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***FOR RELEASE: UPON RECEIPT*****An American First is Now Recorded*****The First March for the State of Pennsylvania******Composed By Lehigh Valley Musician, Ronald W. DeGrandis  
was Premiered by the Marine Band of Allentown***

ALLENTOWN, PA. (September 19, 2018) – Over 250 attended the premier of the first March ever composed for the state of Pennsylvania, by Bethlehem, PA musician, Ronald W. DeGrandis. *The Pennsylvania March* was debuted by The Marine Band of Allentown under the direction of Tom Heinick on Sunday, September 16th at 3:00 PM in Allentown’s West Park and took place during their annual dedication concert to past conductor, Raymond S. Becker, Jr. Proclamations were received for Ronald DeGrandis by the Mayor of Allentown, Ray O’Connell, Marta Boulos Gabriel, Regional Manager for U.S. Senator Pat Toomey and Governor Tom Wolf. Ms. Gabriel read proclamations from both Senator Toomey and Governor Wolf.

The Pennsylvania March is now recorded in history as an American “first.” Although every state except New Jersey has a state song (Pennsylvania’s dates from 1990), few, if any, have a march in the grand tradition of America’s brass marching and circus bands!

“The idea for The Pennsylvania March came from a close friend, the late John Jankowich, who enjoyed my compositions,” Mr. DeGrandis said. “He discovered that no one has ever composed a ‘Pennsylvania March’! Our state only has the Pennsylvania Polka and the song, Pennsylvania 6-5000. So, I sketched out musical ideas on the piano over the last two years and developed the final composition. As you listen to the March, you’ll hear the rhythmic motif of the word Pennsylvania throughout the composition. The March is dedicated to the memory of John Jankowich.”

**About Ron DeGrandis**

A Pennsylvania native and prolific composer, conductor, musician and instructor, Ron DeGrandis holds music education degrees from Temple University and West Chester University, and has earned graduate credits from Vandercook College, Chicago and Philadelphia’s University of the Arts. He retired in 2011 after 30 years as music instructor at Easton Area Middle School, where he conducted the school’s award-winning concert, marching bands, orchestra, and jazz band. He is a dedicated musician including 38 years as a violist with the Allentown Symphony Orchestra. He’s a member of many professional musical organizations and owner of <https://www.rondegrandismusic.com>, offering arrangements and original compositions.

**About The Marine Band of Allentown**

The Marine Band of Allentown was founded in 1903 and played more than 130 engagements in its first year. A civilian band based out of Allentown, Lehigh Valley, is not affiliated with the United States Marine Corps, and is now in its 115<sup>th</sup> year.

<http://www.allentownmarinebandinc.com/history.html>