



Brevard Federation of Teachers

Retired Chapter News

“Retired, Not Expired”

Volume 25, Number 4
Jan. 2021

The President’s Missive

--Joan Taddie

I can’t remember a time in my life when so many of us in America and around the globe were holding our breath as we counted the days left before Wednesday, January 20, 2021; The Inauguration of the 46th President of the United States of America, Joseph R. Biden, Jr. and Kamala Devi Harris, the 49th and first woman, first African American, and first Asian American Vice President. It was a glorious day even with the massive security and the Covid-19 protocols in place. I felt confident that the United States was back on track to heal the terrible divisions of the last four years as I listened to President Biden’s Inaugural Address. He began with these words: “This is America’s day. This is democracy’s day. A day of history and hope. Of renewal and resolve. Through a crucible for the ages America has been tested anew and America has risen to the challenge. Today, we celebrate the triumph not of a candidate, but of a cause, the cause of democracy. The will of the people has been heard and the will of the people has been heeded. We have learned again that democracy is precious. Democracy is fragile. And at this hour, my friends, democracy has prevailed.”

The inauguration lifted my spirit with so many inspiring words and fabulous vocal performances. Garth Brooks, a Republican, answering Biden’s call for bipartisan unity, sang a beautiful, a cappella version of “Amazing Grace” and asked the audience to join him for the last verse. Jennifer Lopez sang an inspiring arrangement of Woody Guthrie’s “This Land Is Your Land” and then segued into “America the Beautiful” shouting out in Spanish, “One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” But for me, Lady Gaga, the first performer, making an entrance in a dress only she could wear, brought us all together as Americans with her magnificent performance of “The Star Spangled Banner.”

At the close of the ceremony, a 22 year old Harvard graduate and the first national youth poet laureate, Amanda Gorman, stepped up to the podium and stole the hearts of all who were lucky enough to hear her beautiful and powerfully crafted inaugural poem, “The Hill We Climb.” She challenged us all in the first line of the poem by presenting us with a problem that Americans desperately need to resolve. “When the day comes, we ask ourselves, where can we find light in this never-ending shade?” Her five minute poem continued to remind us of the work we still must do to close the divide of our country “that is bruised but whole, benevolent but bold, fierce and free.” She ended her piece with a powerful message, “The new dawn balloons as we free it. For there is always light, if only we’re brave enough to see it. If only we’re brave enough to be it.”

I am so proud to be the president of the Brevard Federation of Teachers – Retired. Over these past four years, we have worked tirelessly together, regardless of our political differences, to stand with our BFT teachers as they waved signs and attended school board meetings to ensure that they would be given a fair and equitable contract, volunteered in schools, worked with Rita Hewett and Sheila Bollinger every year preparing and distributing bags of books and stuffed toys to every Pre-K, K, and 1st grader in every Title I school in Brevard County, supported their political parties and candidates by phone banking, post card writing, waving signs, and canvassing. They made masks to help keep people safe from Covid-19, provided grants and college scholarships for the children of BFT teachers entering their first year of college, contacted our members as part of our phone tree with surveys and wellness checks, attended fun and informative field trips, and listened to interesting and entertaining speakers at all our meetings. Individually, our members are active participants in groups such as the ACLU, League of Woman Voters, and numerous local church and environmental organizations.

You, dear friends, have always seen the light and are brave enough to be it! I celebrate you!



Next Meeting--Thurs., Feb. 4, 2021 via ZOOM

11:00 Business Meeting
12:00 Guest Speaker: Dominic Del Brocco
Topic: The Henegar Center

Our next BFTR General Membership meeting will be a Zoom meeting on Thursday, February 4th. You will be receiving an email soon that will give you the information you need to attend, which includes our meeting ID#. Text or call me at 321-266-6006 if you need any help, or a practice session with me to figure out how to be admitted into the meeting. The meeting begins at 11:00 am and will be concluded at 12:30 pm. I always have the meeting room open at 10:30 am if you would like to get into the meeting earlier. An agenda will be sent to you in a separate email.

Our speaker for this meeting is Dominic Del Brocco, Executive and Artistic Director of The Henegar Center in downtown Melbourne. I've asked Dominic to discuss with you and answer any questions you might have regarding the Covid protocols at The Henegar, established to provide you with a safe theatrical experience as you attend one of their musicals, plays, and children's theatre productions. Their last performance of the wonderful musical "Godspell" closes on Sunday, January 31st. The next musical that is already in rehearsal is "Once On This Island", which will run on weekends from February 19th – March 7th. **WE WILL BE HOLDING A DRAWING FOR TWO TICKETS TO "ONCE ON THIS ISLAND" AT THE END OF DOMINIC'S TALK!**



Membership News

--Sheila Cootes

The following are on the 2020-21 "Honor Roll" (those members who have paid their 2020-21 dues since the last newsletter):

Altamese Davis, Patricia Farley-Crutcher, Lin Herz, Judith Kinloch, Barbara Kirker, Margaret Nickolenko and Dan Scheuerer.



Life membership is \$400. Annual membership is \$76 (\$30 of that amount stays with BFTR). Annual members, consider changing to the "life" status. 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 two or three (your choice) installments.

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

2021 Florida Legislative Session

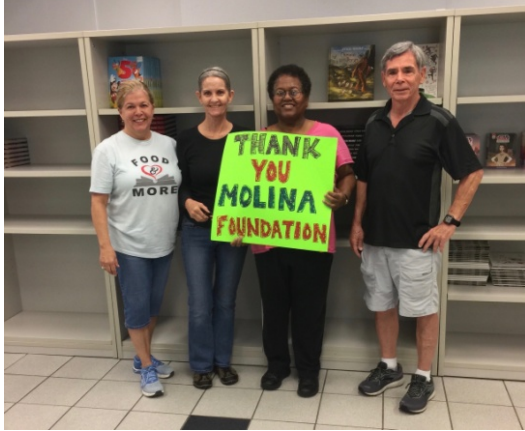
- Jan. 25-Feb. 19: Interim committee meetings
- March 2: First day of legislative session
- April 30: Last day of legislative session

Keep up with what's going on in the Florida Legislature at: <https://feaweb.org/news/take-action/>

Read, Recycle, and Reward Program

--Rita Hewett

We have been lucky to reap the benefit of working with the Molina Foundation again this year. We helped them sort books for their Book Buddies program and in return we got to select books that they donated for our program.



We still need lots of helpers to match books to stuffed animals. Please come with your mask and help. Please contact Rita Hewett for details about how and when you can help at rmhewett@yahoo.com or (321) 720-3683.

Volunteer Hours

--Susan Vincent

Send your volunteer hours to me anytime at snv1@cfl.rr.com Remember to put volunteer hours in the subject line. Thanks for all you do.

In our Thoughts

BFTR Treasurer Susan Vincent has been in a hospital or a rehab center for about the last 10 weeks due to a knee replacement that hasn't as yet been done, because of complications. She will be there for at least another 4 weeks before her knee replacement can be done.

BFTR Co-Secretary Susan How is also in a rehab facility due to a broken pelvis.

Here are their addresses if you'd like to send a card:

Susan Vincent: 449 Willow Tree Drive,
Melbourne FL 32940

Susan How: 4357 Mount Carmel Lane,
Melbourne FL 32901

In the News

--Joan Taddie

You all should have received the January issue of "NEAToday." Our own Nancy Johnson was featured on page 26 in the article entitled "The Masketeers of FEA-Retired." Thank you Nancy for all the 32,000 colorful masks you and your 500 fellow mask makers have provided for health care workers, seniors, and our students, teachers and staff members at Brevard Schools.



Need a laugh?



When I say, "The other day," I could be referring to any time between yesterday and 15 years ago.

I run like the winded.

I hate when a couple argues in public, and I missed the beginning and don't know whose side I'm on.

I don't mean to interrupt people. I just randomly remember things and get really excited.

When I ask for directions, please don't use words like "east."

Sometimes, someone unexpected comes into your life out of nowhere, makes your heart race, and changes you forever. We call those people cops.

I recently bought a toilet brush....long story short, I'm going back to toilet paper.



Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

OFFICERS

CALENDAR

<p>President: Joan Taddie jtaddie@cfl.rr.com</p> <p>Co-Vice-Presidents: Bettie Bailey baileybettie@yahoo.com Nancy Johnson nanjoh99@gmail.com</p> <p>Co-Secretaries: Linda Guiles lindag315@aol.com Susan How sun515flower@msn.com</p> <p>Treasurer: Susan Vincent snv1@cfl.rr.com</p> <p>Membership Chairman: Sheila Cootes 427-7808</p> <p>Sunshine Coordinator: Eva Slaughter 724-0702</p> <p>Program Coordinator: Lin Herz lin32905@gmail.com</p> <p>Newsletter Editor: Nancy Johnson nanjoh99@gmail.com</p>	<p>Thur. Feb. 4 - BFT-R meeting--on ZOOM 11:00-12:00 Meeting 12:00-12:30 Speaker--Dominic Del Brocco from The Henegar Center</p> <p>Next meeting - Mar.4--on ZOOM</p>
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Membership Application

I want to join BFT/R for the 2020-2021 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)
 _____ Lifetime dues \$400.00
 (state and national)
 _____ Local dues \$30 (For lifetime members only)
 (Must be paid each 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.**