



Welcome to the latest edition of eNEWS - the PMEA Retired Member Network... an informal alliance and forum for interconnecting retired music educators, and sharing their ideas, stories, successes, news, and views. Thank you for staying involved in PMEA!

Unique and bizarre September holidays

http://holidayinsights.com/moreholidays/september.htm

Unless you recently "slid" into a marching band or football coaching position, or just restarted your church choir (from the summer break), or began weekly rehearsals for a local community or youth orchestra (like me - I love it!), now is the time to turn to your gainfully employed colleagues, stick out your tongue, and gleefully taunt them: "Nah, nah-nah, nah, nah! I'm retired. I don't have to go back to school!"



As a retiree, you may have more time (?) to celebrate what "Holiday Insights" online calls "daily holidays, special or wacky days" in September:

- September 1: National Cherry Popover Day
September 5: Be Late for Something Day or Cheese Pizza Day
September 6: Fight Procrastination Day (why?)
September 7: National Salami Day
September 9: Teddy Bear Day
September 10: Swap Ideas Day
September 11: No News Is Good News Day
September 12: Chocolate Milk Shake Day
September 13: Defy Superstition Day
September 15: Make a Hat Day
September 16: National Play-Doh Day
September 17: Wife Appreciation Day
September 18: National Cheeseburger Day
September 20: National Pepperoni Pizza Day
September 22: Elephant Appreciation Day
September 23: Checkers Day
September 23: International Rabbit Day
September 25: National Comic Book Day
September 27: Crush a Can Day
September 28: Ask a Stupid Question Day
September 30: National Mud Pack Day

According to "Holiday Insights," September is...

- Baby Safety Month
Better Breakfast Month
Chicken Month
Classical Music Month
Fall Hat Month
Hispanic Heritage Month
Honey Month
International Square Dancing Month
Little League Month
National Blueberry Popsicle Month
National Courtesy Month
National Piano Month
Self-Improvement Month

Take Note: PMEA District 1 Retirees' Breakfast has been moved to Sept. 11

Avoiding Labor Day, we will resume our monthly meeting at First Watch of Bridgeville, Rt. 50, near Rt. 79: https://www.firstwatch.com/. Every retired music teacher is invited to attend at 9 a.m. for breakfast!

Paul K. Fox
1564 Hastings Mill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15241
(412) 596-7937 or (412) 854-3459
paulkfox.usc@gmail.com https://paulkfoxusc.wordpress.com/





## The AARP corner: "10 Steps to Get You Ready for Retirement"

"Start Planning Now for Your Ideal Retirement" by Donna Fuscaldo

<http://www.aarp.org/work/social-security/info-05-2011/10-steps-to-retire-every-day.html>

Recent retirees and those who are considering retirement over the next five years or more should read this "classic" AARP blog-post. Here is the "executive summary."

- Step 1: Define Your Retirement
- Step 2: Take Stock of Your "Assets"
- Step 3: Evaluate Your Health - Now
- Step 4: Determine When to Collect Social Security
- Step 5: Network Through Social Media & Other Methods
- Step 6: Decide How Much You Want (or Need) to Work
- Step 7: Create a Retirement Budget
- Step 8: Find New Ways to Cut Your Expenses (Start Saving More)
- Step 9: Prepare for the Unexpected
- Step 10: Stick to Your Plan



## Now... "Doctor Fox's" thoughts on preparing for retirement

With absolutely no expertise or training in the financial, psychological, physiological, or gerontological realms (based solely on my own experience retiring from 35+ years of music teaching), these are my "top six tips" for getting ready to "living the dream!"

1. Download the *Ultimate Retiree Resource Guide* and peruse the myriad of contributions by "true experts in the field of retirement" posted on the PMEA retired member website: <https://www.pmea.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/ultimate-retiree-resource-guide-081317.pdf>
2. Scan through the plethora of blog-posts at <https://paulkfoxusc.wordpress.com/for-retirees/>.
3. Purchase a book or two by the "masters" of retirement transitioning (check out these authors and others from the sources above: David Borchard, Julie Cameron, Robert Delmontagne, Dave Hughes, Steven Price, Kenneth Shultz, Hyrum Smith, Verne Wilson, and Ernie Zelinski).
4. **Family Meeting:** If you are married, sit down with your spouse (with no distractions) and map out the essential "who, what, when, where, and how" of retirement. Are you both ready to "take the plunge" into your "golden years?" Are you and your wife/husband on the same page?
5. **PSERS Planning:** 12 months or more away from your projected retirement date, attend a "Foundations for Your Future" program (even attend it more than once), and request a retirement estimate (form PSRS-151), after which you will need to schedule the all-important "Exit Counseling Session."
6. Make an appointment with an estate planner, elder attorney, and/or financial advisor (probably all three). Bring a copy of your bank and investment statements, PSERS reports, social security, annuities, and insurance documents. You may need help in determining which PSERS "plan" to adopt. While you're at it, update your will and other legal documents.

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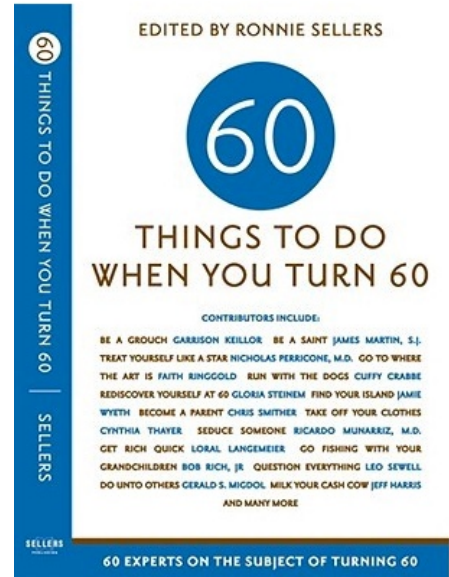


**A quick look: 60 Things to Do When You Turn 60 edited by Ronnie Sellers**

<https://www.amazon.com/Sixty-Things-When-You-Turn/dp/1569069670>

Amazon review: "In 2006, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, the oldest of the baby boomers will begin to turn 60. That translates to approximately 13,000 people per day who will be celebrating this event in North America. We have the perfect gift of reading for the 60-somethings in your life. *60 Things To Do When You Turn 60* is a thoughtful, humorous, and sometimes provoking collection of essays written by people from all walks of life on the subject of turning 60."

An amusing and intriguing read... Before I had spent an hour on this book, I had consumed essays proposing the "virtues" of being a grouch, stubborn, or even righteously angry in retirement to "give you staying power," letting go of bad memories, learning the definition and value of humility by going to jail, and (believe-it-or-not) taking off your clothes - a group of women spinning wool, knitting, weaving, and crocheting, and who created a senior "naked spinners" calendar for charity.



Uniquely appropriate for the various topics and very nostalgic, the publication is divided into nine sections based on popular music hits of the 60s:

- "Get Back" (Beatles/1969)
- "I'm a Believer" (Monkees/1966)
- "Good Vibrations" (Beach Boys/1966)
- "Papa's Got a Brand-New Bag" (James Brown/1965)
- "Money" - That's What I Want" (Beatles/1964)
- "This Old Heart of Mine" (Isley Brothers/1966)
- "The Leader of the Pack" (Shangri-Las/1964)
- "I Got You Babe" (Sonny & Cher/1965)
- "Turn! Turn! Turn! - To Everything There Is a Season" (The Byrds, 1965)

In the introduction to his book, editor Ronnie Sellers sets the stage:

"The celebrities, artists, pundits, financial wizards, medical specialists, and theologians were kind enough to contribute a wealth of information for those approaching their Big Six-Oh. When taken in its entirety, this book comprises a veritable instruction manual on how to enjoy the process..."

"I recommend that you pull up a comfortable chair, relax, and settle in with this book. It will make you laugh. It may bring tears to your eyes. It could even be the impetus for change. But, most importantly, it will enable you to appreciate how fortunate you are to be one of the youngest 60-year-olds ever."

Put this in your "reading room" (wherever that is) and enjoy a couple essays "per stop!"

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[paulkfox.usc@gmail.com](mailto:paulkfox.usc@gmail.com) <https://paulkfoxusc.wordpress.com/>





**Fun things to read on the web with “age” or “old” as the tag**

- “This List Proves You’re Never Too Old to Do Something Amazing” (*Business Insider*)  
<http://www.businessinsider.com/100-amazing-accomplishments-achieved-at-every-age-2014-3>
- “Humility and Growing Old” (*Huffington Post*)  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/humility-and-growing-old\\_b\\_5538776.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/humility-and-growing-old_b_5538776.html)
- “Getting the Most Out of Old Age” (*The Atlantic*)  
<https://www.theatlantic.com/notes/2017/03/old-age/519369/>
- “Civic Engagement Alive and Well with Older Adults” (*Huffington Post*)  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/civic-engagement-alive\\_b\\_3505870.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/civic-engagement-alive_b_3505870.html)
- “What Old Age Is Really Like” (*The New Yorker*)  
<http://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/what-old-age-is-really-like>

**Videos of NAFME “Hill Day” and the 2017 Collegiate Advocacy Summit**

<https://vimeo.com/224345553>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBV\\_-jdXX\\_g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBV_-jdXX_g)

On June 29, 2017, more than 300 music education advocates visited their U.S. senators and representatives to advocate for music education.

The day began with a music education rally at the Upper Senate Park, including singing and a special message from Jake Hochberg, staffer for Rep. Nydia Velazquez (NY-7). Afterwards,

delegations visited congressional offices to tell their stories about music education and make specific “public policy asks.”

June 27-July 1, 2017, members of PCMEA and other state NAFME collegiate chapters joined music education professionals to meet in Washington D.C. for mentoring, professional development, and working to make their “voices” heard in support of better access to music education for more students through new laws like

“Every Student Succeeds Act” (<http://www.nafme.org/take-action/elementary-and-secondary-education-act-esea-updates/>).

Learn more about the issues NAFME advocates for: <https://nafme.org/advocacy/>.



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## Annual PMEA retired membership recruitment campaign coming to an end

Sorry - one more advertisement! To stay current and engaged albeit less active, rejoin your professional association, and pay discounted dues (\$65/NAfME + PMEA or \$30/PMEA-only). Also important, please update your personal profile to add a **home email address**.



We seek your ongoing support. **What does PMEA need from its retirees?**

- **Mentoring** of new/less experienced teachers
- **Advising** "best practices" in curriculum, instruction, and assessment
- **Serving** as leaders or consultants on local or state councils/boards
- **Volunteering** at local workshops and state conferences
- **Advocating** music education to the legislature and general public
- **Presenting** sessions at workshops or conferences
- **Conducting, coaching** or **accompanying** students at festivals
- **Assisting** in technology, teacher training, recruitment, auditions, etc.

### How does PMEA engage its retired members?

- **Retiree Resource Registry (R<sup>3</sup>)**
- Representation on Executive Board and Councils
- PA Lists of Amateur/Community Bands, Choirs, Orchestras & Theater Groups
- "Free" Retired Member Breakfast and PMEA Info Booth at Spring Conference
- Feature articles in *PMEA News* and *Retired Member Network eNEWS*

To join PMEA for 2017-18, go to <https://www.pmea.net/membership-information/>.

### Why renew, now that you retired and are no longer teaching full-time?

- **Keep a finger on "the pulse of music education"** by reading NAfME, *PMEA News*, and *Retired Member Network eNEWS* publications, and attending workshops/conferences about new literature, resources, methods, trends, innovation, and research.
- **Keep serving as an advocate!** Retired members' dues help music education advocacy efforts at the federal and state levels. In addition, retired members "make a difference" and elect or serve as future leaders in PMEA.
- **"Keep your chops up"** and remain active in the field of music and education by joining the **Retiree Resource Registry** to function as an informal adviser or consultant for new or needy PMEA members or officers. Or volunteer to assist other PMEA projects like the spring conference info booth.

### Advocacy alert: Need public comment!

On August 2, State Advocacy Chair Mark Despotakis sent members an email about the **Consolidated State Plan of the Every Student Succeeds Act**, with a link to the PA draft: <http://www.education.pa.gov/K-12/ESSA/Pages/default.aspx#tab-1>. "We encourage you to submit feedback to PDE... However, PMEA will provide a formal response to PDE..." Email your ideas to [mark.despotakis@progrmusic.com](mailto:mark.despotakis@progrmusic.com). See: <https://www.pmea.net/specialty-areas/advocacy/>.

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### Can you draw? How about comics for eNEWS?

As I mentioned in the last eNEWS, we think it would add a lot to this forum to design our own "funnies" on specific issues, "pet peeves," satire, or problems in music education. Two examples were a music teacher tuning a line of her EL string musicians' instruments ("The concert should have started an hour ago") or a general music classroom in disarray showing broken Orff instruments and drum sticks ("I usually don't take a sick day"), etc.

Want to give it a try? Do you have your own ideas for a little political commentary?

Please email me: [paulkfox.usc@gmail.com](mailto:paulkfox.usc@gmail.com).

### A sample of the best "funny retirement wishes" from *Brandon Gaille*

<http://brandongaille.com/20-best-funny-retirement-wishes/>

- A professor is one who talks in someone else's sleep.
- Congratulations for gaining two new best friends upon your retirement. Their names are Bed and Couch. You will be hanging out with them a lot.
- Half our life is spent trying to find something to do with the time we have rushed through life trying to save.
- It is ironic that all your life you sacrificed your health so that you can earn more money to retire. Because when you retire, you will spend all that money to keep up your health.
- Old teachers never die; they just grade away.
- Retirement is the beginning of joyous moments in which you can sit back and give advice to others, even though you never followed it in your own life.
- Retirement is the only thing that will make you realize how you wasted all these years trying to be mature when you can get back to being a child at the end of it all.



### Mobility and exercise "advice of the month" from *Kathy's Retirement Blog*

"A Recliner and a Bag of Chips" by Kathy Merlino

<https://kathysretirementblog.com/2017/08/13/a-recliner-and-a-bag-of-chips/>

Kathy's inspirational website (please read the article above) suggests to me several important questions about your overall physical fitness - time to nag a little:

- Do you exercise (walk, run, do yard work, etc.) at least 30 minutes a day, 5 times a week?
- Do you do stretching exercises every morning?
- Can you "keep up" with walking the dogs or playing with your grandchildren?
- After climbing a flight of stairs, do you find yourself winded or aching?
- Have you "safety checked" in and around your home, repairing/removing dangerous conditions (loose rugs or wires, disorganized or cluttered spaces, sidewalk cracks, etc.)?
- When was the last time you visited a doctor for a physical?

**Happy trails, retirees.** Please take care and enjoy your retirement "freedom!" PKF

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