



*Black Friday chilling: Sierrans at Tillie Fowler Park (photo by Bill Armstrong)*

## Sierrans opt for nature on Black Friday, joining national movement

In sharp contrast to the hustle and bustle of the traditional day-after-Thanksgiving shopping spree, a group of Sierrans opted for a mellow Black Friday hike in Jacksonville's Tillie Fowler Regional Forest.

"This was the third year we've done it," said Bill Armstrong, the Sierra group's outings chair.

About 19 people attended.

Other Jacksonville conservation-

focused organizations were outside as well, enjoying a picture-perfect day and a feel-good antidote to the start of the shopping season.

Black Friday hikes were started three years ago by the outdoors chain REI with the hashtag #optoutside,

In contrast to most to businesses, REI stores were closed and employees were paid for their time enjoying nature.

- ExCom elections this month, see page 2.
- Hadrian's Wall, wild plants, see page 3
- Club seeks new treasurer, see page 4

## Our values show in final tallies from election

By Janet Stanko

The mid-term elections showed a clear and positive trend for the environmental issues that represent the Sierra Club's core values.

Although the U.S. Senate and Florida governor posts were won by candidates not known for their environmental concern, one significant constitutional amendment—the ban on offshore oil drilling—passed overwhelmingly.

Environmentally aware candidates whom we endorsed did win the state agricultural commissioner's race as well as local offices in St. Augustine and in Jacksonville Beach.

Keep in mind that our club does not make endorsements based on political party. Our election recommendations and endorsements center on the people and issues we think will work towards protecting the environment.

Our Sierra volunteers put in time, money, and work to elect people who will stand up for the environment. We won some and we lost some. We set a good, positive precedent for our cause.

### Next up, Tallahassee

The state legislative session starts March 3 and we will have a presence there.

Before the session begins, however, club representatives will

*See elections on Page 4*

## Who we are

### *Executive Committee*

**Chair** Janet Stanko  
janestan@bellsouth.net  
**Treasurer** Ed Schlessinger  
eds.greenmail@gmail.com

### **Members**

Cindy Baker  
cindysbaker@gmail.com  
Logan Cross  
jlogancross3@gmail.com  
Pam Keramati  
kemap@me.com  
Joel Roberts  
joelroberts@me.com  
Vijay Satoskar  
satoskarvv@yahoo.com  
Lisa Williams  
lisaow@gmail.com

### *Committee chairs*

#### **Conservation**

*Volunteer! Call 904.990-3191*

#### **Environmental Education**

Julianne Mammana  
jmm094@bucknell.edu

#### **Outings**

Bill Armstrong  
armsfam@yahoo.com

#### **Legislative**

*Volunteer. Call 904.990.3191*

#### **Legal**

Ken Wright  
ken@jacobsonwright.com

#### **Newsletter**

Robert Blade  
rblade@gmail.com

#### **Website**

Bill Armstrong  
armstrongjax@att.net

#### **Beaches Programs**

Brian Paradise  
bgparadise@comcast.net

#### **Jacksonville Programs**

Cindy Baker  
cindysbaker@gmail.com

#### **Publicity**

*Volunteer! Call 904.990.3191*

## Executive Committee Election Ballot

Three positions on our group's eight-member Executive Committee are open this year. Three candidates are running. The term is for two years.

Households with a single membership, use box 1.

Households with a joint membership, use box 1 and box 2.

John Pilecki 1  2

Barbara Gubbin 1  2

Robert Blade 1  2

Cut out the ballot and mail it to ExCom Election, c/o Brian Paradise, 13 Arbor Club Drive #315, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082. The deadline for ballots is Dec. 21.

## Getting to know the ExCom candidates

The annual election for group's executive committee is this month.

The committee, which functions as the board of directors, meets monthly and handles all of the policy and governance aspects the group.

Three candidates have said they will serve on the committee. Here are brief biographies of each.

### **John Pilecki**

John T. Pilecki is an organizer and participant in the North Florida environmental movement. He lives in Vilano Beach and is active in Sierra Club efforts centered in the St. Johns County area. He is a former English and special education teacher in Quakertown, Penn. In 2013, five years after he retired, John and his wife, Laura, moved to Vilano. John founded the Democratic Environmental Caucus of St. Johns County in 2017 which works to promote climate issues in the political arena.

### **Barbara Gubbin**

Barbara Gubbin has been a member of the Sierra Club for many years—her membership card says 1990—but she became active before that when she lived in Houston, Texas, in the mid-1980s. The Sierra Club has educated her on environmental issues and given her the opportunity

to speak up about the environment; on the local level she has always enjoyed hiking, exploring, and getting to know people with similar interests. Earlier this year Barbara went to Tallahassee to lobby the legislature on environmental issues. She helped research and interview two candidates for Sierra Club endorsements and was glad to see both were elected! Beyond hiking, Barbara looks forward to being an advocate for environmental issues on the local, state and national levels.

### **Robert Blade**

Robert Blade is the current newsletter editor of our group's monthly newsletter, the Sierra Sentry. For the first half of his working life, Robert was a reporter, editor, and columnist for newspapers in Quincy, Mass; in Lima, Ohio; and in Jacksonville at the Florida Times-Union. For the second half of his working life, he taught journalism, communications, and English at Florida State College at Jacksonville. He retired in 2012. Robert became active in the Sierra Club through a deep and abiding concern over climate change, sea-level rise, and the need to protect and expand the nation's natural resources, with a special emphasis on Florida.

## Hadrian's Wall, wild plants blooming top meeting list

The club has a fascinating set of meetings this month and next. They are free and open to all.

• **Monday, Dec. 3**, in Ponte Vedra; 6 p.m. Bill Armstrong, our club's outings chair, will speak on his eight-day hiking trip this summer along the Hadrian's Wall Path in England. Hadrian's Wall was a defensive fortification in the Roman province of Britannia. It was started in A.D. 122 in the reign of Emperor Hadrian and was the northern limit of the Roman Empire. It is a UNESCO World Heritage site. The program will be held in the Clubhouse of the Ocean Grove Condominiums at 1, Arbor Club Drive, Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, 32082. For information, write to Brian Paradise at [bgparadise@comcast.net](mailto:bgparadise@comcast.net).

• **Monday, Jan. 14**, at Lakewood Presbyterian Church, Jacksonville: 6:30 p.m. to socialize; the meeting starts at 7 p.m. Dr. Jim Moore will speak on "Wild Plants: a Fresh Perspective." Moore, a former physician who has concentrated on urban biology since 2015, will focus on wild plants and ways to integrate them into our lives. This will be an interactive program with microscopes and live specimens. There will be a seed dispersal at the end.

The idea of wilderness needs no defense, it only needs defenders.  
—Edward Abbey

Individually, we are one drop.  
Together, we are an ocean.  
—Ryunosuke Satoro



## Outings: Paddling, hiking in September

Note: To see a full outing description and to RSVP see our website or our Meetup site:

- <https://www.sierraclub.org/florida/northeast-florida/get-outdoors>
- <https://www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group>

Outings are free (except for any park fees) and open to all. Some outings require a greater level of fitness and skill than others. No pets or firearms allowed on outings. Outing participants are required to sign a waiver and release of liability at the start of the outing. A link to the waiver can be found at: <https://www.sierraclub.org/florida/northeast-florida/get-outdoors>

**Saturday, Dec. 8, 10 a.m.:** Hike Ft. George Island to Kingsley Plantation. We'll start at the famous Ribault Club and hike to Kingsley Plantation, stop for a visit, and return.

**Sunday, Dec. 9, 8:45 a.m.:** Hike the Moses Creek Conservation Area. Hike in one of the few remaining undeveloped tidal

creeks in our region.

**Saturday, Dec. 15, 9 a.m.:** Urban Fitness Hike, Brooklyn Loop. The hike will take place in a historic Jacksonville neighborhood and use its streets and sidewalks to create a 5-6-mile loop.

**Sunday, Dec. 16, 10 a.m.:** Hike Nocatee Preserve. Join us on an easy 5-mile hike. The trail is well-maintained and is both beautiful and interesting.

**Saturday, Dec. 29, 10:00 a.m.:** Hike Hanna Park. We will hike three miles along the beautiful trails of Hanna Park and take a bit of a beach walk along the way.

## Naturalist program

A master naturalist program will be offered in January by the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. Registration closes Jan. 4. The course will be Jan. 9-11.

The course is a series of three eight-contact-hour workshops that cover biodiversity, ecosystem integrity, and conservation strategies.

This course is open to everyone. Classroom sessions will be held at the North Florida Land Trust Milam House, 11994 Houston Ave., Jacksonville.

Fees begin at \$155. Advance registration is required. For information see the website, [www.masternaturalist.org](http://www.masternaturalist.org). For questions contact Carol Wyninger at [wyninger@comcast.net](mailto:wyninger@comcast.net).

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Northeast Florida Group  
*Website*

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<input type="checkbox"/> Regular \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$49
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Life \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,250
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<input type="checkbox"/> Senior \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Limited Income \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
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**Mail this form to:** Sierra Club  
Member Services, 2101 Webster St.,  
Suite 1300, Oakland, CA 94612 or go  
to [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)

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Sierra Club are not tax deductible;  
they support our advocacy and  
lobbying efforts. Contributions to The  
Sierra Club Foundation and  
Environmental Law Program are tax-  
deductible.

## Club seeks volunteer for treasurer

The Sierra Club, Northeast Florida group, is looking for a volunteer interested in serving as the group's treasurer.

The opening comes in the wake of the recent resignation of our long-time treasurer, Ed Schlessinger. We are grateful for his many years of service to our club.

But now we need a person to serve as his replacement. The job

involves keeping track of the club's income and paying its bills.

It takes about two hours per month.

Ed will answer any questions about this job. Contact him with questions at [eds.greenmail@gmail.com](mailto:eds.greenmail@gmail.com). Or contact Janet Stanko at [janestan@bellsouth.net](mailto:janestan@bellsouth.net).

## Election wrap-up: Positive trends

*Continued from page 1*

meet with the area's legislators to help them understand the importance of environmental issues. We call this process "legislative advocacy" because it is educational and collaborative with our legislators. Later, during the session, we will lobby for or against specific bills.

Right now, we need volunteers to go with us to visit the legislators in January and February. Of course we, as the Sierra Club, represent significant

significant blocs of voters in their respective districts, but it really helps get their attention when we have a constituent with our advocacy team. If you are available during the day please let us know. Training will be provided ahead of time on the process, issues and talking points. If you are good at scheduling, we could use help in setting up our appointments with the legislators.

Write to me at Janet Stanko, chair, Sierra Club Northeast Florida, [janestan@bellsouth.net](mailto:janestan@bellsouth.net) or phone or text me at 904-208-1341.