



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

Volume 30, Number 2  
Nov, 2025

## *President’s Message*

*--Anne Marie Monteparo*

I hope everyone that attended our October meeting enjoyed our very informative speaker, Ruth Rhodes from Rhodes Law. Ruth shared her knowledge of Estate Planning and samples of Identity Theft and Prevention Tips.

Nancy Rhodes and Nancy Johnson attended the FEA Delegate assembly and FEA Retired annual meetings in Orlando. Thank you for your dedication to our union.

We have received 19 FEA Retired Grant applications. The committee is working on selecting 2 winners for FEA Retired and 10 BFT Retired winners. Each teacher selected will receive \$150 to use for various projects in their classrooms.

Happy Fall y’all! Hope everyone is enjoying the “cooler” weather. The holiday season is upon us and here they come.



**Next Meeting--Thur, Nov. 6, 2025**

**1007 Florida Ave, Rockledge**

11:30 Brown bag lunch

12:00 Business meeting

12:30 Speaker: Dr. Laura Wilson, Marine Resources Council

BFT-R will provide drinks, dessert & paper products

Our speaker for November is Dr. Laura Wilson, executive director of the Marine Resources Council. The MRC is dedicated to protecting and restoring the Indian River Lagoon. Dr. Wilson was inspired by the natural world to bring together her loves of learning, teaching and exploring. She will speak to us about what’s happening in the lagoon and what we can do at home to lessen our individual impact on the Indian River Lagoon.



## Membership News

--Sheila Cootes

We're very happy to welcome **Nancy Gilmor and Mary Goelz** as new members. Nancy taught second grade at Harbor City Elementary School. She lists rock concerts, musical theater, movies and eating out as her interests. **Mary** taught ILA, HOPE, and PE at Palm Bay Magnet High School. She lists crafts and sports as her interests. **WELCOME, Nancy and Mary!**



The following are on the **2025-26 "Honor Roll"** (those members who have paid their 2025-26 dues since the last newsletter): **Judith Alexander, Donald Barlow, Marilyn Bollo, Atlene Britt, Bettye Jean Bryant, Cecily Cain, Gary Castner, Marcy Cipolletti, Maria Clifford, Sheila Cootes, Nancy Craft, Teresita Delgado, Judith Doyle, Patricia Farley-Crutcher, Lonnie Ford, Rita Gynan, Kathryn Harbaugh, Rita Hewett, Bonita Holland, Mary Hosken, Nancy Johnson, Gerald Jones, Deborah Keys, Mary Krause, Roslie Larruscain, Richard Ley, Gerard McCabe, Anne Marie Monteparo, Wendy Morrison, Barbara Morse, Christine Newman, Stephen Newman, Margaret Nikolenko, Lynne Nilles, Jaqueline Parris, Marion Pickette, Jan Ann Preston, Nancy Rhodes, Charles Stockton, Geneva Swilley, Lance Wallace, Linda Wells, Sally White, Kathleen Whitehead, Jennifer Whiting and Cynthia Woznicki.**

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](mailto:scootes@earthlink.net))



## Political News



-Patty Farley

In the last few months I have held four large round table discussions with major union leadership asking them what major challenges they are facing and what can be accomplished to help ease some of these problems.

While the responses have been diverse, they focus on the need to:

- build relationships with lawmakers,
- personalize outreach,
- focus communication on kitchen table issues were identified as effective engagement tactics,
- develop and distribute clear organizing plans and talking points for our members and the broader public.

I ask you to remember that the mass government job terminations in unions like AFGE are more than just loss of government services. These are people with families being kicked out of union jobs. They are enduring hardships.

Many are losing not only their income, but also their pensions after working many years. Please watch and listen for calls to help our union brothers and sisters in the near future.

## Field Trip

--Lin Herz

### November 19 - Stetson Mansion Christmas Spectacular

Experience the magic of the holiday season when we visit Deland's Stetson Mansion on November 19th for the celebrated "Christmas Spectacular Holiday Home Tour." Built in 1886 for John B. Stetson, of Stetson hat fame, this estate was Florida's first luxury home. The home is recognized as one of USA Today's "10 Best Holiday Home Tours in the US" (It ranks #5 nationwide) and is Tripadvisor's #1 landmark attraction in Florida. Explore lavish interiors filled with original mosaic parquet flooring, thousands of antique glass panes, and an array of unique handcrafted details—plus the distinction of being Florida's first snowbird home, the first home with electricity, (Mr. Stetson was best friends with Thomas Edison) steam heat, indoor plumbing, and a call-bell system (like on Downton Abbey).

Details:

- Lunch in Deland: **before the tour**
- Guided Tour: **at 2:30 p.m.**
- Cost: **\$34 (BFT/R will cover tax and booking fees)**
- Payment deadline: **We must receive your payment no later than : October 31st**
- **After October 31st you must book online for \$40.47. Contact Lin for how to pay online.**

Please send checks (payable to **BFT/R**) to Anne Marie Monteparo 1118 Wild Flower Dr Melbourne, FL 32940. She MUST receive it by October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Carpools will be arranged. For questions and to RSVP, contact Lin Herz at 321-960-8194 or [lin32905@gmail.com](mailto:lin32905@gmail.com).

### Annual Holiday Luncheon

On **Thursday, December 4th** at 11:30 BFT/R will be getting together at Tuscan Grill in the Avenues of Viera for our yearly Holiday Luncheon.

The menu will feature the same selections as last year, cost \$22 per person, to be paid at the restaurant. BFT/R will cover the tax and tip.

This annual gathering is a special way to end the year, sharing laughter and friendship with fellow retirees. The choices are:

Salmon Acropolis – "60 South" Salmon sautéed with artichokes, red peppers and sun-dried tomatoes, in lemon-white wine butter, served over fettuccine.

Eggplant Rollatini - Thin sliced battered eggplant stuffed with a garlic ricotta blend, baked and topped with mozzarella and served over spaghetti and marinara.

Lasagna - Pasta sheets layered with ground sirloin, ricotta and mozzarella cheeses and Italian herbs, baked in our homemade ragout and covered with melted mozzarella.

Chicken Marsala - Tender chicken breast served with sautéed mushrooms in a Marsala and light cream sauce, served over angel hair.

Mediterranean Salad - Mixed greens, hearts of palm, red onion, olives, artichoke hearts, tomatoes, and feta cheese with Greek dressing (with or without grilled chicken).

The lunch includes bread, house salad, soda or tea and a cannoli for dessert.

**The cost is \$22/person., pay at the restaurant. BFT/R is paying the tax and gratuity.**

**RSVP by Nov. 24** to Lin Herz by text or phone at 321-960-8194 or email [lin32905@gmail.com](mailto:lin32905@gmail.com).

## **Read, Recycle, and Reward Program**

*--Rita Hewett*

We had a very exciting October. We have delivered books to 2 schools in the month of October, serving 542 students and giving out 1,084 books.

It is such a pleasure to hear the excitement coming from the students and teachers' reaction when they come into the room full of books with all kinds of topics, with an eye catching stuffed animal or toy inside each book bag. We walk each class around tables of grade level books. The room is silent until after we give a short talk of rules. Then the room breaks out into happy voices as children search for their interest book bag. After their selection of a book bag, the children are directed over to another table with extra items of bookmarks, tissue holder, or tiny stuffed animals.

I overheard some children's remarks:

"This is so much fun and now we have to go back."

"I hope they come back."

"I am glad you are retired."

One 1st grade boy said. "I am sick and do not want to spread my germs so can you please pick up a book for me?" When he stood in front of his choice, I picked it up and gave it to him.

At another school a teacher assistant that I know personally told me this:

"I would like to thank your team for such an amazing activity during your visit. You ladies did a fantastic job with all the items that you had prepared for the different grade levels. I can see that you all really put a great effort in preparing the packages--like matching the plush toys with book themes and also preparing the beautiful handmade bags. For me it was just a pleasure to be able to assist while watching the students' happy faces. Thank you for all you do for being a great example of love."

Some schools post our visits on Facebook. Check them out:

Christa McAuliffe

Croton

Columbia

Discovery

Jupiter

Nancy Rhodes and I participated in the National Night Out event at Eddie Taylor Park.

All of the books given out were gone.



If you want to be a part of this exciting book program please contact me.

Rita Hewett (321) 720-3683

## FEA-Retired Annual Meeting & FEA-Delegate Assembly

Nancy Rhodes & Nancy Johnson attended both meetings at the Rosen Centre in Orlando on October 10-11. Yearly budgets were approved along with many new business items. At the FEA-Retired Annual meeting, BFT/R received awards for volunteer hours and communications. We also met the new FEA-Retired Staff Liason, Mike Dale, who is replacing Renita Bates, who retired.

## New Member Benefit from FEA

FEA has partnered with a company called Overall's to offer members a new benefit called Member Assist. Member Assist is like having a personal assistant, who is a live person in the USA. From planning a move to looking for a good mechanic or a great hotel, Member Assist will do the research & give you a list of the best recommendations. They'll even book it for you, if you ask them to. You can sign up on the website: [www.memberassist.net](http://www.memberassist.net)

## Lawndale Field trip 10/21/25



## 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: [snvl@cfl.rr.com](mailto:snvl@cfl.rr.com). Please put "volunteer hours" in the subject line.



### *Dues are due in October*

*--\$30 for life member  
--\$76 for non-life members*

### ***Make check payable to BFTR***

*Pay Sheila Cootes at our next meeting or mail it to her using the form on page 6.*





## *Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News*

### OFFICERS

### CALENDAR

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>President:</b>            | <b>Anne Marie Monteparo</b><br><a href="mailto:amonteparo@cfl.rr.com">amonteparo@cfl.rr.com</a>                                                                            |
| <b>Vice-President:</b>       | <b>Nancy Rhodes</b> <a href="mailto:nanr1871@gmail.com">nanr1871@gmail.com</a>                                                                                             |
| <b>Co-Secretaries:</b>       | <b>Linda Guiles</b> <a href="mailto:lindag315@aol.com">lindag315@aol.com</a><br><b>JayAnn Preston</b> <a href="mailto:jayannpreston@yahoo.com">jayannpreston@yahoo.com</a> |
| <b>Treasurer:</b>            | <b>Susan Vincent</b> <a href="mailto:snv1@cfl.rr.com">snv1@cfl.rr.com</a>                                                                                                  |
| <b>Membership Chair:</b>     | <b>Sheila Cootes</b> 427-7808                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Sunshine Coordinator:</b> | <b>Eva Slaughter</b> 724-0702                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Program Coordinator:</b>  | <b>Lin Herz</b> <a href="mailto:lin32905@gmail.com">lin32905@gmail.com</a>                                                                                                 |
| <b>Phone tree:</b>           | <b>Rita Gynan</b> <a href="mailto:fgynan@cfl.rr.com">fgynan@cfl.rr.com</a>                                                                                                 |
| <b>Newsletter Editor:</b>    | <b>Nancy Johnson</b> <a href="mailto:nanjoh99@gmail.com">nanjoh99@gmail.com</a>                                                                                            |

**Thur, Nov. 6 - BFT-R meeting at  
BFT Office  
1007 Florida Ave, Rockledge  
-11:30 Brown bag lunch  
-12:00 Business meeting  
-12:30 Speaker: Dr. Laura Wilson,  
Marine Resources Council**

**Holiday Luncheon--12/4 @ 11:30  
Tuscany Grill  
**RSVP by 11/24****

**Next meeting - February 5, 2026**

### Membership Application

**I want to join BFT/R for the 2025-2026 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.**