



# *Brevard Federation of Teachers Retired Chapter News "Retired, Not Expired"*

Volume 28, Number 4  
Feb, 2024

## *YOU can be President!! (of BFTR)*

*--Nancy Johnson*

As many of you know, Joan Taddie is dedicating her time to taking care of her husband and will not be running for reelection as President of BFTR. I will also not be running for any office, due to family issues (nothing concerning--I'm going to be a grandma for the first time!). And Susan Vincent would LOVE to turn over the Treasurer's job to someone else. Our elections are held at our April meeting, and will be handled by Cecily Cain since I will be out of town. If we only have 1 person nominated for an office, they are elected by acclamation. Cecily's article gives basic job descriptions. Two of the hardest jobs are appointed, not elected: Sheila Cootes will still be Membership Chair & Lin Herz will still be in charge of finding speakers & field trips.

Please consider stepping up & nominating yourself for an office. The outgoing officers will be happy to answer any questions that you have. If you haven't noticed, we are a VERY informal & friendly group.

## **SOS..... MEMBERS, WE ARE IN DEEP TROUBLE**

*--Cecily Cain*

With no one to man the wheelhouse we are in danger of going aground. Our incredible retiree group is in dire need of members ready to take the helm and keep us afloat. Our election is in April, and as of now much of the slate is bare. Here is what is needed:

### 1. President

-Leads 5 monthly meetings (October, November, February, March, April), 1 holiday luncheon in December, and our May potluck.

-Attends 2 FEA-Retired statewide meetings in Orlando-- one in January & one in October

-Invites newly retired former BFT members to join our group

-Schedules & chairs BFTR Executive Board meetings (may be via ZOOM)

### 2. Vice President (could be more than 1)

-Takes over when needed, attends monthly membership meetings & Executive Board meetings

### 3. Secretary (We have 2 returning, but a third would be nice)

-Takes minutes at monthly membership & Exec Board meetings

### 4. Treasurer

-Keeps track of whatever money comes in and goes out. Susan Vincent will be thrilled to turn over the checkbook.

So who's ready to take a deep breath and take a whack at running for office, so we can continue to run smoothly? Worried about protocol? Well, we do tend to be rather relaxed about everything. If and when assistance is needed, past officers and membership chair are always at your disposal. **WITHOUT LEADERSHIP WE MAY BE DEAD IN THE WATER!**

If you would like to nominate yourself for an office, please send your name, email address, and which office you are running for to Cecily Cain --321-723-6463 [ccain7@cfl.rr.com](mailto:ccain7@cfl.rr.com) or Nancy Johnson --321-725-3504 [nanjoh99@gmail.com](mailto:nanjoh99@gmail.com) (Do NOT text to these phone numbers...they are landlines)



## Next Meeting--Thur, Feb. 1, 2024

1007 Florida Ave, Rockledge

11:30 Brown bag lunch

11:55 Business meeting

12:15 Speaker: Dr. Ben Brotemarkle, Florida Historical Society

BFT-R will provide drinks, dessert & paper products



In February our speaker will be Dr. Ben Brotemarkle who will present “The COMPLETE History of Florida (In Less Than an Hour!!)”. Major periods of Florida history and culture are covered in a fast-paced and entertaining way, as we discuss many interesting people, places, and events. Ben Brotemarkle is Executive Director of the Florida Historical Society, and host of the Florida Frontiers public radio and television programs.



## Membership News

--Sheila Cootes

The following are on the 2023-24 “Honor Roll” (those members who have paid their 2023-24 dues since the last newsletter): **Janet Cameron, Phyllis Day, Mary Hosken, Marjorie Misits, Jay Ann Preston and Jonathan Schuman.**



**DUES ARE PAST DUE for the 2023-24 membership year** but I still love you. Our February meeting is February 1 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](mailto:scootes@earthlink.net))

## Field Trips

--Lin Herz

**On Wednesday, March 20th** we’ll be taking the “Scenic Boat Tour” through the pristine chain lakes of Winter Park. <https://www.scenicboattours.com/> This is a narrated cruise through a lovely area. The lakes were connected by loggers in the 1800s. You learn about the history of the area, as well as what famous people lived in the houses. If we have 15-18 people we can have a boat just for our group. **The special discount rate is \$15 per person, if we have at least 15 people. If we don’t have at least 15 people the price is \$20 and we can’t reserve a certain time.** The scenic tour is normally first come first serve, but in order to assure we can take the cruise at a certain time, we need to book as soon as possible. If you plan on going, you need to **RSVP by February 20!**

We’ll be a block away from Park Avenue where there are an array of restaurants and shops.

Everyone can pay on their own the day of the boat tour. Be sure to have exact change or use a credit card. We will be car-pooling.

To RSVP or if you have any questions contact Lin by text and she’ll call you back 321 960 8194 or email [lin32905@gmail.com](mailto:lin32905@gmail.com). Include your name, email, phone and address when you RSVP.



## Legislative Report

--Patty Farley-Crutcher

Instead of prioritizing issues concerning regular Floridians like affordable housing and the insurance crisis, the majority in the Tallahassee legislature continues the focus on culture war issues.

As we get into this year's legislative session, it is obvious that the main concerns are going to be culture war, child labor laws, and the environment. It appears that the Florida legislature is trying to fill Florida's labor shortage by encouraging teenage children to drop out of school to work in local restaurants and in the construction industry. There's a bill being passed that will allow teenagers to work full-time and Senate Bill 460 will allow any teenager 16 to 17 to work on construction sites.

An attack is underway against anyone who sues a business in violation of environmental laws. SB 738 would change the rules for suits against the Florida Department of Environmental Protection or any of the state's five water-management districts. In those cases, the losing side would have to pay for the winning side's lawyers. This will mean groups will be reluctant to bring suits.

The legislature is moving bills to protect poultry companies, plastic, polluters, and police officers who engage in brutality. They seem to be interested in building housing, but for migrant farm workers, and not for local citizens.

The culture war seems to continue in Tallahassee with a bill to ban pride flags from all public buildings.

**HB 1 is going to make it illegal to be on social media for any person under the age of 16.**

Here is a list of other bills to watch that threaten citizens' rights:

**SB 1752 - Attack on Vote By Mail:** A potential threat to the accessibility of our democratic process.

**HB 599 - Censoring Pronouns at Work:** A concerning infringement on workplace equality and inclusivity for the LGBTQ community.

**HB 757 - Free Speech:** Allowing public officials to sue over accusations of homophobia could have a chilling effect on open discourse.

**HB 49 - Child Labor Laws:** We need to ensure the protection and well being of our youngest residents.

**HB 1233 - Biological Sex Bill:** An issue that questions privacy and individual rights.



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.

## Read, Recycle, and Reward Program

--Rita Hewett



It is getting harder to find vetted books that are gently used. Prices have gone up in many thrift stores. Some thrift stores give us items free; others give discounts. Some items our team personally buys.

We have an abundance of stuffed animals at this time. We do run out of certain ones that we need more often. If you can help please let me know. Here is a list of items we need: fairies, raccoons, trains, Barbie size princess gowns, fish, cows, ducks, horses, and pigs.

If you can donate any of the books listed below, they are books I know are vetted. I bought these before but could use more than one. I went on eBay and looked for the free shipping and the cheapest book in good condition. More than 1 copy would be great. These books would really help. Buying books this way costs much more money. If you can find them elsewhere cheaper, great! We appreciate your help. Thank you for all you do for the book program.

*Corduroy* by Don Freeman

*The Little Engine That Could* by Watty Piper

*Chickens Aren't the Only Ones* by Ruth Heller

*The Runaway Bunny* by Margaret Wise Brown

*Dinosaur Days* by Joyce Milton

*Joe and Sparky Go to School* by Jamie Michalak

*So Many Butterflies* by Lara Bergen

*The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash* by Trinka Noble

*I Want to Be a Doctor* by Laura Driscoll

*Biscuit Loves the Park* by Alyssa Capucilli

*Biscuit and the Lost Teddy Bear* by Alyssa Capucilli

Your help will brighten children's reading. Questions? Contact me at (321)720-3683  
[rmhewett@yahoo.com](mailto:rmhewett@yahoo.com)

## 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](mailto:snv1@cfl.rr.com). Please put volunteer hours in the subject line. Thanks for all that you do.



## Phone Tree News

--Rita Gynan

The BFT-R phone tree is our basic means of communication, used to remind members of meetings or any "emergency" information. It is very important that we know if you are not receiving your calls. You should be getting meeting reminders about a week or so before each meeting. If you are not getting a call or a phone message, please let me know. It is also very important that you notify Sheila Cootes or me if you have a phone number, address, or email change.

Also, if any of you would like to volunteer to be a part of the phone tree by making calls, we would love to have you. It really doesn't take up very much time, depending on how long you chat. After the newsletter is published, I make a bullet list of items to mention and send it out along with the contact information for your "branch."

You can contact me at 321-728-2946 (you can leave a voice message, not a text) or email me at [fgynan@cfl.rr.com](mailto:fgynan@cfl.rr.com)





## Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

### OFFICERS

### CALENDAR

<p><b>President:</b> Joan Taddie <a href="mailto:jtaddie@cfl.rr.com">jtaddie@cfl.rr.com</a></p> <p><b>Vice-President:</b> Nancy Johnson <a href="mailto:nanjoh99@gmail.com">nanjoh99@gmail.com</a></p> <p><b>Co-Secretaries:</b> Linda Guiles <a href="mailto:lindag315@aol.com">lindag315@aol.com</a> JayAnn Preston <a href="mailto:javannpreston@yahoo.com">javannpreston@yahoo.com</a></p> <p><b>Treasurer:</b> Susan Vincent <a href="mailto:snv1@cfl.rr.com">snv1@cfl.rr.com</a></p> <p><b>Membership Chair:</b> Sheila Cootes 427-7808</p> <p><b>Sunshine Coordinator:</b> Eva Slaughter 724-0702</p> <p><b>Program Coordinator:</b> Lin Herz <a href="mailto:lin32905@gmail.com">lin32905@gmail.com</a></p> <p><b>Newsletter Editor:</b> Nancy Johnson <a href="mailto:nanjoh99@gmail.com">nanjoh99@gmail.com</a></p>	<p><b>Thur, Feb. 1 - BFT-R meeting at BFT Office</b>  <b>1007 Florida Ave, Rockledge</b>  <b>-11:30 Brown bag lunch</b>  <b>-11:55 Business meeting</b>  <b>-12:15 Speaker: Dr. Ben Brotemarkle,</b>  <b>Florida Historical Society</b></p> <p><b>Next meeting - Mar. 7, 2024</b></p>
---	---

### 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.**