



BROWARD SIERRA NEWS



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PLASTIC STRAW BAN

– Sue Caruso, Broward Sierra Excom Secretary

On Monday, September 17, the cities of Hallandale Beach and Deerfield Beach both held votes to ban the use and sale of plastic straws in their communities. I attended the Deerfield Beach meeting where most of the attendees were there for this agenda item. The speakers in favor of this ban ranged from environmentalists to concerned citizens and even some local restaurant owners. No one spoke against the ban. Speakers gave a variety of reasons for wanting the ban, including harm to the environment, excessive and unnecessary resource use, increased waste disposal, and chemical contamination that works its way up the food chain to human food. Vincent Bolocofsky of the Surfrider Foundation noted that not only are straws the second most common waste found during beach cleanups (second to cigarette butts), they have also been found stuck



[youtube.com/watch?v=4wH878t78bw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wH878t78bw)

in our coral reefs. One infamous example of how a single straw can harm a creature is the sea turtle found with a plastic straw wedged up its nose. There is also a study released in which pediatricians warn of the danger of

three types of plastic straws due to the leaching of chemicals into the liquid being consumed.

It seems hard to come up with a reason for not banning the straws, but Mayor Bill Ganz suggested it could be harmful to people with disabilities who need to use a "bendable" straw. He was also concerned about passing an ordinance that could not be enforced. With further discussion from the other commissioners, the vote came down to a 3-2 decision in favor of the ban. Mayor Ganz was the deciding vote in favor! It seems that Deerfield Beach wants to show their progressive side and will find a way to deal with the drawbacks of this ordinance. Happily, the City of Hallandale made the same choice!

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OUR YEARLY SIERRA BEACH PICNIC

– Ina Oost Topper, Broward Excom Chair

As always, another fun day at the beach in Dania with the Broward Sierrans. Even in the dead heat of summer, there's a nice breeze at the beach and we have our pavilion for shade.



In our continuing effort to educate people about the environmental impact their food choices are making, Max, our Treasurer, always likes to remind us how much of our earthly resources go into raising cattle, just for the sake of consuming ever more meat, or ever larger portions. And no, bringing up this topic is not meant to support the conversion of meat eaters to vegetarians. It is simply meant to point out the enormous resources that go into raising cattle to begin with: the grazing space needed, then the fodder for massive herds, and the water needed to grow the fodder and hay for all these cows. Let's face it, the simplest shortcut would be to use all that grazing acreage for growing veggies and grains to be eaten straight from the fields by us humans. Again pointing out that we all could very well eat some meat, but for adequate protein supplied by meat products a small portion just the size of a deck of cards is enough!

This picnic day we also had Cat Uden, campaign organizer from South Florida for Oceana and Surfrider member, speak about a variety of issues. It's always interesting, when we have a nice informal day like this, to note how much input many of our Broward Sierrans can come up with. Truly inspiring! Among other things, we all noticed that many environmental (if not most) issues are held hostage by politicizing the very issue itself in a variety of ways. Sometimes because the dollars needed for saving the environment are not a politically popular topic to be tackled by either local or regional candidates running for office. Other times, the local populace is too uninformed to put two and two together, hence a certain environmental concern never gets on the ballot.

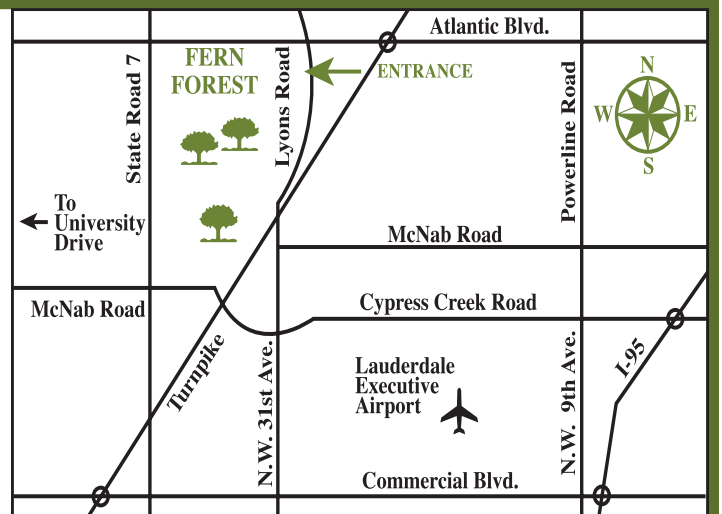
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Broward Sierra Club's General Meetings - The first Thursday of each month we have committee reports and an educational program on conservation or environmental issues.

DIRECTIONS: Fern Forest Nature Center, 201 Lyons Road South, in 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 follows. The meeting is open to the public at no charge.

Thursday, Oct. 4th: Stephanie Pearson from the League of Women Voters who will be our speaker. She will be explaining the many amendments on the November ballot that can make a huge difference. Become an informed voter!



LOCAL SIERRA CLUB OUTINGS AND EVENTS

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

NOV 17 - 18, SAT - SUN. CAMPGROUND CAMPING AND KAYAKING/CANOEING ON FISHEATING CREEK Fisheating Creek is the only free-flowing tributary to Lake Okeechobee. Framed by bald cypress swamps and hardwood hammocks, Fisheating Creek has long been valued for its scenic quality unmarred by houses and other human intrusions. Fisheating Creek is critical to the long-term welfare of Florida panthers, Florida black bears, swallow-tailed kites, whooping and sandhill cranes, crested caracara, and a number of other species native to the area. We'll camp in the campground and paddle along the creek, enjoying the scenery and the abundant wildlife, including deer, feral hog, Osceola turkey, and plenty of gators. Our outfitter will be www.fisheatingcreekoutpost.com. We'll meet at the campground on Saturday morning and the outfitter will transport us and our kayaks/canoes to the Burnt Bridge put in point. On Sunday, we can explore some of the trails along the creek. You may bring your own kayak/canoe or rent one. The outfitter's price schedule for the transport is practically the same whether you bring your own vessel or rent from them. *Suggested donation is \$55 per person members, \$65 person non-members if you will have two people in your boat. If you are bringing or renting 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 (both Friday and Saturday nights if you wish), 3 meals (Saturday lunch and dinner plus Sunday breakfast), upriver transport, and canoe/kayak rental, if applicable. RV sites are available at slight extra cost. Payment is due by October 28th. 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 561-739-3171, loxoutings@gmail.com; Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913, judykuchta@yahoo.com; Kaatje Bernabei 305-298-0277, kaatjebernabei@bellsouth.net; Max Goldstein 954-296-3411, maxgold@yahoo.com.



DEC 1 SAT. CANOE/KAYAK AT JOHN PRINCE PARK IN LAKE WORTH. 10am - noon. Morning paddling in the backwaters of John Prince Park. Suitable for beginners. See <http://discover.pbcgov.org/parks/Locations/John-Prince.aspx> for park details. Rentals possibly available. Rated Leisurely. Limit 10. *Suggested donation is \$3 members, \$5 non-members.* Leader: Ron Haines, 561-315-0528, RonaldHaines@bellsouth.net.



Plastic Straws, continued from previous page



Delray Beach, Hollywood and Dania Beach are also considering ways to reduce the use of plastic straws in their communities.

Does that mean we should all switch to paper straws? You should still consider the other detriments to your health from drinking through a straw, such as digestive distress from ingesting too much air and the increased risk of cavities due to concentrated exposure to sugary drinks. And, no matter what material a straw is made from, there is still a huge amount of resource use involved. So, before you reach for that straw, ask yourself "am I capable of getting that liquid into my mouth without a straw?" If you're like me, sometimes the answer is "no," but the alternative damage of using a straw, makes it worth the risk!

For those of you joining us for our December Holiday Party, we will be distributing free metal straws!

[Plastic Straws Not Just Bad for the Environment - Washington Post](#)

[Pediatricians Warn Against Using Plastic Numbers 3, 6, 7](#)

Picnic, continued from previous page

And then there's the money angle. "Follow the money" as we often hear nowadays. I hate to bring it up again the (yes, a personal pet-peeve) the still disastrous amounts of plastic bags being used by most supermarkets and other stores. Besides us environmentalists already having come a long way in bringing our own shopping bags to the stores, there's still the constant obstacle of no cashier, no store manager, no supermarket personnel trying to actively discourage each and every customer from getting it all 'bagged' in plastic, often in separate bags for each item. We heard it again: the peculiar ordinance, statewide in Florida, that prohibits local municipalities from bringing a stop to eliminating plastic bags. Coral Gables having been the first to go against the (wastage-)grain by banning plastic bags, is expecting appeal after appeal in the courts to do away with this rule. Now this is where we were informed by Cat Uden that yes, there ARE ways to circumvent the status quo. For instance, Hallandale Beach having creatively ruled that no styrofoam containers can be brought to the beaches, parks, etc. Now that's an example we can start with, and think creatively going forward. Readers: any suggestions? Please let us know!

We also found that most people had brought their own recyclable plates and silverware. Kudos to all of you. And as another gesture of setting an example, our Excom team handed out paper straws to set in motion a new way of thinking, just days ago started by Starbucks: **NO MORE PLASTIC STRAWS!**

Maybe there is a light at the end of the (plastic waste) tunnel!



Keep an eye on your email for information on our upcoming Excom election and our annual December holiday dinner and raffle.