



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

Volume 26, Number 3
Nov. 2021

The President’s Missive

--Joan Taddie

As I sit here pondering what I should write, I realize I haven’t bought any Halloween candy yet...I wonder if any kids will ring our bell this year?...Oh! I hope I remember it’s “Fall Back” so we gain an hour on November 7th! That’s something good!...I’m not sure I really need another hour. What will I do with it? Oh, I can get my Christmas gifts ready to mail, because according to the sign in the post office, November 8th is the last day to mail them that will guarantee their delivery by Christmas! Better mark my calendar!...Oh my! Thanksgiving is November 25th. I love Thanksgiving and I have a lot to be thankful for this year. Everyone in my family is vaccinated now! My youngest grandson turned twelve this month and will be fully vaccinated by Thanksgiving! That’s a wonderful blessing! We’ll definitely celebrate that milestone!

While I’m focusing on things to be thankful for, I want to send a shoutout to Keith Winsten, Executive Director of the Brevard Zoo. Thank you, Keith, for your wonderful talk about the Zoo at our October meeting, which included giving all of us a peek at the plans for the new Aquarium that the Zoo will soon begin constructing at Port Canaveral. We were all amazed at the unique and creative design that you and your staff have put together for all of us to experience!

I want to close by congratulating Nancy Johnson for her outstanding work putting together this newsletter every month. Because of her tireless efforts and patience with people like me who get their articles to her late every month, our BFT-R newsletter was recognized again at the FEA-Retired Annual Meeting at the Rosen Centre in Orlando on October 14th. I would also like to thank the president of the FEA-Retired, Janice Poirier, for presenting me with this year’s “Activist Award” at the conference. I am humbled by this award, knowing the people who have won it before me. Thank you for the recognition and the encouragement!

Happy Thanksgiving everyone! I am thankful that I know and work with each and every one of you. You are all heroes in my eyes for everything you do and have done for our precious children! Be safe! Enjoy!



Next Meeting--Thur, Nov. 4, 2021 via ZOOM

11:00 Business meeting

12:00 Guest Speaker: Ann McCutchan, author

Topic: Her new book, *The Life She Wished to Live*

You will be receiving an email that will give you the information you need to attend including our meeting ID#. Text or call Joan at 321-266-6006 if you need any help, or a practice session to figure out how to be admitted into the meeting. The meeting room will be open at 10:30 if you would like to get into the meeting earlier.



Membership News

--Sheila Cootes

No new members this month. Know someone who recently retired? Let them know what a great organization BFTR is. We will welcome them and even give them a gift or two. (Joan is in charge of these perks.)

The following are on the **2021-22 “Honor Roll”** (those members who have paid their 2021-22 dues since the last newsletter): **Judy Alexander, Donald Barlow, Atlene Britt, Cecily Cain, Sheila Cootes, Altamese Davis, Phyllis Day, Teri Delgado, Janet Eastman, Linda Guiles, Gerald Jones, Christine Luecking, Marsha Millar, Fern Patton, Xymena “Sam” Partelow, Marion Pickett, Eva Saughter, Carla Stevenson, Charles Stockton, Joan Taddie, Lance Wallace, Linda Wells and Sally White.**



If you haven’t paid your dues, **IT’S PAST TIME**, but I still love you. Our November meeting will be another Zoom experience. Sooooo, you need to 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)

FYRE

--Joan Taddie

Caitie Walters is a Brevard County teacher who serves on the BFT Executive Board. She is a coordinator for the national organization, FYRE, which stands for Florida’s Young Remarkable Educators. The mission statement of the Brevard County FYRE is that the “Brevard County FYRE unites the most passionate young educators in Brevard for the betterment of public education and society. We aspire to network passionate educators; better our communities through public outreach programs; and to better our profession through our unions.”

Caitie has asked me to invite any of our BFT-R members who are interested in mentoring these new teachers by phone, Zoom, or when Covid is tamed, by visits to their classrooms, to contact me by phone, text, or email (jtaddie@cfl.rr.com 321-266-6006). I will then connect you with Caitie for further information.

Programs

--Lin Herz

Our November speaker will be Ann McCutchan, author of *The Life She Wished to Live*, a biography of author Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings that came out this year, and 5 other books. Ann is a professional musician, author, professor, former editor, founding director of the University of Wyoming’s creative writing program, and former editor of the *American Literacy Review*. She was commissioned to write the book on Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings.

Ann graduated from Titusville High School in 1969 and one of her books is *Where’s the Moon, a Memoir of the Space Coast and the Florida Dream*. She currently lives in Wyoming.

For those who attend the November meeting, there will be a drawing for an autographed copy of *The Life She Wished to Live*. You can check out her website at <https://www.annmccutchan.com/>

Brevard County School Board

Mask Mandate Update

--Joan Taddie

On August 30, 2021, the Brevard School Board voted 3-2 to implement an emergency policy, effective immediately, of making face masks mandatory on school board property, including schools and school buses. Masks were not required if the child or adult presented a “certification from a licensed health care provider that the person has a medical, physical, or psychological contraindication that prevents the person from being able to safely wear a face covering.” Masks were not required if a student or adult were outside, if they were eating or drinking, involved in strenuous physical activity, or receiving health care. This policy would remain in effect up to 30 days and then brought back to the Board for another vote.

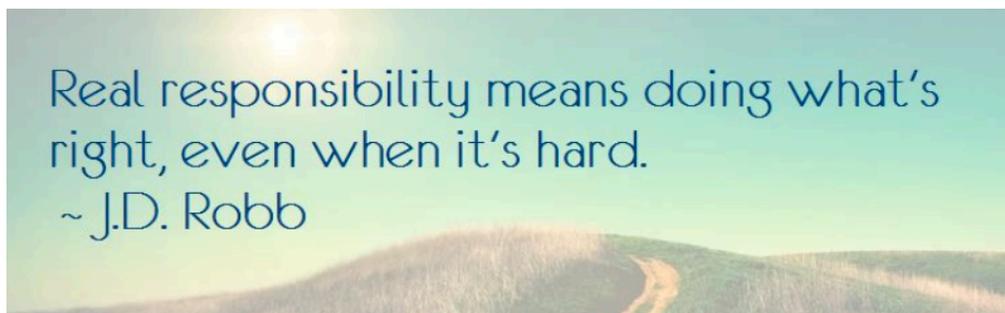
Fast-forward to our last Brevard School Board meeting on October 7, held just before this newsletter is published. By a vote again of 3-2, with Misty Belford, Jennifer Jenkins, and Cheryl McDougall again voting for the motion and Katye Campbell and Matt Susin voting against the motion to keep Brevard’s school district’s current mask mandate in place for at least another 30 days. But there was a change regarding parent opt-out of masks in that motion. “If the county reaches 50 COVID-19 cases or lower per 100,000 people, the Superintendent shall implement a parental opt-out. BPS staff would continue to be required to wear a face mask unless social distancing of at least six feet is maintained. If COVID-19 cases would go back above 50 per 100,000, the School Board would need to act before the parental opt-out would be eliminated.”

On October 12, Brevard and seven other Florida school districts received a letter from the Florida Board of Election stating that they were “not in compliance with the mask requirements set forth by the state that prioritizes parents’ decisions to opt out their child from mask mandates.” The school boards were given a 48-hour notice to comply. If they did not comply, that school board would be penalized financially in an amount equal to the monthly salaries of board members. The Brevard School Board did not comply and “provided the state a list of their school board salaries as requested.”

Throughout this divisive time, we have witnessed angry and violent protestors outside during every school board meeting this school year, with two being arrested for their threatening behavior. The behavior of the citizens in attendance at the school board meetings has escalated to having people ejected from the meeting, as well as having the entire school board room cleared so that the board’s business could continue.

But the most egregious behavior of our citizens has been directed at School Board member, Jennifer Jenkins. Because of her support of mask mandates and the rights of our LGBTQ students, she has, along with her family, including her five year old daughter, faced such violent harassment, threats and hate. Because of this, she has received national attention from the major TV networks after they viewed a video of her describing to the school board the violence that she and her family face everyday because of her ONE vote on a school board of five members.

Jennifer Jenkins, know that you had the endorsement of both the BFT and the BFT-R when you ran for office. We are proud to continue to stand with you now!





Read, Recycle, and Reward Program

--Rita Hewett



We are settling in our new space in Eau Gallie High School's portable that we share with supplies from the School Supply Zone, where the BLAST students learn how to fill orders for teachers. We have about a half of a portable to work in. We had to down size a whole lot to make everything we had fit into the room, combining tubs of animals help reduce tubs. We are now ready to match books to animals. We have a school drop off delivery every Thursday this month in the south area.

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.

Thank you, BLAST Students & United Way!



Eau Gallie High School BLAST Program students help move our Book Program from Clearlake Education Center to their high School. We will partner with their students on job skills. They did an awesome job.



United Way donated \$1,000 worth of bags for our book program. Andrea Sasson from United Way went shopping with me. Look at the many boxes of bags in the left photo!

FEA Delegate Assembly

--Nancy Johnson

The FEA Delegate Assembly was held October 14-16 at the Rosen Centre in Orlando. 600 delegates attended, with strict Covid safety protocols. The Delegate Assembly approved the 2022/23 budget and passed 11 new business items, including items related to equitable treatment as classroom teachers for PreK teachers, alternatives for statewide standardized assessments, high school core class size, support for districts threatened and/or penalized for guiding safety protocols, and creation of a statewide campaign to highlight truth and facts about the work of our educational workforce.

At the FEA-Retired Annual Meeting, held prior to the Delegate Assembly, it was announced that FEA-Retired members donated over 42,000 volunteer hours worth over \$1.2 MILLION! Joan Taddie was awarded the "Activist Award for Outstanding Service" and BFT-R won a Newsletter Award.



PAY YOUR DUES

Dues are due to Sheila Cootes

--\$30 for life member

--\$76 for non-life members

Make check payable to BFTR

Mail to:

Sheila Cootes

3737 Sunward Dr.

Merritt Island, FL 32953

Holiday Luncheon at The Tides

--Joan Taddie

The annual Holiday Luncheon is scheduled to be held on Thursday, December 16 at The Tides on A1A on Patrick Space Force Base beginning at 11:00 am.

We were notified in September that Covid protocols have been relaxed since we agreed on the contract. We can now have 70 in the dining room, rather than 40, and masks are not required. We still must pay an extra \$100 to have the room cleaned. I have only received 4 reservations. I will continue to take reservations until Friday, November 5th. At that time, the Executive Board will determine if we will cancel our reservation at The Tides or confirm the date.

For reservations and/or questions, please email me at jtaddie@cfl.rr.com.

Cecily Cain's great alternate plan if the luncheon at The Tides doesn't work out!!!!

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! If 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!

Volunteer Hours

--Susan Vincent

Please continue to send in your volunteer hours. Remember to send to snv1@cfl.rr.com. Please put volunteer hours in the subject line.

There's
always
SOMETHING
TO BE
thankful
FOR





©Brian Crane. All rights reserved.

Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

OFFICERS

CALENDAR

President: Joan Taddie jtaddie@cfl.rr.com
Co-Vice-Presidents: Bettie Bailey baileybettie@yahoo.com
 Nancy Johnson nanjoh99@gmail.com
Co-Secretaries: Linda Guiles lindag315@aol.com
 Susan How sun515flower@msn.com
Treasurer: Susan Vincent snv1@cfl.rr.com
Membership Chairman: Sheila Cootes 427-7808
Sunshine Coordinator: Eva Slaughter 724-0702
Program Coordinator: Lin Herz lin32905@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor: Nancy Johnson nanjoh99@gmail.com

Thur, Nov. 4 - BFT-R meeting--on ZOOM
11:00 Business meeting
12:00 Speaker: Ann McCutchan
Topic: Her new book

Next meeting - Feb. 3, 2022

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.**