



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

Volume 30, Number 3
Dec, 2025

President’s Message

--Anne Marie Monteparo

Happy Holidays to everyone! The Executive board was busy reading 19 Innovative Grant applications from Brevard County teachers. We selected 2 FEA-Retired winners and 10 winners that will be awarded \$150 from BFT Retiree Chapter. This is one way your dues are put to good use. The winning teachers are very grateful for our support in these trying times. Here is a list of the winners:

2025 Innovative Grant Winners

FEA-Retired Grant Winners

Ranekqua Brown – DeLaura Middle School – Book Club Materials for Sunshine State Readers
Stephanie McGowan – Space Coast Jr/Sr High School- Science – Crime Scene Kits

Brevard Federation of Teachers Retired Winners

Emery Martin-Palm Bay High School - Science – Squid for dissection
Colleen Hall – Eau Gallie High School ESE – Raised garden beds
Steve Vilgats – Eau Gallie High School ESE – Hand tools, soil and seeds for garden
Erin Convery - Columbia Elementary – 5th Grade – Barometer, hygrometer, anemometer
Kelly Lett – Palm Bay Elementary- PreK VE – Social emotional tools, storybooks, colored ink, velcro
Laura McIntyre – Meritt Island High School Deaf & Hard of Hearing – Laminating sheets & colored ink
Michele McCormick – Meadowlane Primary - Deaf & Hard of Hearing – books with D/HH characters
Paige Good – Dr. W J Creel Elementary - PreK VE- Manipulatives for Reading, Math, and Science
Vijay Saam – Dr. W J Creel Elementary - Media – Literary Centers for K-2
Zorica Simic – Capeview Elementary- PreK VE – Sensory items

May the holiday season give you countless reasons to smile, relax, and feel grateful for the journey you’re on. Happy holidays, don't forget to enjoy to your fullest! Hope to see you at Tuscany Grill for our Holiday Luncheon on December 4!



Next Meeting--Thur, Feb. 5, 2026

1007 Florida Ave, Rockledge

11:30 Brown bag lunch

12:00 Business meeting

12:30 Speaker: Dr. Ben Brotemarkle, Florida Historical Society

BFT-R will provide drinks, dessert & paper products

In February we are fortunate to have Dr. Ben Brotemarkle be our speaker once again. Dr. Brotemarkle is executive director of the Florida Historical Society, the oldest existing cultural organization in Florida. Ben serves as producer and host of “Florida Frontiers: The Weekly Radio Magazine of the Florida Historical Society” on NPR, and the PBS series “Florida Frontiers”. He has written five books on the history and culture of Florida.



Membership News

--Sheila Cootes

The following are on the **2025-26 "Honor Roll"** (those members who have paid their 2025-26 dues since the last newsletter): **Marion Blocker, Carolyn Bruce, Altamese Davis, Janet Eastman, Mona Layne Fulton, Sheila Hammett, Lin Herz, Kurt Kaufman, Marge Misits, Cynthia Novak, Ann Perrine, Carol Post, Paula Ramos, Diane Sartore, Louise Stroman, Dicque Walz and Judith Wilkie.**



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)



Political News



-Patty Farley

We are getting closer to the start of the 2026 Florida Legislative Session and that means we all normally hold our breath and pray we get through it all without major disruptions to life and property.

Well here are already three main issues you will most likely hear about:

1. Ron DeSantis and the legislature paid \$83.3 million of our tax dollars for 4 acres of land in Destin, Florida from a prominent Republican donor in what many are calling a major land deal scam. This was added to the budget in the last minutes before it was finalized.
2. There are bills to protect Mosaic Phosphate Company from liability in lawsuits where homes have been built on reclaimed land. Mosaic has been working on building roads with toxic waste and injecting toxic waste into the deep aquifer. Mosaic is also a major contributor to members of the Florida Legislature.
3. Bills that are killed and keep coming back are referred to as Zombie Bills. Here is one: The issues involving fetal personhood are coming up again with a bill Civil Liability for the Wrongful Death of an Unborn Child.

Buckle up and hunker down. This Legislative Session officially starts in January, but the members have been working in committee since September.

How You Can Take Action Today!

Visit the **FEA website** to learn more about session and sign up for **FEA Action Alert texts.**



Legislative Session Updates
FEAweb.org/Session



FEA Action Alert Texts
Text "edactivist" to 22394

Field Trips

--Lin Herz

Join us on **February 24th** as we visit the **Elliott Museum in Stuart** (about an hour and a forty minutes from Melbourne) to see King Tut as well as their many other terrific exhibits.

The cost is **\$18 per person** (\$16 if we're more than 10 people).

<https://hsmc-fl.com/elliott-museum/>

“Step Into A Breathtaking Exhibition...

The Elliott Museum invites you on an extraordinary journey back in time. The Main Gallery is transformed into a breathtaking exhibition featuring spectacular replicas of prized artifacts from the tomb of Tutankhamun, one of the greatest archaeological discoveries in history.

In collaboration with Tarek Ragab and the Egyptian Art Center in Cairo, we are proud to present “Wonderful Things... The Return of King Tut.” Like Howard Carter peering into the boy king’s tomb in 1922, visitors will enter a mysterious, dimly lit chamber shimmering with gold, mystery, and wonder.

Painstakingly recreated by master historians and artisans in Egypt using authentic materials and centuries-old techniques, these artifacts are more than replicas — they are a tribute to the genius and grandeur of ancient Egyptian craftsmanship. Every detail is designed to transport you — to make you feel the thrill of discovery.”

Among other exhibits on display at the museum is a collection of Faberge eggs, a history of Derek Jeter, an Exhibit of Highwaymen paintings that will allow you to “experience the history, resilience, and beauty of Florida through the eyes of The Highwaymen.” There is a “baseball gallery” filled with baseball memorabilia. “signed cards, well-worn bats, and game-used baseballs aren’t just displays — they’re storytellers.

There’s an exhibit of vehicles from the dawn of autos and motorcycles to cutting edge autos not even sold yet. “At the Elliott Museum, The Wheels of Change brings that story to life — and it begins with a jaw-dropping display unlike anything you’ve seen in a museum before.”

RSVP by February 9th to Lin Herz 321-960-8194 or lin32905@gmail.com

November 19 - Stetson Mansion Christmas Spectacular



Read, Recycle, and Reward Program

--Rita Hewett

We had a great first semester delivering books to children with 1,436 students served and 2,872 books given out. As we begin our second semester, I invite you to come see all that is involved in our program. Then you will really understand why we do what we do. It is one way you still can be supportive in the field we all love, which is helping children learn.

Come join us at our workroom in the portable at Palm Bay High School. Share the joy we feel as we prepare our books and stuffed animals for the children. Then experience the most rewarding part of all by going inside the schools where you will see and hear the excitement of children selecting their own book bag. That will confirm your decision to be part of our book program team.

If you can't physically help us, consider donating supplies. We are always in need of 2-gallon size clear plastic baggies.

Also, we need books with certain titles. If you would like to donate any of these vetted books, it would be greatly appreciated:

Wild Baby by Jaren Wallace

Baby animals of the Seashore by Carmen Brendon

The Bald Eagle by Robert Stengard Olliges

Animals in Cold Places by Moira Butterfield

Polar Bear Cubs by Ruth Owens

A Baby Seal Story by Martha Rustad

Wally Walrus by Barbara DeRubertis

These books can be gently used or new.

If you have any questions, please call Rita Hewett at (321) 720-3683.





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Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

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CALENDAR

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Holiday Luncheon--12/4 @ 11:30
Tuscany Grill

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 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.**