



The Byway Buzz

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2011 National Scenic Byways Conference

Written by Clint Eliason

Once again the National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) held a wonderful conference from August 21-24, 2011, in beautiful Minneapolis, Minnesota. Members of the Florida Scenic Highways Program (FSHP) staff, along with other members from numerous scenic highways around Florida, were in attendance.

The conference included presentations and sessions throughout the four-day affair, providing byways and state programs with opportunities to learn and network. Notable sessions included: *Interpretation through Oral*

the different scenarios and things that could change if the byways program is absorbed into the new Livability Program, which is proposed by President Obama.

The conclusion of the conference featured the National Scenic Byways Awards Dinner, which showcased and presented winners for outstanding byway projects and leadership around the nation. A1A Scenic & Historic Coastal Byway, represented by Sallie O'Hara and Ann Wilson, accepted their award for the Educational Fair (see previous FSHP Newsletter). All in all, the NSBP Conference was a valuable event for byways groups and state programs. For more information about the 2011 National Scenic Byways Conference visit www.bywaysresourcecenter.org

History with Charlie Phillips, Jr. from Brockington and Associates, which included *The Fabric of Life* project with long-term residents of the A1A Scenic and Historic Coastal Byway; *Setting Expectations for State Byway Programs*, with Wanda Maloney from Corridor Solutions, in which she discussed the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Five Accreditation Program, developed with Garry Balogh, FDOT District Scenic Highways Coordinator (DSHC), and the implementation of the 24 best management practices developed for byways; and, *Crafting a Wayshowing and Interpretation Plan* with Diane Delaney and Pam Portwood, representing the Big Bend Scenic Byway and Clint Eliason, of TranSystems. These were a few of the presentations which highlighted projects in the state of Florida. Overall, there were almost one hundred different sessions and workshops that conference attendees could attend.

A keynote luncheon was held on the second day with an inspiring speech by Gerard Baker, the Former Assistant Director of American Indian Relations for the National Park Service and member of the Mandan-Hidatsa Tribe. Mr. Baker encouraged byways to embrace the vast diversity of cultural traditions in America and help share the stories of our national heritage, especially those stories captured through American Indians and tribes. The Day Three Conference Luncheon featured two representatives of the Minnesota Twins baseball team who discussed the importance of creating and selling a brand. The representatives showed how they raised Twins ticket sales using some great marketing strategies and campaigns. They used the best and most recognizable player on the team and developed commercials and ads around him. The overall idea of the presentation was to use a resource that may already be known or easily identifiable and create a marketing campaign based around it. On the final conference day, Gary Jensen, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Program Director, led a *Livable Communities and the Future of the NSBP* breakfast presentation and discussion on how reauthorization of the U.S. Transportation Bill may affect the future of the Program. Gary described

FY2012 National Scenic Byways Program Grants

Written by Clint Eliason

On November 7, 2011, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) announced the 2012 National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) Grant Cycle was open and seeking new discretionary grant proposals for funding considerations. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), as extended to March 31, 2012, authorizes funding for half of FY2012 at the FY2011 NSBP level, subject to the obligation limitation. This means that half of the available funding from FY2011 will be available for FY2012. According to the FHWA NSBP site www.fhwa.dot.gov/discretionary/nsbp2012info.htm, the estimated amount available for grants is \$20.6 million to award to those byway projects which are determined to be eligible. The FHWA will continue to consider projects with the same specifications as in the past two years, which include projects that provide the greatest long-term benefits to the surrounding areas being given priority consideration. Particular focus will be on projects with substantial benefits and applications which outline large-scale, high-cost planning, safety, and roadway infrastructure projects, which provide strategic benefits within the NSBP.

Seven grant applications were submitted under the Florida Scenic Highways Program (FSHP). These grant applications were reviewed and ranked by the Scenic Highways Advisory Committee (SHAC) in Tallahassee in early January 2012 and the top applications were forwarded to FHWA for consideration. Those applications include: Planning for Big Bend Scenic Byway Economic Competitiveness Through Tourism Accessibility, A1A Scenic & Historical—Coastal-Byway Wayfinding Signage System

Grants Con't

Master Plan Implementation, Indian River Lagoon National Scenic Byway Welcome Center, Florida Keys Scenic Highway Multi-Media Interpretation, and Broward County SR A1A Scenic Byway Traveler Wayfinding Signage Project.

The FHWA will review all of the applications submitted from each state around the country next and determine which projects are eligible. They will then determine which projects will be awarded funding, based on need and geographical location. The FHWA should have all of the applications reviewed and funding awarded by Spring 2012.

Good luck in the FHWA review and selection process!

3rd Annual Super Scenic 72 Mile Garage Sale Delivers

Written & Photos by Sally O'Hara



Beth McElhinny, Friends of A1A Flagler College Intern.

This year's Super Scenic 72 Mile Garage Sale proved to be an enormous success, with exciting buys, raffle prizes, enthusiastic sellers, extensive business participation, and the highest buyer turn-out the event has seen to date! The sale, which took place on Saturday, November 19 2011, had the crowds drawn up to an hour prior to the

scheduled start time. The amount of traffic also remained constant throughout the day, so much so that many sellers remained in business past the scheduled end time at 1 p.m.

The sale sites along the byway offered a number of unique items for purchase, including furniture, sails, marine equipment, surf gear, photography, and a variety of antiques and collectables. With ten community sites from Ponte Vedra to Beverly Beach and a slew of other sale sites along the way there were plenty of exciting buys to be found along the way.



North Beach homeowners in St Johns County support A1A Garage Sale stop

From the Bloody Mary's, Mimosas, barbeque sliders and fish tacos for sale at Camachee Cove courtesy of Kingfish Grill, to the various donated coupons, and the multiple donated raffle prize items, there was no shortage of business participation at this year's garage sale. The super scenic package prize raffle was a new addition to the event this year, which proved to generate added excitement and raised additional funds for Friends of A1A. Each of the four



Vilano Beach variety for savvy shoppers during the Super Scenic A1A garage sale

prizes included hotel accommodations, restaurant, entertainment and attractions to the ticket holders' choice location, which included Ponte Vedra, St. Augustine, The Hammock, or Flagler Beach. Raffle prize winners were notified the same day at 5 p.m.

For those who participated in the event as a buyer or a seller we ask that you please fill out our quick survey in order for us to improve the event next year. Your opinions are important to us and we want to hear your input!

To complete the survey, simply click the link below, answer the questions and click "submit responses" when the survey is complete. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

<https://app.e2ma.net/app2/survey/1408485/205029440/2e11fe8529/7350736298/208746726/226775861/>

All of the proceeds from raffle ticket sales and seller site reservation fees went to Friends of A1A Scenic and Historic Coastal Byway, a non-profit organization that protects, preserves, and enhances resources along the A1A National Scenic Byway. Proceeds in support of this citizen advocacy organization enables strong partnerships with municipalities, governmental agencies and other civic groups to maintain and improve resources along the corridor.

The Byway Buzz Tidbits

- **The Byway Buzz**—By now you have figured out that is the name of our newsletter. The "Byway Buzz"! How cool is that? It was a close call between "The Byway Buzz" and "Florida's Byway News and Views", submitted by Tony and Beth Ehrlich. "The Byway Buzz" was submitted by Gary Balogh. A special thanks to everyone that submitted a name and voted. You guys **ROCK!!**
- **Florida Trail Association to host Inaugural Crane Festival January 14, 2012**—Gainesville Florida, The darkening of winter skies over Alachua Fl is an annual right of passage and a time for all to celebrate. Thousands of sand hill cranes and endangered Whooping Cranes migrate annually to Florida, making Alachua County a huge birding destination. The Florida Trail Association announcing the first ever festival celebrating winter cranes. For more information click <http://www.floridacrane festival.com/>
- **Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway**—To mark the completion of the Master Plan for the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway, a special event has been planned for **February 25, 2012** at the Pioneer Settlement for the Creative Arts (sorry, no pets) in Barberville. There will be country food, bands, historic demonstrations, guided hikes, and more. And it will feature The Great Southern Cracker Road show with Dana St. Claire. Visit **Friends of the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway** on Facebook for more information.

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- **Old Florida Heritage Highway**—is waiting for their 501c3 approval which appears to be on track. They are working on a photo contest for the spring. The main stipulation will be that the photos must be taken along our byway and from publicly accessible spots. Dwight at FDOT and his department will be the judges. They are looking to local businesses to provide prizes that will be presented at our annual membership fish fry during the summer.

The Byway Buzz Trivia

Submitted by J. Bernat



So you think you know all about Scenic Highways? Do you know what State, in 2008, had 37 beaches that received the Blue Wave Certification by the Clean Beach Council? Well the answer of course is Florida. But I bet you did

not know that 37 of those beaches happen to be beaches south of Walton, and most are connected to a scenic highway. That is right 14 beaches as well as three State Parks has been certified though the CBC Blue Wave Ethic Program.

Beaches of South Walton have to apply every year for certification and it is quite a detailed process that include testing the sand and taking water samples, but it does not really end there, the beaches have implemented a handful of eco green programs such as "Leave No Trace.", which focuses on visitors taking everything that they brought in out.

There is a beach maintenance team that oversees the health of the beaches 365 days of the year. They are not only responsible for the upkeep of the beach, they are also constantly replanting sea oats, which are vital to the endangered beach mouse.



In order to be Blue Wave certified, applicants must meet the program's criteria for water quality, beach and intertidal conditions, services, habitat conservation and much more. It is the "good housekeeping" stamp of approval for beaches.

Last trivia for you: What beach in the State of Florida, along our scenic highway, holds the only designation in the country to have all 26 miles of coastline certified.

Answer: Beaches of South Walton

Website Information

Tourism Website: <http://floridascenichighways.com>

Program Website: <http://floridascenichighways.com/program>

Follow us on Twitter: @FLscenichighway

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