

Scenic Watch



News from
September
2021

Scenic Jacksonville



Great Cities SYMPOSIUM



Scenic Jacksonville is pleased to welcome Ron Littlefield as its guest speaker at its second annual Great Cities Symposium.

This year the Great Cities Symposium is being held on Wednesday, October 6 from 5:30pm - 7:30pm at the Garden Club of Jacksonville.

Sponsors include FIS Global, Foley & Lardner and many others.



The event begins at 5:30 with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, followed by Mayor Littlefield's remarks at 6:30. Limited seating. Covid-19 precautions observed, bring a mask to use where appropriate.

Littlefield is a city planner and former mayor of Chattanooga. While mayor, he attracted major investment in the city from companies such as Volkswagen and French rail manufacturer Alstom.

Prior to serving two terms as mayor, Littlefield oversaw the undertaking of Vision 2000 — one of the first large scale visioning projects in the US — credited with changing public outlooks and attitudes, paving the way for Chattanooga's transition from the "dirtiest city in America" to a new local economy based on environmental sustainability and quality of life.

"Chattanooga is cool and green and growing," Littlefield noted, as he left office in 2013. "No longer dingy and declining. Chattanooga has status as a fast-advancing, youth attracting, 'cool' city. Nothing could be finer."

Always an innovator, Littlefield now is a senior fellow with the Governing Institute and serves as lead analyst on that organization's City Accelerator project.

-- Scenic Jacksonville

For details and to purchase tickets [please visit Scenic Jacksonville's Great Cities Symposium page.](#)

Legal: Billboard taxes
Supreme Court of the United States



Photo: Supremecourt.gov

"...In November, the court will hear argument in *City of Austin v. Reagan National Advertising of Texas*, a First Amendment challenge to an Austin regulation that bars some digitized billboards but allows others depending on the billboard's location. A new petition asks the court to take up another challenge to a city policy that involves differential treatment of signs.

The city of Baltimore taxes the owners of displays that advertise services that occur in a different location, meaning many billboards but not other types of signs. One of the country's largest billboard-advertising companies challenged the tax under the First Amendment. Applying a relaxed standard, Maryland's highest court upheld the tax as rationally related to the city's legitimate interest in raising public revenue. In its petition, the billboard owner, one of four such companies in Baltimore, argues that a heightened standard should apply. The company also argues that Baltimore's distinction between on-premises signs and off-premises signs is 'even more problematic' than the one presented in Austin. The case is *Clear Channel Outdoor, LLC v. Raymond*."

-- Andrew Hamm, SCOTUSblog

[Read entire article](#)

Legal: Billboard taxes

"Citing American Revolution, Ohio Supreme Court strikes down Cincinnati tax"



Photo: Corrie Schaffeld, Cincinnati Business Courier

"The Ohio Supreme Court unanimously ruled that a tax that Cincinnati City Council put on billboards violated the First Amendment, nullifying it.

After council approved the tax in 2018 aiming to raise \$709,000, it never went into effect while the case wound its way through the courts.

The justices reversed a decision by the Hamilton County Appellate Court made in 2020 upholding the imposition of the tax. The court agreed with former Hamilton County Common Pleas Judge Curt Hartman, who also believed the tax was unconstitutional, and his successor on the case, Common Pleas Judge Thomas Heekin.

Billboard companies Lamar Advertising and Norton Outdoor Advertising sued the city two years ago after the 7% tax on outdoor billboards was passed, saying it was unconstitutional based on the First Amendment right to free speech and violated the U.S. Constitution's commerce clause and equal protection clauses. The city had approved the tax in order to balance the fiscal year 2019 budget.

'Even if the city passed the tax ordinance without a motive to censor billboard operators, the threat of overt censorship, self-censorship, or undetectable censorship created by the tax impermissibly infringes on rights protected by the First Amendment,' wrote Justice Sharon Kennedy. 'The city's billboard tax resembles the type of taxes that were a cause of the American Revolution: taxes that curtail the amount of revenue raised by the press through advertisements and tend to directly restrict the circulation of protected expression.'

The court noted that the city exempted all other types of outdoor advertising — 'potentially thousands' — from the tax..."

-- Chris Wetterich, Cincinnati Business Courier

[Read entire article](#)

Beach Sign Trend:

"Beach, interrupted: Owner of unique Longboat property ends public access"



Photo: YourObserver.com

"Longboat Key beach enthusiasts have for years had the run of the town's nearly 11 miles of Gulf of Mexico shoreline, which up until this summer included a 209-foot stretch of privately owned seawall on one of the town's most iconic properties.

But a few weeks ago, following repairs to the seawall following Hurricane Eta in 2020, the owners of the property known as Ohana at 6633 Gulf of Mexico Drive, posted signs that their property, which extends to the water's edge, was now off limits...

The only way to avoid trespassing on Ohana Hale Estate Land Trust property is now to wade into the surf, which often breaks right on the seawall, or make a 1-mile detour along Gulf of Mexico Drive using the two nearest public beach-access spots.

The seawall that extends all the way to the state's erosion control line is unusual and dates back more than 50 years, town attorney Maggie Mooney said. 'All of a sudden, we see signs saying that they had an invisible fence and a dog in training, and that's where we all went, "Oh, OK. Things are changing,"

Longboat Key Turtle Watch Vice President Cyndi Seamon said of volunteers who scour the beach regularly during nesting season. Mooney explained the public's right to access the beach area seawards of the state-drawn erosion control line (ECL)."

-- Mark Bergin, YourObserver.com

[Read entire article](#)

Beach Sign Trend:

"More no trespassing signs popping up on private properties on Siesta Key beaches"



Photo: WWSP

"Some resort and condo owners on Siesta Key have placed signs on the beach telling people to stay off their beach property..."

Sarasota County says they are aware of the situation and they are looking into the ordinance that governs the signage. Although some beachgoers are upset with what they're seeing, many are very understanding.

-- Rick Adams, WWSP

[Read entire article](#)

"Whacky" interactive billboard:

"Cadbury installs real-life Aussies on billboards to promote Caramilk"



Photo: Featured in Campaign

"Out-of-home campaign tells people to 'Just ask an Aussie'"

Developed by VCCP, the campaign places a real-life Aussie (and Caramilk mega fan) on billboards across the UK, where passers-by can ask why the chocolate bar became such a hit Down Under...

Those who can't make it to the billboards can post questions via an Instagram Q&A.

Beatrice Berutti, senior brand manager at Cadbury-owner Mondelez, said: "We wanted to do something which naturally channelled the Cadbury Caramilk character, whilst standing out from other new product launches."

"We were committed to doing something a little bit different, albeit whacky, to welcome Caramilk to British shelves, and we're super excited that our mad plan of pinning a real, live Aussie was pulled off."

-- Shauna Lewis, Campaign

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