



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week:

"Christmas is a time when everybody wants his past forgotten and his present remembered." - Phyllis Diller

FBT's office will be closed this Friday, December 23rd, and the following week -- December 26-30. Consequently, there will not be any FBT News Clips tomorrow or next week.

Thanks for a great 2005 and we'll see YOU next year!

THURSDAY, 12/22/05

[Florida Is Fastest-Growing State In U.S.](#)

(12/22/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

TAMPA - It's as if everyone in Omaha put down their steaks, picked up their belongings and moved to Florida. The Sunshine State gained 404,000 people from July 2004 to July - about as many as in that Midwestern city - a census report released today shows. That makes us the fastest-growing state in the Union in pure numbers, just ahead of Texas and California.

[Funding woes set back plans for Beach Boulevard widening](#)

(12/22/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

The planned widening of Beach Boulevard through a fast-growing part of Jacksonville took one step forward and one step back in recent days. The setback came when the state Department of Transportation said that funding woes will delay until 2010 the start of widening Beach Boulevard to six lanes from Hodges Boulevard to San Pablo Road. That \$25 million project had been slated to begin in 2007.

[Don't derail the deal](#)

(12/22/2005 © Florida Today)

Plans to extend the Pineda Causeway to Interstate 95 have been on Brevard County's drawing board for 25 years, but repeatedly stalled because of snags involving funding, right-of-way, and design options. Now that the county is so close to seeing real action, a dispute over a railroad crossing should not be allowed to throw the project off the tracks.

[Its safety record works in Chalk's favor, experts say](#)

(12/22/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

The crash of a Grumman seaplane off Miami Beach that killed 20 people on Monday isn't likely to doom Chalk's Ocean Airways, which has a long history of safe flights to fall back on, aviation experts said Wednesday. With only four aircraft and a checkered financial record, Chalk's has limited resources to draw on in its current crisis.

[Quality car time](#)

(12/22/2005 © Gainesville Sun)

When a parent rides in the passenger seat, a teen driver is more likely to avoid accidents and arrive safely. You may notice certain similarities in news reports when young drivers are involved in accidents. Frequently, they have other teenagers as passengers. New, inexperienced drivers have plenty to cope with behind the wheel. It's even more of a distraction when their friends are riding with them. Last year, vehicle accidents were the leading cause of death for the 15-to-20 age group. Youngsters are also twice as likely to be involved in a traffic accident as older drivers.

[Wide tires could leave mark on trucking industry](#)

(12/22/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

Take a closer look at some of the 18-wheelers rolling down the nation's roads lately and you might notice something missing: eight wheels. Some truckers are converting to wider tires that let them replace dual tires with single tires, turning their rigs into 10-wheelers to reap fuel and weight savings.

['Santa' in England pays drivers' fines](#)

(12/22/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

LONDON - For some harassed Christmas motorists, Santa is just the ticket. Motorists receiving parking tickets in the central English city of Birmingham recently have found Christmas cards on their windscreens containing 30 pounds (US\$50; 45 euros) in cash to pay the fine, the Daily Telegraph reported Wednesday.

WEDNESDAY, 12/21/05

[Find money for transit](#)

(12/21/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

South Florida and state officials have the right idea in studying how to combine mixed-used development with mass transit along the Florida East Coast Railway from Miami to Martin County. The estimated \$800 million that they spoke of several years ago for acquiring the freight-heavy FEC right of way, however, may now exceed \$1 billion. So the priority must be the money needed to get there.

[City OKs transit study](#)

(12/21/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

HALLANDALE BEACH Commissioners hope a \$250,000 traffic analysis study they unanimously approved Tuesday will come up with solutions to the city's gridlock. Officials said they will be able to predict worst-case development scenarios, including impact from slot machines and accompanying traffic increases.

[Martin moves on \\$40 million in road bonds](#)

(12/21/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

STUART — Martin County moved a step closer on Tuesday to borrowing \$40 million for road projects, a loan some commissioners said is needed to coax more money from state lawmakers for the proposed Indian Street Bridge. In a 3-2 vote, the board asked staff to start filing papers to issue a bond to help pay for the repeatedly delayed \$162 million bridge over the St. Lucie River.

[Section of A1A may remain closed all week](#)

(12/21/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

FLAGLER BEACH -- A section of State Road A1A that was closed after ocean waves undermined the roadbed on Monday might not reopen until next week, officials said. Workers from the state Department of Transportation spent Monday afternoon packing sand and coquina rock under a washed-out section of the roadbed between 12th and 14th streets.

[Seat-belt use in Florida drops a notch](#)

(12/21/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

After a record-setting 2004, the number of Florida drivers buckling their seat belts dropped this year. Belt use was 73.9 percent, compared with 76.3 percent last year. Nationwide, 82 percent of motorists wear safety belts, a 2 percent increase from 2004.

[Will Florida lawyers force state to review its speed limits?](#)

(12/21/2005 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

Florida lawmakers may be in a difficult spot if the lawyers begin challenging speed limits for their clients who get speeding tickets. Attorneys have been winning in other states. Federal law requires each state to conduct and follow a traffic study before posting speed limits. It must be done every five years. Apparently Florida has not done that.

[Gas tax may be back again in a few months](#)

(12/21/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

CLEARWATER - The Pinellas County Commission narrowly voted down a proposal Tuesday to levy an extra penny tax on gasoline to battle road congestion. Supporters said the extra penny would help create a system of signals on major arteries that could rapidly adapt to traffic, reducing delays, improving air quality and cutting fuel consumption.

TUESDAY, 12/20/05

[20 killed in plane crash off Miami Beach](#)

(12/20/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

MIAMI BEACH, Fla. - A seaplane crashed just off Miami Beach within sight of the city's high-rises Monday, killing all 20 people aboard. Witnesses said the aircraft exploded in flames as it came down, and the FBI joined the investigation. Amateur video obtained by CNN showed the main part of the plane slamming into the water followed by a flaming object trailing thick black smoke.

[State says 2nd leg of commuter rail has to wait till 2013](#)

(12/20/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

If commuter rail comes to Central Florida, the train will be a little late getting to the Kissimmee and Poinciana stations -- two years late. State officials said Monday that plans for the second phase of a commuter-rail system -- a segment that would stretch from Orlando to Poinciana -- would have to wait until 2013, instead of the original target of 2011.

[Delaying bridge work draws critic](#)

(12/20/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

The daughter of a woman who died in a July 2004 crash on the grating of the Mathews Bridge said Monday she is disheartened by the state Department of Transportation's decision to defer by one year the replacement of the Jacksonville bridge's grating.

[Engineers: Slow drivers most dangerous](#)

(12/20/2005 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

The message seems to be getting through to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) officials. Traffic engineers contend raising speed limits reduce highway crashes and deaths. Federal regulations require the state to conduct engineering studies of all highways before speed limits are posted.

[DOT recipe book full of nonalcoholic ideas](#)

(12/20/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

Looking for some tasty alcohol-free drinks to serve to the designated drivers at your holiday get-togethers? How about some DOT punch? The Florida Department of Transportation and the local Community Traffic Safety Teams recently released their second annual edition of Recipes for the Road , a collection of nonalcoholic drink recipes gathered from popular restaurants throughout Pinellas, Hillsborough, Pasco, Citrus and Hernando counties.

[Coconut Road debate continues](#)

(12/20/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Concerns about the traffic impacts in south Lee County are keeping the controversial Coconut Road interchange and flyover issue alive. Bonita Springs city leaders plan to discuss those impacts which are being reviewed by regional transportation planners at their Wednesday city council meeting.

[Martin scuttles alternative bridge plan](#)

(12/20/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

STUART — Enough, members of Martin County's metropolitan planning organization told state planners Monday: Don't waste any more time considering a resident-led alternative to the Indian Street Bridge. The board, which decides which road projects get built, voted 6-1 to stop review of the proposal by Citizens for Smart Growth, which suggested building roundabouts and one-way streets near the existing Palm City Bridge.

MONDAY, 12/19/05

[Get the 5-1-1 on Brevard traffic](#)

(12/19/2005 © Florida Today)

PALM BAY - On a good day, Dave Miller, a project manager with Harris Corp., spends about 2 1/2 hours commuting from his south Orlando home to his job at the Palm Bay campus. On a bad day, Miller says his 70-mile trip can take upwards of four hours depending on whether there is an accident, roadwork or heavy traffic.

[S.R. 33 resurfacing bids may be issued next fall](#)

(12/19/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Bids to resurface nearly 14 miles of State Road 33 from State Road 50 near Groveland to the Polk County line could be awarded in fall 2006 or early 2007. Construction on the estimated \$5.6 million project could begin in late winter or spring 2007 and take about six months to complete, said State Department of Transportation spokesman Steve Homan.

[Seniors struggle with driving rite: Giving up the keys](#)

(12/19/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

DAYTONA BEACH -- Driving a car is a long-anticipated rite of passage for teenagers. Giving up driving for older Americans can be a scary passage of a long-cherished right.

[Construction along I-10 bridge expected to meet 2006 deadline](#)

(12/19/2005 © Pensacola News Journal)

Despite impacts from the 2005 hurricane season, construction of the new eastbound Interstate 10 bridge over Escambia Bay is still expected to meet the projected 2006 completion date. Florida Department of Transportation officials said the storms did affect construction, but the contractor is working to ascertain how much and what steps need to be taken to meet the target completion dates.

[Bonita, county fight over effects of refusing \\$10M to study Coconut Road interchange](#)

(12/19/2005 © Naples Daily News)

Since Lee County has twice rejected \$10 million to study an Interstate 75 interchange at Coconut Road in Estero, Bonita Springs City Council on Wednesday will rethink its road projects that would help the county but possibly further burden the city's transportation system.

[Billboard response](#)

(12/19/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

In regard to your Dec. 8 editorial "A stranglehold," I want to thank you for acknowledging that "billboards can direct motorists to vital services." However, there are a few statements in the editorial we would like to clarify.

[Door-to-door luggage service takes off](#)

(12/19/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Orlando-based BAGS Inc. is growing rapidly as tourism partners such as Disney World sign up for its program. Beth Kassab Sentinel Staff Writer December 19, 2005 The way people move through airports is changing here in Central Florida and elsewhere across the country. Curbside luggage check-in is becoming more rare.

Floridians for Better Transportation (FBT) is a statewide business and transportation association dedicated to making transportation safer and more efficient in Florida. FBT has a diverse membership of 150 businesses, organizations, and individuals, including the Florida Chamber of Commerce, the Florida Transportation Builders Association, Publix Super Markets, AAA Auto Club South, SunTrust Bank, the Florida Institute of Consulting Engineers, the Florida Public Transportation Association, the Florida Ports Council, the Florida MPO Advisory Council, the Florida Airports Council, and numerous local businesses, Chambers of Commerce, MPOs, and transit providers all across the Sunshine State.