



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week:

"Being in politics is like being a football coach. You have to be smart enough to understand the game and dumb enough to think it important. – Eugene McCarthy

MONDAY, 10/3/05

[A better way to use roads](#)

(10/03/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Last week in the wake of Houston's evacuation gridlock, we briefly discussed Southwest Florida hurricane evacuation in this space. People watching the mess on TV wondered why Texas officials didn't open inbound lanes for outgoing traffic, a process called "contra-flow." They did, near the end of the 14-hour, 100-mile evacuation traffic jam. It sounds great. Unfortunately, it doesn't work anywhere near as well as it seems it should.

[State looks into fuel adjustment for roadside assistance trucks](#)

(10/03/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

The Road Rangers, those tow trucks that offer free roadside assistance to stranded motorists on South Florida's major highways, won't fall victim to increasing gas prices. At least, not yet. State officials say they're working on a solution to deal with gas prices squeezing the company that provides the service.

[Poll shows worry rising with gas prices](#)

(10/03/2005 © Miami Herald)

This one shouldn't come as much of a shock to anyone who is dropping \$60 a pop to fill the tank with 89 octane lo-test: Almost two-thirds of all Americans -- 64 percent -- are concerned about the financial consequences of rising fuel prices, according to a recent Associated Press/AOL News poll.

[Hitting the open road](#)

(10/03/2005 © Florida Today)

I was pleased to see FLORIDA TODAY's editorial board tackle the issues concerning motorcycle safety in their Sept. 25 editorial. With more drivers opting to ride motorcycles for affordable and fun transportation, something needs to be done legislatively to reduce the number of riders being killed and injured as a result of motorcycle crashes -- not just in Florida, but throughout the country.

[Firm to study bridge options](#)

(10/03/2005 © Palm Beach Daily News)

The Florida Department of Transportation has hired the engineering and planning firm of Kimley-Horn and Associates to study alternatives for the rehabilitation or replacement

of the aging Flagler Memorial Bridge. The project development and environmental study will cost about \$1 million and take two years to complete.

[Rail trail offers straight shot north to Sarasota](#)

(10/03/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

SARASOTA COUNTY -- It's the north-south connector that Sarasota County has long sought. Unlike U.S. 41, this path is straight as an arrow, has few stops and light traffic. But your speed is limited to how fast you can pump your legs.

[Region's road woes are attributable to a lack of political influence](#)

(10/03/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

Driving back through Georgia from a recent vacation in northern Alabama, I was struck by the amount of roadwork on Interstate 75 and the concept of hurricane evacuation routes. It didn't add up. I-75 is being widened to six lanes throughout south Georgia, a very sparsely populated chunk of the state. It made me wonder why tens of millions of dollars were being spent to widen that stretch when the same interstate in Florida appears to be in dire need of widening.

TUESDAY, 10/4/05

[Fiery crash reminds residents of isolation](#)

(10/04/2005 © Miami Herald)

KEY WEST - The fiery collision of a tanker truck and a sport utility vehicle shut down the Seven Mile Bridge on Monday night, cutting off the Lower Keys from the rest of the state in yet another reminder of how fragile the link is between the islands and the mainland.

[Florida offshore drilling provision withdrawn](#)

(10/04/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

The chairman of a key House committee announced today he was withdrawing a pending energy bill that, if enacted, would have allowed energy companies to explore for natural gas very close to Florida's beaches. Florida lawmakers declared victory.

[State budget edging into the red](#)

(10/04/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat)

Florida's gravy train is about to run out of track. That's according to a study by the nonpartisan Collins Center for Public Policy at Florida State University, which predicts net state revenues will grow just half as fast over the next five years as they have the previous two years.

[Fix intersections to ease Stuart traffic, study finds](#)

(10/04/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

STUART — Widening roads such as Dixie Highway, Wright Boulevard and Baker Road isn't the answer to traffic snarls north of the Roosevelt Bridge, according to a Florida Atlantic University study. Instead, city officials should reshape key intersections, adding roundabouts and extra turn lanes, said Marie York, a planner with the university's Center for Urban and Environmental Solutions.

[Loan may speed U.S. 41 widening](#)

(10/04/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

U.S. 41 could have six lanes from Fort Myers to Naples two years earlier than expected, thanks to a \$24 million loan. State transportation officials have applied for the loan to expedite the widening of the last four-lane segment between Fort Myers and Naples yet to get under construction a 3-mile stretch from Corkscrew Road in Estero to just south of Sanibel Boulevard in San Carlos Park.

[Stations pumped up over filling tires with nitrogen](#)

(10/04/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Gassing up your car's tires at a nitrogen pump, some think, might save money when it comes time to gas up at the fuel pump. Motorists seeking an improvement in their car's fuel efficiency can fill their tires with nitrogen, which keep tires at the recommended pressure for six times longer than conventional air and maintain a more efficient ride for a longer time.

[Starke mulls installing cameras on traffic lights](#)

(10/04/2005 © Gainesville Sun)

STARKE - Driving on U.S. 301, from Gainesville to Jacksonville, could soon require even more caution. Smack dab in between the small towns already known nationwide for the ticket-writing reputations of their police departments is a town contemplating a crackdown on red-light running.

WEDNESDAY, 10/5/05

[Jeb Bush supports drilling in eastern Gulf of Mexico](#)

(10/05/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat)

ORLANDO - Gov. Jeb Bush said Tuesday he supports federal legislation allowing drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico - including areas where he aggressively fought energy exploration just four years ago. Bush cited new political realities and protections he thinks he could win for the state in exchange.

['Where can I get gas ?'](#)

(10/05/2005 © Panama City News Herald)

Some people sighed and waited. Some fretted and cursed. Some cut in line. Some honked their horns. Some were patient, some were not. They all had come seeking the petroleum shrine, the land of long lines and little patience. The gas scare of 2005 hit hard Tuesday in Bay County, where station supplies ran thin and motorists were at a loss to explain the dwindling reserves and skyrocketing prices that have plagued much of the Gulf Coast.

[Carmakers to Focus on Fuel-Saving Tools](#)

(10/05/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

To meet the federal government's new, higher fuel-efficiency plan for pickup trucks, minivans and sport utility vehicles, automakers expect to rely on a new onslaught of fuel-saving technologies.

[From the Crosstown to courtroom](#)

(10/05/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

TAMPA - The government agency expanding the Lee Roy Selmon Crosstown Expressway sued Tuesday to recover \$120-million for repairs to the troubled elevated commuter lanes. The Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority filed a lawsuit against URS Corp., the project's general engineering consultant, after settlement talks stalled this week.

[City to get DOT grant](#)

(10/05/2005 © Florida Keys Keynoter)

It would help offset the costs of transportation It's good news for the Key West Department of Transportation if the city passes a resolution tonight to accept a state grant for public transportation. The Key West transit system, which provides service between Key West and Stock Island, has been in place for 33 years.

[Keys should want four-laned Krome](#)

(10/05/2005 © Florida Keys Keynoter)

EDITOR: As I viewed the backup of traffic in Atlanta, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas of residents fleeing Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, I couldn't help but think about Krome Avenue. The residents of Monroe County should be livid at their politicians for objecting to the four-laning of Krome.

[Martin, Port St. Lucie discuss growth impact](#)

(10/05/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

STUART — As new homes and shops sprout in eastern St. Lucie County, another north-south corridor may be needed to keep traffic flowing through the region, a Port St. Lucie official said Tuesday. "Ten or 15 years from now, are we going to have another route, or are we going to be built out?"

THURSDAY, 10/6/05

[Bush denies easing stance on oil drilling in eastern gulf](#)

(10/06/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

TALLAHASSEE -- Gov. Jeb Bush on Wednesday strongly denied that he has backed off a longtime stance against oil drilling in the eastern Gulf of Mexico. A report in the Orlando Sentinel, published on the front page of Wednesday's Times-Union, spurred a flurry of e-mails, news releases and phone calls between Tallahassee and Washington, where Florida's congressional leaders are portraying a united front against drilling.

[Rebuilding after Katrina: Can Florida give up pork?](#)

(10/06/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Ronald D. Utt Special to the Sentinel - Americans from all walks of life wasted no time in the wake of Hurricane Katrina rallying to help those who survived. American businesses stepped forward with multi-million-dollar donations, as did numerous entertainers. But there should be more -- especially from our political leaders. Lawmakers should "give up" some of the billions of dollars in frivolous pork projects designed to feather their political nests back home and redirect that money to help meet the far more pressing needs of Katrina's victims. The recently enacted highway bill was crammed with \$25 billion in pork-barrel spending.

[JetBlue begins flying to Florida from Newark](#)

(10/06/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

NEWARK, N.J. - Discount carrier JetBlue Airways on Wednesday began flying from Newark Liberty International Airport to two airports in Florida, with plans to fly to three other Sunshine State airports, and one in Puerto Rico, before Thanksgiving.

[Region faces roads deficit](#)

(10/06/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

MANATEE - Doing numerous road projects Manatee County needs to handle projected growth in the next quarter-century: Next to impossible. That's according to a consultant, who said Wednesday the county needs some \$1.7 billion worth of new and wider roads through 2030 but can count on having just \$435 million to spend on roads, mass transit and other transportation improvements. "Revenues are not keeping pace with costs," said Whit Blanton of Renaissance Planning Group, an Orlando firm hired to update a long-range transportation plan for Manatee and Sarasota counties.

[Councilman floats traffic control plan](#)

(10/06/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

Jacksonville City Councilman Lake Ray said Wednesday he will ask the council to reduce the Better Jacksonville Plan's funding for rapid transit right of way by shifting \$75 million to create a citywide traffic control center. Traffic equipment -- called an Intelligent Transportation System -- would use roadside cameras and pavement sensors to relay traffic conditions.

[Bonita wants study on I-75 interchange](#)

(10/06/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Bonita Beach and Corkscrew roads still need traffic relief, Bonita city officials said Wednesday, so they voted unanimously to support conducting a study on a new Interstate 75 interchange in Estero. The city council was responding to last month's decision by Lee County's Metropolitan Planning Organization to reject \$10 million in federal money earmarked for such an interchange, at Coconut Road.

[Can more homes mean less traffic?](#)

(10/06/2005 © Miami Herald)

Broward County hopes new regulations will entice developments that encourage more people out of cars and onto public transportation. Hollywood might be the first to use the new rules. Hundreds of Hollywood residents packed a City Hall meeting room Wednesday night, awaiting their chance to speak against two large developments planned for the city. The projects would be the first in Broward County to take advantage of a new zoning category called "transit-oriented development," which allows developers to build more housing units per acre than currently is allowed.

[Orlando examining downtown traffic](#)

(10/06/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

If Orlando's downtown creates traffic and parking challenges today, imagine what it will be like when thousands more people move into the district, a few more office and condo towers go up, and the central shopping and entertainment spots boom in the next five years.

FRIDAY, 10/7/05

[Jeb right to change fuel view](#)

(10/07/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Good for Gov. Jeb Bush. He has shown the brains and guts to modify his position as circumstances change on the issue of oil and gas drilling off Florida's coastlines. The drilling rigs are coming, probably sooner rather than later. Bush still does not wish to see the drilling but is being realistic about the best deal Florida can get to protect its coasts.

[Reject Jeb's 'compromise' on offshore oil drilling](#)

(10/07/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

In 2002, when Gov. Bush was up for reelection, he was "incredibly proud" of the deal he made with his brother to prevent further oil and gas drilling off the state's fragile Gulf Coast beaches. But there are no elections this year, and the governor has bowed to pressure from the White House and the energy industry.

[Airports might return to private screeners](#)

(10/07/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

WASHINGTON - Lawmakers, upset with the performance of the Transportation Security Administration, say they hope to encourage airports to return to privately employed screeners. An agreement worked out by House and Senate negotiators shields airports from lawsuits if they switch to private screeners.

[Erosion from Tammy shuts A1A in Flagler County; S. Fla. flood watch canceled](#)

(10/07/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

FLAGLER BEACH -- Sections of State Route A1A were closed for the second time in less than a month Thursday after weathering Tropical Storm Tammy's pounding surf. In South Florida, however, the National Weather Service in Miami canceled a flood watch warning that was to have remained in effect in Broward, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties until Friday morning.

[Bridge weight limits ignored](#)

(10/07/2005 © Miami Herald)

When Miami-Dade County officials recognized that large chunks of the Venetian Causeway were crumbling last year, they posted signs at both ends of the historic roadway banning extra-heavy trucks without a permit. The only problem: Nobody enforced the new rules. The new signs were erected, but truck drivers knew they could cross the causeway without fear of even stopping at a tollbooth, much less encountering a cop.

[Gridlock frustrates east Orange drivers](#)

(10/07/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

'Too many people, too many cars' - It's 5:15 p.m. Tuesday in east Orange County. Hundreds of cars choke the intersection of Lake Underhill and Goldenrod roads, moving inches at a time as they try to get on or off the East-West Expressway ramp. White-knuckled hands grasp steering wheels and faces cringe with exasperation as drivers participate in the excruciating workday ritual of coming home.

[Video could cut wait time at lights](#)

(10/07/2005 © Citrus County Chronicle)

Seeing red while stuck behind a string of red lights for too long may be a thing of the past for Country Road 491 motorists. At least that's what county traffic maintenance officials hoped for when they added about a dozen video detection cameras at three of the road's major intersections that can detect approaching traffic up to 1,000 feet away before vehicles ever reach an intersection.