

Scenic Watch



News from
January
2021

"Arbor Day celebration smaller because of pandemic,
but still meaningful"



Photo: Meghan McCarthy, Palm Beach Daily

"Putting on gray work gloves and yellow helmets, students from local elementary schools Thursday morning helped celebrate Florida Arbor Day by planting a kapok tree at Phipps Ocean Park in Palm Beach.

'This is hard work. But it's real good to plant a tree,' said Ryder Lazzaro, a third-grader at Palm Beach Day Academy.

The 13-foot-tall seedling, planted just east of the Little Red Schoolhouse at the park south of Sloane's Curve, could grow to more than 100 feet tall and live more than 200 years.

The fast-growing trees, like the one on Lake Trail on the grounds of the Royal Poinciana Chapel, are known for luxurious canopies and thick buttress roots.

The Garden Club of Palm Beach organized the annual event, which was smaller this year because of the pandemic, said Garden Club President Mary Pressly.

'We're hoping to inspire students to help their community. Planting trees and watching them grow may motivate them to go into fields like conservation and botany,' said Pressly, who was among about 40 other town officials, club members and students who gathered under cloudy skies for the event.

While the national Arbor Day observance is in April, Florida and other states celebrate the day to reflect their best planting time..."

-- Bill DiPaolo, Special to the Daily News

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Scenic Florida's negotiated takedown update:

Another billboard removed from Interstate 95



Photo: Scenic Florida

The second of three Outfront Media billboards (located along Interstate 95 in Southern Duval County) was dismantled and removed on January 7th as part of a take-down settlement negotiated several years ago between Scenic Florida and Outfront Media.

-- Scenic Florida

[Learn more about Scenic Florida](#)

"View improves as billboard falls along A1A in Flagler"



Photo: David Tucker, The Daytona Beach News Journal

"The last of nearly a dozen billboards that Palm Coast developer pledged to remove when he purchased them more than three years ago came tumbling down piece by piece on Monday...

Jim Cullis, president of Grand Living Realty, came out to watch as demolition crews dismantled the over-sized display board just east of the Hammock Dunes Bridge overpass along State Road A1A, also called Ocean Shore Boulevard. He was joined by county officials and members of several local organizations that are dedicated to conserving the natural beauty of the historic scenic roadway.

'It's the end of a three-year effort to work with the Friends of A1A and the (Hammock) Conservancy and the county to beautify scenic A1A,' Cullis said. "We struck this arrangement three years ago, and it's gone by pretty quickly. There were a total of 11 boards involved in this arrangement, and now they're all gone.'

The signs were part of a collection of 14 billboards that included three on Interstate 95. Cullis said he bought the boards from a developer in Hammock Dunes for \$213,000 in June 2013. Four months later, he sold eight of them to the county for \$80,000, and officials demolished two other full-sized billboards on S.R. A1A as part of that deal. He said the Hammock Dunes Association purchased another sign from him and destroyed it last summer.

County officials agreed to allow Cullis to continue leasing the billboards for three years in exchange for him selling them at a cheaper rate. The pact called for him to tear them all down by the end of this month.

The one ripped down Monday was a two-sided display board advertising Coldwell Banker on one side and Bellagio Custom Homes on the other. Cullis said it was among the largest signs in the group and accounted for two billboards coming down because it was double-sided. Cullis said there are now 24 left standing along S.R. A1A, and county officials said the goal is to one day remove them all.

'It's a scenic byway, so we're trying to keep up the way it was,' said Commissioner Greg Hansen, who was on hand to watch as workers began dismantling the sign Monday. 'We want it to be as natural as it can be.'

Fellow Commissioner David Sullivan was also on hand and echoed Hansen's sentiments.

'The deal is it beautifies the road,' he said. 'We don't have the eye sore, and that's what we're trying to do — make A1A as beautiful a road as it can possibly be...'

'Everybody has wanted this, and Jim (Cullis) has made that possible,' said Marge Rooyackers, president of the Hammock Community Association and Hammock Conservancy. 'All our advertising will be done electronically now. All the millennials and young folk are on their cell phones, all on their computers. They just don't need this anymore...'

Dennis Clark, a member of Scenic A1A Pride, the Flagler chapter of the Friends of A1A group, estimated the billboards have been a staple on the road for about 30 years.

'It's a huge improvement,' he said. 'We've been working to do this for probably 14, or 15 years. It was finally possible with Jim Cullis allowing us to do it. So this is fantastic as an improvement and a beautification.'"

-- Matt Bruce, The Daytona Beach News Journal

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"In honor of Sallye Garrigan Jude"

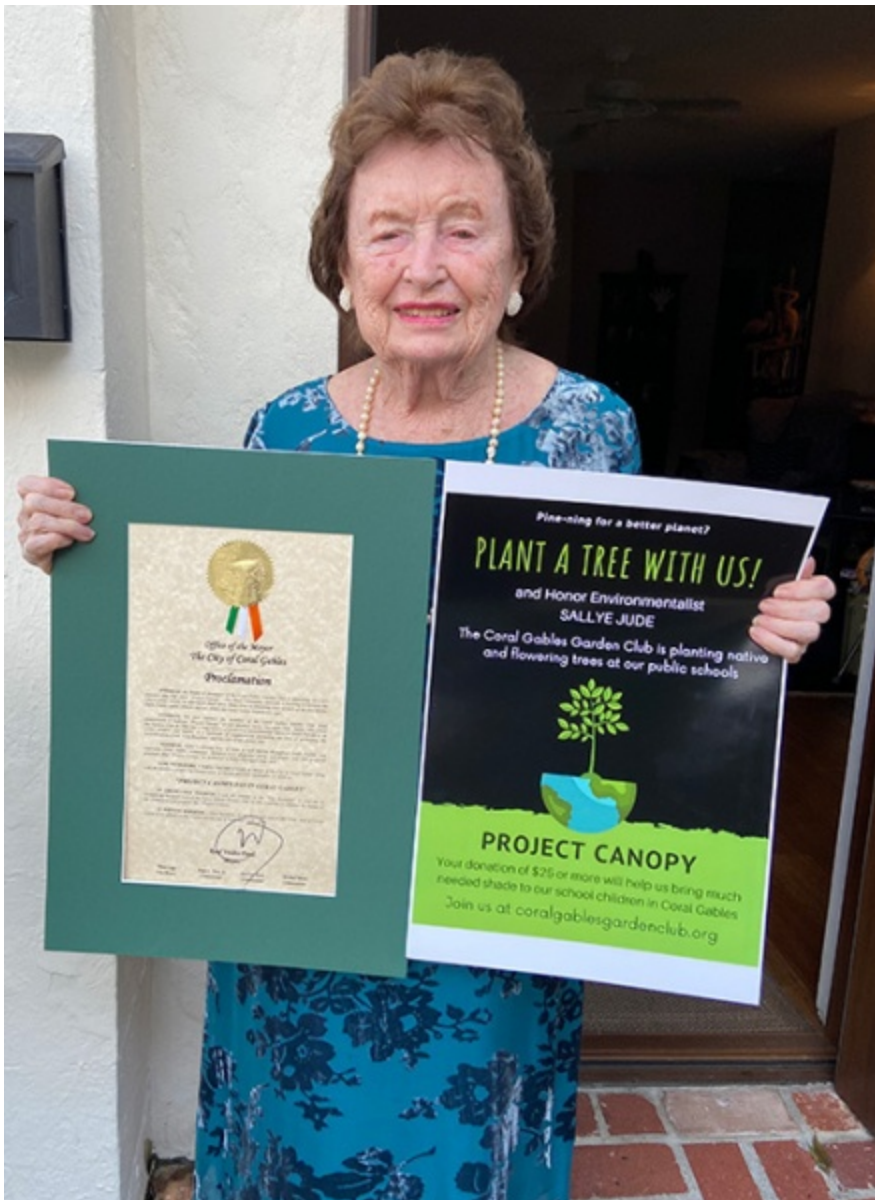


Photo: Coral Gables Garden Club

"The Coral Gables Garden Club members voted unanimously to dedicate "Project Canopy" to our dear Life Member, Sallye Jude.

The City of Coral Gables honored the Coral Gables Garden Club and Sallye Jude for her environmental work by proclaiming September 22nd, 2020, Project Canopy Day. Sallye, who joined the garden club in 1983, has a long history of promoting environmental causes in South Florida. Sallye is a member of the Sierra Club, a Fellow at Fairchild Botanic Garden, a past Board member of the Fern and Exotic Plant Society, the South Florida Palm Society, and the Tropical Flowering Tree Society. Plus, she has been a major supporter of the Royal Poinciana Fiesta for many years, which celebrates our magnificent Royal Poinciana tree. Her love and interest in trees are well known throughout the South Florida and Coral Gables

communities. It is with the deepest admiration that this project is dedicated to her.

She is our "Johnny Appleseed!"

-- Coral Gables Garden Club

[Visit the Coral Gables Garden Club to learn more about Sallye Jude](#)

[Visit Scenic Florida](#)

Legal:

"Pa. Supreme Court - Mt. Washington billboard can remain"

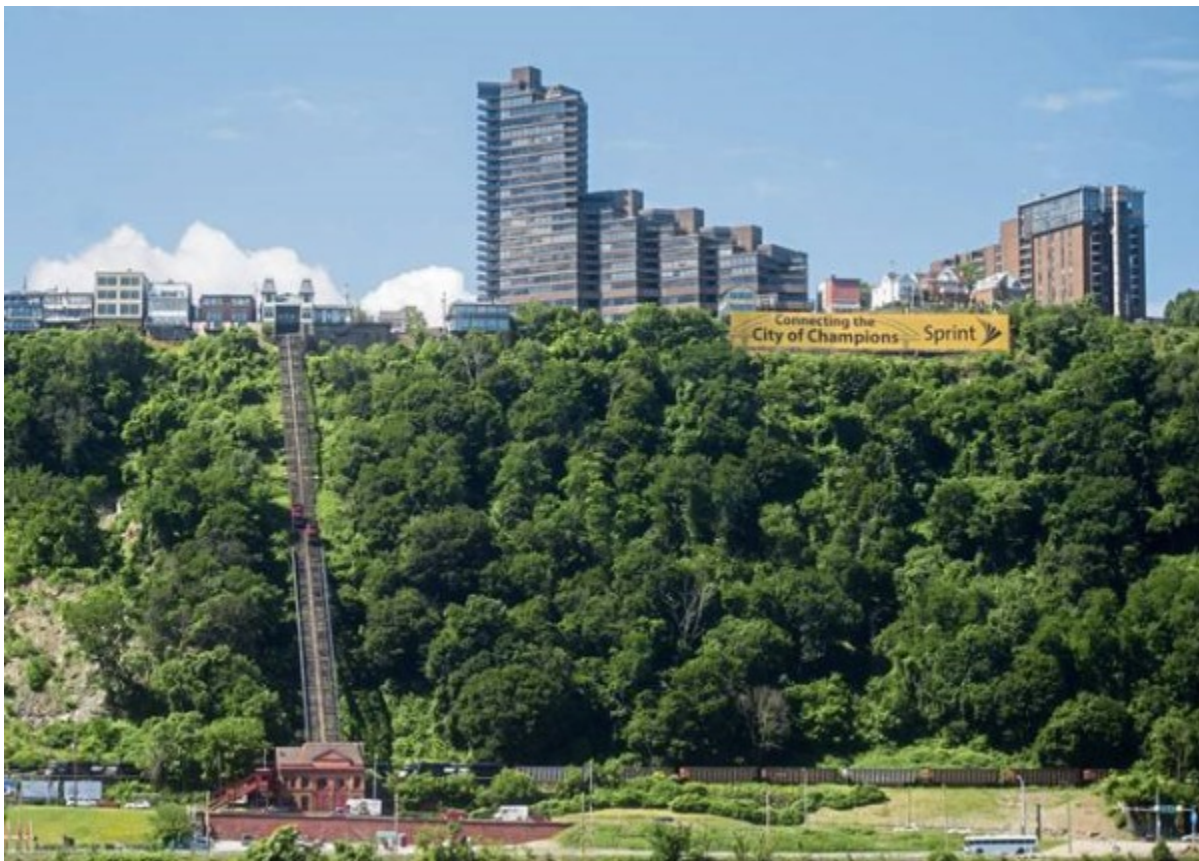


Photo: Nate Smallwood, Tribune-Review

"The state Supreme Court on Wednesday sided with Lamar Advertising, finding that a large vinyl banner the company put on its Mt. Washington billboard nearly five years ago does not violate a Pittsburgh zoning ordinance.

The banner in question was placed over a previous electronic billboard overlooking the city in May 2016. It advertised Sprint, the telecommunications company, in black lettering over a gold-yellow background. The space now advertises Iron City Beer in large red letters on white.

The court, in a 4-3 opinion written by Justice David Wecht, found that the vinyl sign does not violate the zoning code cited by the city.

Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto once called the banner an 'eyesore...'

The original billboard at issue was erected in the mid-1920s on a parcel of land owned by Lamar on Grandview Avenue. It is a concrete structure measuring 7,200 square feet and until May 2016 included a 4,500-square-foot electronic advertising sign. It has been used for local brands like Bayer, Iron City Beer and Alcoa.

Then, without approval from the city, Lamar placed the vinyl Sprint sign over the existing electronic sign.

A month later, the city issued a violation notice to Lamar alleging the sign violated two sections of the zoning code: one that bars the enlargement or addition to an already non-conforming sign (as the electronic one had previously been categorized) without approval, and another that requires the removal of an advertising sign when a business has been terminated.

In November 2016, the Pittsburgh Zoning Hearing Board heard testimony that the vinyl sign did not change the existing structure of the sign but increased the total advertising space from 4,500 square feet to 7,200. The board ruled against Lamar, finding that the alterations to the sign would change its structure. Further, it found that the changes required conditional use and site-plan approval under a previous court case involving Lamar in Monroeville...

The company appealed to Allegheny County Common Pleas Court.

The judge there reversed the zoning board, finding that it had exceeded its jurisdiction by "venturing beyond the two provisions under which [the city] had cited Lamar. The court also agreed with Lamar that it did not need a permit to change the Mount Washington billboard ..."

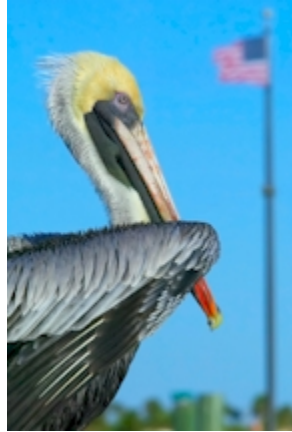
Commonwealth Court, in August 2019, affirmed that decision, finding that because Lamar did not increase the size of the sign, there was no violation. The city appealed to the state Supreme Court, which heard the argument in September.

In the 14-page opinion issued Wednesday, the court said that the previous case involving Lamar's attempt to transition 17 existing static billboards in Monroeville to electronic ones is not applicable.

In that instance, the court ruled against Lamar, finding that the transition to electronic billboards in Monroeville required significant structural alterations to the existing structures, 'whereas its placement of the vinyl sign over the sign structure of the Mount Washington billboard did not require any structural alterations...'"

-- Paula Reed Ward, Tribune-Review

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