

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

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"Taking community seriously not only gives us the companionship we need, it also relieves us of the notion that we are indispensable." - Robert McAfee Brown

SARASOTA COUNTY PURSUES RAPID BUS

In 2007, at the direction of the county commissioners, Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT) began studying possible routes for a bus rapid transit (BRT) system in the county. Grant funding for the study was available through the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

On Sept. 22, SCAT presented the alternatives to the county commissioners along with a recommendation for a preferred alignment. Commissioners approved the selection of the north-south corridor, which will run generally between the University of South Florida and the Sarasota/Bradenton International Airport on the north to the Southgate

Shopping Mall on the south.

The selection of this north-south corridor was guided by several factors:

- Significant traffic congestion along major arterials with little or no opportunity for road network system expansion.
- Traffic conditions along most of U.S. 41 fail adopted level of service standards and are expected to deteriorate further.
- Congestion affects bus travel times resulting in unreliable bus service for riders.

Unless transit travel times are reduced along U.S. 41,

SCAT will continue to experience difficulty in meeting its operational efficiency improvement goals and increase service reliability. To overcome the congestion problem, SCAT is proposing dedicated transit lanes and traffic signal priority for buses at selected intersections for the BRT. It would also increase the frequency of bus service and improved passenger stations and shelters along the corridor.

SCAT will now submit a grant application to the FTA to seek funding for the BRT.

*- Sarah Blanchard
and Warren Richardson*



Pictured above, the BRT of Phoenix, Arizona allows riders to board luxury buses at specially designed park and ride lots.
Credit: STV Incorporated


Sarasota County
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SARASOTA COUNTY NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES TEAM

Jane Grogg
Manager

Chris Kohatsu
Community Planner

Vickie French
Neighborhood Coordinator

Teresa Mast
Community Outreach
Specialist

Debbie Marks
Business Professional/CRA
Coordinator

Corie Haring
CRA Assistant

CELEBRATE DISABILITY AWARENESS MONTH

October is Disability Awareness Month and Sarasota County Parks and Recreation has special events planned to highlight the many agencies and services that provide support for Sarasota County residents with disabilities.

Originally started by

Congress in 1945 as "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week," the designation was expanded by Congress in 1988 and established as "National Disability Employment Awareness Month." October has become the kick-off month

for year-round programs that highlight the abilities and skills of Americans with disabilities.

For more information, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask about the Disability Awareness Health and Recreation Expo.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY - OCT. 25



Saturday, Oct. 25 is National Make a Difference Day!

Be part of the largest national day of helping others. National Make a Difference Day is a celebration of neighbors helping neighbors.

Join or create a team, or request volunteers for your own community-serving project.

To learn more about Make a Difference Day,

contact Sarasota County Openly Plans for Excellence (SCOPE) by visiting their Web site at www.scopexcel.org or send an e-mail to April Doner at adoner@scopexcel.org.

You can also contact Tom Giles at the Senior Friendship Center by calling (941) 953-5965 or by e-mail tgiles@seniorfriendship.com

SIX PROPOSED FLORIDA CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS WILL BE ON THE BALLOT. FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.SCGOV.NET

EARLY VOTING BEGINS - OCT. 20

Sarasota County residents may vote early for the Nov. 4 General Election beginning Monday, Oct. 20, until Sunday, Nov. 2.

Eligible voters may vote early in one of seven locations:

- Sarasota Terrace Bldg.
2001 Adams Lane
Sarasota

- R.L. Anderson Bldg.
4000 S. Tamiami Trail
Venice

- Biscayne Plaza
13640 Tamiami Trail
North Port

- North County Library
2801 Newtown Blvd.
Sarasota

- Fruitville Library
100 Coburn Road
Sarasota

- Gulf Gate Library
7112 Curtiss Ave
Sarasota

- North Port City Hall
4970 City Hall Blvd.
North Port

Hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Sundays.



Commissioner Shannon Staub and plaza architect Jack West enjoy the sunshine during the Nokomis Beach Plaza grand re-opening ceremony.

Credit: Curt Preisser

NOKOMIS BEACH PLAZA RE-OPENS

The atmosphere was filled with anticipation as almost 300 people watched the grand re-opening of the Nokomis Beach Plaza held on Sept. 19.

Jack West, the plaza's original architect and lead designer of the refurbishment, received a special award from Sarasota County for his years of service to the community.

The ribbon cutting ceremony included speeches from County Commissioners Shannon Staub and Jon Thaxton, and welcoming remarks from Parks and Recreation Director John McCarthy.

In addition to the ceremony, attendees could also view displays from the Historic Car

Club, the Friends of the Park, and the Sarasota County History Center.

The Beach Plaza will be an enjoyable location for many years to come. - *Teresa Mast*