



Brevard Federation of Teachers

Retired Chapter News

“Retired, Not Expired”

Volume 28, Number 5
Mar, 2024

Welcome to March

--Nancy Johnson

March is upon us & is full of memorable days. Here are a few you may (or may not) be aware of:

2nd--Dr. Seuss's birthday & Read Across America Day

5th--National Cheese Doodle Day

7th--BFTR Meeting & National Cereal Day

8th--International Women's Day

10th--Daylight Savings begins

11th--National Napping Day

14th--National Pi Day (It's a math thing: $\text{Pi}=3.14$)

17th--St. Patrick's Day & National Preschool Teacher Appreciation Day

19th--First day of spring

21st--National Common Courtesy Day

25th--International Waffle Day

28th--National Black Forest Cake Day

30th--National Folding Laundry Day

31st--Easter

I may lobby for a National Snowbird Migration Back Up North Day, just to help with Florida traffic.



Next Meeting--Thur, Mar. 7, 2024

1007 Florida Ave, Rockledge

11:30 Brown bag lunch

12:00 Business meeting

12:30 Speaker: Suzy Fleming Leonard, Florida Today

BFT-R will provide drinks, dessert & paper products

Our speaker for March is Suzy Fleming Leonard, who has had more than 40 years of experience in journalism working as an editor and writer in Louisiana, Alabama, and Florida. Suzy has worked as a writer, editor and columnist at FLORIDA TODAY since 1999. During her career she has covered drug busts, murder trials, child beauty pageants, funerals, hurricanes, space shuttle disasters, 9/11, manned space launches, drag races and Disney food festivals. She has ridden in helicopters, hot air balloons, monorails, airboats, hay wagons, ambulances and in the back of squad cars. Suzy just retired in February of this year as food and dining editor for Florida Today.



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): **Judith Alexander.**



DUES ARE PAST DUE for the 2023-24 membership year. Our next meeting is March 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

“Once you learn to read, you will be forever free.” — Frederick Douglass

Children’s literature is so rewarding and exciting. Our BFTR group is happy to be part of children’s success in reading by providing them with wonderful reading material at no cost to their families. Children not only get good books, but they also receive an adorable stuffed animal or small toy related to the reading content that adds to the joy of reading. In addition, we help the environment by using recycled books, stuffed animals, and toys as much as possible. Thanks to Vinnie Taranto and his friend, Carolina Rojas Gee, our parent letter has been translated into Spanish (one side is in English; the other side in Spanish).

Our activity for the months of January and February:

- Schools served: 2
- Total number of children served: 477
- Pre-K/ Head Start: 83
- Kindergarten: 150
- First grade: 184
- ESE primary grades: 27
- Total number of books donated: 954.

We also gave 5 extra books per grade level to give children better choice selection and to provide for new students enrolled after distribution. Total number of books given out: 974.

Our greatest need is for more books suitable for ages 3 to 7 years old. **Please help support our book program by bringing books for ages 3 to 7 years old to the next meeting.** We will vet, clean, check, and do slight repairs, if needed. Thank you for your support in our children’s education. Call or text to donate - Rita (321) 720-3683.



Legislative Report

--Patty Farley-Crutcher

There are many things that Floridians really need at this point in time: expanded healthcare, reduced taxes, controls on our home and auto insurance, better funding for our schools....The list could go on. We did not see any of this in the current legislative session. The Republican supermajority announced their priority bills and most have to do with culture war issues. Most of us have no issue with gay rights and reproductive freedom.

The top bills in order that the Majority party in the Legislature listed are as follows:

1. Term limits for county commissioners
2. Ending forced pronouns
3. Ending rainbow flags on government buildings
4. Protecting historic monuments
5. Make gold and silver legal tender in Florida
6. Reducing the minimum age to purchase firearms
7. Gender and biological sex identification.
8. Unauthorized public sleeping and camping

This group is literally reducing taxes on the rich and adding them to the poor and removing child labor protections.

It was hopeful for a few weeks that we might get a cost of living added back to our Florida Retirement System that we lost when Rick Scott was governor, but that, too, has been lost in the muddle.

The session will end soon and we will see how much damage was done and if anything at all positive can be found among Tallahassee's actions.



Visit [FEA's 2024 Session page](#) for all the info and tools you need to get involved. It's vital your legislators hear from you now and throughout 2024. Let them know what priorities you want them to focus on to make Florida a place where we all can thrive.

Field Trips

--Lin Herz

On Wednesday, March 20th we'll be taking the "Scenic Boat Tour" through the pristine chain lakes of Winter Park. We currently have 15 members signed up & the boat can accommodate 3 more. The cost is \$15 & you pay when you get there. We will be car-pooling & going to lunch after the boat trip. So if you are interested, contact Lin by text and she'll call you back 321- 960-8194 or email lin32905@gmail.com.

We survived the Titanic!

We thoroughly enjoyed our field trip to "Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition" in Orlando. Our tour guide was informative & very entertaining!



Volunteer Hours

--Susan Vincent

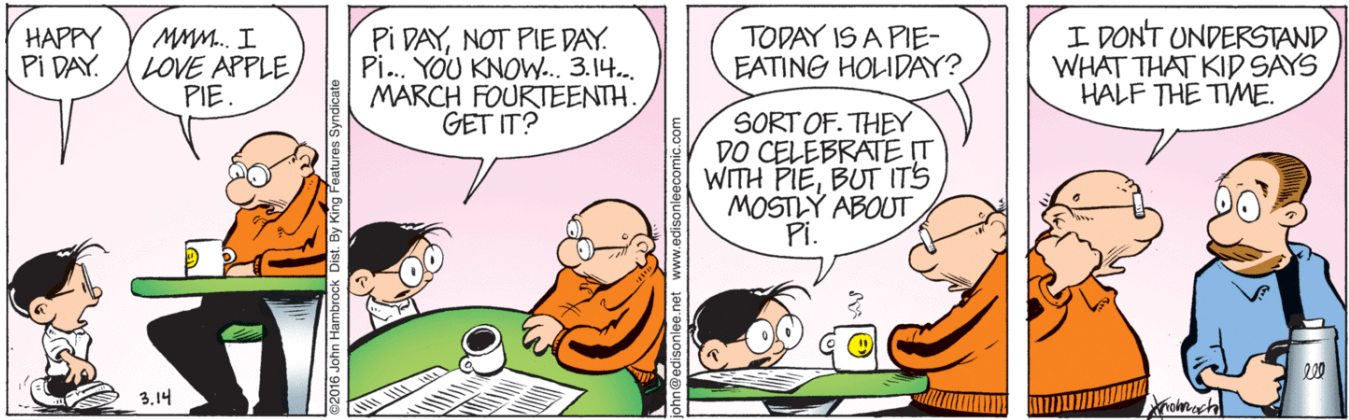
Please write in your volunteer hours on the sign in sheet at our next meeting or email them to me. You don't have to volunteer at schools for your hours to count. You can also count your travel time. You can send them to my email: snv1@cfl.rr.com. Please put "volunteer hours" in the subject line. Thanks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



BFTR Officers Needed!!!

Our election of officers occurs at our April meeting & we need people to step up & run for office!! We need a President, Vice-President (or 2) & Treasurer. We have 2 Secretaries, but could use another to cover when people go on vacation. So step up & run for an office. The current Executive Board members will be there to answer any questions & help you out when you need it.





Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

OFFICERS

CALENDAR

President: Joan Taddie jtaddie@cfl.rr.com
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 JayAnn Preston jayannpreston@yahoo.com
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Thur, Mar. 7 - BFT-R meeting at BFT Office
 1007 Florida Ave, Rockledge
 -11:30 Brown bag lunch
 -12:00 Business meeting
 -12:30 Speaker: Suzy Fleming
 Leonard, Florida Today

 Next meeting - Apr. 4, 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.**