



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

Volume 25, Number 2
Nov. 2020

The President’s Missive

--Joan Taddie

As I write this missive, there are only 10 days until November 3rd, Election Day! I want to personally thank all of the many BFTR members who have tirelessly worked waving signs, writing postcards, canvassing neighborhoods, phonebanking, volunteering as poll workers, organizing political forums, distributing political signs, attending rallies, and marching for equal justice, women’s rights, the health of our planet, and a fair wage and safe working conditions for our teachers. Let us not forget to thank our BFTR phone tree who, during the COVID pandemic, volunteered to call our members and retired members from counties that do not have an active retired union organization, to do welfare checks on their health, emotionally and physically, and to provide them with access to organizations that can help them get through these hard times. Thanks also to all of you who have distributed food, given books to our children, found safe housing for homeless families, donated clothing, furniture, and other household goods to these needy families, and supported with meals and cards of thanks to our first responders and our brave nurses, doctors, and medical technicians.

At the FEA-Retired Virtual Annual Meeting on October 9, President Janice Poirier recognized Nancy Johnson for her tireless work of making masks as part of the Brevard Mask Makers Facebook group. They have sewn and distributed over 32,000 masks. Nancy’s picture has appeared in several educational magazines, which published articles about the mask-making effort. The BFTR is proud of Nancy and all the members of this amazing group for providing these beautiful masks free of charge to many organizations and schools.

Also at the FEA-Retired Virtual Annual Meeting, Nancy Johnson was re-elected as District 6 Director. Janice Poirier and Sandy Rushlow remained President and Vice President as there were no other nominations. With Fedrick Ingram being elected as the new AFT Secretary/Treasurer, Andrew Spar is now the President of the FEA and Carole Gauronskas is the Vice President. Nandi Riley, from the United Faculty of Florida Chapter, was appointed Secretary/Treasurer. All of these leaders spoke to us through zoom and one of Spar’s main observations was that for “the first time, we have seen how effective retirees are during this election.” Because of this observation, Gauronskas announced that budget funding that had been taken away from the retirees is being restored. I know our treasurer, Susan, asks for our volunteer hours each month, but many of us are not keeping good records on the hours we spend in the community volunteering. Susan needs a more accurate number of hours to help continue the funding we will now receive. Join me in doing a better job of reporting our hours!

Thanks to everyone who responded to our phone tree committee regarding your willingness to participate in a Zoom General Membership Meeting in November. Many of our members have had no experience with Zoom, but were willing to try! Your Executive Board was the first to try and meet together on Zoom. Thanks to Nancy Johnson, the Board was sent easy to follow instructions from “Senior Planet-Aging with Attitude.” I have attended many Zoom meetings since COVID made virtual meetings mandatory, but I had never hosted one. So, I was learning something new as well. I am happy to report that on August 25, we had a successful E-Board meeting with eight out of ten members attending. The Board voted to have our November General Membership Meeting on Zoom, and we hope you all will follow the instructions I have written on page 5 of this newsletter and join us for the meeting. A big “Thank You and Well Done” to the ten members who attended the two practice Zoom meetings I had on October 12 and 13.

I’d like to end this missive with a quote from Mother Teresa that was read to us at the Annual Meeting. “The good you do today will soon be forgotten – Do it anyway!” The good you can do today or at the latest, November 3, is to VOTE! “Do it anyway!”



Membership News

--Sheila Cootes

Many of our members have paid their 2020-21 dues—THANK YOU!!! If you haven't sent in your check, please do so. Send your check made payable to BFTR to me:

Sheila Cootes, 3737 Sunward Dr., Merritt Island, FL 32953



The following are on the 2020-21 "Honor Roll" (those members who have paid their 2020-21 dues):

Judith Bonar, Carolyn Bruce, Bettye Jean Bryant, Gary Castner, Marcy Cipolletti, Joyce Craig, Teri Delgado, Mona Layne Fulton, Rita Gynan, Rita Hewett, Bonita Holland, Mary Hosken, Nancy Johnson, Deborah Deys, Cora Knighton, Mary Krause, Rosalie Larruscain, Richard Ley, Carol Linton, Margorie Misits, Wendy Morrison, Barbara Morse, Craig Newman, Tina Newman, Cindi Novak, Margaret O'Connor, Paulette Paradiso, Jacqueline Parris, Barbara Peete, Anne Perrine, Eileen Schaap, Beth Shaffer, Carla Stevenson, Susan Vincent, Lance Wallace, Kathy Whitehead and Cynthia Woznicki.

Life membership is \$400. Annual membership is \$76 (\$30 of that amount stays with BFTR). Annual members, consider changing to the "life" status. 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).



BFT Political Update

--Patty Farley Crutcher

The Florida Education Association (FEA) honored two state legislators recently for their ongoing advocacy for Florida's students, educators and public schools. Sen. Janet Cruz, D-Tampa, and Rep. Carlos Guillermo Smith, D-Orlando, each received the Champion of Public Education Award during the FEA's 2020 Delegate Assembly, which took place virtually.

Recipients of FEA's Champion of Public Education Award demonstrate peerless commitment and exceptional leadership on behalf of public education, have been consistently dedicated to the development and implementation of strong and effective education policy, exhibit a strong commitment to the basic principles of equal access to public education for all students, and demonstrate a commitment to FEA issues as reflected in their voting record.

As a member of the Senate Education Committee and author of several public school bills, Sen. Cruz is being honored this year for her steadfast support of students, teachers and education staff professionals. Rep. Smith continually uses his voice in committees and on the floor of the Florida House to advance the cause of equal access to public education for all students, and to guard against inequities regarding charter schools and voucher programs.

What do you know about the lawsuit FEA v. Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida?

To summarize: FEA asserted that the emergency order that mandated, under threat of lost funding, that children return to in-person learning in August, without regard for the health and well-being of the people, was counter to Florida's Constitution which states Floridians have a right to safe and secure public schools.

In the first step the judicial circuit judge agreed with FEA and an injunction was filed, but schools were already in operation. The state appealed to the District Court of Appeals and that court reversed the decision and found in favor of DeSantis. In districts statewide the struggle to deal with Covid 19 in our schools continues, as do efforts to suppress information.

The FEA is collecting information about Covid in schools here:

<https://feaweb.org/covid19/fea-safe-schools-report/>

Read, Recycle, and Reward Program

--Rita Hewett

Our Book Program still provides enjoyable books for our students during this virus. Our volunteers are so dedicated and loyal that they come every week wearing masks, gloves and using hand sanitizer. We work hard preparing books to bring joy to early readers.

We have delivered book bags to all south area Title 1 public schools. Now we are focusing on the central area schools. We dropped off our large cargo of white bags of books in front of Cape View Elementary Schools. We don't know who gets the biggest kick out of our books: the kids, teachers, office staff or us. They all marvel over the many different books the children have to choose from. The staff loves to peek inside our bags to see the wonderful joy we bring so the children will have a love of reading. What a wonderful program we have!

Thanks to all of you who made it possible with books, bags, money, stuffed animals and your help of volunteering. We are in need of more books for ages 3 to 7 years old. We have enough stuffed animals for now. Please contact Rita Hewett if you want to donate or volunteer at rmhewett@yahoo.com or (321) 720-3683.



Delivering books in the time of corona.
No volunteers allowed inside.



L to R: Suzie Bowden, Sheila Bollinger, Rita Hewett, Nicole Pepin, Cari Smith

Volunteer Hours

--Susan Vincent

I need volunteer hours from our members. I know you all are still helping someone somewhere. Please send me your hours to snv1@cfl.rr.com. Thanks!

Insurance Information

Attention: If you are on the FRSRBE (Florida School Retiree Benefits Consortium) Plan for Dental/Vision, please watch for additional info around Nov 8-10 regarding your ability to make your payments thru FRS. The Consortium and Humana are working on it.

FEA Delegate Assembly

--Nancy Johnson

The FEA Delegate Assembly was held virtually on October 10. The 661 registered delegates were encouraged by NEA President Becky Pringle and AFT President Randi Weingarten to help get out the vote. FEA-Retired President Janice Poirier announced that FEA-Retired members contributed 49,546 volunteer hours, worth \$1,347,651.20.



Vote on November 3rd

Make a plan on how and when you intend to vote and carry it through. Our Future depends upon it.

Tuesday, November 3, 2020

ELECTION DAY!!!! All Polls open from 7:00 am – 7:00 pm

All eligible voters in line at their polling places at 7:00 pm will be allowed to vote, regardless of the length of the line!!!!

More information can be found at:

<https://www.votebrevard.com/>



November Zoom Membership Meeting

Thursday, November 5, 2020

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

- All members should have received an email from Sheila Cootes the last week of October inviting you to attend our first Zoom General Membership Meeting on the day and time listed above.
- To attend a Zoom meeting, you can use a computer, your iPhone, an iPad, or a Kindle. If you don't use your computer, you may not see most of the people attending who are not speaking or some of the buttons that are used to communicate during the meeting. Don't worry about that!
- On your invitation you will see the date and time of the meeting. I will always be at the Zoom meetings about a half-hour early to help all of you to enter the meeting. For this meeting, I set it up so that you can enter the meeting without me individually clicking you in. I also set up the meeting so that none of you are muted when you arrive at the meeting. If it gets too noisy, I will mute everyone and have you unmute yourself by clicking on your microphone when you need to speak. We'll see how that goes! If you find yourself stuck in the waiting room, I will see your name and click you in. Text me at 321 266 6006 if you need help!
- To join a meeting, you can click on the blue website that is under the heading: Join Zoom Meeting
- You can also join the meeting by clicking on the Zoom app if you have one.
- Or you can join the meeting by entering the website: zoom.us
- Once you get to where the meeting is, you will be asked to type in the Meeting ID. **The Meeting ID for this meeting is: 897 6749 6740**
- Please type in your first and last name in the box that asks for that. If you do, we can all see your name in your personal box at the meeting and it helps us take attendance.
- You will also be asked to enter your email in another box and that's about all you need to do to enter the meeting. I'll go over some of the other buttons once we start the meeting. The meeting should be over by noon, since we will not have a speaker at this meeting.



Meeting Dates and Cancellations

Regular Meeting Date (ON ZOOM)-

Thurs, November 5th – 11:00 am–Noon

Canceled! Thursday, December 10th – Holiday

Luncheon at The Tides PAFB

No meeting in January!

Regular Meeting Date (ON ZOOM)-

February 4th – 11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Speaker: Aging Matters



Need a laugh?



The dumbest thing I ever bought was a 2020 planner.

I was so bored I called Jake from State Farm just to talk to someone. He asked *me* what I was wearing.

2019: Stay away from negative people. 2020: Stay away from positive people.

The world has turned upside down. Old folks are sneaking out of the house & their kids are yelling at them to stay indoors!

This morning I saw a neighbor talking to her dog. It was obvious she thought her dog understood her. I came into my house & told my cat. We laughed a lot.

I need to practice social-distancing from the refrigerator.

Never in a million years could I have imagined I would go up to a bank teller wearing a mask & asking for money.

I hope the weather is good tomorrow for my trip to the Backyard. I'm getting tired of the Living Room.

I never thought the comment, "I wouldn't touch him/her with a 6-foot pole" would become a national policy, but here we are!

Does anyone know if we can take showers yet or should we just keep washing our hands?



Brevard Federation of Teachers-Retired Chapter News

OFFICERS

CALENDAR

President:	Joan Taddie jtaddie@cfl.rr.com	Thur, Nov. 5 - BFT-R meeting--on ZOOM 11:00-12:00
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	Next meeting - Feb. 4--on ZOOM Dues were due in Oct. to Sheila Cootes--\$30 for life members, \$76 for non-life members
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	

Membership Application

I want to join BFT/R for the 2020-2021 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 _____

How do you choose to receive your newsletter: _____ Email _____ Postal mail

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.**