



# *Brevard Federation of Teachers*

## *Retired Chapter News*

### *“Retired, Not Expired”*

Volume 27, Number 7  
May, 2023

---

## *The President’s Missive*

*--Joan Taddie*

***“No one can whistle a symphony. It takes a whole orchestra to play it.”*** --H. E. Luccock

As we come to the end of another school year, I decided to look back through my calendar to remind me of what our BFT-Retired organization experienced as we began to see restrictions lifted from our COVID nightmare. To begin with, our BFT-Retired Executive Board continued to meet by Zoom and will continue to do so next year. But our General Membership meeting took a big step in October. After going through Hurricane Ian only a week before, we met outside under a pavilion in a park in Suntree for our annual political meeting with Erin Dunne and Anthony Yantz.

As a Union we were very involved with supporting the School Board candidates that we recommended by phone banking and sign waving, and helped deliver signs urging our voters to vote for the millage that would help compensate our classroom teachers for their dedication under horrific working conditions. To also assist our classroom teachers, BFT-Retired presented \$150 Innovative Grants to 10 Brevard teachers and selected two more teachers to receive this grant from FEA-Retired.

Our November meeting was held in the Melbourne Public Library where we could give our members the option to spread out, as we were all still concerned with meeting inside with a group of people. Our speaker at that meeting was the wonderful Margaret Broussard who did a fascinating and informative presentation on Forever Florida, which led to a field trip to visit this native wilderness in March. Thanks to Lin Herz for organizing two other great field trips to The Moore Center in February and McKee Gardens in April.

We continued to pass on having our annual Holiday Luncheon in December and didn’t meet again until February, once again at the BFT Office! Thanks to Chris and Anthony and the BFT officers for the much appreciated “Welcome Home!”

A final note of appreciation to our April General Membership Meeting speaker, Britt Kennerly, the education and breaking news editor at FLORIDA TODAY. Britt’s presentation was so riveting, our members would not let her leave! Thank you so much, Britt!

I will be attending the BFT Teacher Appreciation Day Event at the Rising Tide in Port Canaveral on May 12<sup>th</sup>. I will be raffling off 3 \$25 VISA Gift Cards to teachers who stop by my table to ask about joining our BFT-Retired Chapter.

There will not be a General Meeting in June, July, August, or September. Our October 5<sup>th</sup> meeting will be our annual political meeting with candidates running in November as the speakers. We will also have a membership recruiting event in September.

Thanks so much to our Executive Board for all the work they do to keep our organization running! Hope to see everyone for our Potluck at the Union office on May 4<sup>th</sup>!

***“Success is best when it’s shared!”***-- Howard Schulz



## Membership News

--Sheila Cootes

The following are on the **2022-23 "Honor Roll"** (those members who have paid their 2022-23 dues since the last newsletter): **Mary Kenney** and **Louise Stroman**.



Just a reminder: dues for 2023-24 are not due until October of this year. Please wait until then to send me your check.

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



## Legislative Report

--Patty Farley

**Elections have consequences.** This has been ever so evident this last Florida Legislative session. The debate has involved legislation that has been anti-women, anti-LGBTQ, anti-immigrant, anti-union, anti-Asian, anti-education, anti-book, anti-local government, anti-voter---ANTI-EVERYTHING. As of this date there are only two weeks left and we have seen the passage of many bills that were proposed and defeated numerous times in the last ten years. Florida is making the national news daily with the egregious legislation that is being passed. Watch the news and read your newspapers. Make sure you know the voting record of your Senators and Representatives. If you voted for them you have responsibility for their vote.

You have one last chance to voice your opposition to your own State Representative about the union busting bill -- *HB 1445 / SB 256 Employee Organizations Representing Public Employees*. It is calendared to be heard on the House floor next Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> and if passed, it will be ready to go to the Governor for his signature into law.

This bill would result in union decertification for public unions with membership below 60%, which would then result in loss of bargaining power for those hard-working union members who are primarily women, people of color, and have low-income jobs. Our large teachers' union will be affected, but jobs like bus drivers, garbage collectors, 911 operators, cafeteria workers, and librarians will also lose their ability to have their union dues automatically deducted from their paychecks. Hundreds of thousands of public union jobs will be affected. But with full bigotry on display, this Republican-sponsored bill excludes the white male-dominated public unions for law enforcement, correctional officers, probation officers, and firefighters. They don't even try to hide it anymore.

American workers deserve the respect that comes with being paid fair wages for hard work and a dignified retirement. Unions have been an instrumental part of achieving those goals. Unfortunately, this bill only seeks to divide us instead of helping regular working folks get ahead.

Please contact your individual State Representatives before Tuesday and tell them to **VOTE NO** on this anti-worker bill.

You can find contact info for your state legislators at:

<https://www.votebrevard.gov/Voter-Information/Contact-Your-Elected-Officials/State-Legislators>

## You are invited!

BFT-R end of the year social gathering.

We may be retired, but we still love an end of the school year party.



### Potluck Luncheon

Thursday, May 4, 2023

11:30 AM until.....

BFT office, Rockledge



BFT-R will provide: Iced tea, lemonade, ice, plates, cups, napkins, eating utensils.

Please bring a dish to share, such as a main dish, casserole, potato salad, mac & cheese, veggies, baked beans, wings, fruit, tossed salad, cheeses, desserts..... These are just suggestions. "What you bring is what we eat." Items may be home-made or purchased.

There will not be a regular meeting or speaker. We will all share our plans for the summer or a little something about ourselves and our hobbies.

RSVP is not needed, but you may contact Rita Gynan with any questions at [fgynan@cfl.rr.com](mailto:fgynan@cfl.rr.com) or 321-728-2946.

## Read, Recycle, and Reward Program

--Rita Hewett



In April we served our tenth school this year, Oak Park, giving 198 students great books to read or have read to them.

Our book group was also at the Sidewalk Chalk Contest at the Liberty Bell Museum on April 15th. We gave away about 100 books and were able to let people in the community know about our book project. Good weather and the company of fellow members made for an enjoyable time. Thank you Sheila Bollinger, Linda Guiles, Carol Post, and Marsha Millar for giving up your Saturday to participate in this community event.



We will continue to accept and collect books, stuffed animals, and bags during the summer. For pick up, contact Rita Hewett at [rmhewett@yahoo.com](mailto:rmhewett@yahoo.com)



Have any suggestions for speakers at our meetings next year? Email Lin Herz at [lin32905@gmail.com](mailto:lin32905@gmail.com)

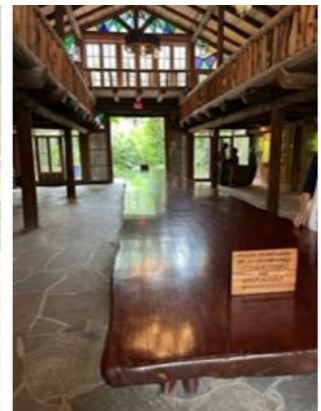
## Volunteer Hours

--Susan Vincent

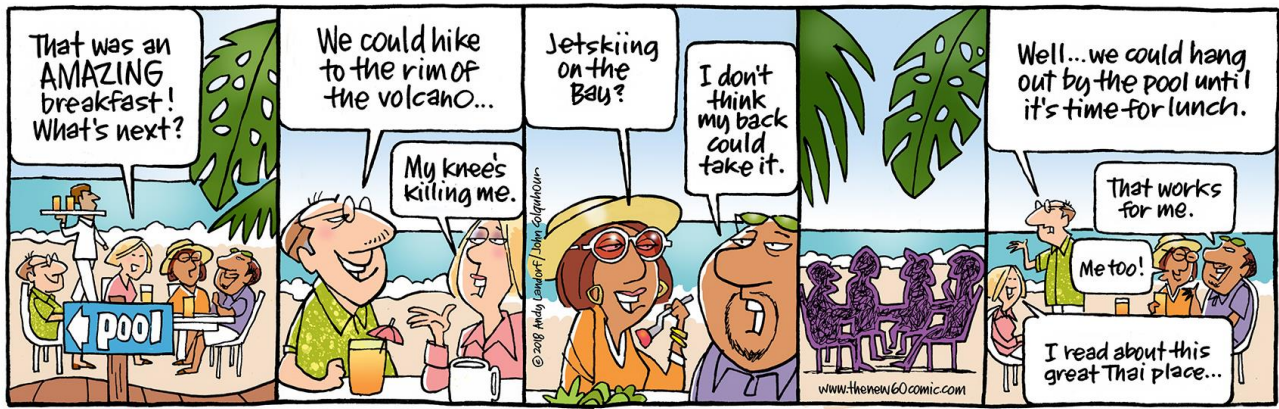
I want to thank everyone for giving me their volunteer hours. Please keep track this summer. You can always send them to my email: [snv1@cfl.rr.com](mailto:snv1@cfl.rr.com). Please put volunteer hours in the subject line.

## Field Trip!

Our field trip to McKee Gardens in Vero Beach was enjoyed by all!



# The New 60



## Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

### OFFICERS

### CALENDAR

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

**Thur, May 4 - Potluck at BFT Office**  
 1007 Florida Ave, Rockledge  
 -11:30  
  
**Next meeting - Oct. 5, 2023**

### Membership Application

I want to join BFT/R for the 2022-2023 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.**