



Brevard Federation of Teachers

Retired Chapter News

“Retired, Not Expired”

Volume 26, Number 4
Dec. 2021

The President’s Missive

--Joan Taddie

“Thanksgiving is a joyous invitation to shower the world with love and gratitude.”

I can’t remember a time in my life that I have ever felt this strongly about celebrating a national holiday; a holiday centered around a nation of people, coming together on this special day, to give thanks for all the blessings that enrich our lives.

I would like to begin this missive by thanking all the courageous Brevard County teachers, administrators, and staff for their tireless efforts to provide our students with classrooms for academic learning, as well as a place to reconnect with each other and find joy in being together again!

A special shoutout to Anthony Colucci, President of the Brevard Federation of Teachers, and his incredible executive board for their continuing support of the teachers and their families during these difficult times.

I, too, have been blessed with an executive board that faced many challenges during the last two years. Thank you all for always believing we could find solutions to the challenges of keeping our communication lines open and continue to provide our members with wellness checks and regular BFTR meetings on Zoom that kept all of us connected as well as also intellectually stimulated by a wonderful group of speakers, arranged by executive board member, Lin Herz!

At our November General Membership Meeting, Lin arranged to Zoom in from Laramie, Wyoming, Ann McCutchan, a former Titusville High School classmate of hers and member Eileen Schaap. Ann is the author of a number of biographies and memoirs. She is also the founding director of the University of Wyoming’s MFA in creative writing program and former editor of *American Literary Review*. Ann spoke to our membership about her latest biography, *The Life She Wished To Live*, a biography of Majorie Kinnan Rawlings, author of *The Yearling*, a popular novel that many of us loved to read to our classes.

Thank you, Ann, for an amazing presentation! And thank you for “meeting” with us in Florida at a very early time in Wyoming! I’m sure that you could feel the excitement and interest we all conveyed to you about your book through the numerous questions our members had for you.

I would also like to congratulate, Rita Gynan, for winning the raffle for a personalized autographed copy of Ann McCutchan’s new book. I know this was a dream come true for Rita, a big fan of Majorie Kinnan Rawlings! Thank you, Ann, for taking the time to go to Second Story Books in Laramie and autographing both Rita’s and my book. We appreciate and treasure your kind words about our members.

This is my last missive of 2021. It has been a year of division, hateful words, and the continuation of the loss of so many lives across our planet. But it also was a year of amazing scientific minds coming together across the globe to find the vaccines to protect us from the scourge of Covid-19. This enabled so many of us to celebrate Thanksgiving 2021 at the family table, surrounded by the people we love.

I leave you with this favorite quote of mine: **“Showing gratitude is one of the simplest yet most powerful things humans can do for each other.”**

I am grateful to serve as your president and represent the most powerful people on this Earth... Teachers! Have a wonderful holiday season!



Membership News

--Sheila Cootes

The following are on the 2021-22 “Honor Roll” (those members who have paid their 2021-22 dues since the last newsletter): **Fran Baer, Dr. Clara Gill, Barbara Humburg, Marion Johnson, Janet Jones, Mary Kenney, Carol Linton, Carethea “Cam” Mathews, Gerald “Jerry” McCabe, Margaret Nickolenko, Carol Post, Jay Ann Preston, Karen Rodriguez, Debra Sandstrom, Dan Scheuerer, Louise Stroman, Geneva Swilley, Susan Vincent and Judith Wilkie.**



There are only ten “almost members” who haven’t paid their dues. We do not have a meeting till next year, so if you’re one of the ten, just 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.”

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.

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



United Way has donated \$1,000 of storage bags for our book program. This is the biggest cost to our program. Megan MacKay, a student from Melbourne Central Catholic High School, is having a Book Drive for us as her senior project. We are so lucky to have these costs donated to us in one month! Maisy Davis from Edgewood High School is another senior who wants to do a book drive for us. Wow! Now all we need is more volunteers and a bigger place.

We are almost finished delivering books to most south area schools. We have Julie Hagadorn and Nancy Alderman donating their time and skills by sewing shoulder bags, tissue holders, and stuffed animals to bring joy to children’s faces. Julie and Nancy also purchase books, puzzles and activity books for our program. They love to hand-make their creations and share with our students.

We are so grateful for all of our donors. Thank you Andrea Sasson from United Way, Julie Hagadorn and Nancy Alderman, and students Megan MacKay and Maisy Davis.

Please let me know if you can volunteer on a Monday, Tuesday and/or Thursday, 10:00 to about 2:30. Please call Rita Hewett at (321) 720-3683 to let me know which days you can help.

**Give a kid a book, and you change the world.
In a way, even the universe.**

--Neil deGrasse Tyson

2021 Innovative Grants Awarded

This year FEA-Retired funded two grants for \$150 each. Because we had such wonderful submissions for use of the grant, the BFT-R Executive Board voted to fund seven additional grants for \$150 each.

Due to COVID, Joan could not arrange a surprise classroom visit to present the \$150 check. She did send a packet to each teacher with a copy of their grant, a letter describing why the committee selected them for the grant, and the check. She also sent a packet to their principal for their personnel file, with a copy of their grant and a letter describing how the grant would be used in the classroom.

Recipients of the FEA-Retired Innovative Grants are:

Michael Broud, Automotive Repair Teacher, Heritage High School

The grant money will be used to purchase kits for drum brake to disc brake conversion to be used by the Advanced Automotive program seniors. Students will grind and fabricate the new brackets and hardware to mount the disc brake kits.

Erin Rice, K-6 Gifted teacher, Tropical Elementary

This grant money will be used to purchase materials to build a hand-cranked machine to investigate mechanics and patterns of motion. After observing and predicting how cam shapes affect movement, students will design their own mechanical art to display on their automaton.

Recipients of BFT-R Funded Innovative Grants are:

Dina Casabianca, ESE teacher, Eau Gallie High

The funds will be used to help students learn about compassion and helping others while becoming more integrated into the community by performing random acts of kindness. Student-led projects such as decorated tote bags and pens will then be handed out when they go into the community, with a card explaining random acts of kindness and inviting people to pay it forward.

Ashley Conner, Kindergarten teacher, Meadowlane Primary

The grant money will be used to purchase board games for the students' free choice time at the end of the school day so they can practice skills such as taking turns, following directions, coding, memory, deductive reasoning, and conflict resolution.

Annette Jankowski, 5th grade teacher, Surfside Elementary

Her grant money will be used to purchase supplies for necklaces so students can track their progress in standards at their individual level. Students will receive a bead for each goal met and a charm for mastery.

Michele McCormack, K-2 Deaf & Hard of Hearing teacher, Meadowlane Primary

The grant will enable her to purchase leveled sight word readers for students to use in class and take home. This will allow students to video themselves reading the book, send the video to their parents, and take the book home to practice, thus giving parents the opportunity to see their child read and feel more comfortable reading with their child.

Zorica Simic, 1st grade teacher, Imperial Estates Elementary

The grant money will be used to purchase sensory integration and social-emotional curriculum materials to enhance students' social skills. This will help students improve their overall well-being and achieve optimal success in the classroom.

D. Jolene Tucker, 9-12 ESE teacher, Rockledge High

Her grant award will be used for flexible seating options and sensory supports for the classroom. She plans to purchase some beanbags, classroom carpets, wiggle seats, pencil grips, and fidgets for her students to use to meet their academic and sensory needs.

Caitlin Walters, Pre-K teacher, Pre-K ESE Services at Mims Elementary

She will use the grant money to purchase "Sophie Books", which are written for students under the age of 5 and have a puppet that accompanies them, as part of the district adopted Conscious Discipline program to support students' social, emotional, and behavioral development. She will also purchase visual aids to help students identify feelings, calm them, and resolve issues.

Volunteer Hours

--Susan Vincent

I only had five members send me their hours last month. I know you are volunteering. Come on people, let's send in your hours! Remember to send to snvl@cfl.rr.com. Please put volunteer hours in the subject line. Thanks for all you do in the name of BFT-Retired.



Thank you to Rita Gynan for volunteering to be in charge of the phone tree!

Holiday Luncheon Cancelled

The bad news: Due to lack of reservations, our annual Holiday Luncheon at The Tides has been cancelled.

The good news: Our last meeting for the school year will be on Thursday, May 5th, 2022. As most of you know, we meet for breakfast in a large private room at Kay's Real Pit Bar-B-Q at 1552 West King Street, Cocoa 32926 for a fun social time! Since we are not able to have a Holiday Luncheon, we will treat each BFTR member to a free breakfast of their choice from the menu, including the tip!

SAVE THE DATE

Next meeting, Thursday, Feb. 3, 2022

Hopefully in person!!



What is the best possible holiday present?

A broken drum—you just can't beat it!

Did you hear Walmart is giving away dead batteries for the holiday?

They're free of charge!

What did the bald man say when he got a comb for Christmas?

"I'll never part with it!"

How much did Santa pay for his sleigh?

Nothing—it was on the house!

What kind of photos do elves take?

Elfies!

How do the elves clean Santa's sleigh on the day after Christmas?

They use Santa-tizer.



"You're getting too old to celebrate like you used to. It's time to say No-No-No instead of Ho-Ho-Ho!"



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Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

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CALENDAR

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Next meeting - Feb. 3, 2022
Hopefully in person!

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.