



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week: **"Get your facts first, then you can distort them as you please."
- Mark Twain**

MONDAY, 10/11/04

[Railway to upgrade crossings](#)

(10/11/2004 © Florida Today)

In the next several weeks, motorists will experience new traffic delays as five railroad crossings undergo repair. "Every year some crossings in Brevard County are resurfaced and reconstructed to make it as safe as possible," said Husein Cumber, spokesman for Florida East Coast Railway.

[Vote To Repeal Bullet Train](#)

(10/11/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Voters don't like to be told they made a mistake, but Florida voters made a big one when they approved a constitutional amendment requiring the state to build and operate a high-speed rail system connecting Florida's largest urban areas. They have a chance to rectify their error on Nov. 2.

[Closing the loop](#)

(10/11/2004 © Jacksonville Business Journal)

Almost as soon as the Florida Department of Transportation announced it would complete a more than \$151 million highway loop around Jacksonville by 2006, private development plans began taking shape.

[The Port of Miami-Dade faces new challenges](#)

(10/11/2004 © Miami Herald)

History is replete with "what ifs." Few subjects illustrate this more than the rise and decline of ports. The Port of Miami-Dade is on an uphill ride. Booming imports from Asia, primarily China, fill the docks. Not only is Miami an important hub for transshipment of Asian and European goods to Latin America and the Caribbean, it also serves as an overflow port.

[County wants to end control of bus system](#)

(10/11/2004 © Orlando Sentinel)

TAVARES -- Lake County officials no longer want to be in charge of the local bus service. Today they will ask the Lake-Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization to either take over as transportation coordinator or find another group to run it. Some members of the planning group, charged with devising road and highway improvements for the region, say they don't want the job.

[Storm recovery slows massive road projects](#)

(10/11/2004 © Pensacola News Journal)

The Interstate 10/110 construction project and the Cervantes Street bridge projects are slowly coming back to life, but a shortage of trucks may slow progress even more, said project spokesman Mike Sasser. Sasser said most trucks in the area are being used to haul Hurricane Ivan-generated debris, and they are hard to come by for road-building projects.

[Without tax break, gas prices go nuts](#)

(10/11/2004 © St. Petersburg Times)

Remember the good old days when you could get a gallon of regular gas for \$1.76 or so? Funny, it almost seems like just a month or so ago. Wait a minute, it was just about a month ago. Not that you could help but notice, but since Florida's gas tax break was lifted in September, gas prices have gone nuts. We're talking a 20-cent jump in a little over a month.

TUESDAY, 10/12/04

[Bullet train's backers roll out own ad drive](#)

(10/12/2004 © St. Petersburg Times)

Proponents of the high-speed bullet train unveiled a \$70,000 advertising campaign Monday, urging voters to defeat an amendment aimed at derailing development of the train.

[Who will answer for Causeway?](#)

(10/12/2004 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Someone in the Lee County government must be held accountable for the outrageous neglect of the Sanibel Causeway. As a report in The News-Press Sunday showed, the county neglected or ignored critical maintenance needs on the causeway while using \$48.5 million in profits during those years to pay for other projects. Only about \$3.3 million was spent on maintenance.

[Transit service to stay with county](#)

(10/12/2004 © Orlando Sentinel)

TAVARES -- Transit officials Monday voted to keep the County Commission in charge of making sure transportation is provided to elderly, disabled and low-income residents. The county wanted the newly formed Lake-Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization to consider either designating itself as the Community Transportation Coordinator or contracting with a private company or a nonprofit agency.

[DOT watching conditions at bridge](#)

(10/12/2004 © South County Marion Citizen)

It went largely unnoticed a week ago Wednesday, but the bridge over the Withlacoochee River, on State Road 200, was closed for a while. Since Hurricane Jeanne passed, rain and runoff water has been swelling the river to flood stage conditions, which will continue for the next few weeks.

[County's road plans hit expensive bump](#)

(10/12/2004 © St. Petersburg Times)

BROOKSVILLE - County road projects meant to deal with increased traffic will cost millions more than anticipated and require new funding solutions, including the possibility of a sales tax. That's the finding of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, which includes the County Commission and a Brooksville City Council member.

[Expressway Authority losing patience with URS](#)

(10/12/2004 © St. Petersburg Times)

TAMPA - With estimates to fix the new Lee Roy Selmon Crosstown Expressway approaching \$70-million, government officials on Monday moved to dump the main engineering consultant. Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority staffers blame URS Construction Services for designs of the highway that have caused two of its support piers to sink.

[Expressway Board Sees Conflict In Pier Repair](#)

(10/12/2004 © Tampa Tribune)

TAMPA - The local expressway authority has decided that the company supervising construction of the elevated lanes of the Lee Roy Selmon Expressway should not also be in charge of deciding what work is needed to fix problems with the project.

WEDNESDAY, 10/13/04

[Condition of road delays firefighters as house burns](#)

(10/13/2004 © Bradenton Herald)

PARRISH - Tom Schipper could only take photos of his house burning down while waiting for emergency officials to get to his home early Monday morning. It took the local firefighters nearly 40 minutes to get to his home because of the bad road conditions surrounding Schipper's home.

[Main Street Bridge to remain closed 1 extra day](#)

(10/13/2004 © Florida Times-Union)

The Main Street bridge in downtown Jacksonville will remain closed until about noon Wednesday, a day longer than the state Department of Transportation originally expected for maintenance of the bridge's cable system. The state hoped to open the bridge by 6 a.m. today but found additional work needed to be done.

[Amtrak to end service for Ocala](#)

(10/13/2004 © Ocala Star Banner)

OCALA-- Once crews have finished cleaning up the rubble left by Saturday's train derailment at Ocala Union Station, the city will start its damage assessment and get on board to repair the historic station again. Too bad train riders won't be able to admire the restoration. Starting Nov. 1, Amtrak will no longer have rail service in Ocala, Waldo, Wildwood and Dade City.

[Kesselring: Burden on local roads may force gas tax hikes](#)

(10/13/2004 © Ocala Star Banner)

OCALA - Marion County Commissioner Andy Kesselring has spent almost 15 years in public office. In all that time there's been one constant: People love to complain about

roads. Now Kesselring, who seeks re-election, argues it's time to get serious about how to maintain the county road network over the long run. While it may not be politically palatable at this point, particularly with signs showing regular unleaded gas creeping above \$2 a gallon, Kesselring advocates additional gas taxes as a possible solution to the roads-funding equation.

[About half of crossing signals are still broken](#)

(10/13/2004 © Palm Beach Post)

With power lines and nerves increasingly frayed after Hurricane Frances, crossing busy intersections without traffic lights became even more dangerous Thursday. County Engineer George Webb estimated that only 45 percent to 50 percent of the county's 1,000 traffic signals were working Friday.

[Trolley numbers continue to rise](#)

(10/13/2004 © Panama City News Herald)

PANAMA CITY The ridership spike is continuing for Bay Town Trolley. In the first nine months of this year, Bay County's main public transportation system topped its 2003 record for total annual riders as 133,273 people have hopped on the trolleys. The record was 114,844 — a far cry from the 16,000 people served during the inaugural year in 1996.

[Bumps in the road](#)

(10/13/2004 © Tallahassee Democrat)

Constructing potholes-in-reverse, which are more euphemistically called "speed humps," is getting to be too expensive for the city of Tallahassee under the old rules. How lucky that there is now financial support for our long-held editorial hunch that some good ideas have a way of getting out of hand and that building speed humps to slow traffic is one of them.

THURSDAY, 10/14/04

[Four years after passage, bullet train goes back to voters](#)

(10/14/2004 © Miami Herald)

ORLANDO, Fla. - Will a bullet train help free Floridians from snarling traffic or is it one-way express to financial disaster? The argument comes to a head on Nov. 2, when voters decide whether they really meant it when they said four years ago they want a high-speed rail network crisscrossing Florida. Amendment 6, if passed, would repeal the constitutional amendment approved in 2000.

[Rooting Rail Out Of The Constitution](#)

(10/14/2004 © Tampa Tribune)

Florida voters four years ago approved a state constitutional amendment to force the Legislature to start work on a high-speed train before the end of 2003. Making it unconstitutional not to build a passenger rail line didn't get one foot of track laid. Instead of pushing to get the project rolling, key lawmakers sensed little local interest and plotted to derail it.

[AP: Report Finds Lavish Spending at TSA](#)

(10/14/2004 © Miami Herald)

The government agency in charge of airport security spent nearly a half-million dollars on an awards ceremony at a lavish hotel, including \$81,000 for plaques and \$500 for cheese displays. Awards were presented to 543 Transportation Security Administration employees and 30 organizations, including a "lifetime achievement award" for one worker with the 2-year-old agency. Almost \$200,000 was spent on travel and lodging for attendees.

[Developer proposes \\$46 million for County Road 210](#)

(10/14/2004 © Florida Times-Union)

The proposed Twin Creeks development in northern St. Johns County would pay \$46 million to widen and straighten County Road 210, which curves sharply like a twisted paperclip, by adding an overpass for the road where it meets U.S. 1. The financing would advance the county's goal of transforming County Road 210 into a thoroughfare that will handle everyday commuter traffic and also give beach communities a better evacuation route.

[Speak Up On Proposals](#)

(10/14/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

More transportation options are on the way for Broward County. That's a good thing for the county, the business community and every local resident. The county's Metropolitan Transportationom:.0001pt">

[Passenger traffic increases at Orlando International](#)

(10/14/2004 © Orlando Business Journal)

Despite the mess caused when Hurricane Charley came roaring through in mid-August, passenger traffic for that month at Orlando International Airport actually increased by nearly 7 percent over the same period last year.

FRIDAY, 10/15/04

[Hurricanes may power S.R. 70 plan, FDOT says](#)

(10/15/2004 © Bradenton Herald)

MANATEE - The recent hurricane evacuations should prompt a renewed look at improving east-west travel across the southern half of Florida, including the possibility of a wider State Road 70 from Bradenton to Fort Pierce, the Florida Department of Transportation's top local official said Thursday.

[Palm Beach County news briefs](#)

(10/15/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

South Florida Tri-Rail gets funding for new train testing The Federal Railroad Administration has awarded a \$4.9 million grant to Tri-Rail to continue tests of a self-propelled passenger rail car for another two years.

[Florida National Guard troops may return to airport duty](#)

(10/15/2004 © Miami Herald)

ORLANDO, Fla. - Florida National Guard troops who patrolled airports after the 2001 terrorist attacks may return to the terminals soon. Florida Guard officials are drafting

plans to dispatch "at least a couple of hundred" troops to airports across the state, spokesman Lt. Col. Ron Tittle said Thursday.

[Airport traffic up, but problems hover](#)

(10/15/2004 © St. Petersburg Times)

St. Petersburg/Clearwater International Airport is having a record year for passenger traffic. Passenger totals through last month were up 50 percent compared with last year's figures, officials said.

[Voters to decide bullet train's fate - again](#)

(10/15/2004 © Tallahassee Democrat)

ORLANDO - Will a bullet train help free Floridians from snarling traffic, or is it a one-way express to financial disaster? The argument comes to a head Nov. 2, when voters decide whether they really meant it when they said four years ago they want a high-speed rail network crisscrossing Florida.