



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week: "Character consists of what you do on the third and fourth tries." – *James Michener*

MONDAY, 2/28/05

[Editorial: Privacy Vs. Public Safety](#)

(02/28/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Since when does the right to privacy protect people who violate traffic laws by running red lights? Unfortunately, it looks like such flawed logic will again stymie a sensible measure to protect people and property on Florida roadways.

[AAA offering seniors home-based driving test](#)

(02/28/2005 © Naples Daily News)

The American Automobile Association is offering older drivers a home-based testing system designed to analyze their physical and mental abilities before they get on the road. Some local folks are skeptical that seniors will even take the test, let alone surrender their licenses if they fail.

[Editorial: Interstate 75](#)

(02/28/2005 © Naples Daily News)

U.S. Rep. Don Young of Alaska, chairman of the U.S. House Transportation Committee, was a welcome guest at a Southwest Florida forum on the need to widen Interstate 75. His interest is impressive. So is his sense of duty to panel members, including both of Collier County's House members — Connie Mack IV of Cape Coral and Mario Diaz-Balart of Miami.

[Lifesavers must fight traffic](#)

(02/28/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

FOUR CORNERS -- With sirens blaring and lights flashing, firefighter George Voelker daily tries to fight his way up and down U.S. Highway 27 in northeast Polk County. Even with its sirens on, the bright red tanker often can't make it down the four-lane highway as quickly as Voelker would like. Sometimes, drivers just don't move out of the way.

[Road improvements on the way](#)

(02/28/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

The new interchange meshing Interstate 275 with Interstate 4 in Tampa is scheduled for completion in spring 2006.

[Road morons take fun out of driving](#)

(02/28/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

I can't imagine there are many people left who are like my dad, who regularly took us on

Sunday drives and seemed to really enjoy those outings. When I was a kid, I imagined how I would feel someday behind the wheel. I wondered what it would be like to have the freedom of the open road.

[The new view on I-275: a vast bay of bumpers](#)

(02/28/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

HOWARD FRANKLAND BRIDGE - The electronic sign flashes its ominous warning, "Congestion Ahead," and it seems premature. After all, you've just crossed the Howard Frankland Bridge hump en route from St. Petersburg to Tampa, and you should have miles before you hit really heavy traffic. You wish.

TUESDAY, 3/1/05

[Group wants quicker widening of interstate](#)

(03/01/2005 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

SARASOTA -- The absence of two of his fellow members -- caught in the latest traffic snarl on Interstate 75 Monday morning -- provided a perfect platform for Sarasota County Commissioner David Mills. During the monthly meeting of the Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization, Mills pointed to the worsening traffic situation on the interstate, as both North Port City Commissioner Fred Tower and Venice City Councilman Rick Tacy arrived late.

[Fed grant puts \\$6.27 million into airport](#)

(03/01/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

Daytona Beach International Airport will receive a \$6.27 million grant from the Federal Aviation Administration to help reimburse the airport for the construction of its terminal in 1992. The federal money will be paid over the next three years and is one of the largest grants received by the airport, U.S. Rep. John Mica, R-Winter Park, said.

[Cigarette lighters won't fly on U.S. flights starting April 14](#)

(03/01/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Travelers will no longer be allowed to carry lighters past airport security checkpoints as of April 14. The ban is not an attack on smokers, but rather a way to prevent terrorists from igniting explosives on board an aircraft, Transportation Security Administration spokesman Christopher White said Monday.

[Southwest Int'l air traffic up 14 percent in January](#)

(03/01/2005 © Naples Daily News)

January passenger traffic at Southwest Florida International Airport was 14 percent higher than a year ago. The nearly 675,000 passengers who used the airport made it the busiest January in the airport's history. The increase almost doubled the national average increase of 7.4 percent for January.

[Tax may fuel transit rides](#)

(03/01/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

TAVARES -- With pump prices nearing \$2 a gallon, Lake County residents could be forced to shell out an additional nickel to help pay for a bus service for elderly, disabled and low-income residents. Although an increase in local gas taxes is a long way from

happening, the idea was discussed by county commissioners Monday as a way to handle rising costs of the transportation program.

[Roads priority in Santa Rosa](#)

(03/01/2005 © Pensacola News Journal)

Santa Rosa County residents at a long-term recovery meeting Monday night said improving transportation was their No. 1 priority over such items as providing affordable housing and making the area more disaster resistant. Nearly four out of 10 people who responded to the question of what should be the county's top priority for long-term recovery from Hurricane Ivan said roads need to be improved.

[Gridlock looms on the horizon](#)

(03/01/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

In 25 years, the region is expected to be a major metropolitan area with more than a million people. That kind of growth is certain to lead to one thing: gridlock. On Monday, frustrated politicians began grappling with the fact that there's simply not enough tax money or time to build all the roads and bridges needed to handle the increased population and the traffic that comes with it.

WEDNESDAY, 3/2/05

[Hybrids Could Lose HOV Perk Early](#)

(*Washington Post* - March 2, 2005) Virginia transportation officials said yesterday that hybrid vehicles have become so prevalent in the Interstate 95/395 carpool lanes that their use may be curbed earlier than promised.

[Survey results mean bonuses at JAA](#)

(03/02/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

Jacksonville Airport Authority employees have received bonuses up to \$700 after departing Super Bowl visitors ranked airport services unexpectedly high.

[Transportation hub grows into \\$127 million plan](#)

(03/02/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

A plan to transform part of downtown Jacksonville's LaVilla neighborhood into a transportation hub for trains, buses and the Skyway has grown much more ambitious and expensive since officials presented a previous proposal in 2000. The new "vision" for a Jacksonville Transportation Center would cost \$127 million.

[County discusses causeway toll remedies](#)

(03/02/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Lee County commissioners on Tuesday floated two remedies for reducing bridge tolls on the Sanibel Causeway. First, they voted to settle a year-long lawsuit with the city of Sanibel. Next, they agreed to study cheaper tolls for motorists during off-peak hours that would help alleviate traffic tieups getting on and off the island.

[Residents divided on projects bond](#)

(03/02/2005 © Miami Herald)

Pembroke Pines voters will decide whether the city should borrow up to \$100 million for

roadwork, parks improvements and economic development. If voters agree to the borrowing, their property taxes will increase.

[Report: Cell Phone Use While Driving Up](#)

(03/02/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

WASHINGTON -- More people than ever are driving under the influence of their cell phones, according to a survey released Tuesday by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

[County adds cent to gas tax](#)

(03/02/2005 © Panama City News Herald)

Bay County commissioners on Tuesday promised that a 1-cent tax hike on gas would be used to improve roads and not to lure high-rise hungry developers to the area. The County Commission voted 4-1 on Tuesday in support of a ninth cent on motor fuel. The tax likely will go into effect on Jan. 1.

THURSDAY, 3/3/05

[Study shows rural roads are most deadly](#)

By Tom Kenworthy, USA TODAY

The death rate for motorists on rural roads was more than 2½ times the rate for driving on all other roads in 2003, a study to be released Thursday shows.

[State aims to advance county tax increases](#)

(03/03/2005 © Ocala Star Banner)

TALLAHASSEE - Gov. Jeb Bush and other Republicans are endorsing a plan that would make it easier for your taxes to be raised. But don't expect the "no new taxes" mantra to be breached in Tallahassee. Instead, state lawmakers are pressuring counties to further raise local sales and property taxes to pay for the costs of roads, sewers and schools for the daily arrival of nearly 600 new Floridians.

[House panel approves \\$284 billion highway bill](#)

(03/03/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

WASHINGTON - A House committee on Wednesday cleared the road for action on a six-year, \$284 billion highway and mass transit bill, a major jobs and infrastructure initiative that stalled last year over a money dispute between the White House and Congress. This year, with the White House on board and the threat of a presidential veto removed, chances for passage are improved.

[Florida keeps an eye on highway funding](#)

(03/03/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

WASHINGTON -- Congress on Wednesday restarted the long-stalled engine of a highway-spending bill that is one of the largest sources of federal aid to states. The \$284 billion measure covers state transportation aid as well as thousands of local pork projects, several dozen of which are for Central Florida.

[Congressional panel OK's \\$72M for I-75](#)

(03/03/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

WASHINGTON -- Efforts to hasten the expansion of Interstate 75 in Lee and Collier counties took a step forward Wednesday. The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee approved a six-year, \$284 billion highway and mass transit bill that included \$72 million for I-75.

[2 airports win federal grants](#)

(03/03/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

The U.S. Department of Transportation said it would give Palm Beach International and Miami International airports grants worth \$12.5 million, part of almost \$90 million in grants to airports in the state to upgrade airport security and infrastructure like runways.

[Airport granted runway funding](#)

(03/03/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Southwest Florida International Airport has landed a new, \$10.8 million federal transportation grant to help revamp its runway. U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta made the announcement Wednesday. The award for the south Fort Myers airport was one of the largest of a 31-airport grant package totaling more than \$89.2 million.

FRIDAY, 3/4/05

[Florida 2nd-worst in U.S. for deaths on rural roads](#)

(03/04/2005 © Miami Herald)

If you're headed upstate for spring baseball training, a trip to the theme parks or a leisurely visit to anywhere outside of South Florida, you might want to stay on the interstate highways. Florida had one of the worst rural road fatality rates in the nation in 2003

[Rural roads 2nd most deadly](#)

(03/04/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Florida's rural roads are among the nation's most dangerous, a new study says. The Road Information Program, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank backed by industry groups, reported Thursday that Florida's rural roads combine for a higher death rate than those in any other state except Arizona.

[Area roads among deadliest in nation](#)

(03/04/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

MANATEE - Florida's rural roads rank among the nation's deadliest, according to a national study released Thursday. The state's rural, non-Interstate roads had the second-highest fatality rate - and third-most deaths - of any state during a recent five-year period, said the study by The Road Information Program. Florida was the only state to place in the top five of both categories.

[Rural roads higher in fatalities, study shows](#)

(03/04/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

ORANGE CITY -- Florida drivers are three times more likely to die in a traffic crash on a country road than on an interstate, according to a safety report released Thursday.

Florida averaged 3.7 fatalities on rural roads per 100 million vehicle miles traveled in 2003.

[Fess up, drivers](#)

(03/04/2005 © Florida Today)

We've all seen them -- those darn taillights that blink off and on as we nudge through rush hour or sit idling at traffic signals. If you feel like traffic congestion is growing and you're spending more time stuck in traffic, you're right. The average motorist spends 46 hours each year (nearly two full days) stuck in rush-hour traffic jams.

[Florida's Turnpike to get barriers along canals, ponds](#)

(03/04/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - Cable barriers will be installed along Florida's Turnpike next to canals and ponds to help keep out-of-control vehicles out of the water, state officials announced Thursday.

[Editorial: Interstate 75 widening](#)

(03/04/2005 © Naples Daily News)

Bully for U.S. Reps. Connie Mack of Cape Coral and Mario Diaz-Balart of Miami. Once again they have set a goal and delivered.

[Destin decision](#)

(03/04/2005 © Northwest Florida Daily News)

Voters in Destin will face a choice on whether they want to complain about our traffic or do something about it this Tuesday when they go to the polls to determine the fate of the proposed Municipal Resort Tax. The city is faced with the problem of how to overcome a \$28.5 million shortfall in the city budget over the next three years for infrastructure and other critical needs.