



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

Volume 25, Number 7
May, 2021

The President’s Missive

--Joan Taddie

It’s hard to believe that on May 6 we are about to attend our last BFTR meeting of the 2020-2021 school year. This meeting is traditionally a breakfast held at Kay’s Real Pit Bar-B-Q in Cocoa, but COVID-19 is still very much in our lives, so we will have a virtual brunch on Zoom and have some fun as we say farewell for the summer.

The BFTR Executive Board made the decision to discontinue our monthly meetings beginning in April 2020. The pandemic was a reality, and masks, handwashing, hand sanitizer, and isolation became the norm. Toilet paper was the first item to disappear from the grocery shelves, and we picked up our groceries at curbside pickup areas or ordered them online to be delivered to our front doors. We read a bunch of books, played board games, cooked, wrote letters again, learned to touch elbows and not hug, and missed our grandchildren so very much!

In September 2020, the Executive Board agreed that it was time for the BFTR to meet again. Many of us had mastered Zoom so that we could continue to work in our important community organizations, attend family gatherings, and even read our grandchildren a book; all virtually! But there were many of our members who still had not acquired the skills necessary to attend our BFTR meetings that could only be held safely on Zoom.

Nancy Johnson found some Zoom directions for the “elderly” and emailed them to everyone. I set up Zoom practice sessions for individual members in October so that we would all be ready for our first BFTR Zoom General Membership Meeting on November 5, 2020, which was a huge success!

Now, in April 2021, most of our members have been fully vaccinated and are learning to carefully adjust to a world where there are people who are vaccinated and people who are not. But the human spirit continues to amaze me. I am so thankful for the scientists, the doctors, the nurses, all the health care professionals and emergency workers who continue to put their lives at risk. I am so proud of our teachers who find ways to teach their classes so that our children will continue to learn and grow. And I am lifted up everyday as I observe the kindness of strangers who step up to help those in need.

As I watched the launch of SpaceX’s Crew Dragon capsule lift off flawlessly from Kennedy Space Center and magnificently light up the night sky on its way to the International Space Station, I felt pride and hope as I remembered the mission commander Shane Kimbrough’s words in the final minutes of the countdown as the two Americans clasped hands with the French and Japanese astronauts. “Off the Earth, for the Earth, Endeavour is ready to go.”

My dear friends and fellow BFTR members, I am so proud of all of you! You have faced so many challenges with perseverance laced with kindness and humor. Watch out world! BFTR, you are ready to go!



Next Meeting--Thur, May 6, 2021 via ZOOM

11:00 End of the school year virtual brunch

No business meeting, no speaker, just a time to be social

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.



2021 Florida Legislative Session Update

--Patty Farley

I am writing this at the beginning of the last week of the Florida legislative session. Next week many things will be coming onto the floor for full House or Senate votes. I am not sure when you will have the opportunity to read this.

As a retiree I have spent more time in Tallahassee this session than I ever did before and I can assure you that **ELECTIONS HAVE CONSEQUENCES**. I have personally spent time with the Working Family Lobby Corps every week. I have been involved in the fight against 12-13 bills directly aimed at hurting teachers, unions, and public education.

These bills include:

Anti-union bills, such as those requiring all instructional and support staff locals to be above 50% membership or those that interfere with our members' individual freedom to join and remain a member of their union.

Voucher expansion bills that expand unaccountable private and religious school voucher programs and drain resources from our public schools.

Retirement legislation that threatens the stability of the FRS pension plan or forces employees into plans that have a less stable and less reliable returns or require higher employee contributions.

Legislation that attempts to block and limit the academic freedom of college and university professors.

Attacks on Florida's Sunshine Laws, such as exempting colleges and universities from revealing applicants for president of an institution.

I have seen members of the House and Senate, your Florida FEA officers and many individuals, like myself, who traveled to Tallahassee spend hours working to defeat bad bills and to protect teacher jobs, unions, salaries, and pensions.

As quickly as one of these bad bills passes, the Governor is quick to sign it.

I hope these issues matter to you as a retired educator. I beg you to get involved. You may be asked to make a sign, or a phone call, or be in a car caravan. It matters. Just do it.

There has been no acknowledgement that teachers and education staff have been working as frontline essential workers having to overcome great obstacles and in harm's way in order to keep their students safe, fed in cafeterias, and have learning continue. Instead of valuing the dedication and hard work given by educators, one feels that many legislators in Tallahassee have declared war on public educators and public schools. Find out who they are before you vote next time! **ELECTIONS DO HAVE CONSEQUENCES!**

Read, Recycle, and Reward Program

--Rita Hewett

Another great month for our Book Program! First, I want to brag about one of our volunteers, Sheila Bollinger. I call her our manager. She has worked non-stop, after hours all through these years, especially through the Covid Pandemic.

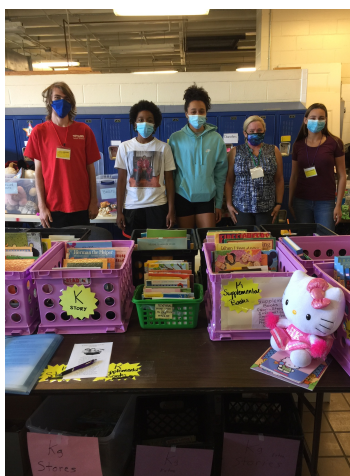


Sheila Bollinger

Even before we moved into our current building Sheila has organized every detail in the room of tubs, crates, toys, books, stuffed animals into their own space. Sheila has such precise order perfection that keeps the rest of us on our toes.

Nothing passes her Quality Assurance inspection unless it is perfect. Sheila has the help of our dedicated workers Linda Guiles, Cynthia Warnicki and Carol Post who were right there working hard too. No one could ever ask for a better team.

We have 7 Eastern Florida State College students who volunteer with us. What a great group of eager volunteers to work with! Thank you Jayna Hart, Stephen Pace, Julie Tripp, Bridget Borne, Anissa Tuitt, Magnolia Sagolla and Jourdan Avery for wanting to help get a jump-start on your career as an educator. You will help young children have a love for books.



EFSC volunteer students: Stephen, Jourdan, Anissa, Julie, and Magnolia

The Professor from the Melbourne Campus, Marika Koch, came by and joined us in our volunteer training day. She said she can now put a face to the names in her online class. The professor and the college students were glad they met each other in our class.

We look forward to working with these volunteer students. What a great mentoring opportunity for both of us.

Come and be a part of this growing, wonderful program. For more information please call me at (321) 720-3683.

Volunteer Hours

--Susan Vincent

We need your volunteer hours!! These are sent in to FEA-Retired. Anything that you do for others without getting paid counts toward volunteer hours. Did you walk your neighbor's dog, pick up groceries or bake bread for a friend? Those count!! Please send your volunteer hours to my email address, which is snv1@cfl.rr.com. Please put in the subject line: volunteer hours. Thanks for all you do.

Volunteers Needed

Needed – Members to Man/Woman the phone tree. Please contact Carla Stevenson 636-0742. It requires less than 30 minutes of time each month.

Save the Date: Dec. 16, 2021



Our annual holiday luncheon is scheduled for Thursday, December 16 at The Tides. Due to Covid restrictions, the luncheon will be limited to 40 people. Members must be current in their dues by October 31, 2021 in order to attend. Guests will only be allowed if there are spaces available after members have made their reservations. More info & reservation deadline will be coming in the fall.

This will be a plated luncheon, not a buffet. Because of the stresses of the past year, BFT-R will be picking up part of the price of the luncheon. Members will be asked to pay \$20 each. The price range for meals is \$22.99 - \$26.99. BFT-R will pay the difference for the meal, plus tax, tip, & service charge.

BFT-R now has a Facebook page!

If you're on Facebook, check it out:

<https://www.facebook.com/Brevard-Federation-of-Teachers-Retired-106921664807940>

Fun homework for our May Meeting

At our May meeting we will be playing a game called "Two Truths & a Lie". Each player thinks of three statements about themselves. Two must be true statements and one must be false. Players take turns telling two truths and one lie, in any order, to the group. The group votes on which of the 3 statements they think is a lie, and at the end of each round, the person reveals which one was the lie. So your **HOMEWORK** is: Come to the meeting prepared with your two truths and a lie.

FEA-Retired Annual Meeting Delegates Wanted

As of this moment, the FEA-Retired annual meeting is scheduled to be held **IN PERSON** on Thursday, Oct. 14 at the Rosen Center in Orlando from 1:00-4:00. Brevard is allocated to have 2 delegates plus our President Joan Taddie & District Director Nancy Johnson. Delegates meet for lunch (paid for by BFT-R) at the Rosen Center at 11:30. If you would like to be a delegate, contact Joan Taddie by July 31. The first 2 to respond will be delegates, and the next 3 will be alternates, in case a delegate cannot attend.



Next Meeting will be Sept. 2 on ZOOM

We don't usually meet in September, but this year is (to say the least) **UNUSUAL**. We all need some social time, even if it's on ZOOM.



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Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

OFFICERS

CALENDAR

President:	Joan Taddie jtaddie@cfl.rr.com
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**Thur, May 6 - BFT-R meeting--on ZOOM
11:00 Virtual brunch**

Next meeting - Sept. 2--on ZOOM

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.**