

## Scenic Watch

Citizens for a Scenic Florida



May 2013

### Under Pressure from Citizens, Maitland Abandons Plan for Digital Billboard Along I-4



Photo: WFTV, Central Florida

**"I would hope the communities around us would be able to see us as an example of how to be able to build their communities."**

**-- Maitland resident Jennifer Sigman**

"...Sigman said that before she learned about the proposed billboard, which would have sat several hundred feet from her back yard, plans for it were moving forward..."

-- WFTV, Central Florida

"Confronted by an overflow crowd of angry residents, Maitland's City Council on Monday backed away from allowing a digital billboard alongside Interstate 4.

The Council unanimously voted to withdraw the proposed change to the city's sign ordinance after it became clear it no longer had the necessary three votes to pass.

The ordinance would have permitted the 45-foot-by-14-foot 'digital outdoor advertising sign' on property owned by the St. Anthony Coptic Orthodox Church...

Residents of nearby Maitland Club, a gated community of about 115 homes, feared the 70-foot-tall double-

sided sign would be visible from their homes.

The measure had won preliminary approval from the City Council in April despite being unanimously rejected by the city's development review committee and planning and zoning board.

City Councilman John Lowndes expressed concern that the ordinance even came before the council. "This is an embarrassing situation where we've disregarded our professional staff and our citizen board," Lowndes said. "What we've relearned is Maitland is not a billboard town."

-- David Breen, Orlando Sentinel

[Read entire Orlando Sentinel article here>](#)  
[Watch video and read entire WFTV article here>](#)

## June



### Fun Festivals and Events

#### Central Florida

**June 3-24**

Sarasota Music Festival, Sarasota

**June 1-2**

Silver Spurs Rodeo, Kissimmee

**June 2-3**

Fifth Annual Pepper Fest, Pinellas Park

**June 9-10**

Tampa Bay Caribbean Carnival, Tampa

**June 2-3**

Corey Avenue Craft Festival, St. Petersburg Beach

**June 9-10**

St. Armands Circle Craft Festival, Sarasota

**June 21**

Sea Side Fiesta, New Smyrna Beach

**June 22-24**

Harvest Festival, Clermont

**June 8-10**

Soccer on the Beach Tournament, Daytona Beach

**June 23**



Photo: City of Clearwater

The proposed amendments to the Florida Statute covering Outdoor Advertising, Chapter 479 that were a concern to Citizens for a Scenic Florida, Inc. were not made during this session.

Previously CSF had communicated to FDOT and others that several proposed changes were ill-advised including the introduction of fine limits for illegal tree cutting and a pilot program for significantly shortening the spacing requirements along the interstates. Unfortunately a couple of needed changes were also not adopted.

We will remain vigilant and prepare for next year!

-- Bill Jonson, Citizens for a Scenic FI, Inc.

[Visit Citizens for a Scenic Florida, Inc. website here>](#)

## "Are Pay Phones a Thing of the Past?"

## Florida Legislative Update

Art Walk on Flagler Avenue, New Smyrna Beach

**June 23-24**

Downtown Dunedin Craft Festival, Dunedin

**June 23-July 4**

Suncoast Offshore Grand Prix Festival, Sarasota

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## South Florida

**June 2-3**

Miami/Bahamas Goombay Festival, Coconut Grove

**June 1-3**

West Palm Beach Antiques Festival, West Palm Beach

**June 5**

Founder's Day at Whitehall, Palm Beach

**June 4-17**

Coral Gables Restaurant Week, Coral Gables

**June 16-17**

Redland Summer Fruit Festival, Homestead

**June 1-4**

Royal Poinciana Fiesta, Coconut Grove

**June 17**

West Palm Beach Carnival, West Palm Beach

**June 16-17**

Downtown Venice Craft Festival, Venice

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## North Florida

**June 2-10**



Photo: Scenic Miami, Inc.

**"Stroll down most of Miami's main streets and every few blocks you'll see a 5-foot tall, three-sided structure with a couple of sides of advertising, usually for bottled water or a clothing line.", writes Brian Corn of The Wichita Eagle.**

"They stand like sentries on the sidewalks of Brickell Avenue and Biscayne Boulevard, along Flagler and Eighth streets, about 100 of them — yet they are barely noticed and rarely used.

The question: What to do with the archaic, bland pay phones that once served an extraordinary public service but, at a time when just about everyone has a cell phone, seem little more than space-eating advertising sites cluttering Miami sidewalks?

'I suppose you can justify one without an ad every 12 blocks or so,' said Peter Ehrlich, a Scenic Miami member whose group considers outdoor advertising to be visual pollution. 'They're not really pay phones anymore, it's visual clutter, an eyesore.'

Though most everyone agrees pay phones are so rarely used they don't pay for themselves and would disappear without the advertising, they still serve an important function, advocates argue.

'Miami has a large number of tourists, especially foreign tourists whose cell phones won't work,' said Bruce Renard, executive director of the Florida Public Telephone Association. 'And it still serves a major public purpose. When the towers went down in New York the pay phones were the only phones that worked for weeks.'

Stroll down most of Miami's main streets and every few blocks you'll see a 5-foot tall, three-sided structure with a couple of sides of advertising, usually for bottled water or a clothing line...

Countywide, advertising on pay phones isn't a hot-button issue, at least for now. Deputy Miami-Dade mayor Chip Iglesias said the county has contracts for the airport and its jails — the only pay phones in town he believes pay for themselves...

Fiesta of Five Flags, Pensacola

**June 1-2**

Wellborn Blueberry Festival,  
Wellborn

**May 31-June 2**

Billy Bowlegs Pirate Festival, Fort  
Walton Beach

**June 2**

First Saturday Jam, Barberville

**June 2**

Living History Day at Fort Matanzas,  
Marineland

**June 2**

Watermelon Festival, Chiefland

**June 9**

Annual St

George Island Mullet Toss, St.  
George Island

**June 14-16**

Suwannee River Jubilee, Live Oak

**June 22-23**

Panhandle Watermelon Festival,  
Chipley

**June 23**

Battle of Bloody Mose 271st  
Anniversary Commemoration, Fort  
Mose Historic State Park

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**Note from the Editor**

Suggestions for improvement are  
always welcome.

[Commissioner] Sarnoff had his staff do an audit, and the results didn't surprise him: In 2012, each of the 96 pay phones on city right-of-ways in Miami averaged 200 calls a year — about one every other day. Free calls to 911 averaged less than one a week from each phone. To put up a phone on a city right-of-way you must obtain a permit from the city. The same goes for placing an ad on a phone booth.

Most of the phones in Miami with ads are there because of a 2001 pilot program in which the city allowed advertising on the pay phones for the first time. But there was no next step, and the city's phones have for the most part languished ever since. The city collects \$9,300 a year total from the company that owns most of the pay phones on city streets, plus another \$185 per phone — not exactly the multi-million dollar windfall that billboards have brought.

Sarnoff placed an item on the city agenda a few weeks to do away with all the pay phones on public property, but pulled it after seeing he didn't have enough votes from fellow commissioners.

'I'm not sure you need' pay phones, Sarnoff said. ' But if we do they shouldn't be ugly little kiosks just for advertising. Let's make Miami a really cool city and do what New York did.'

Aha. New York. Where the lights are brighter and the pay phones are — sexier?

They certainly are this year, especially since New York launched its "Reinvent Payphones" contest in December. The winner: The "NYFI", a 10-foot tall double-sided touchscreen outdoor phone with large advertising panels on the sides. The booth comes with free wi-fi and other smart phone features.

Other contestants include "The Beacon," a 12-foot tall voice- and gesture-controlled kiosk that looks like a colorful canoe paddle standing on end. There was also the "NYC IO," a three-sided tube-like structure that offers real time data.

Michael Kohner is director of operations for First American Telecom, which owns 325 pay phones throughout Miami, most of them on private property or Florida Department of Transportation land. He admits the phones aren't self-sustaining, and require advertising to keep them around. He said he's aware of the New York competition, and has a couple of ideas of his own, like combination ATM/pay phone kiosks.

He said his company would be more than willing to take a look at other ways to supplement pay phone revenue, whether it's working in combination with ATMs or setting up at Internet hot spots.

'Pay phones are a declining business,' said Kohner..."

-- Charles Rabin, Miami Herald

[Read entire article here>](#)

## "Florida Man Uses Hair as Advertising Space for Businesses"



Photo: Mohackads.com via NYDailyNews.com

**"Gasmy Joseph AKA Mohawk Gaz airbrushes ads of local Ft. Lauderdale businesses on his mohawk. The idea sparked when he used his hair to promote a friend's party about eight months ago."**

"... A Florida entrepreneur is using his head to make cash — literally.

Gasmy Joseph airbrushes ads on his Mohawk to give local businesses a boost, a quirky side gig he's hoping will soon spiral into a lucrative, full-time job.

It started about eight months ago when Joseph — known as Mohawk Gaz around Ft. Lauderdale — used his Mohawk to promote a friend's party.

'Everybody loved it, so I just kept on doing it,' Joseph, 36, told the Daily News. 'When people see it, they can't believe it. They're always asking me if it's my real hair.'

Joseph, a freelance videographer and aspiring actor, has gotten about 25 gigs so far, from catering companies to tax groups...

Price for headspace is case-by-case, but Joseph says a bigger company should expect to pay about \$1200 for a weekend.

Mohawk Gaz hopes to work with national brands soon — like the NBA.

He works with an airbrush artist to design the ads.

Get yours at MohawkAds.com..."



Photo: Mohackads.com via NYDailyNews.com

-- Rheana Murray, New York Daily News

[Read entire article here>](#)