

# POLK GROUP

Issue: 08-02

## FROM THE CHAIR...Paul Anderson

### A REASON FOR HOPE

Recent events concerning the Everglades Restoration Project have given us some hope that the Project may actually get back on track. In 2000 Florida and the U. S. Congress agreed to split the cost. To date Florida has committed more than \$2 billion to the Project, but last year appropriated only \$200 million. A reason to hope for an increased Florida contribution is that Gov. Crist said at the annual Everglades Coalition Conference he would ask the Legislature for increased funding in 2008. He may run into two problems: the economic downturn may limit the funds available in Florida and the second is that Crist may not be able to persuade the Legislature to increase funding, despite his good intention. He has not to date been forceful with the Legislature, and he has not submitted detailed plans to the Legislature regarding his goals. The devil is in the details and Crist has not been a details person.

The U. S. Congress has so far appropriated only a few million dollars. But in 2007 the Congress passed the Water Resources Development Act, over President Bush's veto, that included some \$1.8 billion for Everglades Restoration. The problem here is that President Bush may not spend the money approved. It could be that the Federal money may not be spent until a new president takes office in 2009.

Sierrans can help by writing their Florida legislators urging increased funding for the Everglades Restoration, and by writing their U. S. Congressional Representatives and Senators asking them to see that the Everglades funds approved are actually sent to Florida in 2008 for the Everglades Project. A short sample letter to your U. S. Congresspersons can be viewed at <http://www.sancapaudubon.org/index.html>. The past seven years have seen a continuous attack by President Bush on the environment from the north shore of Alaska to the southern tip of Florida. We may have hope for a renewed effort in Everglades restoration, but we still have a battle on our hands and every letter Sierrans write will help.



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## FEBRUARY 2008 NEWSLETTER

serving DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands and Polk County

### PROGRAM FOR FEBRUARY 14, 2008

**Growth Cap and Trade Proposal.** John Ryan will discuss a proposed November 2008 amendment to the Polk County Charter which will restrict the boundaries of growth, move new development into urban areas, and cap the total number of residences that can be permitted throughout the County.

### GROWTH MANAGEMENT REFERENDUM PROPOSAL

Below is the proposed language for Polk's Cap and Trade charter amendment which would control where residential growth occurs in our county. If we can obtain enough signatures on petitions, this referendum could appear on the Nov. 4, 2008 ballot.

In order to conserve wetlands, wildlife resources, and agricultural lands; promote the efficient use of public infrastructure funds, and discourage urban sprawl, shall the Polk County Charter be amended? The amendment shall cap the total residential units to levels that exist as of November 4, 2008, set Urban Development Boundaries to limit sprawl into rural areas, prevent cities from increasing density outside of the Urban Development Boundaries, and allow for the transfer of residential density from rural areas into urban areas. The provisions of this Charter Amendment shall apply to Polk County and its municipalities.

YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

If you're upset about the sprawling growth that's occurring in Polk, this is your chance to do something about it. See you on the 14th!

### AT A GLANCE

#### FLEXCOM In Disarray

The Florida Executive Committee of Sierra is experiencing a leadership crisis. Our groups will continue to function as they always have and National staff and committees will help us through this difficult period.

#### Recycling Rechargeable Batteries

Recently a very knowledgeable person said he thought rechargeable batteries were to be placed in the box for recyclables at curbside. Solid Waste says 'no - please.' If you don't want to hold on to those batteries until a Hazardous Waste Collection Event, just take them to your local Lowe's. There is a collection box there for batteries marked:

- Nickel Cadmium (Ni-Cd)
  - Nickel Metal Hydride (Ni-MH)
  - Lithium Ion (Li-ion) and
  - Small Sealed Lead (Pb) weighing less than 2 pounds
- Alkaline batteries may be disposed of in your regular trash.

## JANUARY PROGRAM BY PROGRESS ENERGY



Photo by Frances H. Coleman

In appreciation for a most interesting program Paul Anderson presents Greg Burkett a Polk Sierra t-shirt and Gail Simpson a tote bag. Energy efficiency and alternate energy were the major topics.

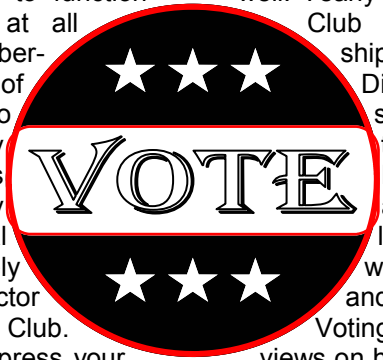
## NATIONAL CLUB ELECTION COMING THIS SPRING

The annual election for the Club's Board of Directors is now underway. Those eligible to vote in the national Sierra Club election will receive in the mail (or by Internet if you chose the electronic delivery option) your national Sierra Club ballot. This will include information on the candidates and where you can find additional information on the Club's website.

The Sierra Club is a democratically structured organization at all levels. The Club requires the regular flow of views on policy and priorities from its grassroots membership in order to function well. Yearly participation in elections at all Club levels is a major membership obligation. Your Board of Directors is required to stand for election by the membership. This Club policy and budgets at the national level and works closely with the Executive Director and staff to operate the Club. Voting for candidates who express your views on how the Club should grow and change is both a privilege and responsibility of membership.

Members frequently state that they don't know the candidates and find it difficult to vote without learning more. You can learn more by asking questions of your group and chapter leadership and other experienced members you know. Visit the Club's election website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/bod/2008election>. This site provides links to additional information about candidates, and their views on a variety of issues facing the Club and the environment.

You should use your own judgment by taking several



minutes to read the ballot statement of each candidate. Then make your choice and cast your vote. You will find the ballot is quite straightforward and easy to mark and mail. A growing number of members find the user friendly Internet voting option to be very convenient as well as saving postage.

... Marvin Baker, Chief Inspector of Election, Sierra

## IS A LED IN YOUR FUTURE?

Lighting accounts for 22% of the electricity we use in a year. Light-emitting diodes (LEDs) use 90% less energy than the standard incandescent bulbs we normally use and they last much longer. The US Department of Energy predicts that if we were to switch to LEDs in our homes, the savings would be ten billion dollars per year. If this peaks your interest read on.

Today the average home and business has a familiar mix of incandescent and florescent light bulbs. In the future the mix will be LEDs and compact florescent lights (CFLs). The CFLs are the spiraled bulbs that have already been discussed in the September 2007 issue. There are many differences between LEDs and CFLs; for example, LEDs are much smaller, will probably be bundled together and are more directional. They also come in several different colors, last longer and dim out over time rather than going bad all at once. I'm sure each type of lighting will develop its own niche.

Concerning the origin of LEDs: H. R. Round, a British scientist, first noticed that a semiconductor junction would produce light in 1906, but it wasn't until the early 1960s that much practical came of the discovery. You are most familiar with it now as the little red light in some electronic equipment that lets you know that the power is on or the green light in a calculator screen. How does it work? "A light-emitting diode (LED) is a semiconductor diode that emits incoherent narrow-spectrum light when electrically biased in the forward direction of the p-n junction" (Wikipedia, the free online Encyclopedia) - in other words you really don't want to know. What you do need to know is that it uses far less energy to operate and lasts far longer than the light bulbs we use now. This will save us money, reduce the need for foreign oil, and by reducing carbon dioxide emissions, significantly lower your carbon footprint to help prevent global warming.



Currently, in the early stages of development, the two biggest problems seem to be that the units are a bit pricy and, to some, the flickering is annoying. The price is an artifact of scale and will come down as has all electronic equipment and the flickering problem will be engineered out quickly.

Today you can see the start of the conversion as traffic lights and street lights are being replaced with the new technology. And let's not forget the new Christmas tree lights and other forms of outdoor illumination. For some, the future is here.

...Charles Geanangel

## STEWARDSHIP AT MACKAY GARDENS



Photo by Frances H. Coleman

Al and Gunn Honican clear trails in January. This cool weather is the ideal time to get involved in service projects. Join the fun!

## Sierra Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (optional): (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ F94Q W3311 1

Check One    **Individual**    **Joint**  
**Introductory**  \$25  
**Regular**         \$39         \$47  
**Senior**         \$24         \$32  
**Student**        \$24         \$32



Annual dues include subscription to Sierra (\$7.50) and chapter publications (\$1). Dues are not tax-deductible.

Please mail your check and this form to:  
**Sierra Club, PO Box 52968, Boulder, Colorado, 80322-2968**

## EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

For more activities/events, please visit our web site at <http://florida.sierraclub.org/polk/>

**2nd Wednesdays of the Month Through March**    **South Lake Howard Nature Park - Winter Haven.** Guided nature walk from 8:55 - 9:30AM. Call 863 291-5881 for additional details.

**2nd Thursdays of the Month Through March**    **Lake Hartridge Nature Park - Winter Haven.** Guided walks with emphasis on the stormwater treatment system from 3:55 - 4:30PM. Call 863 291-5881 for additional details.

**Feb. 10**    **Trek Ten Trails Guided Hike - SUMICA - 10 miles east of Lake Wales.** Observe wildlife ranging from gopher tortoises to deer to wading birds as we hike through habitats as diverse as wet flatwoods and riverine floodplain. Start 1:30PM - call Marian at 863 293-6961 for more details.

**Mar. 8**    **Trek Ten Trails Guided Hike - Gator Creek Reserve - north of Lakeland off Hwy 98.** Hike through pine flatwoods interspersed with cypress domes while, hopefully, observing deer, turkey, fox squirrels, and gopher tortoises. Start 9AM - call Marian at 863 293-6961 for more details.

### Service - These Saturday events are Ridge Ranger projects.

For start times and more details, call Lynne Flannery at 863 699-3742 or email [Lynne.Flannery@MyFWC.com](mailto:Lynne.Flannery@MyFWC.com)

**Feb. 23**    **Historic Bok Sanctuary - Lake Wales.** Stewardship.

**Mar. 1-2**    **Lake Kissimmee State Park - Lake Wales.** Camping and Conservation. Enjoy a morning workday followed by an evening of good company, grilled goodies and fresh air.

**Mar. 15**    **TNC'C Tiger Creek Preserve - Babson Park.** Stewardship.

**Mar. 29**    **Historic Bok Sanctuary - Lake Wales.** Stewardship.

Winter Haven, with the assistance of a grant from the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program, has purchased 12 kayaks. Participate in the following events and learn to kayak as you clean up waterbodies in the Peace River watershed. For confirmation of details call the Natural Resource Division at 863 291-5881.

**Mar. 22**    **Cardboard Boat Races - MLK Park, Lake Silver - Winter Haven.** 10AM - noon. Primarily an instruction session.

**Apr. 5**    **Sunset Celebration - McDock, Lake Howard - Winter Haven.** 3PM-sunset.

**Apr. 19**    **Chain of Lakes Challenge Take-Out, Lake Hartridge - Winter Haven.** 8:30-10AM

**Apr. 26**    **Project EAGLE - Lake Shipp Park - Winter Haven.** 8AM-noon. Kayaks are a great way to access and pick up trash at the lake's edge.

In order to participate in one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver which will be furnished at the beginning of the outing. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/> or call 415-977-5528. In the interests of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel. Please note that some of the above listed activities are events that we think you will find interesting and fun, but they are not official outings.





**Sierra Club**  
**Polk Group - Florida Chapter**  
 P.O. Box 7544  
 Winter Haven, FL 33883

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Members should send **changes of address** to: Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968  
 or [address.changes@sierraclub.org](mailto:address.changes@sierraclub.org)

**FEBRUARY MEETING**  
 Thursday, February 14, 2008

**PROGRAM:**

**Growth Cap and Trade Proposal  
 A Unique Approach for a Charter County**

**By**

**John Ryan**

*General Meeting and Executive Committee  
 Meeting Run Concurrently*

Join us for our pot-luck suppers at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month. Bring a dish to share, a drink and your utensils. Dress is casual. **The meeting will start around 7:15 p.m.**

**Meetings are held at the Audubon Nature Center, 115 Lameraux Rd., Winter Haven.** From the traffic light at the intersection of Hwy. 540 (Cypress Gardens Blvd.) and Cypress Gardens Road (look for the Shell station and Blockbuster Video) - Turn east onto C.G. Road and follow around sharp right hand turn & then sharp left hand turn. After left hand turn, Lameraux is fourth road on left, two blocks west of Garden Grove Elementary School. Distance from the light to the Nature Center is about 2.3 miles. (Phone 324-7304)

Web Site: <http://florida.sierraclub.org/polk/>

**LOVE  
 IS IN THE AIR**

Valentine's Day is almost upon us - do you have a unique and appropriate remembrance selected yet? A nesting box carries with it the qualities of caring and concern that will show just what a sensitive type you are! These cypress wood boxes are yard or lake appropriate and are very easy to put up. A minimum donation of \$50 is requested and all monies in excess of costs will be donated to the Richard Coleman Scholarship Fund. Contact Bob at 863 439-2251 or Frances at 863 956-3771 for immediate delivery.



*Photo by Bob Taylor*

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