



Broward Sierra News

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SIERRA CLUB ENDORSEMENTS – By Barbara Ruge, Broward Sierra Vice-Chair & Political Committee Chair

Broward Sierra is pleased to announce that Sierra Club has endorsed the Federal candidacies of **Rep. Alcee L. Hastings (D-20)**, **Rep. Lois Frankel (D-21)**, and **Rep. Ted Deutch (D-22)**, to the United States Congress for the 2016 election cycle. **The Florida Chapter supports their campaigns in appreciation for their demonstrated commitment to protecting America's environment.** You may look up the environment scorecard of Congress members by the environmental bills that came to a vote, made available from the League of Conservation Voters. The scorecard, which is made with input from a number of environmental organizations including Sierra Club, is an important tool in deciding federal level endorsements. It can be accessed at the following link: http://scorecard.lcv.org/sites/scorecard.lcv.org/files/2015_LCV_Scorecard.pdf

Florida's Primary Election is Tuesday August 30th. If you have not already Voted-By-Mail or in Early Voting (Aug 20-Aug 28), **please go to your designated poll on August 30th and VOTE!**

You can read the list of candidates competing for all political offices in Florida, by district, at this link: <http://dos.elections.myflorida.com/candidates/CanList.asp>

Check your Voter Registration Card for your Federal district and State Senate and State House districts AND your polling location.

Always look at the back of your ballot, and make sure you vote on all offices and initiatives. **Vote YES on Amendment 4, the SOLAR amendment.** This amendment guarantees if and when you upgrade your home or business to solar, you will not pay additional property taxes. **In November, vote NO on Amendment 1, the utility scam amendment. More on that later.**

The Sierra Club national accepts donations to its political PAC fund which is used to promote the campaigns of endorsed candidates. Our clean air and water challenges and preservation of our land and wildlife cannot be resolved without putting these and more environmental champions into public offices. Write your checks payable to Sierra Club PAC. They are not tax-deductible. Also, feel free to send donations directly to the endorsed candidates, knowing these candidates support progressive environmental issues. Go to their individual websites.

REMEMBER *GENERAL ELECTION* NOVEMBER 8th. Happy voting and good luck environmental candidates!

BIG SUGAR – By Ina Oost Topper, Broward Sierra Excom Chair

In August some of our Broward Sierra Excom members attended the Big Sugar Summit in West Palm Beach. What a learning experience it was... It turns out there's much more to this issue than we had thought from reading articles on the subject.

The big sugar companies here in Florida have played a major part in much of what's ailing in our fragile environment. What was once meant to help the small fry, is now benefiting the BIG fish much more than was intended. There were, and still are, good reasons for governmental subsidies to aid small farmers or agriculture in general. Were it not for some form of governmental oversight and assistance regarding vital staples for our everyday food needs, most of what we consume daily would have been subject to arbitrary market forces, totally lacking projections for nourishment needs, to sustain a well fed population.

Sugarcane is a longtime big crop for our state. The major sugar corporations have benefited quite nicely for decades from

government handouts and price protection, while at the same time ignoring the harmful side effects of grand scale cane sugar production. One culprit harming many of our residents is the constant cane burning in areas in or adjoining the Everglades. This scourge is now seriously affecting people living close to the fields. The everlasting clouds of smoke throughout the year cause black ash particles raining down on many neighborhoods, which has caused major respiratory ills - especially among children. We were all touched by one speaker, Kina Philips, a resident of an area much affected by burning, who eloquently enlightened us to this smoke



Broward Sierra Excom members at the Big Sugar Summit

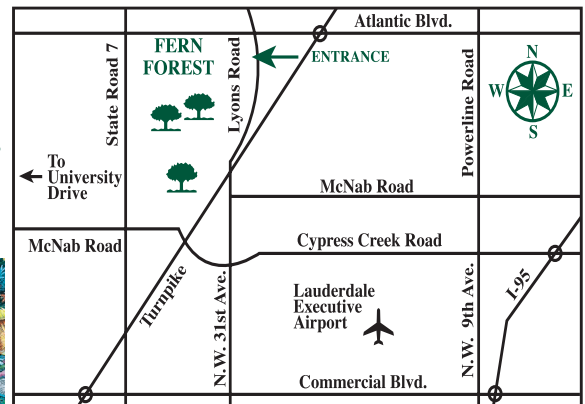
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Broward Sierra Club's General Meetings - The first Thursday of each month we have committee reports and an educational program on conservation or environmental issues.

DIRECTIONS: Fern Forest Nature Center, 201 Lyons Road South, Coconut Creek is 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, Sept. 1st: Our featured speaker will be **Peter Gies, transportation planner for the Metropolitan Planning Organization.** His talk will be on transportation projects planned for Broward County.

Thursday, Oct. 6th: Our featured speaker will be **David Stout, Natural Resources Specialist for Broward County.** His talk will be on environmental projects planned for Broward County, such as **beach re-nourishment, coral reef protection, etc.**



Local Sierra Club Outings & Events



SEPT 10, SAT. KAYAK, CANOE, SNORKEL AT INDIAN KEY. Indian Key, near Islamorada, is an interesting island with a fascinating history. It is also on a coral reef so the swimming and snorkeling are great. Lots of aquarium type fish to see. And the water is exceptionally clear. We have canoes available (for an extra charge), or bring your own paddle gear. Some paddling experience necessary. Bring water, lunch, sunblock, hat, camera and any safety gear you will need to enjoy the day. Rated moderate. Carpooling highly encouraged. \$20 members; \$25 non-members (\$15 w/own kayak/canoe). Leader: Mark Walters mark.walters@sierraclub.org, 305-632-7514.



SEPT 18, SUN. FORT LAUDERDALE SNORKEL AND GLASS BOTTOM BOAT TRIP. Experience the beauty of the underwater world just off our Ft. Lauderdale beach (which is threatened to be destroyed by the Port Everglades channel dredging in the spring of 2017. Sad but true. Remember what happened in Miami?) The snorkeling is in 7'-20' feet. Ability to swim is mandatory for snorkelers. If you want to stay dry, enjoy the view from the glass bottom boat. Please reserve early as space is limited. Cost: \$35 adult snorkelers, children less than 12 yrs \$21. Riders - adult \$28, kids \$15. Leader: Judy Kuchta judykuchta@yahoo.com 305-308-8913. Asst. Leader TBA.



OCT 15, SAT. WINE TASTING FUND RAISER. 6:30 - 8:30pm at Total Wine in the Fountains of Plantation at 801 S. University Drive. The theme is "A Taste of Adventure." This exciting class focuses on delicious wines crafted in the Southern Hemisphere. Featured wines include Argentine Malbec, Australian Shiraz and New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc. Tasty appetizers will be served. Donation: \$20. Please R.S.V.P. by October 10th to Sue Caruso at 954-684-6747 or susan.caruso@att.net.



NOV 5 - 6, SAT. - SUN. CAMPGROUND CAMPING AND KAYAKING/CANOEING ON FISHEATING CREEK. We'll meet at the campground Saturday morning and the outfitter will transport us and our boats to the put in point. Sunday, we can explore some of the trails. You may bring your own kayak/canoe or rent one. The outfitter's price for the transport is practically the same whether you bring your own vessel or rent from them. Suggested donation is \$55 per person for members, \$65 person for non-members if you will have two people in your boat. If you bring or rent a single kayak, the donation is \$75 per person members and \$85 per person non-members. \$30 per person for non-paddlers. This includes the campsite (Friday and Saturday nights if you wish), 3 meals (Saturday lunch and dinner and Sunday breakfast), upriver transport, and canoe/kayak rental, if applicable. RV sites are available at slight extra cost. Rated Moderate. Limit 24. If you wish, you may camp at our main campground campsite on Friday evening on your own - just provide your own meals. Leaders: Chas Hunt loxoutings@gmail.com 561-315-0677, Kaatje Bernabei kaatjebernabei@bellsouth.net 305-223-6551.



ANOTHER YEAR, ANOTHER PICNIC – By Ina Oost Topper, Broward Sierra Excom Chair



It has been our tradition to have an educational aspect to our yearly picnic. To this end, Max Goldstein gave us a useful presentation about the health benefits to ourselves AND to our planet, of eating more vegetables and less meat. Although the Sierra Club is not a vegetarian/vegan based organization, we thank Max for pointing out that it takes thousands of gallons of water to raise a cow to adult size, in order to supply an ample number of steaks, compared to using that same quantity of water for growing crops (and in a much shorter time). And that the updated USAD food pyramid shows a very small sized protein portion versus much larger vegetable and grain based portions, as part of our daily menus. Many TV programs and print articles on nutrition have been repeatedly stating that our daily portion of meat or fish only

needs to be the size of a deck of cards! And also suggests to, once a week, have a meatless day!

Something we added this year was to ask folks to bring their own unique vegetarian or vegan dish, and that we all would vote on the most creative dish served, with the winner to receive a cash prize. Well, it was a tie for first place - Renée Souza for her tasty vegan chile and Mary Ann Soltis for her vegan mango nut bread. So the cash prize was split 50-50. Coming in a close second was Allan Aunapu for his shitaki and spinach quinoa. Yummm. We all had a lot of fun with it, besides unanimously coming to the conclusion that ALL the dishes were impressively creative as well as most delicious! See you next year.... and bring a dish!

Go to www.sierraclub.org/florida/broward/photo-gallery for more photos from the picnic, the Big Sugar Summit and other events.

Big Sugar, continued from previous page



curse, now seriously affecting the health of the people in the area.

And while we know that fertilizer runoff from our many golf courses and

lawns is a major contributor to the now acute algae blooms all over Florida, the runoffs from the sugarcane fields seem to be as much of an issue - if not more so.

Another speaker, Betty Osceola, informed us that the Indian tribes of Florida have already started legal action, due to the fact that decades ago in an agreement between the federal government and the Indian tribes of Florida, assurances were given that ALL tribal lands within our

state should be kept free of ANY pollution affecting their tribal lands. Who knew? Thank you, Betty Osceola, for letting us know! United we'll stand....

While it's always easy to point out a problem, our task is also to find solutions. One of the things we learned: in Australia the big sugar corporations have successfully been using cane cutting machinery which blows the (now finely shredded) cane chaff back on to the field. Pray tell, why is this type of equipment not being used here? And, besides recycling the chaff in the field, we were made aware of a variety of uses for cane fiber too many to mention here. (Think: hemp residue made into fabric, etc.)

Time for us all to get on the sugarcane bandwagon! Something needs to be done....