

Preparing for & fostering “living the dream!”

PMEA Retired Member Network eNEWS

Fall/Winter issue – December 31, 2025

Pennsylvania Music Educators Association

“Often when you think you are at the end of something, you’re at the beginning of something else.”

– Fred Rogers

Happy New Year!

FEATURES

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EDITOR'S NOTE

How are you doing?

Retirees, those soon-to-retire, collegiates, and active members: Join in celebrating & contributing to the *combined might* of our expertise, endowments, and encouragements that only your TEAM PMEA has to offer!

Send us your news, views, stories, and even *funnies* for the next edition of this forum.

Do you have any “hints or hacks” to share with our colleagues? Please contribute YOUR articles, notices, or suggestions!

We want to hear from you!

That's why “we” are here! PKF

Retirement = Self-Reinvention... It's All About “Rewirement!”

Season's Greetings to active and retired PMEA members! Hope this e-publication finds you happy, healthy, financially secure, and fully engaged in the good work of teaching and making “life-long music!”

Welcome to the newest edition of **eNEWS – PMEA Retired Member Network** – an informal alliance and forum for interconnecting pre- and in-service music educators and retirees sharing their ideas, updates, successes, and perspectives! Thanks for lending your support and staying involved in the profession!

We're here to help you “grow” in all phases of your life & career!

What does *retirement* really mean? A survey sent out by the *New York Times* in 2024 received more than 1500 replies. Here are a few quotes on *retirement*:

“Some see it as a state of stillness. A second childhood. A new chapter. The opportunity to live life rather than merely make a living. Some described it as hell. For others, it has been heaven.”

“The responses made it clear that retirement is not just one thing. It could be doing nothing, relishing quiet moments in the morning to linger over coffee or walk the dog without rushing. Or it could be an opportunity for reinvention by embracing a new focus in life, perhaps even another form of work, but one with greater satisfaction.”

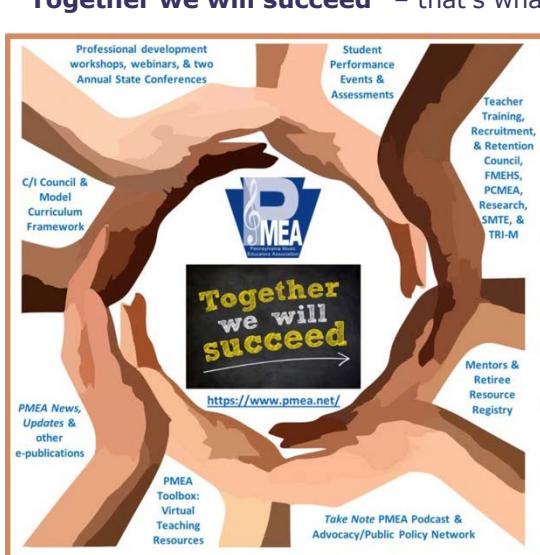
“For some responders, retirement has been freedom or liberation. Many considered themselves lucky. Some were frank about needing time to adjust, saying retirement feels felt like jumping off a cliff. For at least one responder, it has been a black hole...”

“Together we will succeed” – that's what PMEA provides for all members active, retired and those retiring over the next several years.

Remember what Sister Kathleen Doutt said at the 2025 Retirement 101 session? “I have already told people who ask me if I'm retired that I'm REWIRED!”

The super-power of PMEA is the SHARING of our combined clearinghouse and reservoir of experience and talent. The PMEA website archives contacts, links, webinars, documents, etc. – everything conveniently in one place: <https://www.pmea.net/>.

Join us in making a difference in PA music education!



Paul K. Fox, PMEA State Retired Members Coordinator
1564 Hastings Mill Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15241-2860
412-596-7937 <https://www.pmea.net/retired-members/>

Deadline for the next issue

June 1, 2026

Send “stuff” to:

paulkfox.usc@gmail.com





"It's the most wonderful time of the year..."
PMEA 2026 Conference "Scaling Heights"
And our return to scenic Mt. Poconos & Kalahari!



"Pocono" means the "stream between two mountains," the PA region encompassing 2,400 square miles of lakes, rivers and woodlands just waiting to be discovered.

Keynote Speakers:

- Dr. Alice Hammel, Music Educator, Author, and Clinician
- Dave Deitz, PDE Consultant
- Scott Sheehan, NAfME Immediate Past President

Featuring:

- Nearly 100 professional development sessions (all levels and specialties)
- Performances of more than 35 ensembles from across the state
- Music Education Marketplace of more than 80 companies representing a variety of services from colleges/universities to music retailers
- A minimum of 12 hours of PDE Act 48 continuing education credits

You won't want to miss:

- The U.S. Army Chamber Strings
- PMEA Awards Breakfast
- PMEA All-State Band, Orchestra, Wind Ensemble, Jazz Ensemble, Chorus, Contemporary A Cappella, and Modern Band performances
- Annual Retired Member Breakfast & session for soon-to-retire educators



**Help College Students Attend the
 PMEA Conference**

Sign-in to your PMEA portal to donate: <https://portal.pmea.net/i4a/ams/publicLogin.cfm>

The Annual Conference edition of eNEWS

What's a-Happening at Kalahari in the Poconos?

For the complete conference schedule (proposed as of 11/25), download:

<https://www.pmea.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2026-PMEA-Conference-Schedule-from-PMEA-News.pdf> or

<https://www.pmea.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/26insert.pdf>

Mark these dates on your calendar: **April 23-25, 2026.**

Then ask your spouse, grandchildren, nieces/nephews, other fun-loving family members, or friends if they are available to join you for a *three-day escape to the Poconos*, "the world's coolest indoor waterpark" at Kalahari Resort in the Poconos! Experience great music, unique professional development, opportunities to catch-up with colleagues, and family-friendly entertainment all wrapped up in one location. And best yet, each spacious hotel room allows you to register up to four people with access to all the resort's amenities for no extra charge!

WHAT AN AMAZING WATERPARK! Check out their map of slides, pools, and other family attractions!

AMERICA'S COOLEST INDOOR WATERPARK



Attractions:

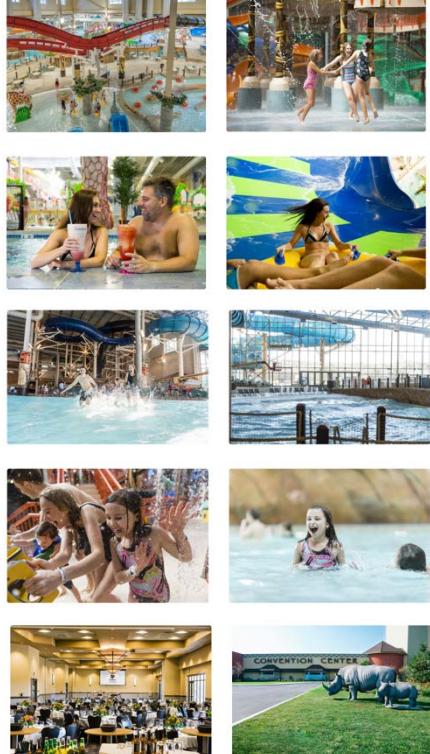
- ① MEZZANINE
- ② LAZY RIVER
- ③ LOCKERS
- ④ TOWEL EXCHANGE
- ⑤ LOST LAGOON
- ⑥ IN / OUT FAMILY WHIRLPOOL
- ⑦ THIRSTY TURTLE SWIM-UP BAR
- ⑧ WILD WILDEBEEST
- ⑨ TANZANIAN TWISTER
- ⑩ ZIMBABWE ZIPPER
- ⑪ RIPPLING RHINO
- ⑫ BARRELLING BABOON
- ⑬ FLOWRIDER®
- ⑭ CRACKED COCONUT BAR
- ⑮ SPLASHDOWN SAFARI
- ⑯ KID'S LAZY RIVER
- ⑰ TIKO'S WATERING HOLE
- ⑱ KID'S SLIDES
- ⑲ ANACONDA
- ⑳ ZANZIBAR/POOL DECK (SEASONAL)
- ㉑ ZANZIBAR
- ㉒ DUNGEONS OF HOUT BAY (WAVE POOL)
- ㉓ SAHARA SIDEWINDER
- ㉔ SCREAMING HYENA
- ㉕ CORAL COVE
- ㉖ VICTORIA FALLS
- ㉗ THE SMOKE THAT THUNDERS
- ㉘ KENYA KORKSCREW
- ㉙ SERENGETI SAFARI
- ㉚ CHEETAH RACE
- ㉛ ELEPHANT'S TRUNK
- ㉜ ZIG ZAG ZEBRA
- ㉝ THE PAXTON GROTTO SWIM UP BAR
- ㉞ INDOOR/OUTDOOR SPAS
- ㉟ SHOOTING STARS BASKETBALL
- ㉟ ZULU GRILLE
- ㉟ BUGS BURROW (SEASONAL)
- ㉟ ZANZIBAR BASKETBALL (SEASONAL)
- A - KK CABANAS
- PF - PARTY CABANAS
- H1 - H4 HOT TUB CABANAS
- H5 - SAFARI WHIRLPOOL CABANA
- M1 - M4 MEZZANINE CABANAS
- 1 - 9 BUNGALOWS
- EA - EB COVE CABANA
- PS - PREMIUM SEATING AREA
- FIRST AID STATION

Requirements:

- Must be 42" tall or over to ride this attraction
- Must be 46" tall or over to ride this attraction
- Must be 21 or over

ALL hot tubs are accessible to guests over 6 years old





What's in it for you? **Scan the next page's summary "at-a-glance,"** the above links or *PMEA News* for more details on the keynoters, clinicians, performers, and the conference schedule!

ESPECIALLY FOR RETIRED MEMBERS

Join us for the annual retiree breakfast with special recognitions and gifts. The breakfast is planned for **Friday, April 24.** We cannot wait to "party hearty," swap stories, and "reconnect" with you!

CAN YOU HELP?

We're looking for volunteers to assist PMEA in presiding over conference sessions. The "easy" job entails welcoming the attendees, introducing the speaker, distributing handouts (if any), and closing the workshop. Keep your eye on the *PMEA Updates* in your email in-box for the opportunity to sign-up as a **PRESIDING CHAIR** or even sit an hour or two assisting at the registration desks. Of course, that would be in-between enjoying the workshops, All-State ensemble rehearsals, guest performances, corporate exhibits, and the water attractions.

Kalahari.
RESORTS &
CONVENTIONS

Special thanks to the hard work of PMEA PD Council, Officers, and Staff There's Something for Everyone... What a Line-Up!

We know the print is small, so download the complete conference schedule (as of 11/25) here:

<https://www.pmea.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2026-PMEA-Conference-Schedule-from-PMEA-News.pdf> or

<https://www.pmea.net/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/26insert.pdf>



ACCESS/BELONGING/DIVERSITY/ EQUITY/INCLUSION (EXCEPTIONAL LEARNERS)

- 101 New Jazz Standards by Women Composers
- The ABCs of UDL in the General Music Classroom
- Connecting with Musicians: Embedding Social Emotional Learning in Private & Small Group Lessons
- Designing Inclusive Policies for LGBTQIA+ Students in Music Education
- Recommendations for Supporting Students with Disabilities in Audition and Performance Settings
- Your Journey Beyond the Notes: A Reflective Path Towards Cultural Inclusivity Part 1 and Part 2

ADJUDICATION/PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

- Introduction to PMEA Music Performance Assessments
- PMEA Behind the Recorder: A Conversation With Music Performance Assessment Adjudicators for Band and Orchestra
- Recommendations for Supporting Students with Disabilities in Audition and Performance Settings

CAREER DEVELOPMENT/ TEACHER RESOURCES

- 101 New Jazz Standards by Women Composers
- Charting the Course: From Classroom to Career!
- Dear New Music Teacher
- Fake it 'Til You Make It: Piano Skills for the Non-Pianist Choral Director
- Get to the 'Good Stuff' Faster with Tech Tools
- Self-Care Cookbook - Reflections, Recipes and Resources
- Stop Talking About AI and Start Building It: Come Create Apps and Assistants for Your Classroom
- Stronger Together: Building Collaborative Music Departments for Student Success

CHORAL/MUSICAL THEATRE

- ACDA-PA Choral Reading Session
- Around the World with the Developing Choir!
- Cultivating Values in the Choral Classroom: Become More Intentional about Current Practices
- Fake it 'Til You Make It: Piano Skills for the Non-Pianist Choral Director
- Finding Your Choir's Mojo: Unlocking Musicality Through Eurhythmics
- Flexible Gems for Unison and Two-Part Choirs
- Open Doors, Open Scores: Teaching Novice Choirs
- The Power of D.I.Y.: Crafting Musicals and Revues for YOUR Students
- Pro Audio 101 and Introduction to Wireless
- Sing, Move, Play! Music & Materials for Kids
- T.A.P. Into Teaching - Growing the Next Generation of Educators
- "T" Time- Choral Rehearsal Strategies for Tempo, Tuning and Text
- Vocal Development and Health Throughout the Lifespan

COLLEGIATE/PCMEA

- Dear New Music Teacher
- From Practice to Praxis: Study Smarter, not Harder, to PASS the Music Teacher Exam!
- I'm Not Ready!: Building Confidence in the Chaos at the Start of your Music Teaching Career
- It's Fine, You're Fine, Everything is Fine!
- Your Future Self Will Thank You: What New Teachers Want You to Know While You're Still in School

CURRICULUM INSTRUCTION/ DEVELOPMENT/ASSESSMENT

- Beyond the Notes: Teaching Expressivity in the Band Rehearsal
- A Framework for Success in Secondary General Music
- Making Research in Music Class Fun for Middle and High School Students (Yes, It IS Possible!)
- New PA Arts Standards Are On Their Way!
- Percussion Unleashed: Tame It, Train It, Make It Musical
- Strategies for Teaching Improvisation in a Variety of Settings and Genres
- Title Drafted by ChatGPT - Don't Fear the Future: Using AI to Amplify Your Teaching
- Your Future Self Will Thank You: What New Teachers Want You to Know While You're Still in School

EDUCATION IN RURAL/ URBAN SETTINGS

- The Art of the Comeback: Reversing Burnout Among Rural Music Educators
- Educating Urban Scholars ~ Music and Connection to the Child Who Needs it Most
- Rurally Comprehensive
- Ukulele Jam: Simplification Techniques for Successful Experiences
- Under the Hood of Your Band Program: Systems, Culture, and Growth

GENERAL MUSIC CLASSROOMS - EARLY/PRIMARY/ INTERMEDIATE/MIDDLE/HIGH

- A Framework for Success in Secondary General Music
- Creative Movement: Assessing Students Through Kinesthetic Experiences
- Flexible Gems for Unison and Two-Part Choirs
- From Microphones to Mixing: Start a Music Technology Elective at Your School from Scratch
- From Page to Performance: Using Original Children's Books to Spark Music-Making in Elementary Classrooms
- Global Grooves: Easy-to-Learn Multi-Cultural Dances You Might Not Know!
- Going Solo: Encouraging Individual Expression in the General Music Classroom
- Redesigning Secondary General Music: Creating Curricula That Resonate
- The Self Start Routine to Maximize Student Learning & Confidence
- Sing Move Play
- Sing, Move, Play! Music & Materials for Kids
- Sonidos Latinos: Starting and Sustaining a Latin Music Ensemble in a Music Program
- Ticking the Ivories: Tips and Tricks for Teaching High School Piano Lab
- Ukulele Jam: Simplification Techniques for Successful Experiences

HEALTH/WELLNESS/ RETIREMENT

- Connecting with Musicians: Embedding Social Emotional Learning in Private & Small-Group Lessons
- Hearing for Musicians: Understanding and Protecting Your Hearing
- Neuroscience and Music Advocacy: Beyond Higher Math Scores
- Self-Care Cookbook - Reflections, Recipes and Resources
- The Silent Struggles of the Female Band Director
- Ten Things Mentally Strong Teachers Do

INSTRUMENTAL - ALL AREAS

- Celebrating America's 250th Anniversary: Using Fife & Drum to Build Community and Civic Engagement
- The Dynamics of Dynamics: You Are Playing So Loud I Can Barely Hear You!
- From Panic to Power: Teaching Beginning Guitar with Confidence
- Listen Louder
- Method Book Mayhem: Building What You Need When Time Says No
- The Musical ARTS - Using the Picture!
- The Silent Struggles of the Female Band Director

INSTRUMENTAL - BAND/JAZZ

- Beyond the Notes: Teaching Expressivity in the Band Rehearsal
- Chose a side: Be brave and fearless! Encouraging the Use of the B-flat and F Sides of the Horn for Student Success
- Effective Clarinet Pedagogy: Beyond the Methods Class
- Essentials for Success: Strategies and Tools for Building Young Bands
- The Jazz Rhythm Section: A Guide to Navigating Slash Notation
- Low Brass, High Impact: Empowering band teachers to build Better Tuba Players
- Percussion Unleashed: Tame It, Train It, Make It Musical
- A Successful Pedagogy for the Beginning Oboist
- Under the Hood of Your Band Program: Systems, Culture, and Growth

INSTRUMENTAL - STRINGS

- Arc! Bowl!
- Building a Culture of Creativity Through Improvisation and Arranging in Orchestra Classroom
- Cracking the Code: Elevating Musicianship in Rehearsals
- Fiddle Fun!
- From Scratches to Sublime: Strategies for Improving Tone and Intonation on String Instruments
- Improving the Ensemble Playing Habits of Your String Players
- PADESTA String Orchestra Reading Session
- The Creative String Orchestra
- The First Five Lessons: Setting Your Beginner Orchestra Up for Success

LEADERSHIP/MENTORING

- Ten Things Mentally Strong Teachers Do
- Tri-M Can Grow and Connect Student Leaders in Music
- Your Future Self Will Thank You: What New Teachers Want You to Know While You're Still in School

MARKETING/PROMOTION/ MUSIC PARENT GROUPS

- It Takes a Village... Music Booster Parent & Director Sharing Session
- Stronger Together: Building Collaborative Music Departments for Student Success
- Tri-M Can Grow and Connect Student Leaders in Music

MODERN BAND/GUITAR

- From Panic to Power: Teaching Beginning Guitar with Confidence
- Jingle Jam: Empowering Entry-Level Songwriting
- Modern Band Starts Here: Transforming Your General Music or Guitar Class Into a Performance-Based Program
- Moving Past Open Chords on the Guitar with Intermediate Tactics
- Rewiring Rhythm: Brain-Based Strategies for Effective Drum Practice

RESEARCH/HIGHER EDUCATION

- Invited Researcher: Taking the Road Less Traveled, and Making all the Difference, in Research
- Neuroscience and Music Advocacy: Beyond Higher Math Scores
- Research Forum I
- Research Forum II
- Research Forum III
- Research Poster Session
- Research Workshop I

PERFORMING GROUPS

Thursday, April 23, 2026

- Council Rock HS South Vocal Ensemble
- Duquesne University Voice Of Spirit
- Moravian University Saxophone Quartet
- North Hills HS Wind Ensemble
- North Penn HS Chambers Strings
- North Penn HS Navy Jazz
- Parkland Festive Strolling Strings
- Pembroke MS Vocal Ensemble
- Quakertown Community HS Honors Choir
- Rose Tree String Quartet
- Souderton EL Honors Band
- State College Area HS Master Singers
- State College Area HS Symphonic Band
- Susquehanna University Orchestra Strings
- Susquehanna University Percussion Ensemble
- Criterion's Jazz Ensemble/West Chester University
- Veritas Academy Upper School String Orchestra
- Westchester Area School District Senior Strings

Friday, April 24, 2026

- Cedar Cliff HS Chamber Singers
- Charter Arts Latin Music Ensemble
- Concordia Singers
- Drexel Hill MS Jazz Band
- Fifth Avenue Falcons
- Fourth From The Sun
- Franklin Regional Senior HS Flute Quartet
- Kutztown University Brass Bears Quartet
- Liberty HS Pipe & Drums
- Montgomery County Concert Band
- Nazareth Academy Chorale
- Pennsylvania State University Concert Choir
- Souderton Area HS Rock Band
- Select Ensemble Of Mechanicsburg MS
- Wallenpaupack Modern Band
- Westchester University Wind Ensemble
- Williamsport HS Ninth Grade Band
- Wyoming Valley West MS Band

Retired Members – Supporting PMEA, NAfME and the Music Education Profession

Annual Report by Paul K. Fox, PMEA State Retired Member Coordinator

For eleven years (and counting), it has been my pleasure to serve as *your* Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) Retired Member State Coordinator as well as member (2016-2024 State Chair) of the PMEA Council for Teacher Training, Recruitment and Retention. I believe my responsibility to our state association continues to be two-fold:

- Assist soon-to-retire professionals in achieving a smooth transition to a happy and satisfying retirement; to help them cope with the commonly experienced emotional ups-and-downs of this life passage, wrestling with the question “what do you want to be or do when you grow up?” and making new *life lesson plans* and personal goals.
- Reach out to and build meaningful connections with retirees in order to fully engage them towards becoming active in their professional association; to recount, represent, and revitalize the activities of our post full-time employed music educators.

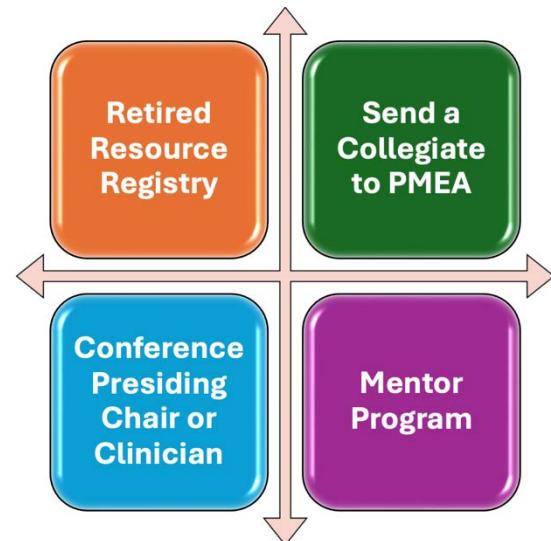
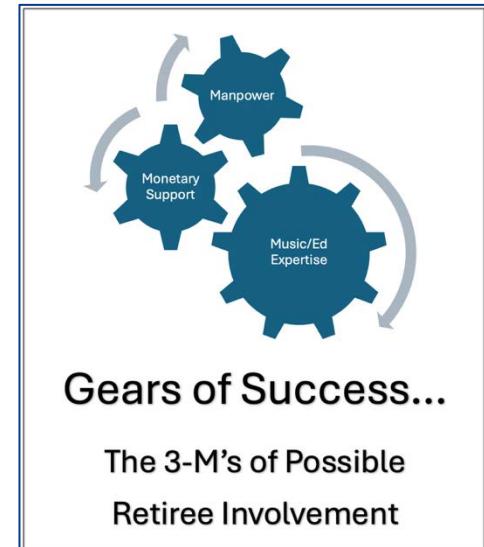
Retired members continue to be a major “cog” in the smooth-running wheel of PMEA and music/education programs throughout the Commonwealth. Most of you are already involved as financial supporters, Retire Resource Registry (informal) consultants or official PMEA mentors, officers/council reps, content advisors, or conference volunteers. With many years of “boots on the ground,” we have at our fingertips numerous ideas to solve issues in education. In 2026, we can re-energize our contributions (the 3-Ms of monetary, manpower, and/or music/ed support) and continue to “make our mark” in helping the profession.

I reached out to **Elizabeth Welsh Lasko**, NAfME Assistant Executive Director for Membership, Organizational Development, and Marketing Communications and “volunteered” OUR assistance. I suggested that, in keeping with the NAfME 2022 Vision Statement – “...an association where all people are heard, seen, and feel they belong throughout their lifelong experiences in music” – we should all intentionally recruit more hands-on involvement of our retirees. She was supportive and suggested I write an article to galvanize our efforts. I did my best to clearly layout the benefits of participation in PMEA and NAfME as well as what our professional organizations need in return. **Please review this NAfME blog at <https://nafme.org/blog/engaging-retiring-retired-educators/>.**

What's next? At the 2027 NAfME Eastern Division Conference, I propose we hold a meeting of retired members and also connect with all available state MEA retired member coordinators (those states that have them). In September, I was privileged to “Zoom in” a conversation with the newly appointed **CTMEA State Retired Member Coordinator Tom Kessler** in order to collaborate and share future plans and resources! It was hard not to brag a little about what we already offer our retirees on the PMEA website (take a look!): <https://www.pmea.net/retired-members/>

Retirees can always say, “It's not my sandbox, anymore!” However, most of us have spare time and can lend a hand when needed! I would like to challenge YOU to make a New Year's Resolution and choose one new thing you can do this year to help PMEA: help fund a PCMEA member to attend the conference, sign-up for the R3 or become trained as a PMEA Mentor, write an article for PMEA News, volunteer for a PMEA committee or serve as a presiding chair, etc. Need more motivation? READ THE ARTICLE REPRINT ON THE NEXT PAGE. We appreciate your dedication to the cause!

Let's make plans to meet in April when we return to Kalahari Resort (Poconos) and “break bread together” for another PMEA Retired Member Breakfast on my birthday – Friday, April 24, 2026. Who's bringing the cake?

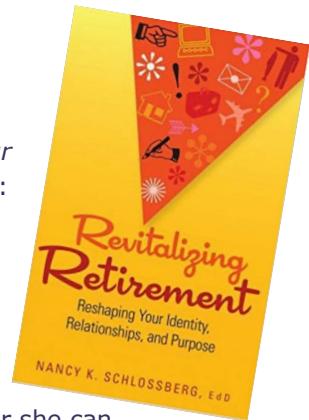


Keeping Our Hands in it!

From the Spring/Summer 2025 issue of *PMEA Retired Member Network eNEWS*

Do you feel "needed" and know you "make a difference?" Research has showed that the one of the most important motivators for involvement in a professional association is that its members feel they are essential for its success. This quote is from *Revitalizing Retirement: Reshaping Your Identity, Relationships, and Purpose* by Nancy Schlossberg, attributed to Rosenberg/McCullough:

"It has been suggested that one problem of retirement is that one no longer matters; others no longer depend on us... The reward of retirement, involving a surcease from labor, can be the punishment of not mattering. Existence loses its point and savor when one no longer makes a difference."



Retired members DO MATTER, and we NEED YOU! Even though anytime a retiree wants to, he or she can say "NO!" or "Not interested," there may be a few areas to offer some assistance. Here's a quick brainstorm... and we hope you'll pick at least one or two! Ask Abi Young or Paul Fox how you can get more involved!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PMEA VOLUNTEERISM

1. Write an article or share a news announcement for *PMEA News* or this e-newsletter.
2. Participate in the PMEA Advocacy Day & make your voice heard by writing to your state/federal representatives.
3. Submit a proposal for the conference or a regional workshop session (with you as the presenter or on a panel).
4. Serve on the conference planning committee and judge sessions or performers online via the Submittable app.
5. Register for the annual conference and become a presiding chair for the sessions/concerts or a registration aide.
6. Nominate a colleague for the PMEA Citation of Excellence, James R. Stewart, or Hall-of-Fame awards.
7. Donate to the "Send a Collegiate to the Conference" to help music education majors attend our big event.
8. Contribute funds to the Irene Christman Scholarship or Margaret Bauer Grant programs.
9. Become an All-State Program Patron or assist any local/regional/state PMEA festival, MPA, or workshop.
10. Run for office or accept an appointment to your PMEA District/State Boards/Councils (Advocacy, C/I, PD, SPEC).
11. Become an official PMEA Mentor. (Register for the next one-hour training session with Co-Chairs Lisa or Susan.)
12. Volunteer to serve on a mock interview panel for future educators (listing your name on the PMEA website).
13. Assist the State Retired Member Coordinator in updating several databases on the PMEA website:
 - PMEA Member Compositions Library
 - Community Bands and Orchestras
 - Community Choirs
 - Community Theater Groups
14. Continue to help your local school music programs as an accompanist, chaperone, composer, conductor, music coach, etc.
15. Sign-up for the **Retired Resource Registry** to be available to offer advice to PCMEA, transfers, and newcomers to a specialty.



What Retired Members Should Expect from Their Professional Associations!

What Can PMEA and NAfME Offer Their Retirees?

Excerpts from <https://paulfox.blog/2025/10/01/engaging-retiring-retired-educators/>

You have devoted your entire life to inspiring the development of personal artistry and “ah-ha” musical moments in others. Now it is your turn to reap the benefits (and privileges) of this commitment to the profession. NAfME and PMEA can provide the resources and motivation of “sharing and caring,” directing retirees “places to go, people to meet, and things to do” for fulfilling that “next chapter” or (perhaps better terms) the “refirement” or “rewirement” of senior living.

Most people who are one to five years away from “pulling their pin” and putting in their walking papers “do not know what they do not know.” Experts agree: “Retirement preparation is not only about the money!” Our silver-haired colleagues who have already Crossed the Rubicon and are now “living the dream” in retirement can share their trials, tribulations, and (more importantly) numerous success stories about coping with this transition!

NAfME, PMEA and the <https://paulfox.blog/for-retirees/> sites have archived an exhaustive number of self-help articles. Check out this omnibus NAfME blog on Retirement Prep: <https://nafme.org/blog/retirement-prep-top-ten-treasures/>.

The benefits of retired MEA membership are numerous. Besides providing helpful transitioning advice, these advantages also come to mind:

1. Answers to questions like “What have you always wanted to sing, compose, play, record, conduct, write, publish or present?” and “Where can I share my hard-won expertise and help others in the field?”
2. Networks and contacts to help you develop “encore careers” in other musical or educational arenas (e.g., higher education, music industry, festival organization, travel/tour planning, composition, guest conducting, private studio teaching, church music, etc.)
3. Opportunities to “rekindle your expressiveness” by participation in adult community or full/part time performance groups (playing “gigs”)
4. Places to go/things to see/hear: NAfME/MEA conferences, workshops, and concerts
5. Exclusive discounts and other benefits (reduced dues and registration fees)

GOALS OF PMEA: **A**ssess the needs and interests of PMEA Retired Members. **C**ollaborate on various new projects and programs. Help soon-to-retire members to **T**ransition the passage to a happy and healthy retirement. **I**nform them of news and happenings from PMEA and its retirees and active members. **V**alidate and archive their contributions to the profession. **A**dvocate for them and their views and goals. **T**rain them towards meaningful self-reinvention and personal growth. **E**ngage them to continue “making a difference” in PMEA and the music education profession.

Assess
Collaborate
Transition
Inform
Validate
Advocate
Train
Engage

Membership Privileges – These Tools Are “Free” at www.pmea.net

From rookies and newcomers entering the profession... to active “veteran” teachers and those contemplating retirement, music educators have a plethora of resources available to them on the PMEA.net website. We hope you take full advantage of them. What is that saying? “You can lead a horse to water, but...” Be sure you check out these links:

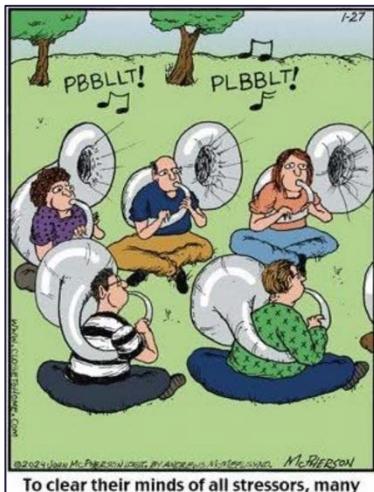
- Past retirement preparation articles in *PMEA News*
<https://www.pmea.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/PMEA-Retiree-Library-s081223.pdf>
- Retirement 101 Annual Conference Presentation
<https://www.pmea.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Retirement-101-PMEA-conference-revised-s041125.pdf>
- Ultimate Retiree Resource Guide
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Rz9tTHD0pXWeUBJJjgosrWit3O2fEw2G_dYTsTWjmCE/edit?usp=sharing
- Prepping for Retirement
<https://www.pmea.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Retire-Prep-Revised-102219.pdf>
- The How-To-Retire Webinar
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LluJ_0ctC4o

Graffiti – Inspiration and “The Funnies”

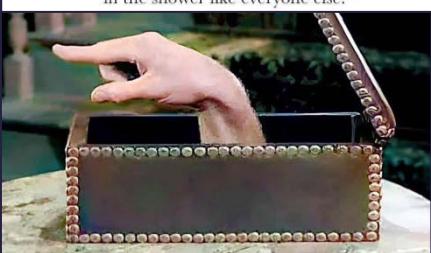
from our retired and active members surfing the “Net” –
Send your humorous or thoughtful clippings to paulkfox.usc@gmail.com.



“For goodness sake, can’t you just sing in the shower like everyone else?”



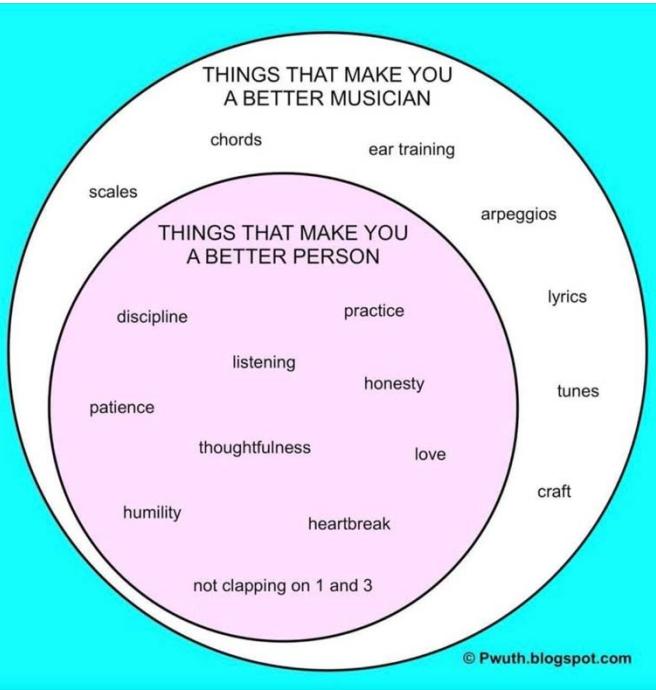
To clear their minds of all stressors, many people are turning to the relaxation and serenity of tuba circles.



before Thing was an actor,
he was a stagehand.

F-E-A-R has two meanings:
‘Forget Everything And Run’
or ‘Face Everything And Rise.’
The choice is yours.

“I would teach children music, physics, and philosophy; but most importantly music, for the patterns in music and all the arts are the keys to learning.” – Plato



THEY WERE IN BAND?

ATHLETES

FLUTE
Becky Sauerbrunn (US Women’s Soccer)
Terry Crews (NFL player & Actor)

OBOE
Chester Pitts (NFL Houston Texans)

CLARINET
Robert Reid (Houston Rockets)
Amy Acuff (US Olympic High Jumper)

SAXOPHONE
Ray Williams (NFL Detroit Lions)
Vince Carter (NBA)
David Robinson (NBA San Antonio Spurs)
Tedy Bruschi (NFL New England Patriots)
Tyler Wright (NHL Anaheim Ducks)
Jason Kelce (NFL Philadelphia Eagles)
Michael Jordan (NBA)
Earl Thomas (NFL Seattle Seahawks)

TRUMPET
Darey Gordichuk (NHL)
Eric Lindros (Dallas Stars Forward)
Davy DeArmond (Marathon runner & Naval officer)

TROMBONE
Calvin Johnson (NFL Detroit Lions)
Tony Stewart (NASCAR Driver)

TUBA
Malik Rose (NBA)

PERCUSSION
Mike Anderson (NFL Denver Broncos)
Tracy Simien (NFL)
Andy Schneider (NHL Pittsburgh Penguins)
Walter Payton (NFL Hall of Fame)
Dennis Green (Professional Football Coach)
Mike Piazza (former MLB catcher)
Crystal Dangerfield-WNBA
Trevor Pryce (NFL Denver Broncos)

ACTORS & SINGERS

FLUTE
Alanis Morissette (singer)
Halle Berry (actress)
Gwen Stefani (singer)
Tim Fey (actress & writer)
Lizzo (singer/rapper)

CLARINET
Julia Roberts (actress)
Tony Shaloub (actor “Monk”)
Jimmy Kimmel (comedian/talk show host)
Steven Spielberg (movie director)
Zakk Wylde (Guitarist for Ozzy Osbourne)
Jenna Marbles (YouTuber)

SAXOPHONE
Jennifer Garner (“Alias”)
Lionel Richie (singer)
Tom Selleck (actor)
Trent Reznor (singer)

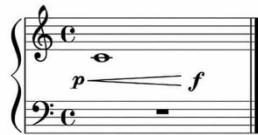
TRUMPET
Michael Anthony (Bass player for Van Halen)
Drew Carey (actor/comedian)
Stephen Tyler (lead singer for Aerosmith)
Shania Twain (singer)
Flea (Red Hot Chili Peppers, All-State Band)
Samuel L. Jackson (actor)
Kesha (singer)
Markieplier (YouTuber)

FRENCH HORN
Ewan McGregor (Obi Wan Kenobi)
Samuel L. Jackson (actor)
Ariana Grande (singer)

TROMBONE
Bill Engvall (Comedian)
Nelly Furtado (singer)

TUBA
Andy Griffith (actor)
Dan Aykroyd (actor and “Blues Brother”)
Aretha Franklin (“Queen of Soul”, singer)

Musicians, if a pianist ever bullies you, just ask them if they can play this



Laziness kills ambition
Anger kills wisdom
Fear kills dreams
Ego kills growth
Jealousy kills peace
Doubt kills confidence

Now read that right to left.



More Graffiti – Inspiration and “The Funnies”

from our retired and active members surfing the “Net” –

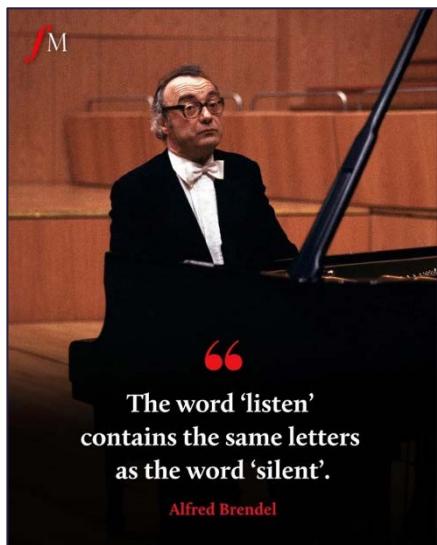
Send your humorous or thoughtful clippings to paulkfox.usc@gmail.com.



THAT FIRST BREATH THAT A CHOIR OR ORCHESTRA TAKES TOGETHER, A BREATH FILLED WITH FOCUS, INTENTION AND EMOTION, A BREATH UNIFIED FOR NO OTHER REASON THAN TO MAKE SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL TOGETHER... THAT IS THE REASON WE DO WHAT WE DO.

Distraction
Distraction
Distraction

You have to remove some things to remain with the right thing.



Signs of the Times?



The Semi-Annual Retirement Book Report

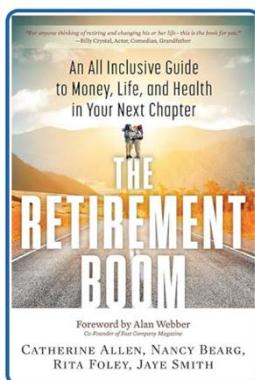
From One Booklover to Another...

by Paul K. Fox, PMEA State Retired Member Coordinator

Are you a lectiophile, bookworm, bibliophile, or librocubicularist? Whatever your definition of an *obsessed book-lover*, there is no better outing than losing oneself in a well-stocked library! It brings to mind this scene from the 2017 adaptation of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* directed and co-written by one of my former music students Stephen Chbosky (yes, I'm bragging!):

<https://youtu.be/61Elcd45qQ8>. Here is the moment that the bibliophile "Belle" is gifted the Beast's entire book collection, a backdrop inspired by the real-life Admont Abbey Library in Austria.

This issue's retirement book find is *The Retirement Boom – an All-Inclusive Guide to Money, Life, and Health in Your Next Chapter*, a practical roadmap for making your "retirement years" a time of reinvention, excitement, and fulfillment.



The coauthors of this practical guide, Catherine Allen, Nancy Bearg, Rita Foley and Jaye Smith, are four Boomer professionals who have walked the walk and transformed themselves from corporate executives, CEOs, consultants, and national security policy experts into a range of new careers that more closely hew to their passions. They interviewed more than 300 people and 30 organizations in the writing of this book.

The Retirement Boom includes tips, stories, exercises, and techniques to help you:

- Design your own "retirement" & plan for it.
- Use your time creatively and well.
- Understand what's changing in the workplace and the workforce today.
- Make your money last.
- Renegotiate life at home .
- Improve and keep your health.
- Build and leave a legacy.
- Simplify your life.

And much, much more.

You can tell a lot about a book by its Table of Contents (see column at the right).

My favorite "takeaways" were in Chapters 1 and 6.

Quotables:

20 years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than the ones you did do. So throw off the bowl lines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover. – Mark Twain

You're just retired and the requests are coming in. Because of the use of the word retirement, everyone think you have plenty of time on your hands. Can you babysit the grandchild this summer three times a week? Can you walk the dog for us during the day? Will you be on our nonprofit board or chair the fundraising event? Will you teach Sunday school at our church? your new lifestyle is about to be challenged by others' agendas. And, unfortunately, most often by you responding to those agendas or creating ones of your own to take you off course!

For more reviews on books on retirement, visit the **Retired Member Network eNEWS Book Index:**

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bGkx4rqDE2m3JunmMaiLp2pThkSTWS1xWoiKIk3_qWA/edit?usp=sharing

Something to build in your house?



Chapters:

1. The R Word, reboot & reinvent rather than retire
2. Planning and designing your reinvention
3. Making your money last
4. Reinventing into new work
5. What will I do with my time
6. Retirement robbers and other challenges
7. We negotiate life at home
8. Most important of all: your health
9. Leaving your legacy
10. Simplifying your life and living a life of passion

Heard Through the "Vintage" Grapevine

I get the feeling we're missing a lot of "retiree news updates" from across our state. Your Retired Member Coordinator has resorted to "trolling the Internet" to try to capture "rumors" like these! What's the lesson here? Please email paulkfox.usc@gmail.com "what's happening in YOUR LIFE," OR you might see an unflattering photograph from social media or a Google-search post here! Hey, feel free to send a cartoon or inspirational link, family vacation or pet photo, etc. Thanks!

psst...



We can always count on **Mark Jelinek** (District 8) to send us some "action" from his Southwest Symphony Orchestra in Hobbs, NM.

This was a festive holiday program he conducted on November 16, 2025.



Elected officials presenting official proclamations to retired music educators and guess who just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary?

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/197125944369437>

Need a laugh? Here are three versions of the William Tell Overture sent in by one of our retired members!

William Tell Overture but the pianist has ADHD.

Wilhelm Spell Old Returns



<https://youtu.be/GUBhE00h9U0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0hyklaV6st8>