



# NEWS CLIPS

***Your "Voice" for Transportation!***

Quote of the Week:

**"The Constitution only gives people the right to pursue happiness.  
You have to catch it yourself." - Benjamin Franklin**

**FRIDAY, 12/16/05**

[Study again raises idea of toll roads](#)

(12/16/2005 © Florida Times-Union )

A state agency that builds toll roads throughout Florida has launched a study of how many drivers would use special toll lanes in Jacksonville if they were built on Butler Boulevard, the Arlington Expressway/Mathews Bridge, and Florida 9A. The analysis, requested by the Jacksonville Transportation Authority, will be finished in February, according to state officials.

[DOT chief backs city's transit plan](#)

(12/16/2005 © Florida Times-Union )

The state Department of Transportation's top administrator said Thursday he will back state funding for Jacksonville's planned rapid transit system, but he did not spell out a dollar amount. FDOT Secretary Denver Stutler gave the keynote speech at the Jacksonville Transportation Authority's regional transportation summit, which marked the agency's 50th anniversary.

[More drivers gabbing](#)

(12/16/2005 © Bradenton Herald )

WASHINGTON - More people than ever are turning their cars into personal phone booths, with a million and a half drivers gabbing on cell phones at any given time. Women and young people are the most common yakkers. About 10 percent of the people on the road during the day are using cell phones, up from 8 percent in 2004, the government reported Thursday.

[Lee considers borrowing money to build U.S. 41 road segment](#)

(12/16/2005 © Naples Daily News )

Lee County commissioners may have to borrow more than \$24 million if they want to help the state expedite plans to widen the last four-lane stretch of U.S. 41 between Naples and downtown Fort Myers. The Florida Department of Transportation will not have the money for the road segment until 2011 and attempts to speed up construction through a state loan failed earlier this month.

### [Officials: Price of rock, fill dirt 'going berserk'](#)

(12/16/2005 © Naples Daily News )

*Dwindling availability of places to mine the resource is driving up the cost of roads, homes, transportation administrator says* - Housing is not the only high-priced item in Collier County. The cost of rock and fill dirt is also excessive, officials at a joint meeting of the Collier and Lee county metropolitan planning organizations said Thursday.

### [Cash stalls county road projects](#)

(12/16/2005 © Palm Beach Post )

A 25 percent increase in the cost of construction materials and a decrease in federal money is forcing the state to delay several projects in its five-year road building program in Palm Beach County.

### [Facing a future of congestion, gridlock](#)

(12/16/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat )

Steve Vancore's daily commute runs one of the nastiest gantlets in Tallahassee - from deep in Killlearn Estates down Thomasville Road to the heart of downtown. At rush hour, it takes the 45-year-old public-relations firm owner about 35 minutes to make the 7.5-mile trip, just five minutes more each way than it normally takes to make the journey by car.

## **THURSDAY, 12/15/05**

### [Traffic slows as Tallahassee grows](#)

(12/15/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat )

Tallahassee motorists might as well learn to live with the traffic they battle every day because it's as good as it's going to get. The sobering reality, transportation experts agree, is traffic congestion in the Capital City is only going to get worse as people flock to the area, putting stress on a constricted road system already taxed by an annual influx of students and state power brokers.

### [Progress report scheduled on FEC rail passenger study](#)

(12/15/2005 © Palm Beach Post )

Boynton Beach Mayor Jerry Taylor says it would be a tremendous boost to his city's downtown redevelopment program to have commuter trains that would drop out-of-town passengers within walking distance of new waterfront shops and attractions. "Anytime you can get more intermodal transportation like that, it would be great," Taylor said.

### [County seeks state help with growth](#)

(12/15/2005 © Naples Daily News )

Help may be on the way for Collier County's growth management plan. On Wednesday, Collier commission Chairman Fred Coyle asked the Southwest Florida state legislators for help passing a bill that would allow Collier County to maintain the growth management system that has been in place for several years within the county. A new growth management law might damage the county's concurrency system.

### [Developer will kick in \\$500,000 for U.S. 41](#)

(12/15/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press )

A local developer has offered \$500,000 to help speed up the widening of U.S. 41 between Estero and San Carlos Park if Wal-Mart sticks to its previous offer of \$1 million.

### [Jennings: Florida will get commercial space business](#)

(12/15/2005 © Florida Times-Union )

TALLAHASSEE -- Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings said Wednesday that Florida is well-equipped to win a race for commercial space business -- possibly at Cecil Field in Jacksonville -- despite headlines about a \$225 million deal in New Mexico.

### [Transit authority plan may rest on tax increase](#)

(12/15/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press )

For motorists tired of traffic jams and impatient drivers, the proposed Lee County Transit Authority may provide relief with light rail and waterborne transportation systems. But supporters of alternatives to driving might have to pay a higher sales tax as a result. Lee County public officials met Wednesday in Fort Myers to discuss forming a transit authority.

### [Editorial: Roundabouts to ease traffic in Martin? That's circular logic](#)

(12/15/2005 © Ft. Pierce Tribune )

A complicated system of paired one-way roads and roundabouts on the east side of the Palm City Bridge will be considered Monday morning by the Martin County commission. Offered by Citizens for Smart Growth, led by Odias Smith, the proposal is an alternative to building the Indian Street bridge. The commission ought reject it and get on with the Indian Street bridge.

## **WEDNESDAY, 12/14/05**

### [Marshals To Patrol Land, Sea Transport](#)

(12/14/05 – Washington Post)

Teams of undercover air marshals and uniformed law enforcement officers will fan out to bus and train stations, ferries, and mass transit facilities across the country this week in a new test program to conduct surveillance and "counter potential criminal terrorist activity in all modes of transportation," according to internal federal documents.

### [Drilling's champion](#)

(12/14/2005 © Bradenton Herald )

Offshore drilling is coming to Florida. Count on it. That much was made clear by the entry of Associated Industries of Florida into the drilling debate. AIF came out for the compromise Monday, arguing that the need for more energy supplies outweighs the concern for despoiling Florida's beaches. Agriculture, transportation and electrical generating industries are all big users of natural gas, AIF said, and "we must make sure they have a reliable and affordable energy supply."

### [Rising costs could stall roads](#)

(12/14/2005 © Orlando Sentinel )

Exploding costs of land and materials are pushing the price of highway construction

toward the breaking point, adding \$2 billion to what Florida taxpayers will be asked to pay for roads during the next five years and forcing the delay of some projects.

### [GROWTH: Quality is the goal](#)

(12/14/2005 © Florida Times-Union )

Florida counties have a year to draw their own model ordinances to comply with new growth management standards from the state of Florida. A model ordinance proposed by the Florida Department of Transportation offers hope for the future. The ordinance is designed to help local governments set guidelines for addressing growth near roads that are already failing.

### [Legislator Seeking To Repeal Gas Law](#)

(12/14/2005 © Tampa Tribune )

TAMPA - -- A state representative wants to end a law he says stymies competition, protects the profits of big oil companies and keeps motorists paying through the hose. State Rep. Irving "Irv" Slosberg, D-Boca Raton, is seeking a repeal of the Motor Fuel Marketing Practices Act, which state legislators passed in 1985 to stop gasoline retailers from selling fuel for less than what they paid for it.

### [A PASS FOR DOWNTOWN DEVELOPERS](#)

(12/14/2005 © Florida Times-Union )

Downtown Jacksonville with its renaissance of high-rise, urban living could become the first place in Northeast Florida where developers get a pass on complying with the usual growth-management regulations for traffic. The City Council voted Tuesday to designate downtown as an area where traffic congestion will not be grounds for rejecting a proposed development.

### [Spaceport race just got harder](#)

(12/14/2005 © Florida Today )

CAPE CANAVERAL - New Mexico will build a \$225 million spaceport and become the launching site for the world's first spaceliner under a deal to be finalized today. The news frustrates some Brevard County leaders. They worry Florida is missing out on too many exciting, new space projects that might make up for some of the thousands of jobs threatened by NASA's plan to retire the shuttle orbiters.

**TUESDAY, 12/13/05**

### [Associated Industries backs offshore drilling](#)

(12/13/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat )

The state's most powerful business organization threw its considerable influence behind offshore oil and gas exploration in the Gulf of Mexico today. Associated Industries of Florida brought together a coalition of transportation, farming and manufacturing interests to endorse a bill pending in Congress that would expand drilling on the outer continental shelf.

### [TSA defends move to allow sharp tools](#)

(12/13/2005 © Bradenton Herald )

WASHINGTON - The head of the Transportation Security Administration defended the

agency's decision to allow small scissors and sharp tools onto planes, insisting at a Senate hearing Monday that it will make air travel safer.

#### [Computer technology is sensible traffic solution](#)

(12/13/2005 © Florida Times-Union )

The City Council, at the urging of the Mayor's Office, could be about to make a big mistake. The council is scheduled to vote tonight on a plan by the Mayor's Office to rejigger several hundred million dollars of Better Jacksonville Plan road projects, including getting rid of some proposed overpasses, a plan that grew out of neighborhood opposition, cost overruns and changing traffic needs.

#### [Back from the dust heap: eastern commuter rail](#)

(12/13/2005 © Miami Herald )

The idea of running commuter trains on the Florida East Coast Railway corridor is rising once more from the dust bins of dream projects that were oft-studied, but never removed from the drawing boards.

#### [Lynx has chance to fulfill wish list](#)

(12/13/2005 © Orlando Sentinel )

*A study offers ways for the system to get more money, such as a dedicated tax.* - Lynx bus riders dream of buses that arrive frequently, run late into the night and take them where they need to go -- even on weekends. So do the people who run Lynx.

#### [TRANSPORT YOURSELF TO THE FUTURE](#)

(12/13/2005 © Florida Times-Union )

Picture a typical commute across Jacksonville in 2055. It might involve driving partway in a network of high-tech toll lanes, then switching to a hovercraft boat for a fast ride down the St. Johns River, and finally hopping on an expanded Skyway system downtown.

#### [County MPO balks at state cut of Aquí Esta](#)

(12/13/2005 © Charlotte Sun Herald )

PUNTA GORDA -- Florida Department of Transportation officials can't promise Charlotte County it will see federal and state road money for \$18 million in improvements to Aquí Esta Drive. All the state officials can promise is that they will try to find money for the road project -- but that's not good enough for local officials.

**MONDAY, 12/12/05**

#### [A Future Free From Gridlock, For a Price](#)

*Toll Lane Network Swiftly Taking Form*

(12/12/05 - The Washington Post)

Motorists would drive on the Capital Beltway during rush hour at the mind-blowing rate of a mile a minute. In this strange, new world, people would run errands whenever they pleased, vacationers would leave town without spending hours in traffic, and express bus service would be launched on the region's major commuter routes. But these dream scenarios come with a cost: a toll as high as a dollar a mile in heavily traveled areas during peak times.

### [Gas-tax roadmap](#)

(12/12/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune )

*Manatee needs a detailed spending plan* - If Manatee County officials ever vote to raise the gas tax by a nickel a gallon, they certainly shouldn't be accused of rushing into it. The County Commission tapped the brakes on the idea again last week after the second presentation on the proposal in recent months.

### [Palm Beach International Airport nears its 70th birthday](#)

(12/12/2005 © Boca Raton News )

Twenty miles north of Boca Raton, 15 miles south of Jupiter, and very near Interstate 95 is Palm Beach International Airport. Ranked one of the best by both local and international travelers, Palm Beach County Commissioner Jeff Koons, in whose District 2 the airport is located, talks proudly about the facility.

### [Volusia still has chance for road grant](#)

(12/12/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal )

ORANGE CITY -- When the state recently doled out \$63 million to help improve some important Central Florida roads, Volusia and Flagler counties got nothing. But, they were not the only ones. Of nine counties in the Florida Department of Transportation's Central Florida District, four counties got money from a new grant program to enhance "regionally significant" roads.

### [Safety has always been on mind of airport officials](#)

(12/12/2005 © Charlotte Sun Herald )

PUNTA GORDA -- Charlotte County Airport officials say they think about safety all the time. Saturday's fiery crash of an experimental aircraft brought the issue to the forefront again. Pilot Felix Mestas, 52, of Cape Coral and passenger Ed Wilson, 75, of Fort Myers escaped with only minor injuries after the plane's engine failed and they were forced to make an emergency landing.

### [FACE TO FACE: DAVE EVANS: For this HNTB engineer, all roads led to transportation](#)

(12/12/2005 © Florida Times-Union )

Dave Evans remembers playing in his sandbox as a kid -- and even then, just a couple of years old, he already was building roadways. A few decades later, Evans is still building roadways, overseeing the project to turn a portion of Interstate 10 into a six-lane highway and running an office -- the Jacksonville office of engineering company HNTB Corp. -- that is responsible for doing work on Butler Boulevard, U.S. 1 and other highway projects in the area.

### [Overpass plan may be axed](#)

(12/12/2005 © Florida Times-Union )

Get ready for jumbo-size intersections at some of Jacksonville's worst traffic chokepoints. When the City Council votes Tuesday on killing four Better Jacksonville Plan overpasses, it will do so based on a study that demonstrates how greatly increasing the size of intersections can relieve traffic in lieu of building overpasses.