



Broward Sierra News

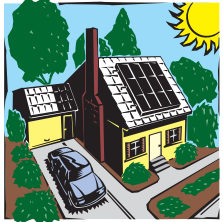


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THE PRICE OF GOING GREEN – Ina Oost Topper, Broward Excom Chair, and Education & Recycling Chair



We could have guessed that sooner or later (and as it turns out - sooner), the powers that be (read; big business, big \$\$ earning lobbyists, etc.) will find a way for us to pay for being more environmentally savvy and frugal.

In recent newsletters we discussed the prohibitive price of solar panels, i.e. the difficulty for many well meaning people to come up with the sizable lay-out for full roof panels. A price of \$20,000 + is not unheard of, when also taking into account installation, permits, etc. Knowing full well that this cost is almost never recovered when reselling one's residence (what's one to do, when a prospective buyer says, "I don't want panels, take them off the roof") there's now a NEW idea afoot with many electric companies to extract money from us.

Besides recent articles in the press mentioning several states banning the resale of extra residence generated solar power (yes, Florida, the Sunshine state, is one of them), we're now facing the threat from various utility sources to financially punish ALL solar power users. A recent Miami Herald OpEd article (Feb. 23rd) pointed out that "Monopoly utilities (like FPL) are understandably scared of losing their monopoly and the lucrative profits". Subsequently, there are currently talks going on between various power companies to actually implement a monthly \$50 fee (penalty?) for those who fall below a certain power company usage for their residence. One would think that, in a more positive way, power companies could actually

get into the business of selling and/or installing roof panels but, possibly, the risk of losing ever increasing future profits is speaking more loudly.

Aside from the utility & power subject, there's still the actual ordinance on the books in Florida stating that, 'no local city ordinance may be enacted regarding a ban on plastic bag usage' in its municipality. Surely, some plastic bag manufacturer must have been able to shrewdly get that on the books when we weren't watching.

In addition, speaking of a VERY current traffic gridlock issue in recent weeks here in South Florida, one also wonders who's benefiting from the millions (no - billions) of dollars spent on ever bigger, multiple layered highways and flyovers in South Florida. We'd think that this much money would have gone a long way towards improving and providing access to public transportation. Remember the extra penny sales tax voted for years ago? It didn't do much for increasing transportation options! (Our Miami Sierrans can vouch for THAT debacle.)

Also, the jury's still out on how to reduce the price of hybrid cars, or how to make charging the batteries easier, not to mention the not too environmentally-friendly batteries currently needed to install in a hybrid car.

Speak up, Sierrans, and other environmentalists! Keep track of local issues on the ballot related to public transportation, utilities and many other 'green' issues in your area. Go out and use your vote!

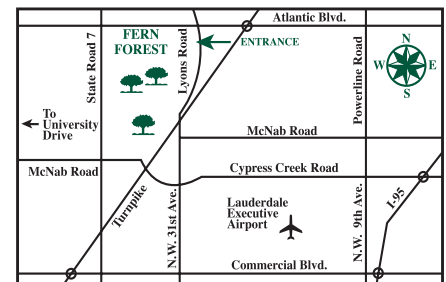
DID YOU KNOW? – by Barbara Ruge, Broward Sierra Excom Vice-Chair, and Transportation and CWA Liaison

The average driver spends 434 hours or 18 days on a 30-minute commute each year. South Florida Commuter Services helps promote ride sharing options in Miami-Dade, Broward, West Palm Beach, Martin and St. Lucie counties. All free of charge! Visit www.1800234RIDE.com or call 1-800-234-RIDE to discover your best commuting option. Source: Broward MPO

Broward Sierra Club's General Meetings - Each month we have an educational program on conservation or ecological issues.

DIRECTIONS: The Fern Forest Nature Center, 201 Lyons Road South, Coconut Creek, just south of Atlantic Blvd. on the west side of the street. (From the south, NW 31 Ave. becomes NW 46 Ave., and then Lyons Rd. as you pass under the turnpike.) Committee reports begin at 7:30, and the program begins at 8:00. The meeting is open to the public at no charge.

Thursday, April 2nd: After the committee reports, **Dr. Nicholas Aumen** of the USGS and former vice president of the San Francisco Sierra Club will be discussing **The Role of USGS Science in Restoring the Everglades**



The Broward Sierra News is available every month in electronic format at www.sierraclub.org/florida/broward/newsletters.

Additionally, to keep you apprised of current Broward Sierra Club issues, outings, speakers and events, they will be listed on our website: www.sierraclub.org/florida/broward. If you would like to receive reminders of these events e-mailed to you, **subscribe to our Yahoo newsgroup**. The address is: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BrowardSierra>. Simply click on the blue "Join this Group" icon and follow the instructions. You may have to create a Yahoo ID first, which is easy and free. This will also allow you to sign up for any of the other numerous Yahoo groups. Also like our **FaceBook page** at www.facebook.com/BrowardSierra.



Local Sierra Club Outings & Events

To preserve a place, you must believe in it.
To believe in it, you must see it.



YOU ARE INVITED TO A FUNDRAISING WINE TASTING PARTY

FOR THE BROWARD SIERRA CLUB

SATURDAY APRIL 11TH

WE WILL BE SAMPLING AMERICAN WINES AND
TASTY APPETIZERS TO SATISFY EVERYONE'S PALATE.

Our group is run by Sierra Club members who volunteer their time and hard work on local environmental issues, as well as on state and national levels. Unfortunately, like everything else, we need funds to help support our efforts.

We are asking for a donation of \$20.00 to attend this event. This price is comparable to commercially offered wine tastings. And all of the funds you donate will go toward our environmental conservation efforts. (Your donation is tax deductible.)

Come join us for a fun night out and a good cause! Please RSVP by April 8th.

Location: Total Wine at The Fountains in Plantation, 801 S. University Dr., Plantation, FL

When: Saturday April 11th at 6:30pm

Contact: Sue Caruso at 954-684-6747 or susan.caruso@att.net

Cost: \$20.00 (make checks out to Sierra Club Foundation - Broward Group). Please RSVP to Sue as soon as possible.

Donations will be appreciated even if you don't plan to attend.



OCT. 17, SAT. FAKAHATCHEE STRAND PRESERVE STATE PARK SWAMP WALK. Copeland, FL. Join us for a guided swamp walk in a lush environment filled with ferns and bromeliads. Learn what type of habitat is required to grow more native orchid species (including the famous ghost orchid) in a wilderness setting, than anywhere else in the U.S. Rated moderate due to uneven footing, mostly under water. Cost TBA. For more information contact Outing Leader: Jackie Fisher 954-434-2855 jsf812@bellsouth.net.



APR. 4, SAT. SHARK VALLEY FULL MOON BICYCLE RIDE AND FUNDRAISER. If you haven't done this before, you'll marvel at the beauty of the Everglades' open space and mysterious wildlife. During this 15 mile ride you will see the sun set and the moon rise. We'll start at 6pm. Cost \$10 and for your contribution we'll have delicious snacks at the lookout tower. Rated moderate. Leader: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 judykuchta@yahoo.com, Assist Manuel Monteiro 954-815-6230 manuel_monteiro@yahoo.com.



APR. 11, SAT. BROWARD SIERRA CLUB WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER. See above. Sue Caruso 954-684-6747 <susan.caruso@att.net>.

APR. 18, SAT. DAY KAYAKING/CANOEING AT ST. LUCIE INLET PRESERVE STATE PARK (near Stuart). This classic Florida barrier island is accessible only by boat, but it is worth the ride. A 3300 foot boardwalk takes visitors across mangrove forests and hammocks of live oaks, cabbage palms, paradise trees, and wild limes to a neatly preserved Atlantic beach. During the summer months, the island is an important nesting area for loggerhead, leatherback, and green turtles. We will paddle across the Intracoastal and then explore the tidal creeks. Afterwards, we'll have lunch and go for an ocean swim on a pristine secluded beach. \$3 members, \$5 non-members if you bring your own kayak or canoe. Rentals available. Bring a lunch to share. Leader: Chas Hunt 561-967-4770 loxoutings@comcast.net.



APR. 18-19, SAT. - SUN. FLORIDA'S NATURAL SPRINGS. Details are currently being developed. This will be a two day outing calling for an overnight stay. The goal is going on the famous Ichetucknee River north of Gainesville. Those participating in this outing will learn how these beautiful springs are being endangered. This will be a 5.5 hour trip and will call for carpooling. An effort will be made to invite other Sierran's from other groups. Please contact Darryl L. Rutz 954-892-1740 dmrtz2@msn.com if you are interested.



APR. 25, SAT. BAYNANZA ANNUAL BAY CLEANUP. Historic Virginia Key Beach Park 4020 Virginia Beach Drive, Miami, FL 33149. Clean-up coastal areas and mangrove islands from 9-12, then picnic in the park. We may use canoes for portions of this outing. Rating: easy to moderate. Contact the leader for location and more details. Leader: Mark Walters 305 632 7514 mark.walters@sierraclub.org

We would like to invite you to come on one of our fun and educational outings! If you have any questions about an outing, please check with the certified Sierra Outing Leader listed for the outing. Some of the outings need no experience; others require some level of proficiency. All participants are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the Liability Waiver before you choose to participate in an outing, contact the leader of the outing or go to <http://vault.sierraclub.org/outings/national/participantforms/forms/individual_waiver.pdf>. Florida Seller of Travel Ref. No. ST37115

Unless otherwise stated, the costs for each outing represent a best estimate of actual shared expenses, for food and transportation and other direct expenses.

For sign-up, payment and further information, please contact the outing leader.

LOOK FOR UPDATED INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITE: <www.sierraclub.org/florida/broward>

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet