



Welcome to the first eNEWS of the New Year... PMEA Retired Member Network... an informal alliance and forum for interconnecting retired music educators, and sharing their ideas, stories, successes, news, and views. There's so much to bring to you... this is one of our largest editions! Thank you for staying involved in PMEA and our profession!

How long did it take for you to fail or forget your New Year's Resolutions?

Samples from http://www.guy-sports.com/humor/christmas/new\_year.htm

Dieting - New Year's Resolutions

- 2013: I will get my weight down below 180 pounds.
2014: I will follow my new diet religiously until I get below 200 pounds.
2015: I will develop a realistic attitude about my weight.
2016: I will work out 3 days a week.
2017: I will try to drive past a gym at least once a week.



New Year's Resolutions by Fido

- 1. I will not bark each time I see or hear a dog on TV.
2. I will not steal underwear belonging to my mistress and then dance all over the back yard with it.
3. I will not chew red crayons or pens, because my master will think that I am hemorrhaging.
4. I will not roll my toys behind the fridge.
5. I must shake the rainwater out of my coat BEFORE I enter the house.

New Year's Quotes

"New Year's Day: Now is the accepted time to make your regular annual good resolutions. Next week you can begin paving hell with them as usual." - Mark Twain

"One resolution I have made, and try always to keep, is this: To rise above the little things." - John Burroughs

"Good resolutions are simply checks that men draw on a bank where they have no account." - Oscar Wilde



Other Ideas for New Year Promises (Serious Ones!)

- Always keep a joke book handy for times you have to wait
Learn First Aid
Give up a bad habit
Forgive someone
Start a journal or blog
Research your family history
Start collecting something interesting

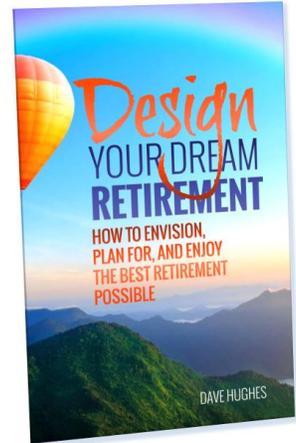
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**Retiree Book of the Month: *Design Your Dream Retirement* by Dave Hughes**

Starting with a Simone de Beauvoir quote, "Retirement may be looked upon either as a prolonged holiday or as a rejection, being thrown on to the scrap-heap," this is another one of those quick and easy-to-read paperbacks with humor and personal insight towards preparing for that "the grand passage" to post-employment. Famous for his articles in *U.S. News & World Report* and the comprehensive website [www.RetireFabulously.com](http://www.RetireFabulously.com), Dave Hughes divides his book *Design Your Dream Retirement - How to Envision, Plan for, and Enjoy the Best Retirement Possible* (Prickly Pair Publishing 2015) into these sections:



- Setting the Stage
- A New Paradigm for Retirement
- How Will You Spend Your Days?
- How Much Money Will You Need?
- Do You and Your Spouse Want the Same Things?
- Planning for Your Retirement

This is another of what I call a "great list" publication, making it readily accessible to grasp the core concepts. Some examples:

- 25 great things about being retired
- 5 reasons you shouldn't wait until you retire to figure out what you're going to do
- 4 essential ingredients of a balanced life
- 101 potential things you can do after your retirement
- 7 things you shouldn't put off until you retire

At the end of most chapters, he summarizes with a "question section," which models the "tutorial" approach, although if you preferred, you could scan the entire book and then read each section in a different order.

**Most Unique Blog-Post: Quotes from "Dr. Quack" in *Teacher Gibberish***  
from <https://wordpress.com/read/blogs/18593914/posts/2141>

"I underestimated how bizarre of a profession teaching would be."

"Music is important because of the things that don't make it math: expressivity, emotion, understanding teamwork, building friendships, and establishing human connection."

"I am not just a teacher. Perhaps being a teacher is the least important of my duties. I am a stable adult. I am a role model."

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### Welcome to our latest R<sup>3</sup> registrants

We appreciate "fresh blood" and new volunteers signing up for the informal consultant group **Retiree Resource Registry**: **Kim Hannigan** (formerly of Mechanicsburg Area School District), **David Levin** (Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland), and **Jeffrey Dent** (East Lycoming/Hanover Area/Jersey Shore).

Kim retired in June 2016 from 35 years of teaching, assigned to Elmwood and Upper Allen elementary schools as a band and string director. Her musical goals in retirement include teaching private lessons and learning to repair instruments. On her R<sup>3</sup> survey form, she mentioned that student recruitment and retention would be subjects she would be willing to help a new teacher or transfer. On the R<sup>3</sup> Help Index, Kim will be listed as an informal mentor/assistant for elementary band and elementary strings.

For 34 years, Jeff has taught instrumental music in Hughesville, Hanover, and Jersey Shore School Districts. His Jersey Shore Middle School Band was invited to perform at PMEA State Conference in 2004 and 2014. Since September 2003, Jeff has served as Assistant Director of the Repasz Band of Williamsport, PA ("a continuous tradition since 1833"), which was also featured at PMEA in 2016. He is continuing his work as Director of the Tournament of Bands.

David introduced himself at the second PMEA District 1 retired teacher breakfast on December 5. With more than 35 years of teaching instrumental music classes and ensembles under his belt, including conducting and preparing orchestras, concert bands, and jazz ensembles at all levels, he commented on his recent professional status: "Currently retired and building a private trumpet studio since moving from Maryland to Pennsylvania, [I] would like to get involved in the local music programs in some capacity that will benefit those programs: sectionals, festival prep, coaching, etc." He continues to play the trumpet and conduct the Potomac Valley Youth Orchestras. The retired member coordinator (I) was literally overjoyed when he showed up "out-of-the-blue" one day to help coach and play in the trumpet section for the South Hills Junior Orchestra!

### Interested in "lending a hand" to help other PMEA members?

To sign-up to become a member of the "who's-who guide of past leaders in PA music education" (the **Retiree Resource Registry** or R<sup>3</sup>), go to the link in the retired member section of the PMEA website: <https://pmea.wufoo.com/forms/pmea-retiree-resource-survey/>.

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## A new “retirement guru” added to our guide: **Emily Brandon**

From the *Business Insider*: <http://www.businessinsider.com/author/emily-brandon>

“Emily Brandon has written about retirement and aging issues for *U.S. News & World Report* and [www.usnews.com](http://www.usnews.com) since February 2006. She writes the Planning to Retire blog, which provides financial advice on preparing for retirement. Recently, she has covered Social Security, pursuit of a new career after age 50, and tips on investing and withdrawing cash from IRAs and 401(k)s. She has also spent much of the past year learning about, traveling to, and conversing with retirees about the best places to retire in the United States.”



She may look young, but she “writes smart!” Here are a few of her most recent articles:

- **Three Little-Known Retirement Savings Tax Breaks**  
<http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/planning-to-retire/articles/2016-12-23/3-little-known-retirement-savings-tax-breaks>
- **Ten Tax Breaks for People Over 50**  
<http://money.usnews.com/money/retirement/boomers/slideshows/10-tax-breaks-for-people-over-50>
- **Twelve Free Preventive Services Medicare Provides**  
<http://money.usnews.com/money/blogs/planning-to-retire/articles/2016-12-09/12-free-preventive-services-medicare-provides>

Visit the **Ultimate Resource Guide/Bibliography for Music Teacher Retirees**

<http://www.pmea.net/retired-members/> or <https://paulkfoxusc.wordpress.com/for-retirees/>.

Including Emily Brandon, our extensive list of retirement bloggers is growing...

- Dave Bernard <http://lovebeingretired.com/>
- Emily Brandon <http://www.businessinsider.com/author/emily-brandon>
- Ken Dychtwald <http://agewave.com/>
- Dave Hughes <http://retirefabulously.com/>
- Kathy Merlino <https://kathysretirementblog.com/>
- Jean Potuchek <https://stepintofuture.wordpress.com/>
- Barbara Torris <http://www.retireinstyleblog.com/>
- Marie Villeza <http://elderimpact.org/>
- Ernie Zelinski <http://www.retirement-cafe.com/>

## How is your financial literacy?

<https://retirehappy.ca/what-is-financial-literacy/>

Canadian Jim Yih, an authority on money, retirement, investing, and personal finance, publishes a website called *Retire Happy*. Although it reviews many things we don't have “in the states” (like Registered Retirement Savings Plans), it's worth a quick look!

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## PMEA Retired Member Network eNEWS: January 9, 2017

by Paul K. Fox, PMEA Retired Members Coordinator

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### Here comes the spring conference! Calling on volunteers!

*"Ask not what PMEA can do for you, but what you can do for PMEA..."*

Make preparations now to attend the 2017 PMEA Annual Conference, April 19-22 in Erie, PA. This event will also feature an Urban Music Educators Symposium on Friday, April 21.



[Online Conference Registration](#), [Hotel Information](#) and the [Tentative Schedule](#) are available in the Annual Conference section of the PMEA website. For retired members, the **early-bird registration is only \$10...** you can't beat that!

Could you assist PMEA is presiding over one or two sessions during the 2017 PMEA Spring Conference? The job is easy: introduce the speaker, welcome everybody, manage the distribution of handouts, and make sure the clinician has everything he/she needs for the one-hour session. If you see any sessions on the [Tentative Schedule](#) in which you're interested and would like to volunteer, complete the online [Presider Form](#) by **Monday, January 30.**

In addition, we also need assistance at the registration desk, and due to the stunning success of last year's retiree participation, **retired members** are especially invited to return to "manning" the **PMEA information booth**. If you would have an hour to spare over the sessions on Thursday, April 20 (10:30 a.m., Noon, 1:30 p.m., 3:00, 4:30) or Friday, April 21 (8:15 a.m., 9:45, 11:15, 12:45 p.m., 2:15), could you let me know? As soon as possible, please e-mail me at [paulkfox.usc@gmail.com](mailto:paulkfox.usc@gmail.com). Thank you so much in advance!!

### It's time for the annual Retired Member breakfast meeting!

Here's our chance to come together, "catch up," swap stories, and network with each other. The best part? The breakfast is FREE and "on PMEA!" Please join us and come hungry on Friday, April 21 at 7:00 a.m. **RSVP by March 31, 2017:** [paulkfox.usc@gmail.com](mailto:paulkfox.usc@gmail.com).



### Another opportunity to help – Attend the Music Education Advocacy Day!

PMEA will hold its 6<sup>th</sup> annual **Music Education Advocacy Day** at the State Capitol in Harrisburg on Monday, March 20, 2017.

Retired members are encouraged to participate! Need more information? Go to...

<http://www.pmea.net/news/save-the-date-sixth-annual-pmea-music-education-advocacy-day-monday-march-20/> and <http://www.pmea.net/specialty-areas/advocacy/>

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## Advocacy Alert – another way that PMEA retirees can come to the rescue!!



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) is working on drafting the **Every Student Succeeds Act** state plan. Following a series of stakeholder sessions over the past few months, PDE is now asking for feedback from the general public. We hope you can provide feedback directly to PDE. **This is your chance as a PMEA retired member and former educator to directly impact education policy in Pennsylvania. We cannot stress the importance and the value of your responses in this process.**

PDE is considering some very broad topics for inclusion in the state plan. At this point, PMEA is not staking a position on any of these suggestions because they are vague and not part of the state plan. However, we're asking for you to provide feedback directly to PDE on your thoughts on these topics.

Below you will see several areas PDE is considering. We'd like you to review these topics and think about the value of each suggestion as well as how the suggestion could be implemented. You can email your responses directly to PDE at [RA-edESSA@pa.gov](mailto:RA-edESSA@pa.gov). We have been assured these emails will be read and all feedback will be taken into account.

### AREAS FOR FEEDBACK

#### Assessments

- Can we reduce the amount of time students spend on statewide PSSA testing (grades 3-8)?
- Is it feasible to test students at multiple times across the school year instead of only once?
- Can we eliminate double testing for middle school Algebra I students (would need to add adv math test in high school for those students)

#### Accountability - Measures

- Future Ready PA Index - a proposed tool to measure school success
- Increased weight on growth in test scores versus point-in-time achievement
- Local options for additional assessments
- Career ready indicators and meaningful post-secondary student engagement
- More holistic measures of student success
- Measures of both inputs (i.e., course offerings) and outcomes (achievement scores)

#### Accountability - Interventions

- Tailored to local context and school based needs assessment.
- Intervention for lowest performing schools to include BOTH academic and holistic strategies
- Level of state intervention to be responsive to student progress over time.

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### Educator Preparation and Evaluation

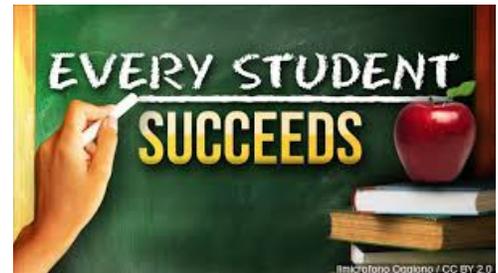
- What are the best strategies to ensure effective, diverse educators and school leaders for all students?
- What changes in teacher preparation do we need to consider to improve the readiness of new teachers?
- How to promote alternative pathways to teacher certification?

You don't have to respond to every suggestion, but please feel free to provide feedback regarding the subjects on which you have opinions/thoughts.

Comments should go to PDE at [RA-edESSA@pa.gov](mailto:RA-edESSA@pa.gov).

Feel free to submit your feedback to PMEA as well so we can monitor the view of our members. You can email Mark Despotakis, Chair of the PMEA

Advancement of Music Education Council, at [mark.despotakis@progrmusic.com](mailto:mark.despotakis@progrmusic.com).



PDE has provided a PowerPoint presentation about the public listening tour and with a little more background on the above listed suggestions on their website at

<http://www.education.pa.gov/Pages/tour.aspx#tab-1>.

### More PA bragging rights...

The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) 55<sup>th</sup> Eastern Division Conference is being hosted by the New Jersey Music Educators Association in Atlantic City, NJ on April 5-8, 2017.

Preview the conference sessions at <https://www.nafme-eastern.org/sessions.php> or guest performing groups at [https://www.nafme-eastern.org/performing\\_groups.php](https://www.nafme-eastern.org/performing_groups.php). For general information, discounted early-bird registration (\$75 for retired members), and to book a hotel at a reduced cost, go to <http://nafme-eastern.org/>.

We are proud that so many PA groups will be featured: Central Buck HS East Select Choir, Concordia Singers of the Nittany Valley Children's Choir, Harriton HS Chamber Ensemble, Haverford HS Chamber Singers, Haverford HS Combined Choirs, Hershey Symphony Festival Strings, Indiana University of PA Chorale, Lower Dauphin HS Women's Select Choir, North Allegheny Jazz Ensemble I, North Hills HS Wind Ensemble, North Penn HS Chamber Singers, North Penn HS Women's Choir, Norwin HS Wind Ensemble, Pennbrook & Pennfield MS The P2 Select String Ensemble, Pennbrook MS Jazz Ensemble, Penndale MS Jazz Ensemble, Temple University Concert Choir, and The University of the Arts "Z" Big Band.

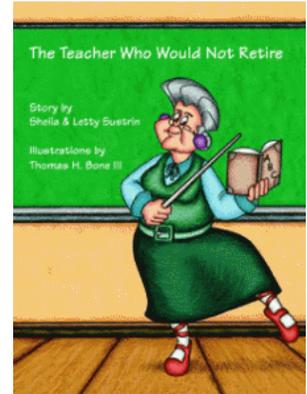
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### Caught Our Eye: *The Teacher Who Would Not Retire*

This is probably the most unusual children's book on teaching the concepts of retirement and love of learning! Released in hardcover September 2002, Amazon describes *The Teacher Who Would Not Retire*, story by Sheila & Letty Sustrin and illustrations by Thomas H. Bone III, as "a humorous portrayal of one first grade teacher who will do anything to continue to stay involved with her students, including coming to school disguised as a window washer, a firefighter, and a cafeteria cook. The children recognize her every time because of her distinctive ballet slippers."



I was intrigued by the setting and theme - after all, we have a lot of music teachers who never *totally* retire. Then, I found this is not one book, but a five-part series of delightful tales with the leading character, a teacher (our hero), focused on remaining involved with her students:

- *The Teacher Who Would Not Retire Goes to Camp* (2005)
- *The Teacher Who Would Not Retire Discovers a New Planet* (2009)
- *The Teacher Who Would Not Retire Becomes a Movie Star* (2012)

Here's a summary of the plot from the last edition, *The Teacher Who Would Not Retire Loses Her Ballet Slippers* (2014): "Mrs. Belle awakens one morning to discover that all her pairs of ballet slippers have disappeared. What happened to them? Poor Mrs. Belle. She is so concerned about how upset the children will be if she doesn't wear her special ballet slippers every day. Now, the townspeople of Laurelville must join together to help solve the mystery. Some of Mrs. Belle's favorite friends - Mr. Rivera, Kitty Belle, Magic, Fire Chief Henry, and Police Chief Jaron - come along to help Mrs. Belle in her search for her slippers."

Well, have you found *your* slippers? In retirement, are you enjoying what Ernie Zelinski (author of *How to Retire Happy, Wild and Free* - <http://www.retirement-cafe.com/>) refers to as a "work/life balance" of the essential ingredients of purpose, community, and structure? Perhaps Mrs. Belle has the right "plan" and perspective?

**Happy trails, retirees.** To keep these *Constant Contact* messages and eNEWS coming, be sure they are not "lost" in your "promotions" or spam folders. **Happy New Year!** PKF

