

Scenic Watch

Citizens for a Scenic Florida



September 18, 2010

In the News: Bill Brinton

"On the Other Hand: Rethinking Shelter Advertising"

"The citizens of many cities in this country desire to improve their communities' appearances and to reduce sign clutter along roadways. In November 2009, an overwhelming majority of voters in San Francisco approved a ballot initiative to halt the placement of ads on transit furniture. Cities like Houston, TX and Arlington, VA, hard at work in improving their communities' appearance, do not allow advertising on transit furniture.

While some cities do allow curbside advertisements that target passing drivers, the fact is that the ads distract drivers from the task of driving, diverting their attention to ads for fast food, personal injury lawyers, and an array of commercial products and services. In 2008, an expert for Clear Channel Outdoor noted the distraction caused by such advertisements because they force drivers to read them at shorter distances than billboards.

The City of Orlando still prohibits advertisements on downtown shelters because city leaders know that beauty is good for business. There is no doubt that roadside ads erode a community's interest in visual enhancement. In December 2009, a federal court in New Jersey observed that a city's interest in aesthetics was diminished by allowing an exemption for bus shelter advertising.



Photo: Josh Green, jgreen@wncn.com

In Jacksonville, voters went to the polls in 1987 to approve a citizens' initiative to halt further billboard construction. It should be no surprise that Keep Jacksonville Beautiful, Greenscape, The City Beautiful Coalition, Inc. and other visual enhancement and neighborhood organizations vigorously opposed plans to place advertising on bus shelters that will admittedly "target" Jacksonville residents and drivers. Jacksonville Transportation Authority's Board Chair acknowledged that these ads will increase visual clutter, and opened the door to discussions to find alternatives. This was a good sign (pardon the pun).

Some neighborhoods were exempted from the controversial scheme, while other neighborhoods were not spared. But if some parts of a city are free to advance the goal of beautification, shouldn't all parts have that opportunity?

One does not need to diminish roadside beauty to improve transportation amenities. It is a false choice.

Just as landscaping and streetscaping are part of



Photos: Gulf to Bay Blvd, Clearwater, FL : Then and Now

sound transportation planning, street furniture should also be taken into account and not made into the Yellow Pages.

Thomas Jefferson is reported to have said that cities should be surrounded continuously by a maximum of beauty. The battle for beauty repeats itself over and over as citizens struggle to improve their communities. Transportation planners and agencies must pay close attention to this struggle, and reject any scheme that does not advance both beauty and transportation. They are not mutually exclusive.

In his last public appearance before his death, the late Charles Kuralt spoke these words: "America does not belong to the franchisers and the developers and spoilers who do not give a damn about their country. The land is ours. Ordinary Americans, I am persuaded of this with all my heart, ordinary Americans want a beautiful country."

Here is an open question for the transportation community: will you give ordinary Americans a beautiful country or one that is awash in clutter and visual pollution?

-- by Bill Brinton via TripPlanner.com

August-September



Fun Festivals and Events

North Florida

Sept 18-19

Spanish American War Event,
Fernandina Beach

Sept 19

Old Time Dance at O'Leno, High
Springs

Sept 23-25

Quiltfest 2009, Jacksonville

Sept 24-26

Pensacola Seafood Festival,

**ClearChannel Spent \$1.37M on
lobbying in 2Q**

CBS Spent \$800k in 2Q



Photos: Adme.ru

"Clear Channel Communications Inc. spent \$1.37 million in the second quarter to lobby the federal government on a proposal to pay recording artists and

Pensacola

Sept 25

Marion County Springs Festival,
Dunnellon

Oct 2

Central Florida Harvest and Peanut
Festival, Williston

Oct 2

Fall Festival, High Springs

Oct 3-10

Amelia Island Jazz Festival,
Fernandina Beach

Oct 7-9

Third Annual Fall Palatka Bluegrass
Festival, Palatka

Oct 8-10

Seafood, Wine and Music Festival,
Panama City Beach

Oct 8-10

Annual Greek Festival, St. Augustine

Oct 15-17

Boggy Bayou Mullet Festival,
Niceville

Oct 15-17

Blast on the Bay Songwriter Festival,
Port St. Joe

Oct 15-17

Suwannee River Quilt Show and
Sale, White Springs

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Central Florida

Sept 17-19

27th Annual Raft Race Weekend,
Homosassa

Sept 18

Classic Auto, Bike and Truck Show,
St. Petersburg

Sept 24-26

New Smyrna Beach Jazz Festival,
New Smyrna Beach

Sept 25-26

Fiesta del Coqui, Orlando

Oct 1-2

Ranch Rodeo Finals and Cowboy
Heritage Festival, Kissimmee

Oct 1-3

Music Fest, Winter Garden

Oct 1-3

Super Boat National Championship,
Clearwater Beach

Oct 1-3

labels royalties for song play on traditional radio stations and other issues....
The association also lobbied the government on congressional oversight of
digital billboards...."

-- Bloomberg Businessweek

"...According to a filing with Congress, the issues Clear Channel's lobbyists
have been talking to legislators about include broadcast localism, ownership
rules, decency, Fairness Doctrine, spectrum policies, the DISCLOSE Act,
performance royalties, broadcast monitoring, congressional oversight of digital
billboards and broadcast advertising.

...CBS Corp. ... spent \$800,000 in its second quarter on a lengthy list of
legislation affecting its radio, TV and other media businesses. Its total at the
half-year for 2010 is about \$2.3 million, compared to \$2.2 million at this point
last year."

-- Radio World

[Read the Businessweek News Here >](#)

[Read the Radio World News Here >](#)



Photo: YourObserver.com

Lamar Defaults on

Sarasota Contract

"Ten years ago, the city of Sarasota signed a contract with Lamar Advertising
Co., making the company the sole provider of public bus shelters in Sarasota.

The agreement called for Lamar to install 50 shelters. Now a decade later, only
19 shelters have been placed, and three of those are no longer on active SCAT
bus routes.

Furthermore, the city has tried to communicate with the company for nearly a
year to discuss its failure to live up to the contract and has received no
response.

One hour before city staff was set to present these facts to the City
Commission, a Lamar executive called the neighborhood and development
services department and said it will still install all 50 shelters and wants its
contract extended...

Commissioners decided to allow the contract to expire and see if SCAT wanted
to install in its own shelters."

-- YourObserver.com

[Read the Article Here >](#)

Melbourne Main Street Fall Festival,
Melbourne

Oct 7-10

36th Annual Bicycle Festival, Mount
Dora

Oct 9-10

37th Annual Winter Park Autumn
Art Festival, Winter Park

Oct 13-17

Ringling International Arts Festival,
Sarasota

Oct 14-17

Clearwater Jazz Holiday, Clearwater

Oct 14-17

Melbourne Oktoberfest, Melbourne

[Read More >](#)

South Florida

Sept 17-19

Martin County Nautical Flea Market
and Seafood Festival, Stuart

Sept 22-26

Florida Keys Birding and Wildlife
Festival, Marathon and Lower Keys

Oct 1-10

16th Annual Oktoberfest, Coral
Gables

Oct 2-3

Downtown Delray Beach Craft
Festival, Delray Beach

Oct 8-30

Festival Miami 2010, Miami

Oct 8-10

Pirate Festival, Fort Myers Beach

Oct 9-10

Peace River Boat Show and
Flatsmasters Series Championship,
Port Charlotte

Oct 9-10

Second annual Coconut Creek Craft
Festival, Coconut Creek

Oct 9-10

Columbus Day Regatta 2010, Key
Biscayne

Oct 10

Miami Carnival Parade and Festival,
Miami

Oct 12-26

Photos From Blogs:

C000000L Bus Shelters in Siberia

...Literally



Photos: Adme.ru



Photos: Adme.ru



[Read Russian? The Article IS Here>](#)

News From Across the Nation



Photos: Adme.ru

Grand Rapids - Give ONE company an inch....CBS sues and wins right to get a billboard based on Lamar's previously approved billboard.

[Read Grand Rapids Press Article >](#)

Phoenix - Political Billboard is turned off between 11pm and sunrise in accordance with Phoenix's Dark Sky Ordinance. "The Sounds of Silence: Dougherty's Digital Billboards Light Up the Phoenix Sky."

[Read Article >](#)

Bellingham - Details on the rules for advertising on Bus Shelters. "WTA advances plan for expanded advertising on buses, shelters"

[Read Complete Article >](#)

South Florida Theatre Festival,
Miami

[Read More >](#)



Note from the Editor

Suggestions for improvement are
always welcome.

Rapid City - UPDATE - "City council enacts another billboard moratorium"

".. no use in additional regulations if the city was not going to approve any new billboards."

[Read Article on Recent Events in Rapid City >](#)

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