



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!

“Kids of all ages” jokes for the month of March!

<https://funkidsjokes.com/march-jokes/>

- Q: What's Irish and comes out during March? A: Paddy O'Furniture
- Q: What season is it when you are on a trampoline in March? A: Springtime.
- Q: What falls during March but never gets hurt? A: The rain.
- Q: Which type of bow can't be tied in March? A: A rainbow.
- Q: Which crime fighter likes March the most? A: Robin
- Q: Why are oak trees so forgiving? A: Every March they "turn over a new leaf."
- Q: What do trumpet players in a spring parade do? A: March
- Q: What goes up when March rain comes down? A: An umbrella.
- Q: What do you get when you cross poison ivy with a four-leaf clover? A: A rash of good luck
- Q: Why was the sports fan acting so crazy? A: He had March madness!
- Q: What do you call a fake diamond in Ireland? A: A sham-rock
- Q: What did the Irish potato say to his sweetheart? A: I only have eyes for you!
- Q: What can be seen in the middle of April and March, but can't be seen in the beginning or end of either one? A: The letter "r."



Keeping connected with your “compadres” in PMEA

February is our shortest month of the year, so technically I had several fewer days to prepare this March edition of e-NEWS. It is released early because I was trying to “sneak it in” before Constant Contact closed out using our

An important message from your retired member coordinator:
Do you want to continue receiving these eNEWS? Help is needed!

old email template. Besides the thank-you notes from a few of you (it was great hearing from Fred Danchenko, Ron DeGrandis, David Cree, and Dick Merrell), I received ZERO mail in my inbox with *your* feedback, articles, happenings, “good news,” jokes, pics, etc.

We would love to hear from you. It is hard to generate news of the retired members when they don't check-in with us. Yes, I do visit the Facebook pages of many of you to see what you have been up to (and scrounge up what I can - didn't find much this time), but I shouldn't have to, right? This is *your* forum. Take advantage of this opportunity to *engage* with music education colleagues and keep our retiree network *alive!*

What books are you reading? Any new hobbies? How about additional grandkids or pets? What have you been doing in music? Have you taken any interesting trips in spite of COVID-19? Any ideas or anecdotes on “living the dream” for our newbie retirees?

Share your stories and updates. Let's make eNEWS even more relevant and FUN!

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Cartoon-of-the-month

by Manjiri Palayekar, Class of 2021, Upper St. Clair High School



THE BEST PART ABOUT COVID IS THAT I CAN TROT OVER TO HER ANY TIME OF THE DAY AND GET MY EARS SCRATCHED, AND SHE MIGHT EVEN PICK ME UP SO THAT I CAN MEET THE KIDS. ALTHOUGH SHE SEEMS "TRAPPED" STARING AT THAT BOX, SOMETHING CALLED "VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT" DOES HELP PROVIDE ME WITH UNLIMITED WALKS AND TREATS, AND WE SPEND MUCH MORE "QUALITY TIME" WITH EACH OTHER THAN THE OLD DAYS

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This month's "Fox Finds" – Theory apps

Are you involved in tutoring (private or college) students in musicianship training, harmony, counterpoint, composition, sight-singing, or music dictation? Even now while you're retired?

My own experience of teaching music theory classes in the public schools goes back to more than 40 years ago! When I was hired to the Upper St. Clair School District in 1980, somebody's brilliant idea for scheduling was to assign the rookie teacher a class of 20 high school students called "Comprehensive Music Theory I & II." This meant I was introducing intervals and key signatures to one half of the enrollees and four-part voice leading exercises to the rest. Meeting over a lunch period, I split the class into two 20-minute "live" sessions and generated "independent learning modules" (theory "paper packs" - no computers then) for each group to complete on-their-own when they were not attending the face-to-face lecture/discussion, and of course, I had double the workload in correcting homework.

When the pandemic arrived on the scene and closed down nearly everything a year ago, to keep my community youth orchestra active and the students practicing, we formed an online academy and subscribed to the *MusicFirst Classroom* suite of programs. My student musicians expressed interest in composing, but most of them didn't know the difference between a tritone and a Neapolitan Sixth. MusicFirst Classroom provides access (on any device) to state-of-the-art instruction and assessment offered by *Musition* and *Auralia* (I remember using the diskette versions of these for a decade of summer string camps) - they are a true godsend - and the \$16/person package also includes the renown notational software *Noteflight Learn*. Since I have a few adult learners in the academy, these tools have fostered a lot of inspiration and motivation to work on unique creative projects. For example, when we learned of Chick Corea's passing, my French horn player wrote a jazz piece on Noteflight in his memory. Good stuff, but these applications are not available (or cost effective) unless you "bite the bullet" and purchase MusicFirst for a size-able school program, ensemble setting, or private studio.

A couple additional solutions: If you have a few "shining stars" out there who would like some theory, sight-singing, or ear-training help, take a look at the free app called *Teoria* (<https://www.teoria.com/>) or the low-cost *Tenuto* from musictheory.net (only \$3.99 for iPhone or iPad at <https://www.musictheory.net/products/tenuto>).



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Book-of-the-month: *National Geographic 50 States 5000 Ideas*

by Mike Bellah, Ph.D. book: <https://www.facebook.com/george.szlemp> blog: <https://mikebellah.com/>

I don't know about you, but since the pandemic has clobbered all of us, I've pretty much stayed hunkered-down and postponed any vacations or car trips. However, as of today's writing of this article, I will have received my first coronavirus vaccination, and things are looking up for the future. Perhaps to stray a little from "how to retire" and strategies for self reinvention, let's dive into a book on where to go when we take a break from our routine.

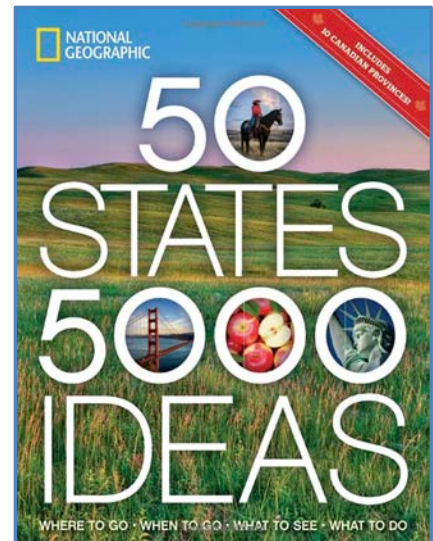
National Geographic 50 States 5000 Ideas

Where To Go, When To Go, What To See, What To Do

From the back cover:

Get out there and start exploring! In this delightful and comprehensive book, you'll find:

- 1000's of ideas to get you started planning your own cross-country odyssey to all 50 states...
- Must-see destinations in every state & Canadian provinces, from the Hill Country of Texas to the ice fields of Yukon...
- More than 250 exciting full-color photos of places you won't want to miss, both famous and off the beaten track...
- Practical information on visitor centers and tourism offices in every state and province...
- Fun facts and highlights on everything including the best road trips, best festivals, and best local flavors the states have to offer.



Have you been to the remote polar bear provincial park in Ontario? How about those steep streets of San Francisco? Do you need to jump into a little historic reenactment getting lost in the old west town of Dodge City, Kansas? Or would you just be happy wandering through the coastal fishing villages of Maine?

In the household where I grew up, the magazines we placed on the coffee table in the living room included LIFE, Newsweek, Readers Digest, a couple of my dad's professional engineering journals, and the more exotic *National Geographic*. Somewhere in a landfill there are literally tons of our past issues of *National Geographic* - displays of then state-of-the-art layouts and photographic essays providing journeys to faraway lands and hidden villages - peoples and places from across the globe. In keeping with the tradition of *National Geographic*, this 288-page fully-indexed guide will take you to just about anywhere you want to explore.

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So it may go without saying that when you review a new travelogue publication, your first stop is to thumb through to the state in which you currently live to see what they have to say about it.



On pages 170 through 173, the quick glimpse was not too shabby, squeezing in many attractions and landscapes of the Commonwealth. Here is their quote about Pennsylvania: "one of only two states that stretches between the Atlantic coast and the Great Lakes, Pennsylvania offers an amazing variety of landscapes, both of rural and urban. Home to both Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, the state boasts two of the nations most intriguing cities. But the countryside of the Keystone State also dazzles, a scenic mosaic that includes the Allegheny Mountains, Amish country, and the battlefields of Gettysburg." They shared the hidden treasures of the Mutter Museum (Philadelphia), Pittsburgh's Northside, the National Civil War Museum (Harrisburg), Eisenhower National Historic Site (Gettysburg), and Eastern State Penitentiary (Philadelphia). The box on "local flavors" showcased Hershey Chocolate, scrapple - a popular breakfast item at the Neptune Diner in Lancaster, Philly cheesesteak, and shoofly pie, another Pennsylvania Dutch treat.

Of course, PA residents may offer a much longer list of places to go and things to see. Many of these are not listed in the book, but if you need to do some brainstorming for the planning of your next close-to-home excursion...

Andy Warhol Museum, Carnegie Science Center, and other Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh
Bake Oven Knob, lookout along the Kittatiny Ridge (Lehigh County)
The Boulder Field at Hickory Run State Park
Bushkill Falls "The Niagara of PA"
Cathedral of Learning, Nationality Rooms, Gothic Study Hall (University of Pittsburgh)
Codus State Park
Duquesne Incline, Mount Washington, and the Pittsburgh Skyline
Fallingwater (Mill Run)
Ganoga Falls and Ricketts Glen State Park (Benton)
Independence National Park and the Liberty Bell (Philadelphia)
Oakland Run Waterfalls (York County)

Old Country Store, Quilt Museum, Buggy Rides, People's Place, Covered Bridges (Intercourse)
Pennsylvania State Capital and State Museum (Harrisburg)
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Pine Creek Gorge "The Grand Canyon of PA"
Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens (Pittsburgh's Schenley Park)
The Poconos
Presque Isle State Park (Erie)
Salt Springs State Park (Susquehanna County)
Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum (Pittsburgh)
Strasburg Rail Road & National Toy Train Museum
Valley Forge and Valley Forge National Historic Park (King of Prussia)

Where would you take an out-of-state visitor? Share your secret spots...

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Wanted: Volunteers to serve as Presiding Chairs for Annual Conference

PMEA is looking for a few "virtual moderators" to introduce a session or two during the Annual Spring Conference on April 14-17, 2021. If you are willing to help, please send an email to Paul Fox: paulkfox.usc@gmail.com.

More Nuggets from the 'Net

Just happened upon these... Do you have any of your own favorites?

- **In Memory of Chick Corea:** <https://vimeo.com/10933550>
- **Sight-Reading Devilish Time Signatures (TwoSetViolin)** <https://youtu.be/wfl2aT-Yf30>
- **Epic Piano Battle Brings Crowd to a Standstill** <https://youtu.be/wdcSwilZ9Y0>
- **Billy Joel Disrupts Igudesman & Joo in Concert** <https://youtu.be/vfOdU3YKFXE>
- **How Do I Know When I Have Enough Money to Retire?** <https://youtu.be/uggSmPDo-Zw>
- **Rhapsody in Blue (Bernstein)** <https://youtu.be/Ino4ey9b5kQ>

Sitting on the bookshelf

Are you in the mood for some quiet time for reading? Turn off the TV, smartphone, iPad, and computer! Curl up next to the fireplace with a good book! These just happened to be on the Foxes' bedstand or in "the reading room," and you'll notice they are not recent releases or on any best-selling lists. Now it is your turn to share your own precious "finds!"



- *Thinking Machine - 50 Novelettes and Short Stories* by Jacques Futrelle, Neo Books 2018
- *A Work in Progress... On Being a Musician* by Chick Corea, 2019
- *The Escape Artists - A Band of Daredevil Pilots and The Greatest Prison Break of the Great War* by Neil Bascomb, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt 2018
- *The Burnout Cure - Learning to Love Teaching Again* by Chase Moselle, ASCD 2019
- *Teaching Genius - Dorothy Delay and the Making of a Musician* by Barbara Lourie Sand, Amadeus Press 2000
- *The Tipping Point - How Little Things Can Make A Big Difference* by Malcolm Gladwell, Back Bay Books 2002
- **April's Retired Member book-to-be-reviewed:** *Third Calling - What Are You Doing the Rest of Your Life* by Richard and Leona Bergstrom, Re-Ignite 2016

Bragging and "good gossip" are allowed here!

From *Jesus Christ Superstar*: "What the buzz, tell me what's a-happening..."

Please update us - new jobs, assignments, goals, awards, music, pastimes, trips, tips, etc.

Stay healthy and safe. Happy Trails, retirees. PKF

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