



*Brevard Federation of Teachers
Retired Chapter News
"Retired, Not Expired"*

Volume 14, Number 2
November 2009

The President's Column

We will make a belated welcome to all of you on November 5th. Better late than never. We will meet at the School Board at 11:30 a.m. and will do what we do so well – eat and talk. If you plan on partaking of the catered lunch, I strongly advise that you peruse the menu (one of two choices to pick from makes it easy), select and then call or mail your reservation to the BFT office. The **DEADLINE** is on or before November 2nd. We are hoping for a great opening turnout and would be most unhappy if someone came and the cupboard was bare. If you have a dietary problem, please let me know and we will see what the chef can come up with. Now, since we are meeting at the School Board, what would be more

appropriate than inviting as our first speaker of the year and giving you all a chance to meet and greet our new Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Brian Bingeli? We have asked him to join us for lunch (he gets to pick from the same menu) and as he has a few other items on his plate, we will switch our regular agenda by having speaker first and general membership meeting after. Please note that if you try to sneak out early, you will not only miss hearing about some very important and interesting pieces of information, but you may also miss out on winning one of our many singular door prizes. One last reminder – Bring your checkbooks – **DUES are due!!!**

November 5th Lunch at Viera

Please make your reservation by calling Chris at the BFT Office, 636-3323. Reservations **MUST** be in by November 2nd. When reserving your spot, remember to make your menu selection.

Your choices are as follows:

Hot Grilled Chicken with Vegetable or Baked Tilapia with Vegetable



Lunch includes a salad, drink and dessert.

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FEA Retired (The Commitment Continues)

Roving Reporter – Fern Patton

The annual meeting of the FEA/R was held October 15th at the Rosen Centre in Orlando, Florida. We heard from two very knowledgeable speakers during the meeting. One, Jim Geiger from “Creative Benefits for Educators,” told us of three member benefits: 1) Valic – Financial Services; 2) Liberty Mutual for property, casualty and auto insurance; and 3) American Fidelity for mortgage financing.

The second speaker, Ash Williams, Executive Director of the State Board of Administration, gave us a terrific and reassuring overview of our Florida Retirement System Pension and Trust Fund. He is the chief investment officer who advises our Board of Trustees (The Governor, Chief Financial Officer and the Attorney General). Our fund is the 4th largest in the U.S. and the 10th largest in the world. Mr. Williams was most informative (I could not take notes fast enough!) and we have a booklet on the SBA with lots of information if any of you want to borrow it.

Mr. Williams also wanted to make sure we are informed. He sent retirees an e-mail just this weekend with the FRS Funded ratio being stated in the high 80’s and low 90’s. If you want additional information, check out sbafla.com with a link to the Division of Retirement web site, myfrs.com, which he encourages you to use, or call 800-413-1250. I heard enough to feel confident that I will sleep well at night, knowing our pensions are safe and in responsible hands.

Since Cecily, Sheila and I were also delegates to the FEA Convention – just a short note of assurance that we feel the teachers are in good hands as well! The FEA officers, Andy Ford, President, Joanne McCall, Vice President, and Clara Cook, Secretary/Treasurer, all seem to be very professional and concerned about education in Florida – plus all have great personalities and a sense of humor. Then the new Chief of Staff, Alfredo Davis, wowed the crowd, as did the Florida Teacher of the Year, Megan Allen, and Alex Sink, our current Florida CFO and candidate for the next governor of Florida!

So, just a reminder, as the FEA/R says, “The Commitment Continues”, and our BFT/R says, “Retired, Not Expired!” Let’s have a great 2009-10 by helping **Make Our Schools A Priority!**

***Note:** Read Cecily’s report about our volunteer hours. Let’s do better about turning in our hours.

AFT Retiree Workshop

Patsy Shearer

Sheila Cootes and Fern Patton were scheduled to attend the AFT Meeting in Washington, D.C. Unfortunately Fern was unable to attend, so at the last minute – less than 24 hours – I got reservations and flew to Dulles and then grabbed a bus to downtown. I missed the Wednesday session, but made it in time for dinner.

Thursday was the day to lobby Senators and Representatives. We had a long meeting with the Health Care Representative from Rep. Kosmos’s office. Afterwards, we attempted to see our Senators, but as the AFT had been unable to make appointments, neither was available; which was disappointing. Upon our return, we listened to reports from other groups. Friday was set aside for workshops and idea sharing and hopefully, we can put some of the things we learned to use in our group.

Announcements and Pronouncements

In Memoriam

We are saddened by the news that Marion J. Baker died. We have no details at this time, but will let you know when we receive them.

A memorial service will be held for Gloria Bring, retired English teacher from Merritt Island High School, Sunday, November 8th, 1:00 p.m. at Temple Beth Shalom, 5595 N. Wickham Road, Melbourne, FL.

FEA/R – our state organization is divided into 10 districts. The BFT/R President at this time is also the District 6 Director. Last year, the Executive Board of FEA/R made the decision to award a \$100 grant to each district to be awarded to a BFT teacher who wanted to implement an innovative program, but needed a little bit of extra help to get it started. The money to supply these grants is collected two ways – through the sale of \$2 tickets for a drawing held at the FEA Convention (the prize being a \$300 lifetime membership), and the very successful silent auction also held at the Convention. The total amount raised this October has enabled us to offer two \$100 grants per district.

All of our local libraries have book clubs, though evening meetings may have been curtailed due cutback of library hours. If enough members are interested, you may be able to start a BFT/R club.

Volunteer hours

Please remember to turn in your volunteer hours to Caroline McGuire. She can be reached at 254-0615 or chaleym@aol.com if you miss turning them in at a meeting. These hours were compiled for FEA/R and a “check” representing the amount of dollars that would have been earned, had we been paid, was presented at the FEA Convention in the amount of \$1,385, 976.50. Any and all volunteer hours count, so turn them in.

Volunteer Opportunity – Beginning November 2nd, from 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. The Park, located at 2405 S. Harbor City Blvd, Melbourne, FL, will be offering Boarding School (a free after-school tutoring program). Mondays and Wednesdays will be English, spelling, reading and history and Tuesdays and Thursdays will be math and science. Contact Julie Cain at 726-8075 for further information.

Exercising the brain opportunities – Senior Adventures in Learning – formerly the Shepherd’s Center. Three centers: Palm Bay 723-2976; Melbourne 259-8886; Beachside 773-1815. Check their schedule for great courses for economical prices: <http://shepherdscenterofmelbourne.org/>

Membership News

We are happy to report that ten more BFT/R members have paid their 2009-10 dues and so join the ranks of the **Membership Honor Roll**. They are: Donald, Barlow, Carolyn Bruce, Gary Castner, Esther F. Grant, Barbara Humburg, Paul Jones, R. Ann Perrine, Marion Pickett (all the way from California), Karen Rodriguez and Carla Stevenson. Michael Norton (all the way from Hawthorne, FL) made a donation to the Fran Shevenel Scholarship Fund.

Two members have decided to take advantage of the “installment plan” for paying the \$300 lifetime membership amount. BFT/R will pay their \$30 local dues this year. If you’re interested in this option, please call Sheila at 321-452-3580 and work out what is best for you. As one member said, “Why would I want to keep paying \$66 (which does escalate) each year, when I can save \$30 the first year and then only have to pay \$30 annually after that?” Why, indeed?

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OFFICERS

CALENDAR

President: Cecily Cain 723-6463
Vice-President: Patsy Shearer 632-9036
Secretary: Anne Byrd 452-6837
Treasurer: Jim Fisher 639-3762
Membership Chairman: Sheila Cootes 452-3580
Sunshine Coordinator: Eva Slaughter 724-0702
Program Chairman: Kay Aiken 777-4870 or
626-7172

November 5, 2009
Retiree Meeting & Lunch, 11:30 a.m.
School Board, Room TBA
Viera, FL
Dr. Brian Binggeli, Speaker
Reservations required

Membership Application

I want to join BFT/R for the 2009-10 school year and receive membership benefits. Enclosed please find a check payable to BFT/R for:

New Member

_____ Annual dues \$66.00
_____ Lifetime dues \$300.00
(Local, state and national)

Renewing Member

_____ Annual dues \$66.00 (For non-life members)
_____ Lifetime dues \$300
(Local, state and national)
_____ Local dues \$30 (For lifetime members only)
(Must be paid each year)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Phone _____

E-mail _____ Receive newsletter by E-mail: Yes _____ No _____

Former School _____ Subject or Level _____

Interests _____

Signature _____

(Please complete this form and mail it and your check to **Sheila Cootes, 3737 Sunward Dr., Merritt Island, FL 32953** or just give it to her at one of our meetings.)

Retired Teachers Chapter
Brevard Federation of Teachers
1007 South Florida Avenue
Rockledge, FL 32953