



Brevard Federation of Teachers

Retired Chapter News

“Retired, Not Expired”

Volume 28, Number 6
Apr, 2024

From your Reluctant President

--Nancy Johnson

Many years ago then-BFTR President Cecily Cain asked me if I wanted to be BFTR President. My answer was a resounding NO. Why? When I was teaching, I was always the person who was a pain in the (fill in body part here) to those in charge, but never wanted to be in charge myself, probably because I'd have to put up with pain in the (whatever) people.

A few years later BFTR President Joan Taddie fractured her pelvis & was planning to resign from office. Since Vice President Bettie Bailey did not want to chair meetings, I volunteered to be 2nd Vice President & run the meetings if Joan didn't quit. Joan recuperated & returned as President. Then Bettie left BFTR & I was left as sole Vice President. So this past fall when Joan needed to take care of her husband, I became (as I call it) Substitute Acting President of BFTR.

I have since discovered something amazing. BFTR is full of people who are helpful, caring & NOT a pain in any body part. So thanks to all BFTR members for your kindness & especially to the Executive Board for your help and ability to be flexible. I know my habit of “just wing it” might have made you nervous, but we all survived.

To the next BFTR officers: Enjoy working with this wonderful group.



Next Meeting--Thur, Apr. 4, 2024

1007 Florida Ave, Rockledge

11:30 Brown bag lunch

12:00 Business meeting

12:30 Speaker: Mary Friday, Community Credit Union

3R Book Program will provide drinks, dessert & paper products

Mary Friday, Community Credit Union's Financial Education Manager will be the speaker at our April meeting. Mary is in a brand new position that Community Credit Union recently created; to support the mission of the credit union, which is to improve the financial well-being of its members, and make a positive difference in the community. Mary's role is to help that mission move forward by making presentations, putting together programs, and speaking to students in our schools.

Her presentation will be: “How to Identify Financial Fraud and Scams.”

If you have any questions regarding financial fraud contact Lin so that Mary can include those in her program, if the issue is not already covered.

Contact Lin via text or call 321-960-8194 or email lin32905@gmail.com.



Membership News

--Sheila Cootes

The following is on the **2023-24 “Honor Roll”** (those members who have paid their 2023-24 dues since the last newsletter): **Cindy Donovan and Eileen Schaap.**



DUES ARE PAST DUE for the 2023-24 membership year. Our April meeting is April 7 at the BFT office, so if you’re attending the meeting, you can just give me your check. If you can’t make the meeting, send me your check via postal mail. My address is on the membership form on the last page of this newsletter. Remember to make the check payable to “BFTR.” Reminder: even if you are a “life” member, you still owe local dues of \$30.

Life membership is \$400. We (BFTR) will pay your local dues the year you become a “life member.” **Save \$46 per year (plus the \$30 we “give” you for that first year’s local dues).** We will be glad to accept the \$400 amount in installments.

Annual membership is \$76 (\$30 of that amount stays with BFTR). Annual members, consider changing to the “life” status.

Membership questions? Just call or text (321) 427-7808 or e-mail (scootes@earthlink.net)

Read, Recycle, and Reward Program

--Rita Hewett

I was recently contacted by a friend who works at the Space Coast Discovery Center in Melbourne. Our book group toured their facility. They are currently looking for volunteers to hug and rock babies; to be classroom substitutes; to do STEM projects; to donate books; to serve in another capacity. Anyone who would like to mentor or do workshops for teachers of children aged 6 weeks to 10 years, please contact me (Rita Hewett).



Our book team is working hard to get items ready for the last few schools for this year. We need more plastic storage bags (2 gallon size). Your donations will greatly reduce our expenses. Storage bags may be brought to our monthly meetings.

Check out Palm Bay Elementary School’s Facebook page to see their happy students with our books. This is the reason why our group has worked so hard for the past 9 years. <https://www.facebook.com/PalmBayEl/posts/pfbid02Am2xsLhhCd3ecR99MWbSLWufEorgbpius1rJ24yLUCRpKwMajbttedVbWrdakm3il>

Our activity for the month of March:

- Schools served: 1
- Total number of children served: 203
- Total number of books donated: 406.
- Other items given: All Pre-K classes got a large stuffed book buddy for class use plus tissue holders for individual students. K students also received tissue holders. 1st Grade students were given bookmarks.

If you are interested in helping with the book project, please contact Rita Hewett at (321) 730-3683.



Legislative Report

--Patty Farley-Crutcher

The Legislative Session is now over, and we are trying to see what happened. It is impossible to know and see all that happened while the legislature is in action. We will discover the effects as the year progresses. Here is a list of items that I think will be of interest to our members:

There were two bills dealing with the FRS. One dealt with the reinstating the Cost-of-living Adjustment of Retirement Benefits and another one allowed certain eligible employees participating in the Florida Retirement System to make a second election to move back to the pension plan. Unfortunately both of these bills died in committee.

The “Stop Woke“ Culture war was extended into teacher prep classes with what can be taught and discussed in classrooms. Communism will be emphasized, but not black history, diversity, equity or inclusion.

For homeowners, insurance has been a major issue. You will hear our Governor talking about a major cut he made to homeowners insurance. The change to insurance allowed all homes up to the value of 5 million dollars to get a cut on the taxes on their insurance policy. This cut did not include the clause that lets the insurance companies charge each policy a fee to cover the insurance company’s financial losses in a disaster. The result will be that—according to the Senate—a decrease in \$50-55 to most policy fees. This bill will help million dollar homes, but not most homes in Florida.

A bill passed on the implementation of Senate Bill 256 that hurt our unions, but it did not do much to help or change it.

Senate bill 1492 – preemptions on conditions of employment—which wiped out living wages in local communities, finally passed this year with the super majority.

Many protections for child labor, especially on construction sites, were eliminated.

On a positive note--US produced Iron and Steel will be used in public works projects, Term limits for County Commissioners did not pass. Legislation that would have raised the vote threshold necessary to pass constitutional amendments, allow anyone to challenge curriculum and library resources and to create a statewide registry of banned materials did not pass. The legislation to regulate the use of pronouns, ban free speech and activities in Florida Workplaces also did not pass.

Field Trip

Our group had a great time on the Winter Park Scenic Boat tour & lunch afterwards.



Future Speakers

--Lin Herz

I hope you've enjoyed the speakers who have presented to us this year. If you have any ideas for speakers for next year, please share with me. The main qualification is that the talk you heard was interesting and they were enthusiastic about their topic. Please include your name, the person's name, occupation or hobby if that's what they spoke about, their phone number and what you heard them speak about.

Contact me by email or text. (If you don't text, calling is fine. If I don't have your number in my phone, leave a message and I'll call you back). lin32905@gmail.com or 321-960-8194

Volunteer Hours

--Susan Vincent

Please write in your volunteer hours on the sign in sheet at our next meeting or email them to me. You don't have to volunteer at schools for your hours to count. You can also count your travel time. You can send them to my email: snv1@cfl.rr.com. Please put "volunteer hours" in the subject line. Thanks for all that you do.

Elections

At our April meeting we will have elections for officers. The nominees so far:

President: Anne Marie Monteparo

Co-Vice-Presidents: Nancy Rhodes & Jonathan Schuman

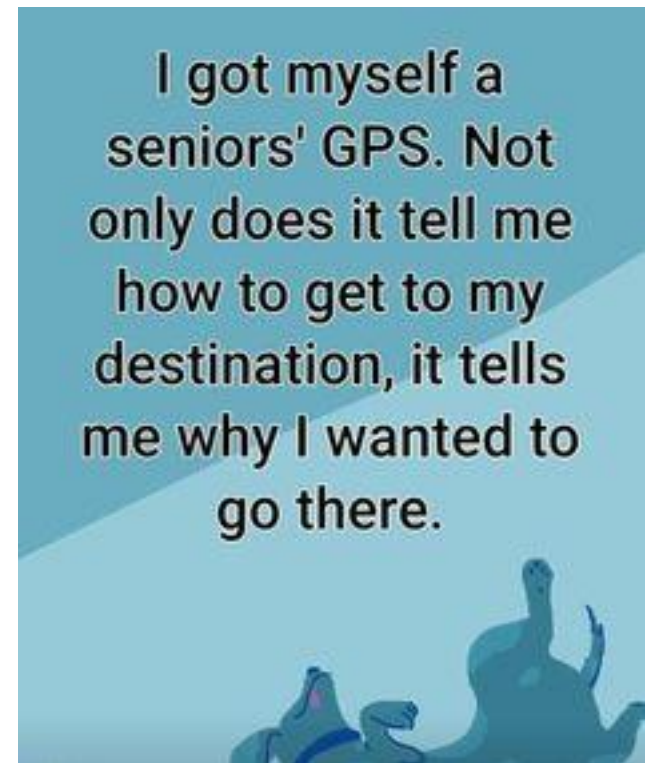
Secretaries: Linda Guiles & Jay Ann Preston (we could use a 3rd one)

Treasurer: Susan Vincent

Nominations will be taken from the floor at the meeting. If there are no additional nominees, officers will be elected by acclamation.

Mark your calendar for May 2

Our May meeting is our end of the school year social gathering, which will be a potluck luncheon at the BFT office. So plan ahead for whatever delicious dish you plan to bring. More info will be in the May newsletter.





Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

OFFICERS

CALENDAR

President: Joan Taddie jtaddie@cfl.rr.com
Vice-President: Nancy Johnson nanjoh99@gmail.com
Co-Secretaries: Linda Guiles lindag315@aol.com
 JayAnn Preston jayannpreston@yahoo.com
Treasurer: Susan Vincent snv1@cfl.rr.com
Membership Chair: Sheila Cootes 427-7808
Sunshine Coordinator: Eva Slaughter 724-0702
Program Coordinator: Lin Herz lin32905@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor: Nancy Johnson nanjoh99@gmail.com

Thur, Apr. 4 - BFT-R meeting at BFT Office
 1007 Florida Ave, Rockledge
 -11:30 Brown bag lunch
 -12:00 Business meeting
 -12:30 Speaker: Mary Friday, CCU

 Next meeting - May 2, 2024

Membership Application

I want to join BFT/R for the 2023-2024 school year and receive membership benefits. Enclosed please find a check payable to BFT/R for:

New Member

Annual dues \$76.00
 Lifetime dues \$400.00
 (state and national)

Renewing Member

Annual dues \$76.00 (For non-life members)
 Local dues for Lifetime members **\$30 each year**
 Lifetime dues \$400 (BFTR pays local dues 1st year)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail _____ Phone _____ Cell _____

Former School _____ Subject /Grade Level _____

Interests _____

Signature _____

Please complete this form and mail it and your check to **Sheila Cootes, 3737 Sunward Dr., Merritt Island, FL 32953.**