

POLK GROUP

Issue: 07-11

FROM THE CHAIR...Al Greulich

"GOING, GOING, BUT NOT GONE" This will be my last "From the Chair" as my two-year term as Group Chair will end in December. I thank all those who called to let me know that they have enjoyed my regular column in our newsletter, and I will miss writing it. You will continue to enjoy this "department" from the next Chair I am sure.

I experienced a myriad of environmental issues and concerns as Chair, and have learned a great deal from our faithful members about the pressing issues facing Natural Florida. Our members have a deep seated love of this land that was the first bastion of European influence in this hemisphere. We truly have something unique here in nature, geography, and history in this "Land of Flowers" as Ponce de Leon so aptly named our peninsula.

My greatest concern as an environmentalist has been the preservation of the beautiful natural places still remaining in Florida. As Chair, I have made establishing an environmental lands acquisition program for Highlands County my highest priority and still have hope that this will come to fruition. I could not want anything more for this Sierra Group than to be the impetus that sparks



Photo by Frances H. Coleman

Highlands activists at the October meeting shared their enthusiasm for a stronger local environmental lands program. There are many other activists who could not attend the meeting but who have contacted the Group leadership and expressed support. Ben and Cyndi Oswald have volunteered to serve as local contact coordinators; call 863 471-0211 or email Cynthia.treehugger@gmail.com and get involved! Let the Group leadership know how it can help.

the fire to establish such a preservation program.

Our October meeting in Sebring was a big success! We had a good number of local activists attend and the one and only thing on their minds was wanting what Polk and over twenty other counties have: a local and financially potent source of funds for Highlands County's environ-

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NOVEMBER 2007 NEWSLETTER

serving DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands and Polk County

PROGRAM FOR NOVEMBER 8, 2007

Tenoroc and the Upper Saddle Creek Restoration Project. Join us for a power point progress report which will include an overview of Tenoroc FMA and an update on the USC completed restoration efforts, proposed restoration projects, recreational opportunities, and potential land trades. Opportunities for Sierra support of FWC's and DEP's objectives will be identified.

AT A GLANCE

Immediately after the Nov. meeting the order will be placed for the **Polk Group's royal blue t-shirts** with Paul Schulz's wood ducks on the front. This is not a fund-raiser as such but donations in excess of costs will be gratefully accepted and forwarded to the scholarship fund. The cost for a shirt up to X L is approximately \$10 and for XX L it will be \$11.50. The shirts will be finished in time for Christmas giving.



The Winter Haven to Lake Alfred Trail will be open by late December; the 'official' opening will probably be in early January.

The **2007 Florida Folk Festival** will be Veterans Day weekend, Nov. 9-11 at the Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park. This is a three-day celebration of the music, dance, stories, crafts, and food that make Florida unique. This year's theme is the 500 years of cattle raising in the Sunshine State. Note the change from Memorial Day weekend - most likely an excellent weather-related decision. Come to the meeting and find some other interested folks to carpool.



Double Pronged Urgency! Wood ducks are pairing up for nesting season and you have gifts to buy for those who have everything. Help the cavity nesters and solve your dilemma by placing an order with Carpenter Bob for a beautiful **cypress wood nesting box**; a minimum donation of \$50 for a small box and \$60 for a large box is requested - a box can be shipped within the state for approximately \$15. All monies in excess of costs are donated to the Richard Coleman Scholarship Fund at New Col-

(Continued from page 1) From the Chair....

mentally sensitive lands. Highlands' current impact fee funded program simply does not generate sufficient funds for much acquisition. This is an issue that needs to be "taken and run with" by citizens of Highlands County, not Polk people. We in Polk are so proud of the interest shown at the meeting at Homer's buffet on October 11th. Highlands folks can make this happen: organize yourselves and we will give you all the expertise we have. Some of our members are experts at establishing these programs. Look over the caption under the photo and write down the email address and phone number of activist Ben and Cyndi Oswald. They are willing to coordinate emails and communications, but certainly can not be expected to be the only spokespersons for this effort. Get in touch and share your ideas and get this under way.

I have visited your gorgeous preserves and seen some of your beautiful lands that warrant protection. They are not yet gone but could be going unless more funding comes forth to preserve them. And I am going as your Chair, but certainly will not be gone, as I hope to stay on our Executive Committee and continue as an environ-



The October 6th Kick-off Celebration of the Friends of the Parks Foundation's new Trek Ten Trails Program drew over 1000 participants in spite of the soggy weather. Participants enjoyed lots of door prizes (Frances Coleman won a GPS unit!), great exhibits and vendors as well as free stuff including hiking sticks, back packs and snacks.

John Ryan, above, supplies answers and hand-outs to an excited and curious crowd.

EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

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

2nd Wednesdays of the Month Through Dec. **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 Dec. **Lake Hartridge Nature Park - Winter Haven.** Guided walks with emphasis on the stormwater treatment system. Call 863 291-5881 for additional details.

Nov. 10 **Trek Ten Trails Guided Hike - Lakeland Highlands Scrub.** At 9AM join Florida Trail Association volunteer leaders for a hike through one of the largest undeveloped scrub communities on the Lakeland Ridge; this habitat is home to rare plant species, gopher tortoises, eastern indigo snakes, and Florida scrub-jays. This hike is one of eight planned activities offered in conjunction with Polk County Family Week 2007. (See uwcf.org for more info on other planned events). From I-4 east or west, take the Polk Parkway (SR 570); take exit 9 at Lakeland Highlands Road South - continue south onto the unpaved portion. Escape from your busy schedule and take time to share a beautiful Florida moment with your family. Find out more about this activity at www.friendsoftheparks.net or call Marian at 863-293-6961.

Dec. 8 **Trek Ten Trails Guided Hike - Hickory Lake Scrub.** See rare species up close from two short loop trails. Start 9AM - call Marian at 863 293-6961 for more details.

Jan. 13 **Trek Ten Trails Guided Hike - Crooked Lake Prairie.** Stroll sandy trails through ancient sand dunes - habitat for Florida scrub-jays. Start 1:30PM - call Marian at 863 293-6961 for more details.

Service - These Saturday events are Ridge Ranger projects.

The Nov. 17 and Dec. 1 and 8 sessions start at 9AM and the Dec. 15 session starts at 8AM at their respective sites. If you want more details, call Lynne Flannery at 863 699-3742 or email Lynne.Flannery@MyFWC.com

Nov. 17 **Flamingo Villas - tract of the Lake Wales Ridge National Wildlife Refuge in Sebring.** Trash/debris removal.

Dec. 1 **Kissimmee River Eco-tour and Butterfly Garden Workday - Riverwoods Field Lab in Lorida.** Visit riverwoods.ces.fau.edu/ .

Dec. 8 **The Lake Wales Ridge State Forest: Arbuckle Tract - Frostproof.** Trash Removal

Dec. 15 **Historic Bok Sanctuary - Lake Wales.** Stewardship.

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
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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

NOVEMBER MEETING
 Thursday, November 8, 2007



PROGRAM:

POWER POINT PROGRAM:
Tenoroc Overview and
Progress Report on the Upper Saddle Creek
Restoration

By
Danon Moxley, Manager, Tenoroc FMA, FWC
 and **Tim King,**
Reclaimed Habitat Specialist, FWC

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/>

Sierra Membership Application

Name _____

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| <i>Check One</i> | Individual | Joint |
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| Senior | <input type="checkbox"/> \$24 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$32 |
| Student | <input type="checkbox"/> \$24 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$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

2007 POLK SIERRA GROUP

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