



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week:

"Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things." -Robert Brault

MONDAY, 11/21/05

[Pink license plates are not such a frivolous idea](#)

(11/21/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

For a minute there, I thought state Sen. Mike Fasano was a guy with way too much time on his hands. Fasano, a New Port Richey Republican, is proposing a law that would require people who get restricted driving privileges after being convicted of driving under the influence to sport bright pink license plates on their vehicles. The first three characters on the plates would read "DUI."

[Sunshine Skyway honors ex-governor](#)

(11/21/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

ST. PETERSBURG - After the 20,000-ton freighter Summit Venture rammed the old Sunshine Skyway bridge on May 9, 1980, there was little agreement on how to rebuild the link over Tampa Bay. Some wanted to rebuild the collapsed span, the cheapest fix. Some wanted to tunnel under the bay, the most expensive possibility. Florida Gov. Bob Graham held out for a brand new bridge and, eventually, he got what he wanted. Today, the bridge that has become a symbol for the Tampa Bay area will be rededicated to carry its champion's name: the Bob Graham/Sunshine Skyway.

[County plans for future traffic needs](#)

(11/21/2005 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

As DeSoto County government continues to work with the elements of the Comprehensive Plan update, tentative plans are in place for what our primary roadways will look like. The Traffic Circulation Element of the plan focuses on what the county will need in the future to meet its projected traffic patterns and volume of traffic. Traffic forecasts were made for the years 2010 and 2015.

[Wider S.R. 415 to get MPO study](#)

(11/21/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

ORANGE CITY -- More than \$900 million may be available through the next 20 years to improve roads, sidewalks and bus systems in Volusia County. That may seem like a lot, but local transportation officials have only \$121 million at their discretion for road improvements, leaving them few choices when they meet Tuesday to update the 20-year transportation plan.

[Roads Plan Might Run Out of Gas](#)

(11/21/2005 © Lakeland Ledger)

Critics say that the bad situation may be worse than people think. -- Michael Howe's headache is too much traffic and not enough roads. Anyone with wheels in Florida, where Howe is executive director of the Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization, can feel his pain.

[A budget bonanza & a big blind spot](#)

(11/21/2005 © Orlando Business Journal)

With the holidays just around the corner, it only seems appropriate that Gov. Jeb Bush be given an early gift. This week, the Revenue Estimating Conference tied a ribbon around a package of financial news that was sure to make the lame-duck governor beam like a 5-year-old on Christmas morning.

[Hey red-light runners, say 'cheese'](#)

(11/21/2005 © Florida Today)

MELBOURNE - Red-light runners beware: Beginning the first week of December, Big Brother -- or at least the Melbourne police -- will be watching one city intersection. Installers spent last week putting up cameras at the intersection of Hibiscus and Airport boulevards to photograph and videotape cars running red lights.

TUESDAY, 11/22/05

[More commuter rail funding awarded](#)

(11/22/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

Like the little engine that could, plans for commuter rail service linking DeBary with Orlando have kept chugging along. Now the project is more on track than ever with the help of more federal financial support -- \$11 million more. "The significance of this funding is that it makes the project a reality," said U.S. Rep. John Mica, R-Winter Park.

[Transportation](#)

(11/22/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

November 22, 2005 ISSUE: Congress approves funds for South Florida transit projects. South Florida learned the importance of regional clout last week when Congress gave final approval to spending millions of dollars on transportation projects for the region. A substantial portion is allocated for mass transit.

[Congress approves \\$4M for Indian Street bridge, \\$500K for buses in St. Lucie](#)

(11/22/2005 © Ft. Pierce Tribune)

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Community Transit picked up \$500,000 from Congress to buy buses to expand the U.S. 1 route between St. Lucie and Martin counties, while another \$4 million was designated for the Indian Street bridge. The transportation spending bill was passed by the House 392 to 31.

[Traffic insanity](#)

(11/22/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

We've seen traffic jams similar to last Tuesday evening's rush-hour nightmare on Bradenton and Palmetto streets before. But there has always been a triggering incident for it, usually an accident on I-75 or U.S. 41 that closes traffic in one direction, forcing

drivers to head into town to go north or south. But there appears to have been no single catalyst for the incredible gridlock that homebound drivers faced trying to get through either downtown Nov. 15. If this is the new normal for commuters getting through Bradenton, it is unacceptable.

[TRAFFIC: Avoiding congestion](#)

(11/22/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

At the rate Florida is growing, the state will never be able to build its way out of road congestion. Fortunately, it's doing the next-best thing -- which is to implement a "traffic jam" warning system. Before leaving on a trip, local or to somewhere else in the state, Jacksonville drivers now can get a report on travel conditions by calling 511 or clicking on www.FL511.com.

[Commissioners worried about lost transportation money](#)

(11/22/2005 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

Options to be presented today - Charlotte County officials are trying to plan their response to last week's announcement that the state has pulled about \$25 million in transportation money. County Public Works Director Tom O'Kane told county commissioners he will brief them during their board meeting today on the situation. O'Kane was questioned about the unexpected loss of money Monday.

[BELTWAY: Southerly and westerly route favored](#)

(11/22/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

I would like to correct some inaccurate information listed in a Nov. 11 letter titled "Chosen route will affect homes." The letter writer cites information from the Clay County Chamber of Commerce and its Strategic Plan for Economic Development that needs clarification. First, the chamber has not yet endorsed a specific route for the outer beltway. The chamber has publicly said it would favor the most southerly and westerly route that connects the Brannan Field Road terminus at Blanding Boulevard to Interstate 95 in St. Johns County. The chamber thinks this type of route will help relieve traffic congestion, promote quality job growth, attract economic development and diversify the tax base of Clay and surrounding counties

WEDNESDAY, 11/23/05

[\\$800,000 in federal money allotted for PGA extension](#)

(11/23/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

Federal lawmakers have agreed to pay \$800,000 to extend PGA Boulevard west through Mecca Farms, although a judge's order blocks the road from being connected to The Scripps Research Institute. U.S. Rep. Mark Foley, R-Jupiter, asked that the money be set aside as part of a transportation bill that earmarks millions of dollars for mass transit and road projects in Palm Beach County and the Treasure Coast. Congress approved a final conference report on the bill Friday, according to Foley's office.

[Congress approves \\$4M for Indian Street bridge, \\$500K for buses in St. Lucie](#)

(11/23/2005 © Stuart News)

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Community Transit picked up \$500,000 from Congress to buy

buses to expand the U.S. 1 route between St. Lucie and Martin counties, while another \$4 million was designated for the Indian Street bridge.

[FDOT money crunch worries county](#)

(11/23/2005 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

Five years worth of money was gone in an instant. Now local officials are scrambling to find out what went wrong and what the ramifications will be for area road projects. Charlotte County Public Works Director Tom O'Kane told Charlotte County commissioners Tuesday that trying to get information from the Florida Department of Transportation about why \$28.7 million worth of road projects were eliminated or delayed without notice has been impossible.

[Transit authority keeps options open](#)

(11/23/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

BOCA RATON — South Florida's transit authority is not pinning its hopes to one idea in creating a \$50 million-a-year pot of money to pay for new commuter rail and bus projects. All options are on the table, including a \$130 title fee on new cars, a \$15 registration fee on all vehicles and a \$2 rental car fee, Jack Stephens, deputy executive director of the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority, told state lawmakers Tuesday during a public hearing at Florida Atlantic University.

[Freight rail a solution for Orlando gridlock](#)

(11/23/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Things are not getting any better for commuters in the Orlando area. It's not only in Orlando, though. In every major city in America, commuters are spending more and more time in their cars fighting traffic. Each year, using data from the Texas Transportation Institute, I study the impact of increased freight traffic in our most congested urban areas and report on how re-directing some of this freight from trucks on the highway to freight trains could impact a typical commuter.

[Airports set new parking regulations](#)

(11/23/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

Hoping to ease congestion at Tampa International Airport, especially during the holiday season, new driving rules and parking options are in place: • Phase 1 of the \$71 million, six-level Economy Parking Garage, providing 3,300 covered spaces, opened Nov. 8. As motorists enter the deck of the garage, a lighted sign informs how many spaces are available on each level, saving you time searching for a space. A secondary sign on each level reminds drivers whether that level is full or space remains.

[Planners: Policies pinch funding for road projects](#)

(11/23/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

SOUTH DAYTONA -- A small pot of discretionary road improvement money would widen State Road 415 in Southwest Volusia and Clyde Morris Boulevard in Daytona Beach during the next 20 years under a plan approved Tuesday. While the Volusia County Metropolitan Planning Organization's 2025 long-range plan lists \$908 million worth of road, sidewalk and transit projects, board members only had options for \$121 million for roadwork. The small pot is the result of new state transportation spending policies, said Karl Welzenbach, executive director of the MPO which oversees federal and state transportation spending in Volusia and southeast Flagler counties.

[Bus use rises with gas price](#)

(11/23/2005 © Miami Herald)

The bad traffic and hurricane horror stories almost had many drivers forgetting about the price of gas. But not the people who ride Broward County Transit buses. The transit system Tuesday reported that September showed the largest month-to-month increase in the system's history.

Happy Thanksgiving!



After surviving a brutal winter where the daily ration of food per person was only 5 dried kernels of corn, the very first American Thanksgiving was held in 1621 when the Pilgrims and their new Native American friends gathered to give thanks to "Almighty God for all His blessings."

The first official observance of Thanksgiving on the last Thursday in November came in 1863 – the same year the bloody Civil War battle at Gettysburg was fought -- when President Abraham Lincoln declared "a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father."

This Thanksgiving Day, I encourage you to take a moment or two – before the turkey, stuffing, pumpkin pie and football games – to reflect on the blessings in your life and give thanks to God with genuine gratitude. And I want to personally THANK YOU for your strong support of FBT in 2005! -Doug Callaway