



Brevard Federation of Teachers Retired Chapter News “Retired, Not Expired”

Volume 26, Number 6
Mar. 2022

The President’s Missive

--Joan Taddie

Charles Dickens once wrote: “It was one of those March days, when the sun shines hot, and the wind blows cold; when it is summer in the light and winter in the shade.” I always used this quote on my March bulletin board because it led to some interesting writing, imaginative artistic creations, and splendid conversations. Even in Florida, we see March as a sign that spring in all its natural splendor will soon be back in our lives. It gives us hope.

And we really need a big dose of hope right now! Since the early months of 2020, the world has shut down as we faced this ever-changing virus. And if that was not enough, our Florida teachers battle not only a Coronavirus, but parents who insist on telling the teachers what and how to teach, and a governor and a state legislature that are passing bills during this legislative session that could end public schools in Florida as we know them and make it harder for Unions to operate. The Clearview Research poll found 76% of teachers in Florida disapprove of Governor DeSantis’s job performance. Two years ago, when DeSantis was elected, 30% disapproved of his performance.

Our Brevard County teachers desperately need our help. This legislative session ends on March 11. There is still time for our BFT-R members to go on FEAweb.org and use this easy to navigate website to find out what bills are being voted on and how to use the site to very quickly contact all the legislators voting on the bills with your opinion on whether this bill should pass or not.

I want to thank our fabulous legislative reporter, Patty Farley, for her informative column in our newsletter every month. Patty spends so much time in Tallahassee lobbying for teachers that she now has her own apartment there! We were thrilled when Patty attended our last General Membership meeting by Zoom and gave us a detailed, but very disturbing update on all the bills being voted on during this session. BFT-R teachers, FEAweb.org is waiting for you!!!!

It's easy these days to lose hope. But we belong to a Union that has won many difficult battles over the years. Our BFT teachers need us now to help them win the battle for respect for our amazing and devoted teachers and allow public education to flourish in this state again.

Once you choose HOPE...anything is possible!



Next Meeting--Thur, Mar. 3, 2022 via ZOOM

11:00 Business meeting

12:00 Speaker: Joyce Rosenberg, writer, former editor at Associated Press

Subject: Surprises & self-care in retirement

You will be receiving an email that will give you the information you need to attend including our meeting ID#. Text or call Joan at 321-266-6006 if you need any help, or a practice session to figure out how to be admitted into the meeting. The meeting room will be open at 10:30 if you would like to get into the meeting earlier.



Membership News

--Sheila Cootes

No “new” news since last month, so I’ll just say:

BFTR is the greatest and our 89 members are super!!!

If you’re an “annual” member (you pay \$76 each year), consider becoming a “life” member. **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 two or three (your choice) installments.

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



Legislative Report

--Patty Farley-Crutcher

Week Six of the Florida Legislature

As of this date some interesting educational bills and their status follow:

It seems as if staff shortages are being addressed by promoting bills to allow military veterans to obtain temporary certificates if they can pass subject area tests.

The proposed bill to put cameras in public school classroom does not look like it will go anywhere.

The bill eliminating school board salaries was horse traded for a bill creating eight-year term limits for school board members who appear to be keeping their salaries.

The entire Florida Senate approved doing away with government in the sunshine and will instead allow college president positions to be given out as political favors. The bill goes to the house next.

Censorship is a priority for the legislators and bills have passed many committees to criminalize teachers discussing and acknowledging homosexuality, present day racism and sexism, and just history in general. Librarians have to provide list of all items in their library for parental review.

Testing is not reduced but the number and frequency increased.

All this is taking place while our public schools are to be punished if they had students mask to the tune of \$200 million.

Stay tuned for more disappointments.

March Speaker

--Lin Herz

Our speaker for March, Joyce Rosenberg, is a retired editor for the Associated Press and freelance writer. She is currently a practicing psychoanalyst and pastoral counseling student. She also holds a law degree!

Joyce spent the last 25 years in two amazing, thriving careers- simultaneously. She will be talking about what it’s like to leave her career at the A.P. behind, and the surprises that retiring entailed, as well as what life is like now.

Joyce will also talk about self-care. She’ll offer some advice on how to live easier, and answer your questions.



Read, Recycle, and Reward Program

--Rita Hewett



Great News! Recently our program was offered the use of a large empty portable at Palm Bay High School that will meet our growing needs. We moved there on February 11th. Thank you goes out to our moving team: Kathy Whitehead, Linda & Harold Guiles, Rita, Jessie and Desmond Hewett. We are currently in the process of setting up and organizing our books and stuffed animals. Our team is thrilled to finally have all our books and stuffed animals in one location and have more room to work.

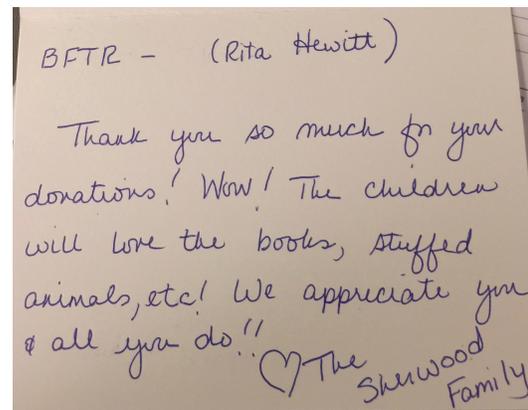
Over the holidays book drives were conducted at Edgewood Junior/Senior High School and at Melbourne Central Catholic High School as part of senior projects. Thousands of books were donated! We are so grateful to the students for their interest in our book program and their enthusiasm about participating. They mentioned planning to tell the next class of seniors how great it was to do a book drive with us and that they hope other students will lead book drives for us next year.

Our next school deliveries will be in the central area (Cocoa, Rockledge, and Merritt Island). We still cannot go inside the schools to do our program, so we just drop the bags of books off at the front of the schools. Most of the time the principal, assistant principal, reading coach, or Title 1 teacher will come out to greet us. They are so excited to see the many different bags of books, stuffed animals, and toys. Thanks to the efforts of our sewing ladies, we often add other special gifts for the students including beautifully decorated bookmarks, special pouches holding tissue, or small bookbags.

We have a small core group of dedicated volunteers for our program, but we can always use more help. Please consider volunteering with us one day a week or month. Our tasks involve cleaning books with disinfecting wipes, checking books for simple repairs, and sorting books by grade level. We have a great need for help in this area right now with the large quantity of books collected in the book drives. Probably our most enjoyable task is matching books with a stuffed animal or toy that matches one of the two books we give. The books and stuffed animals/toys are placed in storage bags and then put into white bags of 10 ready to be delivered. These tasks are very easy to do. Some of them involve standing and walking while other tasks can be done sitting. Come and join us. The students are so appreciative of our kindness. Your reward is in knowing that you helped get books into the hands of young children for their enjoyment and to develop a love for books and reading. **Contact Rita Hewett, Program Chair, at (321) 720-3683.**



Mazie Davis, Edgewood High School, Book Drive



Thank you note from Sherwood Elementary



Phone Tree

--Rita Gynan

BFT-R sees our phone trees as a valuable resource for keeping in touch with our members. It has served as a means of keeping in contact with others during this time of Covid when we can't have our meetings in person. For various reasons, a few captains find that they can no longer make the calls. Therefore, we are looking for a few more volunteers who enjoy friendly conversations with others to call 6 to 8 members per month to remind them of meetings and other updates. Sometimes you will have a nice chat with another member, and sometimes you will just need to leave a voice message.

If you are interested in volunteering to be a caller, please call Rita Gynan at 321-728-2946 or email me at fgynan@cfl.rr.com.



Volunteer Hours

--Susan Vincent

Thank you to the people who sent me their volunteer hours. It's important that you send them in so I can report our hours to FEA-Retired. Remember to send to snv1@cfl.rr.com. Please put volunteer hours in the subject line. Thanks for all you do in the name of BFT-Retired.

Notification of BFT-R Election of Officers

Every two years, during April, the Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired holds elections for the following officers: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Secretary (2).

These are the officers who served during the May, 2020 – April, 2022 term and are seeking reelection for the May, 2022 – April, 2024 term:

President: Joan Taddie

Vice-President: Nancy Johnson

Treasurer: Susan Vincent

Secretaries (2): Linda Guiles

JayAnn Preston has been nominated as 2nd secretary.

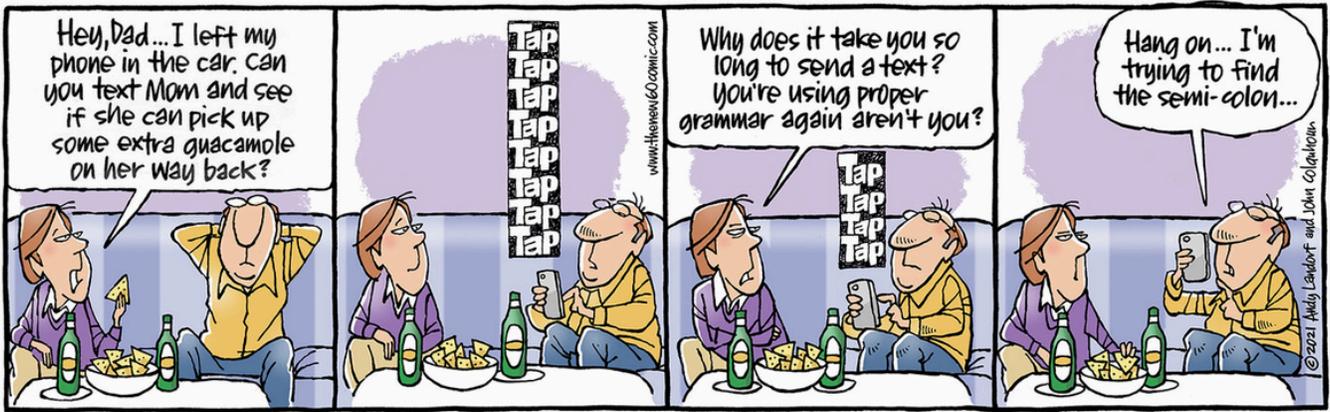
Please nominate yourself or another member for any of these elected positions. Please note that we need 2 Secretaries to ensure that minutes are taken at all meetings. The membership will vote for the slate of officers in April 2022.

As officers you are required to make a report at each monthly General Membership meeting. You are also required to attend the monthly Executive Board meetings, which occur approximately 2 weeks before the General Membership Meetings. Membership chair, Speaker/Field Trip chair, and 3R's Book chair are appointed by the officers and are also members of the Executive Board.

Please email Sheila Cootes at scootes@earthlink.net to nominate yourself or another member for any of the positions listed above by April 1, 2022.



The New 60



Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

OFFICERS

CALENDAR

President: Joan Taddie jtaddie@cfl.rr.com
Co-Vice-Presidents: Bettie Bailey baileybettie@yahoo.com
 Nancy Johnson nanjoh99@gmail.com
Co-Secretaries: Linda Guiles lindag315@aol.com
 Susan How sun515flower@msn.com
Treasurer: Susan Vincent snv1@cfl.rr.com
Membership Chairman: 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, Mar. 3 - BFT-R meeting--on ZOOM
 11:00 Business meeting
 12:00 Speaker: Joyce Rosenberg
 Topic: Surprises & self-care in retirement

Next meeting - Apr. 7

Membership Application

I want to join BFT/R for the 2021-2022 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.