



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

MONDAY, 7/19/04

Theme parks squabbling could kill bullet train project

(07/19/2004 © Bradenton Herald)

ORLANDO, Fla. - There always has been fighting between Mickey Mouse, Shamu the killer whale and Universal's superheroes over tourists' dollars. But that cutthroat capitalism now threatens a potential solution to booming Florida's traffic problems.

Trapped by the Mouse?

(07/19/2004 © Daily Commercial)

The question of repealing the constitutional amendment mandating the construction of a Florida high speed rail system will likely be placed on the Nov. 2 general election ballot. More than 307,000 of the 488,722 signatures necessary to do so were unofficially verified Friday.

Traffic takes tolls

(07/18/2004 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

The clock was ticking, temperatures were rising, but the traffic wasn't going anywhere. And Tami Rudd had 150,000 clams that were dying. Traffic congestion, highway accidents and closed interstates irritate daily commuters -- but they can make or break businesses who depend on timely delivery, a cost that eventually hits consumers' wallets, too.

Bridge openings to operate on schedules as of today

(07/19/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

A Coast Guard plan to open most Palm Beach County Intracoastal Waterway bridges on a schedule, and not on demand by boaters, goes into effect permanently today after a trial period deemed successful by officials.

Gas price woes exacerbated by sprawl

(07/19/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

TAMPA, Fla. -- Denise Quenneville drives 30 miles each way to her \$7-an-hour job as a cashier at a Krispy Kreme doughnut shop here. With this year's surge in gas prices, she's paying \$23 every couple of days to fill up her car, up from about \$19 a year ago.

Air travelers see few signs of summer meltdown

(07/19/2004 © Orlando Sentinel)

It has already been a long, hot summer -- but not nearly as bad as feared for passengers at Orlando International Airport and the nation's other large jetports. Even with air travel up about 20 percent from this time last year, fears of a "summer

meltdown" at OIA and other busy terminals have not materialized on a widespread basis.

Bay Bridge replacement, second span back on table

(07/19/2004 © Pensacola News Journal)

One meeting with Florida Department of Transportation Secretary Jose Abreu accomplished what 46 months of apparent wrangling by Gulf Breeze city officials could not.

TUESDAY, 7/20/04

Causeway tolls could soar

(07/20/2004 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Driving over the Sanibel Causeway to spend the day shelling or lounging at the beach will cost three or four times as much if Lee County commissioners agree with their staffs.

Marco CAT bus ridership rises

(07/20/2004 © Naples Daily News)

An almost overnight surge in ridership on the new Marco Island public bus routes has removed immediate fears that the city would lose the bus to another community.

Train repeal: Right track

(07/20/2004 © Palm Beach Post)

Train repeal: Right track Palm Beach Post Editorial Tuesday, July 20, 2004 People who still want Florida to build a high-speed rail system are mad about money, but they're mad about the wrong money. Voters approved the bullet train four years ago with little conception of how much it would cost.

The Crosstown s image problem

(07/20/2004 © St. Petersburg Times)

Driving over a bridge can give otherwise sound people the creeps, what with one's very life hanging on the abilities of the cheapest bidder on a government contract. That's why the Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority has two distinct problems arising from a second column of its elevated highway sinking while under construction.

WEDNESDAY, 7/21/04

Senate GOP Proposes \$301B Highway Bill

(07/20/2004 © Miami Herald)

WASHINGTON - Senate Republicans on Tuesday proposed a \$301 billion compromise highway-mass transit bill, defying a White House veto threat and warning that a lesser amount would doom the massive job-creating measure in an election year. Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla., chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, gave the House until Thursday to decide on his offer.

Crosstown Expressway piers will need additional support

(07/21/2004 © St. Petersburg Times)

TAMPA - The ground is porous and mucky beneath some pillars being erected for a new elevated highway on the Lee Roy Selmon Crosstown Expressway, so the piers will need extra support, experts told the expressway authority Tuesday. Forensic specialists are testing parts of the elevated lanes that have collapsed and one that has sunk.

Federal agency keeps 10 parkway options open

(07/21/2004 © St. Petersburg Times)

The Federal Highway Administration has rejected the state's request to whittle from 10 to three the number of routes being considered for an extension of the Suncoast Parkway. The rejection of the request by Florida's Turnpike Enterprise was not good news for the almost 3,900 Homosassa homeowners and several thousand property owners in Sugarmill Woods.

Sources say bomb-sniffing dogs at Lauderdale airport flunked re-certification test

(07/21/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Three of the four explosive-sniffing dogs used by the federal Transportation Security Administration at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport flunked their recertification tests in the last few weeks, two law enforcement sources said Tuesday. The federal dogs and their handlers, Broward Sheriff's deputies, all passed eleven weeks of intensive training in the past.

Turnpike median work too late for crash victims from Tamarac, Delray

(07/20/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Frances Blumenthal, 86, and her husband, Irving, 88, were on their way to celebrate their 67th wedding anniversary with family in Memphis when a driver, who the Florida Highway Patrol says lost control of his pickup, careered across the grass median on Florida's Turnpike and rammed their car, killing them. Today, the Florida Department of Transportation is scheduled to award a contract to install median guardrails along 53 miles in Osceola County that might have saved the South Florida couples' lives.

U.S. 98 work takes turn

(07/21/2004 © Panama City News Herald)

A week after a specially called meeting about Hathaway Bridge congestion and confusion, improvements are in the works. U.S. 98/Thomas Drive flyover project leaders have installed eight new directional signs throughout the construction zone and have gotten a change order approved that will extend the westbound left-hand turn lane for Thomas Drive back to the western foot of the Hathaway Bridge.

THURSDAY, 7/22/04

Baggage screening falls short of expectations First of a three-part series.

(07/22/2004 © Bradenton Herald)

SEATTLE - The TSA was supposed to be the fix. But more than 2½ years after it was created, the Transportation Security Administration itself needs a fix. As Sept. 11, 2001,

grows more distant, airline passengers complain more about long lines than feeling vulnerable.

Upcoming retirements of air traffic controllers could force cuts in air travel

(07/22/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

About half of the nation's 15,000 air traffic controllers will be eligible to retire in the next seven years, potentially choking air travel with massive delays if replacements are not quickly hired, the controllers union is warning.

Toll increase impact needs to be softened

(07/22/2004 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Toll increase impact needs to be softened If Sanibel Causeway tolls are going to double and more, the county should find ways to blunt the impact on working people and provide improvements on the new causeway.

FAA drafts contingency plans to handle 2012 mass retirings

(07/22/2004 © Miami Herald)

With half the nation's air traffic controllers due to retire by 2012, the Federal Aviation Administration announced Wednesday that it is revving up a drive for new recruits and more productivity from current employees.

Maitland, Orlando checking out ebikes

(07/22/2004 © Orlando Sentinel)

At the Maitland and Orlando police departments last week, officers were testing out a police version of an electricity-powered bicycle called an "ebike" as a possible purchase. Turns out, selling new gear to them is no sure thing. The Maitland Police Department said "no thanks" to a purchase of the motorized two-wheeled vehicle -- at least, for now -- after a weeklong evaluation.

\$1.45 million offered to spur dragging I-95 flyover work

(07/22/2004 © Palm Beach Post)

\$1.45 million offered to spur dragging I-95 flyover work Chuck McGinness Thursday, July 22, 2004 WEST PALM BEACH -- With the new Palm Beach International Airport interchange months behind schedule and dragging into a fifth year, state officials have taken the drastic step of offering the contractor an extra \$1.45 million in incentives to complete the massive project.

New Pensacola Bay bridge still stuck in planning stage

(07/22/2004 © Pensacola News Journal)

A new bridge for Pensacola Bay appears to still face roadblocks after the first meeting of a regional transportation group.

FRIDAY, 7/23/04

Congress Resumes Talks on Highway Bill

(07/22/2004 © Bradenton Herald)

WASHINGTON - Congressional negotiators on Thursday narrowed their differences

over how much to spend on a massive highway and mass transit bill, but put off until September any final decisions on legislation that is certain to play into election-year politics.

Gas Tax Holiday next Month

(07/23/2004 © Capitol News Service)

Florida motorists are gearing up for the state's first-ever gas tax holiday next month. State legislators pushed through a tax break this spring that will give everybody 8 cents off per gallon of gas during the month of August.

TRANSPORTATION: Do it right

(07/23/2004 © Florida Times-Union)

Enough voices have been raised about the Brooklyn neighborhood road improvements for the state Department of Transportation to listen. Time and money should be the first considerations, but if adjustments to the current plan can be made that would enhance the result, they should be done.

Vanity License Plate Brings Tickets

(07/23/2004 © Lakeland Ledger)

A vanity license tag chosen as a gag has left its owner holding the bag. Jim Cara thought the "NOTAG" plate he got for his Suzuki motorcycle would give people a laugh. Instead, he found that the laugh - along with more than 200 parking violations - was on him.

Seminar tackles airport plans

(07/23/2004 © Miami Herald)

If residents skeptical about Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport's south runway expansion could meet regularly with government and aviation officials, there might be a better understanding of why the airport needs to accommodate passenger growth.

The little engines that could?

(07/23/2004 © Palm Beach Post)

The little engines that could? Douglas Kalajian Friday, July 23, 2004 Like many new-car buyers these days, Kathy and Harry Shafer of Jupiter Farms put a premium on fuel mileage. That put gasoline-electric hybrid cars at the top of their shopping list.