



PMEA Retired Member Network eNEWS: November 5, 2020

by Paul K. Fox, PMEA Retired Members Coordinator

Pennsylvania Music Educators Association Retired Members

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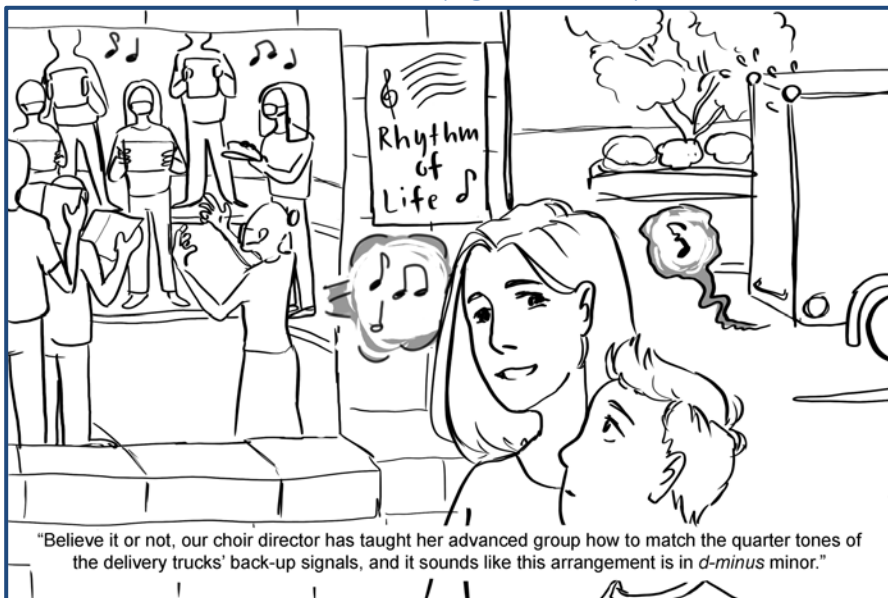
Welcome to the latest edition of **eNEWS** - the **PMEA Retired Member Network**... an informal alliance and forum for interconnecting retired **and retiring** music educators, sharing their ideas, stories, successes, news, and views. Thanks for staying involved!

"Corny" Thanksgiving jokes

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/holidays/thanksgiving-ideas/g22788839/thanksgiving-jokes/>

Thanks to the pandemic, this will be a holiday season like none other. PMEA and the staff/officers/representatives would like to wish all of you safe (socially distanced?), healthy, happy, and meaningful celebrations leading up to New Years! We'll start out with several (bad?) "turkey jokes" to put you in the right mood and frame of mind!

- Why was the Thanksgiving soup so expensive? *It had 24 carrots.*
- What did the turkey say to the turkey hunter on Thanksgiving Day? *Quack, quack!*
- What's the best song to sing when preparing your Thanksgiving turkey? *It's All About That Baste.*
- What role do green beans play in Thanksgiving dinner? *The casse-role.*
- My family told me to stop telling Thanksgiving jokes... *but I told them I couldn't quit "cold turkey!"*
- If your great grandmother saw you making boxed mashed potatoes, *she would turn over in her gravy!*
- If you call a large turkey a gobbler, what do you call a small one? *Goblet.*
- What does Thanksgiving have in common with Halloween? *Gobble-ins!*
- What is a turkey's favorite dessert? *Peach gobbler.*
- Why did the turkey play the drums in his band? *Because he already had drumsticks!*
- What kind of music did the pilgrims like? *Plymouth Rock.*



- What would you get if you crossed a turkey with a ghost? *A poultry-geist!*
- What kind of key can't open doors? *A Tur-key.*
- Who is not hungry at Thanksgiving? *The turkey, because he's already stuffed!*



Thanks to an idea from PMEA choral colleague Lorraine Milovac. Cartoon created by Upper St. Clair HS senior art student Katherine Li.

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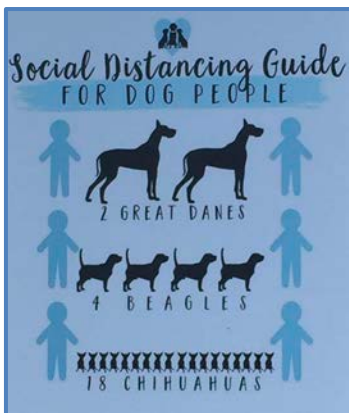
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Signs of the times

<https://twistedstifter.com/2020/10/funny-covid-pandemic-signs-compilation/?>



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This month's "Fox Finds" – "Low tech" tech

I would assume some of our retired members are a bit ambivalent about embracing new high-tech apps – all of those wonderful "innovations" from which "we've" finally escaped for doing our attendance, grading, even signing in to work or arranging for a substitute. Most recently, I relived this first-hand! For 30+ years – seven of which were in retirement –

I never had to "apply" for the marching band announcer, an extra-curricular activity with a modest stipend. Last spring, it took me hours to navigate HR's "new and improved" web application with digital forms and a portal to send my clearances... but to no avail! It looks like "they" chose not to fill the position. Now as a "volunteer," I have attended four home games, one additional performance for the parents, and seven after-school rehearsals, have written six different halftime scripts, and finished off our only playoff game (hours away) last Friday night. High-tech = zero compensation!

As a retiree, if you are still employed as a substitute or teaching at a private institution, you may have to be "updated" in the use of Canvas, Schoology, Blackboard, Moodle, or other learning management systems. If you continue to give private lessons or rehearse sectionals for a church or community ensemble, you may need to train yourself in Zoom, GoTo Meeting, or Google Meet.

Otherwise, technology is *only* a tool. As my wife would say, even a pencil was considered at some point to be "new technology." The "latest and greatest" high-tech gadget or revolutionary invention should not run (or ruin) our lives! Sometimes "low tech" is better.

All I can offer part-time teachers this month is something that can be used to teach key literacy, concepts, or randomize any practice goal or section... an old-fashioned *digital spinning wheel*: <https://pickrandom.com/random-wheel/>



For my community orchestra's online academy, I wanted the wind/brass players to warmup on a different scale every day (not just B-Flat Major), so I adapted our wheel to display all of the Major and minor keys in our current literature: https://pickrandom.com/random-wheel/?custom_data=CM,am,GM,em,FM,dm,BbM,gm,EbM,cm,AbM.

In the program, you can customize the settings and focus on any range of values – intervals, articulations, rhythms, dynamics, rehearsal letters, etc. To avoid repeats, use the "remove after selected" button. Also, click on the option to share your wheel.

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A frank talk... and perhaps a sneak peek at PMEA's future

You may or may not know that a large chunk of the operating budget for PMEA, our professional organization, comes from conference attendee registration fees and corporate member sponsorships and exhibits. The coronavirus forced the cancellation of the PMEA Spring 2020 Conference, and PMEA EXCOM's "Plan B" was to deliver a "super successful" but virtual summer conference, basically a "break-even" \$\$ event. And now plans are underway for another online venue - the PMEA Spring Conference on April 14-17, 2021, coming to a computer screen near you! Our response to COVID-19 precautions will include All-State Ensemble remote music learning experiences, possible "virtual exhibits" of the music industry, and professional development sessions for all PMEA and PCMEA members in a format that would allow the choice to view them synchronously or within 60 days of an asynchronous schedule *at your convenience*.

And, like your and my household, the bills keep piling up! PMEA's "overhead" includes fixed monthly operational costs, utilities, office expenses, insurance, salaries, etc. To make matters worse, NAFME reported a 40% drop in membership renewals of all its state MEAs during the month of September 2020. PMEA, too, has felt this loss.

How can we retirees help the future financial picture of PMEA during these challenging times? I humbly submit a few suggestions for "giving back" in 2020-2021:

1. Pay your dues promptly. Every dollar counts to help balance the budget!
2. Participate in the upcoming state conference(s).
3. Kick up the amount of your charitable giving, perhaps donating to a favorite PMEA program or service or contributing to the Irene Christman Scholarship or Margaret Bauer grant.
4. Offer your "sweat equity" - volunteer your service as an audition screener, mentor, writer for *PMEA News*, presiding chair, guest speaker, panel discussion member, or conference aide.

There's good news on the horizon... and almost all of it has to do with the spirit of care, problem solving, and *innovation* of the PMEA Board, officers, and a super-charged staff. If you have been reading your **PMEA UPDATES**, you would have heard bulletins about the proposed launch of the **PMEA Virtual Conference for Students** (which might be called **M.E.E.T.** for music-exploration-enrichment-training), and a new brainchild of Immediate Past State President Tina Bennett, "**Beyond the Classroom**," seeking to create a video library of pro-bona classroom lectures of "masters and maestros." For those needing help "coping with COVID" or additional training/advice on remote instruction, **find the red tool box** on the PMEA website and peruse the inspiring online resources, webinars, and messages in "PMEA Cares" and "PMEA Planning for the Future." <https://www.pmea.net/>



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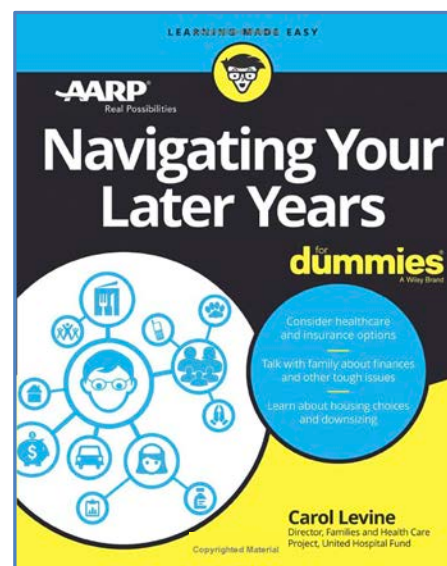


Book-of-the-month: *Navigating Your Later Years (for dummies)*

by Carol Levine

<https://www.brucefeiler.com/books-articles/life-is-in-the-transitions/> and <https://www.dummies.com/>

What do you think about the numerous "Dummies" series of everything from *DOS for Dummies* (1991) to *Writing Dummies Books for Dummies* (2018) by John Wiley & Sons? Co-branded by AARP, *Navigating Your Later Years* definitely lives up to the "dummies" philosophy of *transforming the hard-to-understand into easy-to-use to enable learners at every level to fuel their pursuit of professional and personal advancement*. For all PMEA retired and soon-to-retire members, this publication serves as a must-read and must-save paperback... but get ready to return often to study portions of its voluminous text on healthcare and insurance, choices in living locations, housing, and inexpensive home modifications, "family chats" about finances and other tough issues, tips on independent and assisted living, community services and transportation options, and Medicare/Medicaid advice.



I bow to (and agree with) a 2018 review published by *Forbes* on the release of the manuscript:

There is no doubt in my mind that this 350+ page book will be regarded as one of the premier reference books on aging, at least for the next few years. It is extremely comprehensive, covering almost every aspect of aging and care imaginable and including hundreds of links to national services and resources. Levine covers such far-ranging topics as unraveling the rules of Medicare and Medicaid, paying for long-term care, LGBT older adults, services for veterans, the many roles of nursing homes, living in a community, transportation options, money management, downsizing, all the care options currently available, and more. She also offers clues for locating state-specific information on topics like Medicaid, advance directives, complaint resolution, assessing assisted living facilities, and support for family caregivers. — Sara Zeff Geber

We all need this kind of "textbook" sitting on our mantle, book shelf, or coffee tables. It offers clear references to, unbiased perspective on, and an advance planning roadmap to explore "our bonus years... decades our parents and grandparents didn't have!"

Author Carol Levine is a fellow of the United Hospital Fund and former director of UHF's Families and Health Care Project, which focuses on developing partnerships between health care professionals and family caregivers.

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A glimpse of the table of contents reveals a lot for future discovery:

Part One: Getting Started with Navigating Your Later Years

- **Chapter 1:** Looking Ahead - The Big Picture
- **Chapter 2:** A Personal Inventory - Past Present and Future
- **Chapter 3:** Finding Services
- **Chapter 4:** Making Decisions - A Family Affair

Part Two: Choosing Where to Live

- **Chapter 5:** Staying in Your Home
- **Chapter 6:** Under One Roof - Generations Living Together
- **Chapter 7:** Downsizing For Now And Later
- **Chapter 8:** Assisted and Independent Living and Other Group Settings
- **Chapter 9:** Beyond Your Home - Living in a Community
- **Chapter 10:** Getting Around - Transportation Options



Author Carol Levine

Part Three: Legal and Financial Planning

- **Chapter 11:** Unraveling the Rules of Medicare and Medicaid
- **Chapter 12:** Paying for Care - Long-Term Care Insurance and Other Options
- **Chapter 13:** Financial Matters - Money Management, Wills, Trusts, And More

Part Four: Managing Your Health Care

- **Chapter 14:** Choosing Good Medical Care
- **Chapter 15:** Demystifying Home Care
- **Chapter 16:** Understanding the Different Roles of Nursing Homes
- **Chapters 17:** Getting the Healthcare You Want (and Avoiding What You Don't Want)

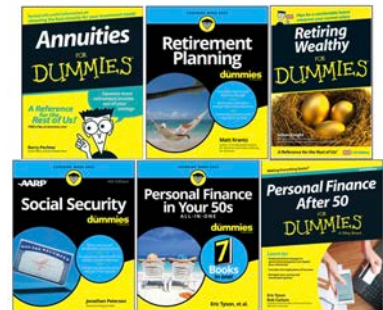
Part Five: Services For Special Groups

- **Chapter 18:** LGBT Older Adults
- **Chapter 19:** Services For Veterans
- **Chapter 20:** Family Caregivers

Part Six: The Part Of Tens

- **Chapter 21:** Ten Myths About Aging in Future Care
- **Chapter 22:** Ten Resources with State-by-State Information

Part Seven: Appendices



Other for dummies books on finances

eNEWS book index

To view past reviews of retirement publications, please go to

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bGkx4rqDE2m3JunmMailp2pThkSTWS1xWoiKI3_qWA/edit?usp=sharing

As always, the Retired Member Coordinator would love to hear from you about anything you have stumbled on to share as "bedtime reading" for retirement prep, finances, pets, post-employment self-reinvention and finding purpose, hobbies, travel, volunteering, etc.

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How to avoid boredom after retiring from the public schools? Keep busy!

From trolling the Internet, searching social media platforms, and "hearing through the grapevine..."



What has Joe Accetta been doing? How about leading the Pennsport String Band in the 2020 Mummers Parade?



You're kidding! Rich did it again?

The Orchestra Society of Philadelphia

Karl Krelove is Vice President and guest conductor of the Orchestra Society of Philadelphia.



One year ago today... Bet you can't keep up with CMU's finest Paul Gerlach, Adrianne Kelly, Dr. Susan Raponi, Dr. Robert Dell, and Jane Wall in the 2019 "Innovations in Equity in Undergraduate Education."



What does Chuck Neidhardt do when he is not directing the Montgomery County Band, like this "spooky" YouTube performance of *The Haunted Carousel* by Erika Svanoë at

<https://youtu.be/k1nFkYz3s4U?>

That's easy! He just drives around town with his tuba.



Did you know? With aunt Linda Peters at her side, PMEA All-State Festival Coordinator Mary Lynne Peters was awarded the Melvin Jones Fellowship for humanitarian service by the Lions International Foundation last year.

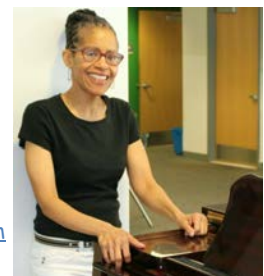


A father & daughter moment... Alicia & David Swinehart



Claire Rudolph Pettigrew's "Yonkers" on National Dog Day!

Happy retirement to Robin Tolbert-Muse! Still very active? You should check out her saved music classroom collection on Pinterest: <https://www.pinterest.com/jrwjl/saved/>



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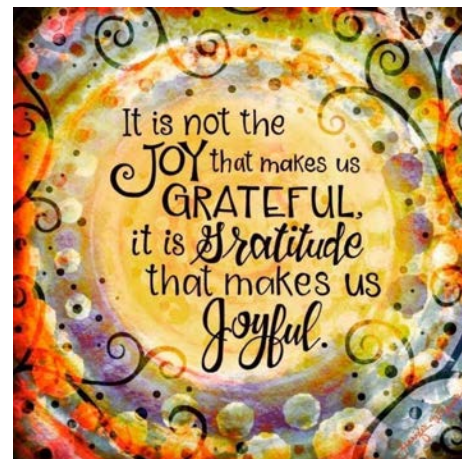
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Interesting stories in the news...

- **Retired Indiana Teacher Handcrafts Ukuleles from Gourds** - November 1, 2020
<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/indiana/articles/2020-11-01/retired-indiana-teacher-handcrafts-ukuleles-from-gourds>
- **How a Retired Teacher Built a Virtual Music Venue During Quarantine** - October 13, 2020
<https://www.eventbrite.com/blog/virtual-music-venue-quarantine-tof-productions/>
- **Music Education Teachers Say Virtual Recording Is the New Normal** - September 24, 2020
<https://wusfnews.wusf.usf.edu/health-news-florida/2020-09-24/music-education-teachers-say-virtual-recording-is-the-new-normal>
- **Lessons in a Pandemic - Music Teachers Navigate New Universe of Learning** - July 24, 2020
<https://www.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/news/2020/07/24/lessons-in-a-pandemic.html>
- **This Award-Winning NYC Music Teacher Had Her Students Making Podcasts During the Pandemic** - July 16, 2020
<https://brooklyneagle.com/articles/2020/07/16/this-award-winning-nyc-music-teacher-had-her-students-making-podcasts-during-the-pandemic/>
- **Music Memories Play On for Retired Teacher** - July 1, 2020
<https://www.westsenecabee.com/articles/music-memories-play-on-for-retired-teacher/>
- **These Retiring Teachers Won't Get a Final Goodbye... So We're Telling Their Stories** - June 8, 2020
<https://why.org/articles/these-retiring-teachers-wont-get-a-final-goodbye-so-were-telling-their-stories/>
- **Retired Music Teacher Gives Nightly Trumpet Performance from Her Porch** - May 29, 2020
<https://6abc.com/retired-music-teacher-gives-nightly-trumpet-performance-from-her-porch/6219767/>



Posted by Scott Sheehan on the PMEA Mentor Program Facebook group page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/717186051786543>

Coda: Getting personal! Is anyone out there?

Did you enjoy reading this e-newsletter? Do you want to continue receiving this monthly "epistle," a true labor of love from your PMEA Retired Member Coordinator? Are those crickets I am hearing? Just like the frozen faces in the Zoom windows of some virtual meetings, the response is sometimes... underwhelming! Hello?

It is a challenge to serve with little feedback from the membership. Time and time again requests are made for news, articles, photos, announcements, etc. to help "color" these pages. The charge has been to "engage" and "involve" PMEA retirees... but how does one do that in one-way communications? If you can, please "connect with your colleagues" and "share stuff" - almost anything would be like a breath of fresh air! **We're waiting...**

Please keep in touch!

Happy Trails, Retired Members! PKF

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