady.
- Mood: Walking can reduce stress, improve mood and stimulate creativity.
- Longevity: Regular physical activity is associated with living longer and maintaining independence.

The important thing isn’t reaching some magical number of steps. It’s consistency.

- At 30, you may have walked fast because you were late.
- At 50, because your doctor told you to.
- At 70, because you want to stay healthy.
- At 80, you walk because you still can.
- That’s something worth celebrating.

We started the MEL Adventure Walks to be healthier, socialize, and continue the one necessity of life that our ancient ancestors also walked to find--lunch.

Join a MEL Adventure Walk and have lunch too.

“Walk and be happy, walk and be healthy.” Charles Dickens



MEL SPA DAY 2026 - By Buddy Kalish

On July 30, seven Melmen once again ventured into the relative strange environs of a nail salon—Pretty Nails in Northbrook. Because this was a MEL activity, I brought coffee, cream cheese, and bagels. You can see we had a good time.

Below Stan Ascher was our rookie, who enjoyed his first pedicure. He giggled as his heal was worked on. Mike Lerner had his pedicure and was on to a manicure. Rick Gurolnick and Ed Cohen were busy “schmoozing” while enjoying their pedicures. Also in attendance were Ron Sandler and Bill Gurolnick.

If you have trouble seeing and/or reaching your toes . . .



UPCOMING SPECIAL AND SEMI-REGULAR EVENTS

- September 8Cubs-Brewers game in Milwaukee
(Bruce and Bob Shuman)
- September 17Marriott Theater “Come From Away”
(Bruce and Walt Brown)
- September 24Men who Lost a Spouse Breakfast 9:30 at Scrambled
(Larry Williams)
- September 25Ethnic lunch Jimmy Thai Deerfield (Bob Shuman)
- October 1Sports Talk World Series edition at Spears (Bruce)
- October 2Special Vaccination event during our Monthly meeting
(Joel Karlinsky and Mike Wiener)
- October 9Miniature Golf at The Highland Park Golf Learning Center on RT41 (Bruce)
- October 16Bocce at Pinstripes (Les Sgnilek)
- October 23Pritzker Military Museum Tour in Kenosha- Lunch at Brat Stop
(Bob Shuman)
- October 29Little City Halloween Volunteer event (Alan Esterman)
- November 16Toys for Tots Luncheon Max and Benny’s (Larry Krupp)



Photo courtesy Joel Karlinsky. Gary Salit, who arranged for the design and production, shares the new, free MEL license plate holder with Bob Shuman.



AUGUSTSEPTEMBER

1	Aaron Hoffman	79	1	Sarge Hoteko	79
2	Buddy Kalish	89	3	William Goldman	88
6	terry Steczo	77	4	Mark Busch	76
10	Bob Stein	76	6	Fred Elman	89
10	Mike Weiner	75	6	Len Zacks	82
12	John Simon	80	7	Phil Fine	82
13	Mike Lerner	84	8	John Belvisi	72
15	Gene Chaiken	87	9	Alana Magit	83
24	Jack Mayer	89	12	Sheldon Kail	72
25	Micheal Golden	83	13	Howard Weisbart	76
28	Mickey Mell	81	16	Marvin Feinberg	83
28	David Newman	77	16	Norman Maskin	74
			25	Rick Gurolnick	72
			27	Paul Chesler	79
			27	Loren Hutter	72