



PMEA Retired Member Network **eNEWS**: January 7, 2021

by Paul K. Fox, PMEA Retired Members Coordinator

Pennsylvania Music Educators Association Retired Members

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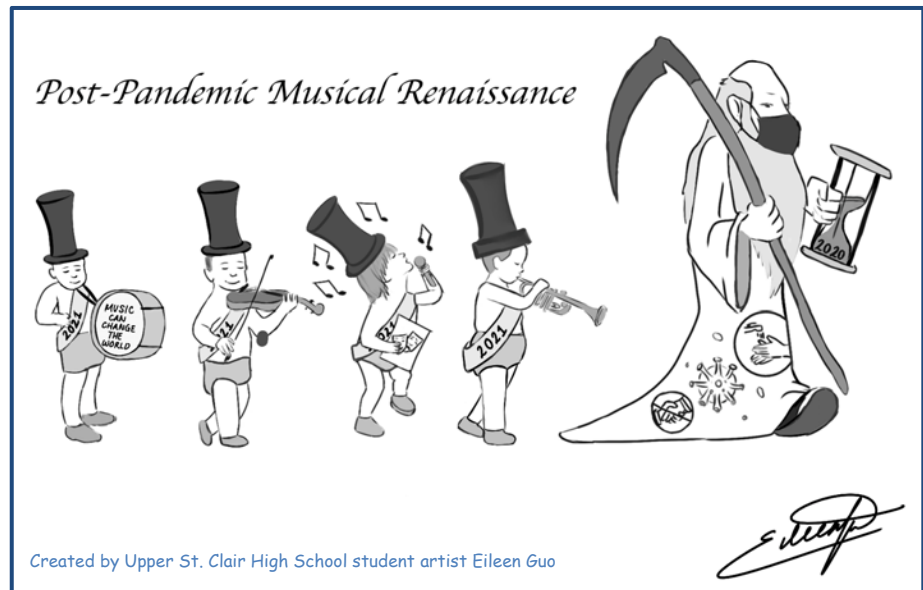
Welcome to the latest edition of **eNEWS** - the **PMEA Retired Member Network**... an informal alliance and forum for interconnecting retired **and retiring** music educators, sharing their ideas, stories, successes, news, and views. Thanks for staying involved!

"Cringe-worthy" music jokes

<https://www.classicfm.com/discover-music/latest/classical-music-jokes/>

These may make you turn the page...

- What's the difference between a conductor and God? *God doesn't think he's a conductor.*
- What's Giuseppe Verdi's favorite way to get around the airport? *La Travelator.*
- Arnold Schoenberg walks into a bar. "I'll have a gin, please, but no tonic."
- Why did Bach have so many children? *Because he didn't have any organ stops!*
- Why was the former conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic always first-off the plane? *Because he only had Karajan luggage.*
- How do you fix a broken instrument? *With a tuba glue.*
- How can you tell if a singer is at your door? *They can't find the key, and they never know when to come in.*
- "How do you get a trombonist off your doorstep? *Pay them for the pizza.*
- Why did the pirate buy a Pavarotti album? *Because he loved the high Cs.*
- What's the definition of perfect pitch? *When you toss a banjo in the bin and it hits an accordion.*
- How does a soprano sing a scale? *Do, Re, Mi, Me, Me, Me, Me, Me!*



Groan... more ridiculous riddles for the grandkids!

<https://www.squiglysplayhouse.com/mobile/jrkk.php?tag=Music>

- Why did the kid put his head into the piano? *He wanted to play by ear!*
- What type of soap did the composer use?? *Anti-BACH-terial!*
- How do you make a bandstand? *You take away their chairs!*
- What is a mummy's favorite kind of music? *Rap!*
- What is the most musical part of your body? *Your nose. You can blow it and pick it!*
- What's the cat's favorite subject in school? *MEW'sic!*
- What do you call a musical insect? *A humbug.*
- Why was the music teacher not able to open his classroom door? *Because his keys were on the piano!*
- What did Mr. and Mrs. Drum name their twin sons? *Tom Tom*



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New Year's resolutions during a pandemic?

<https://paulfox.blog/2020/12/29/covid-19-vs-new-years-resolutions/>

Did You Know?

Of those who make a New Year's resolution, after 1 week 75% are still successful in keeping it. After two weeks, the number drops to 71%. After 1 month, the number drops again to 64%. And after 6 months, 46% of people who make a resolution are still successful in keeping it. In comparison, of those people who have similar goals but do not set a resolution, **only 4% are still successful after 6 months.**

— <https://discoverhappyhabits.com/new-years-resolution-statistics/>



How long did your New Year's resolutions last? Are you still "on track?"

Although we may be seeing the first signs of "the light at the end of the tunnel" with the distribution of the vaccines, coronavirus still has its grip on us... off-the-chart infection rates, record-breaking hospital admissions, schedule disruptions, restrictions on restaurants and small businesses, mandatory mask wearing, social distancing and precautionary self-isolation, etc. By all accounts, **mindfulness, self-care, patience**, and a **positive outlook for the future** are keys to making new goals as the pandemic rages on...

I wrote a blog post about this age-old custom with the perspective to "think first" before you formulate any New Year's Resolutions! ([For the full article, see link above!](#))

Here's the "Cliff Notes" version on what you should do for year-long improvement plans.

1. Adopt a couple (not many) S.M.A.R.T. goals and **write them down**. Publish them. (Tell someone!)
2. **How** you approach them is just as important as **what** you choose to do over these months.
3. **Make an action plan** for each goal.
4. Motivate yourself! Embrace an optimistic and hopeful attitude. **The glass is half full!**
5. Don't accept in yourself **blame or complain** speech, behavior, or attitudes (unlike what you read on social media!)
6. Seek inspiration from **good role models** and "positive gurus!"



If you need a good "kick in the pants" to uplift your spirits, two of my favorite links from "music motivators and mentors" are Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser's **MusicFirst EdTech** clinic https://youtu.be/VYef_YFbHq8 and Lesley Moffat's **"rap"** <https://youtu.be/4MP8LHjYCCg>.





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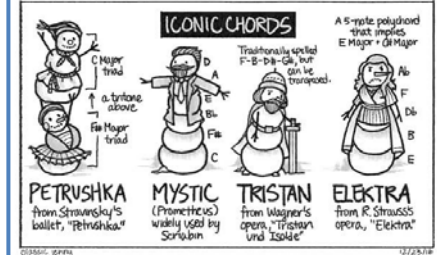
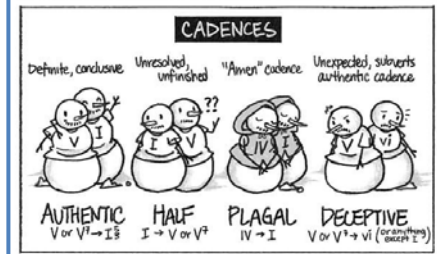
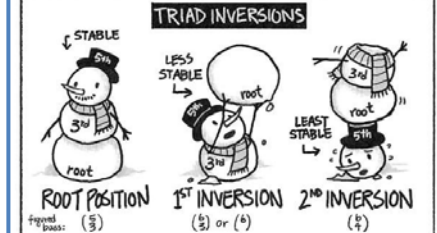
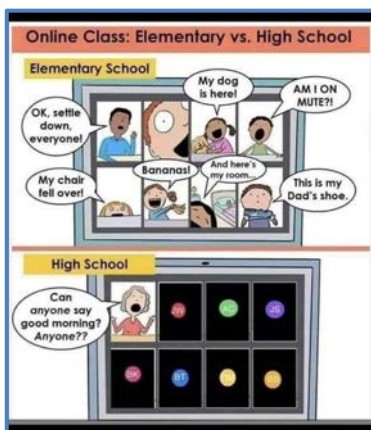
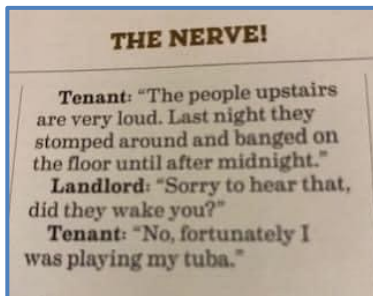
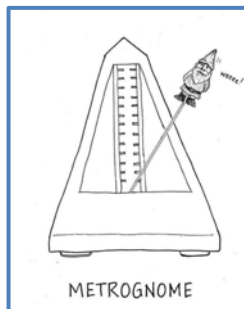
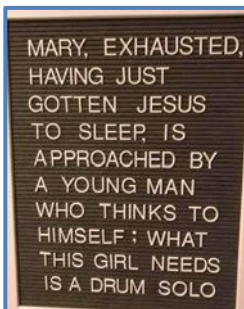
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Seasonal sketches and silly satire – the PMEA retirees' "funnies pages!"

shared by PMEA members and others from the Internet



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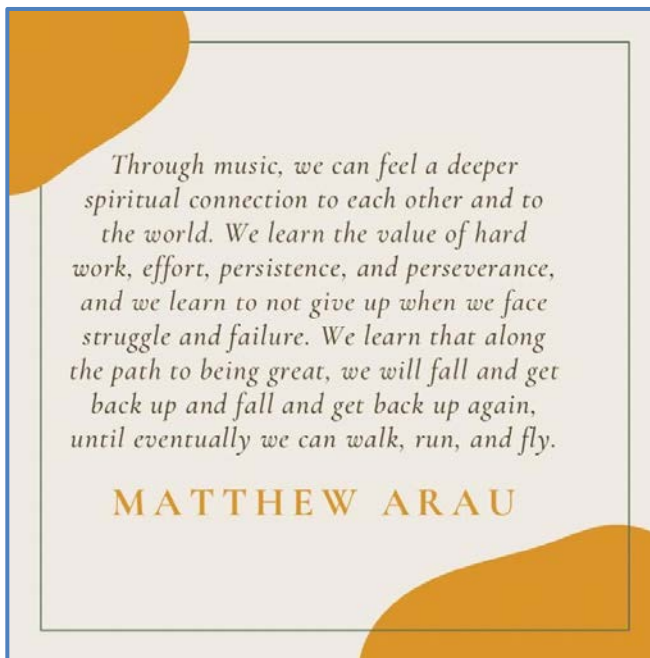
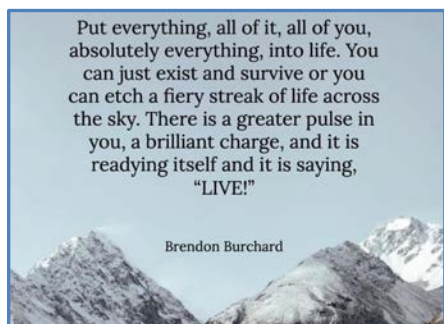
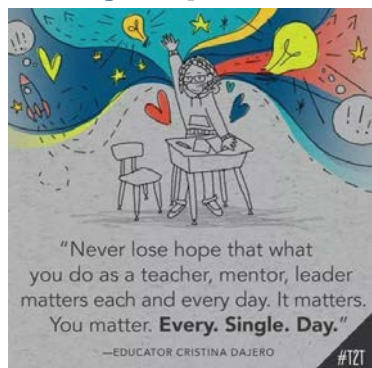


The vaccine rollout order will be first to those keyworkers for whom it is most vital they can continue to work, and so will therefore be as follows:

- 1 first sopranos
- 2 second basses
- 3 second altos
- 4 second sopranos
- 5 first basses
- 6 first altos
- 7 organist
- 8 conductor
- 9 tenors



Timely inspiration in images and icons



Special thanks to Scott Sheehan and the Facebook groups of PMEA Mentor Program and Music Educators Creating Online Learning

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This month's "Fox Finds" – Connecting via email

Have you ever tried to send out group emails to your community, church, or school ensemble members?

Mass distributions of announcements, schedules, holiday greetings, or just reaching out to your fellow musicians are problematic. The likelihood is that your message will be forwarded to their spam/junk mail folders... or worst yet, blocked altogether.

Online providers like Gmail, Outlook, and Yahoo Mail use spam filters to help ensure these messages don't clutter up their user's inboxes.

(See this explanation: <https://www.campaignmonitor.com/resources/guides/avoid-spam-filters/>.)

The solution? Sign-up for an email marketing platform. Several companies are offering free or low-fee services for small volume or low number of contacts (under 300-500).

Currently, PMEA is using a "Cadillac-plan" called **Constant Contact (CC)**. The cover letter to the Retired Member monthly epistle is designed in CC, and you download each eNEWS issue by clicking on the link. Up to this time, **PMEA UPDATES** and other e-bulletins are created in CC and sent out directed by the PMEA database stored within **Membersuite**, our association management software package. Future emails may come directly from Membersuite or generated after using add-ons like **BEEPro** or other graphic editors.

Like Zoom's free version of their app for < 40 minutes of communications or connecting to only two people, several firms have no-charge editions of email marketing programs. I had to do a little research for a local nonprofit charity and found these solutions - some are totally free (*forever), others offer free-trial or stripped-down introductory packages, and the rest provide lower-cost pricing for educators or nonprofits:

- Mailchimp: * <https://mailchimp.com/pricing/>
- SMORE: <https://www.smores.com/educators>
- Sendinblue: <https://www.sendinblue.com/pricing/>
- Hubspot: <https://www.hubspot.com/pricing/crm>
- Sender: * <https://www.sender.net/pricing/>
- Omnisend: <https://www.omnisend.com/pricing/>

I was already familiar with **Mailchimp** because I have been using a forever-free account for SHJO, our Saturday community/youth orchestra. For my municipal foundation, we also decided to go with Mailchimp, bringing down the monthly cost from \$48 (CC) to \$18.

Check out these articles for more information on the "free" programs:

- <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/free-email-marketing-tools/>
- <https://www.emailtooltester.com/en/blog/free-email-marketing-services/>

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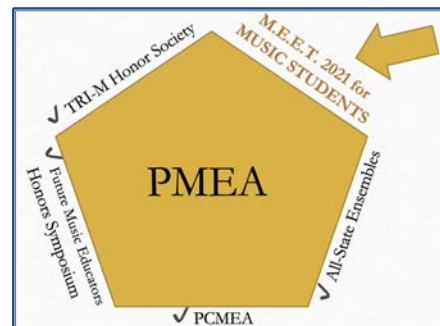
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Do you have session ideas or names of clinicians to share with M.E.E.T.?

PMEA's First Virtual Mini-Conference for Students

After several Zoom meetings, significant progress has been made on the inaugural program geared to music students in grades 8-12 to be held in conjunction with the PMEA Conference on April 17, 2021. Called **M.E.E.T.** - **m**usic-**e**xploration-**e**nrichment-**t**raining - this proposal is the result of a PMEA EXCOM initiative which envisions a one-day *online event*. The planning committee is made up of Immediate Past State President Tina Bennett and members of the PMEA TTRR Council: Nathan Buonviri, Paul Fox, Jonathan Helmick, and Kathleen Melago. (Interested in joining the committee or sharing your ideas? Please send an email to paulkfox.usc@gmail.com.)



The goal is for **M.E.E.T.** to reach out to music students not already participating in PMEA All-State ensembles or the Future Music Educators Honors Symposium. PMEA members would nominate students enrolled in their schools. **M.E.E.T.** could emphasize aspects of college readiness and career development, introducing them to fields and jobs in music.

The tentative 2021 schedule (not "set in stone" yet) is as follows:

- February 1: Confirmation of speakers/panelists/artists availability
- Mid-February: Advertisement of events/clinicians
- March 1-17: Submission of student nominations from PMEA members
- Late-March: Sending of "letter of invitation" notifications to students
- Mid-April: Online registration of students

The committee is recruiting presenters (pro bono) as well as co-hosts/moderators to introduce the sessions. Several "strands" were discussed. **Retiree volunteers wanted!**

- **Careers** (awareness, exploration, preparation, advancement - PDE Career Education and Work Standards, Chapter 4 of Title 22)
- **College readiness** (auditioning tips/tricks, preparing for a music major, music participation in community ensembles or as a non-degree major/minor)
- **Hands-on** (conducting, improvisation, leadership, Modern Band)
- **Instruments** - upgrades and simple repairs
- **Keynote Address** and/or **Panel Discussions**
- **Master Classes** (specific instrument or vocal)
- **Motivational workshops** (meet the artist, composer, conductor, director, etc.)
- **Social Emotional Learning** (breathing/meditation, mindfulness, music therapy, remedies for performance anxiety)
- **Ensemble Performances**

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Book-of-the-month: **Retirement – The First 365 Days**

by George Szlemp <https://www.facebook.com/george.szlemp>

Our collection of retirement manuals has really grown. (Have you seen the eNEWS book index? https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bGkx4rqDE2m3JunmMailp2pThkSTWS1xWoiKIk3_qWA/edit?usp=sharing). Now for something different.

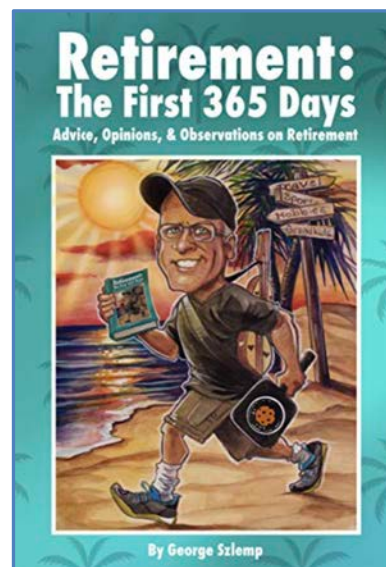
This 368-page paperback is like none other. It's really a diary - a very clever set of short observations or anecdotes, day-by-day experiences of one retiree's first 12-months of "living the dream."

The author admonishes us to consume each chapter consecutively - Day 1, Day 2, Day 3, etc. "Please don't read ahead, if you can help it, because certain things should be experienced when the time is right."

In my reviews, I usually list the table of contents, but that alone would take up 12 pages, a title for each day of his year.

Better than that, let me share a few quotes, inspiration from George Szlemp:

- "Examine your expectations and realize you have grown with your experiences."
- "Don't count the days... Make the days count."
- "Sharing yourself with others is a good retirement option."
- "Excuses don't go away in retirement. You just have fewer of them."
- "Retirement doesn't come with a map, but there are guides."
- "It's our deserved retirement. We earned it."
- "At our age, it isn't about what you leave behind, rather the memories you create."
- "Do two things that are useful and two that are beneficial. When you were done with your useful tasks, it's time to have fun - do something physical, spiritual, emotional or mental (cognitive)."



You may like the reference to his stated mission in the first chapter: "In the 365 entries you'll be reading, I hope each one offers some insight to help you enjoy retirement. As I like to say, **"Those who can, teach; those who cannot, do research!"**

This one is an easy-to-read resource and a quick glimpse to the ups-and-downs of that first year transitioning post-employment. Buy it and place it next to your easy chair (or "throne?") for any random reading moment. It's funny and definitely worth the 18-bucks.

George Szlemp



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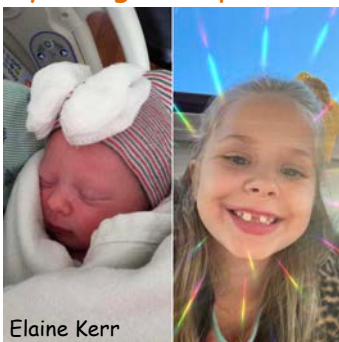
Bring on the “babes” of the New Year... with our Retired Members

Cute as kittens... They bring us hope for 2021!

You mean we can send you our baby pictures?



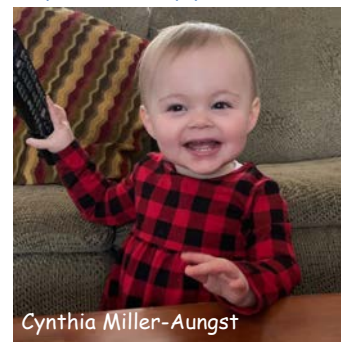
Judy Sheffenberger



Elaine Kerr



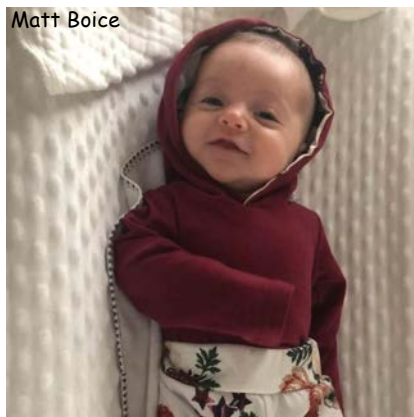
John Gula



Cynthia Miller-Aungst



Drew Podnar

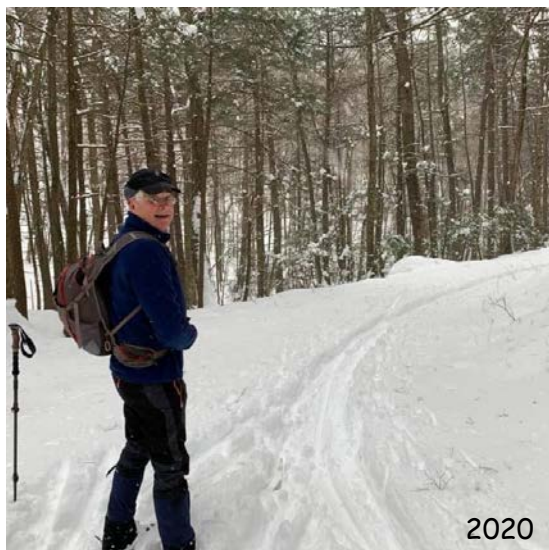


Matt Boice

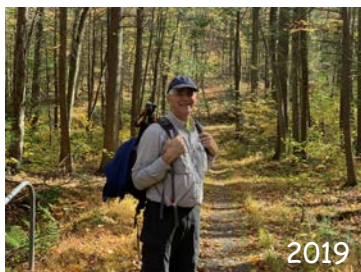


Barrie Bartle

Where in the world is... Rick Coulter? (You'll have to ask him!)



2020



2019



2018



2018



2017

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Have you been busy? It's time to "catch-up" on these newsworthy events...

- **December 22, 2020:** PMEA "Beyond the Classroom" seeking "masters and mentors"
<https://www.facebook.com/pmeamusic/posts/10160388141517786>
- **December 18, 2020:** New opportunities to donate to PMEA
Text *PMEA* to 44-321 or go to <https://www.pmea.net/give/>
- **December 17, 2020:** PMEA 2020 Awards Ceremony
<https://youtu.be/dmNrtI5qEpk>
- **December 11, 2020** PMEA Advocacy Update <https://www.pmea.net/news/pmea-advocacy-update/>



The value of volunteerism – "giving back" to good ole PMEA

The legacy of PMEA's success has always been based on the support of its participants: full-time/active music educators, collegiate members, retirees, corporate sponsors, and music students. There are many ways you can "join us" in helping the organization:

1. Volunteer your service as an audition screener, conference session co-host, aide, or presiding chair, guest speaker, local music education advocate, or workshop panelist.
2. Write an article for *PMEA News* or *Retired Member Network eNEWS*. Share news, photos, "happenings," your expertise on a particular topic, or even a "pet peeve" about our profession.
3. Serve as a PMEA Council representative, or in a District or State office or ex-officio job.
4. Assist PCMEA chapters, college music education classes, or local Pre-K-12 music programs.

Email your Retired Member Coordinator, Mentor Chair Teri Myers, or Executive Director Abi Young: paulkfox.usc@gmail.com, tmyers@altoonasd.org, or abiyoung@pmea.net.

The letters in **volunteers** stand for...

Source: Spring 2020 *Music Clubs Magazine* submitted by Doris Whinery

- **V**aluable in more ways than words can say
- **O**ptimistic and helpful every day
- **L**ending support with a heartwarming smile
- **U**nselfishly going the extra mile
- **N**otable for all the work you do
- **T**rusted because we can count on you
- **E**ffective in all you undertake
- **E**steemed for the difference that you make
- **R**eady to serve in so many ways
- **S**pecial and deserving of all our praise!



Happy Trails, Retired Members! PKF

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