

## HELP US TAKE OUR COMMUNICATIONS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Did you know that our website gets thousands of visitors each year? Our monthly e-newsletter goes out to over 1,100 members and subscribers. Plus our printed newsletter goes out 6 times per year to more than 1,800 members and is handed out at meetings, workshops and events. Amazing isn't it! Unfortunately, your membership dues do not cover the full expense of the work we do to inform you and the public.

- **Social Media/Publicity:** We are embarking upon a social media/publicity campaign to enhance effectiveness in our environmental actions and raise Sierra's profile in the community. This initiative has required additional paid professional services to best accomplish these goals.

- **Newsletter:** One of our largest yearly expenses is maintaining our bi-monthly newsletter, printing and postage. While other Sierra groups have been forced to use only electronic communications, we remain committed to producing a periodic mailed hard copy newsletter for those members who prefer them as well as providing printed versions to the media, elected officials, public libraries, and attendees at workshops and programs.

**We need your help.** A generous donor has agreed to contribute a portion of the cost with monthly contributions in 2018 with the proviso that we seek additional matching donations. 3 more contributors at \$50 per month will cover the cost of the social media professional through 2018. Your one time or monthly donation can enable us to get the word out about the important work of Sierra Club - on climate change and sea level rise, tree preservation, habitat conservation and many other issues of concern for our world.

Please give what you can by donating by check payable to: **Sierra Club, Northeast Florida** (not tax deductible); or **The Sierra Club Foundation, Northeast Florida Group** (tax-deductible). Mail to: Sierra Club, Northeast Florida Group; 6028 Chester Ave. Suite 103; Jacksonville, FL 32217. Or go to our website [sierraclub.org/Florida/northeast-Florida](http://sierraclub.org/Florida/northeast-Florida) and click the "Donate" button. Please indicate "social media" in the message field.

## WHY I HIKE

By: *Bill Armstrong*

This question often comes up in online forums, family gatherings, or just casual chat: Why do you hike?

The question at first seems pretty

silly to me, but then, when I think about it, it seems like a pretty good question.

Why DO I leave my family for weeks at a time, drive or fly to a remote point on the Appalachian Trail, the Florida trail, or somewhere else, and carry a 35 pound backpack up and down mountains or through swamps for weeks?

An unofficial Appalachian Trail website survey found that about 50% of respondents checked "Get closer to nature" as one of their reasons. Getting away from problems, people, or the modern society were also selected. Many picked hiking for spiritual or religious reasons.

So what is it for me? Answering that question requires a bit of introspection. I didn't even start doing this until three years ago when I retired, but I always had a yearning to hike the Appalachian Trail. So one of my reasons is just to follow that calling. I also enjoy the wonderful people I meet on the trail, getting out in nature, enjoying the vistas after a hard climb, simplifying my life for a while—all these are aspects of backpacking that I like.

But, as I think about it, there are two aspects that keep drawing me back. First, is the spiritual experience I often have of being in a huge cathedral. Walking through a huge live oak forest in Florida, or in a tall, old growth stand of hemlock pines in Georgia, or among the huge redwoods in Muir Woods on the West Coast, fills me with awe. The majesty of the woods is magical!

The other is the sense of being on a pilgrimage. Most great literature involves the myth of the pilgrimage, so it's not surprising that this notion of a journey appeals to me so strongly. Encountering obstacles, meeting people, and having lots of "alone" time all provide opportunities for meditation, growth, renewal, and peace along the journey.

What more could I ask?



## Executive Committee

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# Sierra Club Outings

No pets allowed on outing except where designated in the outings description. Outing participants are required to sign a waiver and release of liability at the start of the outing. The waiver can be found at: [sierraclub.org/outings/national/participantforms/forms/individual\\_waiver.pdf](http://sierraclub.org/outings/national/participantforms/forms/individual_waiver.pdf)

### JOIN US ON MEETUP: OUTINGS HAVE BEEN FILLING UP FAST!

For the most up to date information and to ensure your spot, join our MeetUp site. Details of all outings can be found there with easy access to programs and interactions, or check our website.

[www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group](http://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group)

### Saturday, December 2, 10:00 a.m.: Hike Ft. George Island to Kingsley Plantation

We'll start at the famous Ribault Club on Ft. George Island and hike to Kingsley Plantation. Along the way, we'll climb Mount Cornelia (elevation 64 feet), the highest point in this coastal region. We'll also visit the once-busy port at Point Isabel. We'll spend an hour or so visiting Kingsley - enough time to take the free audio tour - then return. Total distance is about five miles. After our hike, we can eat at the great Sand Dollar.

Directions; Meet in the parking lot of the Ribault Club at 11241 Fort George Road, Fort George Island, Florida. From Jax, take I-295 East Beltway north. After crossing the Dames Point Bridge, exit right to Heckscher Drive/Rt 105. Drive for about 9.5 miles. The entrance to Fort George Island is on the left shortly after the Mayport Ferry. After turning on Fort George Road, at the fork bear to the right towards the Ribault Club. Drive about 1.5 miles until you see the Ribault Club on your right. Park in the lot on your left. Bring water, bug spray, and sunscreen. No pets, please. OK for older kids who can keep up with adults. RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Bill Armstrong, armsfam@yahoo.com.

### Saturday, December 9, 10:00 a.m.: Kayak Julington Creek

Let's kayak down beautiful Julington Creek and go to Clark's Fish Camp for a great lunch. After lunch, you can either paddle back to the start on your own or shuttle from Clark's back to the start to get your car. I'll leave an extra car at Clark's for the shuttle. Maybe someone else can leave one, too. We'll put in at the Palmetto Leaves Park, 13799 Old St. Augustine Road, across from the Shoppes at Bartram Park shopping center (1/2 mile north of I-95). There is adequate parking and a launch via floating dock. We'll help each other down to the dock (50 yards or so).

Kayak rentals are available through Jax Paddle Sports for \$35. Call (904) 861-9314. Bring bug repellent and water. PFD and whistle required. You must WEAR your PFD. Please be there by 9:30 a.m. to unload and get ready. RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Bill Armstrong, armsfam@yahoo.com.

### Sunday, December 10, 10:00 a.m.: Hike the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve

Join me in hiking two of the beautiful trails at the Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve: the Spanish Pond Trail and the Hammock Trail. This hike will traverse over wooded ancient dunes of maritime hammock onto even hillier Timucuan shell mounds reaching a high point and vista before returning to the trailhead. The hike is rated from easy to moderate.

Directions to the trailhead: Drive north on I-295E to exit 47, turn right on Monument Rd, proceed 4 miles and turn right on Ft. Caroline Road, after .22 miles turn left to stay on Ft. Caroline Road, then proceed .71 miles to the trailhead on the right. The address is 12713 Ft. Caroline Road and it is located directly across from the entrance to the preserve visitors center. Please arrive by 9:45 for a briefing before the hike. Bring water and insect repellent. Children capable of hiking a distance of 3.5 miles (2.5 hours) are welcome. No pets please. After the hike we can have lunch, if you like, at the Mudville Grill at 1301 Monument Rd. RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Richard Yelton at rap-tor43@juno.com.

### Connect With Us Online

**E-mail:** [ne-editor@florida.sierraclub.org](mailto:ne-editor@florida.sierraclub.org)  
**Web:** <http://florida.sierraclub.org/northeast>  
**Meetup:** [www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group](http://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group)  
**Facebook:** <http://tinyurl.com/29v9hsd>  
**Twitter:** <http://twitter.com/sierranefl>

Sunday, December 17, 9:00 a.m.: Hike Julington-Durbin Preserve

Join us on a 4 to 5 mile hike in the beautiful Julington-Durbin Preserve. The Preserve is on a peninsula between Julington and Durbin Creeks and contains sand hill, flatwood, and floodplain swamp and marshes.

The address is 13200 Bartram Park Blvd. From Old St. Augustine Road in Bartram Park, go south on Bartram Blvd. for about 0.7 mile. Entrance to the trail-head is on the right. There is a wooden sign for the park at the entrance, and we will have our green and white Sierra sign out as well.

Porta-Potties are available, but no other facilities. We will meet at the end of the parking lot. Arrive by 8:45 to allow time for our pre-hike sign-in, introductions, and hike information.

Bring bug spray, sun block, and water. No pets, please. Children capable of hiking the distance are welcome. Participation is limited to 30 hikers. After the hike, we can go to lunch. RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Mike DiAngelo at [mfdiangelo@gmail.com](mailto:mfdiangelo@gmail.com).

Saturday, January 13, 9:00 a.m.: Friendly Morning Paddle - St. Augustine

Let's kayak St Augustine Bayfront in the early morning and then enjoy breakfast / lunch at an area restaurant after we pack up. Approximately a 2-3 hour paddle total.

Join us for a fun filled full morning of kayaking, food and friends on the beautiful landscape of the oldest city. The day will begin at the Vilano boat ramp launch and in water by 9:00 a.m. (Please arrive by 8:30 to prepare and review).

We will then paddle to Hospital Creek and the Bayfront, do some exploring, and return to Vilano ramp to load back up....then on to refuel. A great way to begin the day with positive people.

Directions: From A1A (San Marco Ave) in St. Augustine, turn east on the Vilano Causeway. The boat ramp is about .75 miles on the right. From A1A in Ponte Vedra Beach, head south on A1A. Cross the bridge toward St. Augustine. The boat ramp is on the left in about .5 miles. Bring your own kayak, water, and PFD. You must wear your PFD. RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Rick Knowles at [rtnowles@aol.com](mailto:rtnowles@aol.com).

Saturday, January 20, 9.30 a.m.: Hiking on UNF trails

Explore the varied trails of UNF with views of flatwoods, wetlands, and Lake Surprise and Lake Oneida in this oasis of nature near the hustle and bustle of the city. We'll hike about 3 to 4 miles.

DIRECTIONS: Meet in the parking lot of the Parking Permit Building 52 near the west entrance to UNF about a half mile east of the I-295 East Beltway. This is the entrance that continues east from Town Center Road. You'll see a building on your right where parking permits are purchased. (You don't need a permit on Saturday). Please bring water, lunch and bug spray. No pets please. Restrooms available. Please RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Brian Paradise at [bgparadise@comcast.net](mailto:bgparadise@comcast.net)



**Join the Sierra Club**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!**



Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.  
 Please charge my:  Visa  Mastercard  AMEX  
 Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Card Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
<b>Special Offer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>\$25</b>	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)

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# *Executive Committee Candidates*



## *Vijay Satoskar*

The reason for Vijay's Sierra Club Executive Committee membership is to provide the science perspective to the committee. Most of the decisions made by governing agencies today are based on their political or business perspectives, with scientific considerations given a much lower priority in today's science-skeptic political world. Vijay would like to provide the importance of science perspective to our executive committee and local Sierra Club Chapter.



## *Pam Kermati*

Pamela has had a lifelong passion for the protection of the environment and has supported environmental laws and policy since the 1970s. She became a Sierra Member in 2006 and has been an active participant in our local Sierra Club Outings. Pamela supports the Sierra Clubs efforts to protect the air, land, and waterways; to enjoy the health benefits to explore the outdoors; and work with our communities to ensure a clean energy future for all.

As an educator, now retired, Pamela frequently taught her students about the wonders and protection of our natural world. She devoted lessons on the environment, protection of endangered species, the Florida Aquifer, etc., throughout my long 38 year career. Pamela continues to share environmental concepts with adults as an Educational Ed-ventures Committee member at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute a Division of Continuing Education at UNF.

Pamela regularly corresponds with our Florida representatives federal, state and local to keep the pressure on concerning topics on behalf of the environment. She has spoken before the St. Johns County Commissioners and Planning & Zoning Council on the rapid growth of the county asking for corridors to connect land and water access for wildlife and to protect dark night sky.

Through hiking and kayaking with her local Sierra Club Community, she has learned of the wide variety of resources in the community. As a member of the Executive Committee, Pamela would strive to continue the advocacy of the goals of the Sierra Club. It would be an honor for her to serve our community as a member of the Executive Committee for our local Sierra Club.



## *Joel Roberts*

Joel was born and raised in St. Louis Missouri and graduated from Perdue University in 1965 with a BS degree in electrical engineering and a commission to ensign into the United States Navy. Following his 1988 Naval retirement, various companies employed Joel in the Washington D.C. area for 22 years; each of which provided engineering and management support services to Navy shipbuilding programs.

Joel considers his "real" retirement in 2010 when he and his wife Sharon left their jobs to become full time grandparents. Shortly after visiting Port Orange, he and his wife stopped to explore Jacksonville. She found a house she liked and they made an offer and found their little slice of paradise at last!

Joel and his wife acclimated to Florida immediately. They continued to marvel at the beauty of the natural environment that surrounds us. Their sense of serendipity began to get cloudy when they learned that Florida was facing a commercial onslaught that threatened the newfound paradise. This threat was specifically fracking and seismic testing off of the Florida coastline. To say that Joel felt threatened was a complete understatement.

Shortly after absorbing this bad news, he attended a "Right Whale Festival" at Jacksonville Beach. It was there that Joel stumbled upon a Sierra Club booth and met Brian Paradise. This meeting resulted in Joel's assimilation of the club and he now knows that the Sierra Club has a lot of kindred souls that are fighting back against threats of fracking, seismic testing, and other unspeakable environmental evils. Joel would like nothing more than to be a part of this revolutionary executive committee in order to help protect the natural spaces that we all appreciate so dearly.



# Executive Committee Election Ballot

Take advantage of this opportunity to vote for your own local Executive Committee members. There are three positions open this year. Households with a single membership, use box #1. Households with a joint membership, use box #1 and box #2. Cut this page on the dotted line, vote, put your ballot in an envelope, and mail to: **ExCom Election, c/o Brian Paradise 13 Arbor Club Drive # 315, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082.**

Please keep your membership number intact on the reverse side so we know that you are a Sierra Club member with the right to vote in this election. **Ballots must be received by December 21.** Please review the candidate profiles on the adjacent page.

## Vote for Three

**Vijay Satoskar**

**1**

**2**

**Pam Kermati**

**1**

**2**

**Joel Roberts**

**1**

**2**

# Meeting Calendar

**Monday, December 18 @ 6:30pm**  
**Combined Executive Committee and Conservation Committee Meeting**  
*South East Branch Public Library Meeting Room*  
*10599 Deerwood Park Blvd.*  
*Jacksonville, FL 32256*

**Monday, December 15th @ 6:00 pm**  
**Jacksonville Holiday Program**  
Ocean Grove Clubhouse- PV Beach  
(please RSVP)

**Monday, December 4th @ 6pm**  
Ponte Vedra Program  
Ponte Vedra Beach Public Library

*"The future will either  
be green or not at all"*

*-Bob Brown*



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Jacksonville, FL 32217

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## General Programs

Visit our websites for maps to all meeting locations:  
[florida.sierraclub.org/northeast](http://florida.sierraclub.org/northeast)  
[www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group](http://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group)

**Jacksonville Program**  
**Monday, December 15th 6:00 pm**

**Ponte Vedra Program**  
**Monday, December 4th @ 6pm**

### Protecting Florida's Coast from Oil Drilling

Let's celebrate our accomplishments of the year and each other, ya' hear?

Where: Ocean Grove Clubhouse, Ponte Vedra Beach  
(about 5 miles south of Butler Blvd on A1A)  
Time 6:00-?

Bring: Hors d'oeuvres of your choice, and your own "set-ups" (plates, cups and utensils), and a chair if you wish.

We will provide drinks and fun.

Particulars- We will mingle and eat starting at 6:00.  
At 7:00 we will play Team Climate Change Challenge.  
Valuable Prizes! (OK, OK, it is Sierra Club stuff).

**RSVP at <https://goo.gl/forms/UOba9vyPDfZJOPrp2>**

For questions call Janet L at 904-710-3800

Erin Handy of Oceana will make a presentation on the current proposals of the federal government to allow the oil and gas industry to drill for oil and gas off the coasts of Florida, and the risks that these proposals pose to marine life, healthy oceans, clean beaches, our coastal economies and to our quality of life. Erin will also outline steps that citizens can take to oppose such proposals.

*All members and non-members are welcome.*

The program will be held in the main meeting room of the Ponte Vedra Beach Public Library at 101 Library Boulevard (at intersection with A1A) in Ponte Vedra Beach.

For further information please e-mail Brian Paradise at [bgparadise@comcast.net](mailto:bgparadise@comcast.net)