



SCENIC AMERICA

Viewpoints

Winter, 1994 Vol.10 No. 4

SCENIC AMERICA TURNS ASIDE ATTEMPTS TO GUT SCENIC BYWAYS PROGRAM

They're baaaaack!

Like the villains in the "Poltergeist" movies or Jason of "Friday the Thirteenth" fame, the billboard industry and Rep. Bud Shuster (R-PA) lack the good sense to accept the obvious - in this case, that new billboards have no place on scenic byways - and instead keep coming back. In the most recent tussle, Scenic America, Rep. John Dingell (D-MI), and a public interest coalition teamed up to turn aside billboard lobby attempts to gut the national scenic byways program.

The latest episode in the billboard saga recently concluded with the passage by the House of Representatives of H.R. 2178, the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act (hazmat), which did not include a provision to allow new billboards on the federal-aid portions of state-designated scenic byways despite Rep. Shuster's efforts to have it do so.

Shuster, with the support of Rep. Nick Joe Rahall (D-WV), first attempted to attach this provision, which would have overturned a billboard ban put in place by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, to H.R. 2178 in the form of an amendment during a November 4 markup. But their colleagues in the Surface Transportation Subcommittee of the Public Works and Transportation Committee refused to allow the attachment of this nongermane provision to the hazmat bill.

Undeterred, Shuster withdrew

SCENIC AMERICA APPLAUDS AWARD WINNERS

Scenic America presented its Sixth Annual Stafford Awards and its National Leadership Award to USDOT Secretary Peña at its Annual Gala Dinner on October 18, 1993.

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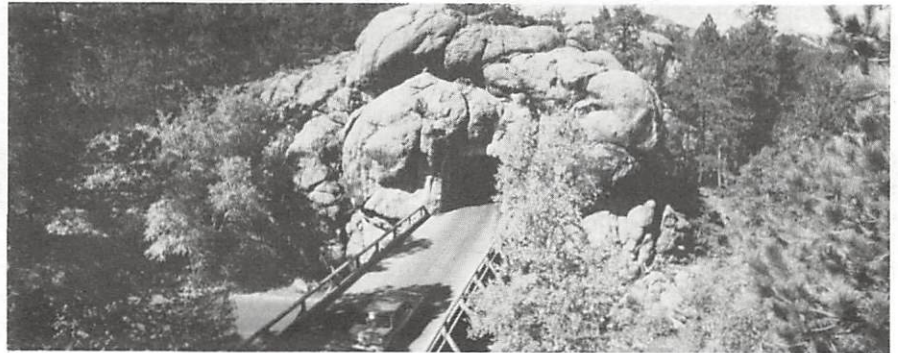
the entire bill and rewrote it, this time including the billboard language. Despite howls of protest from a public interest coalition spearheaded by Scenic America - a coalition of 35 organizations, ranging from the American Automobile Association to the U.S. Conference of Mayors to the National Wildlife Federation, with a total of over 40 million members - that committee rejected an attempt, supported by

Rep. Dick Swett (D-NH) and Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY), to strip the billboard language from the bill on November 9.

The Shuster provision, which he claimed was merely a policy clarification, would in reality have opened up 15,000 miles of America's most scenic roadways to billboard proliferation.

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SCENIC AMERICA NAMES 1993 TOP 20 BYWAYS



Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway, SD, listed as outstanding. Photo: South Dakota Tourism Department.

For the second year, Scenic America has selected Ten Outstanding Scenic Byways nationwide that deserve recognition for scenic conservation and Ten Endangered Scenic Byways that demonstrate the need for continuing vigilance against scenic degradation. The lists were released at the Stafford Awards dinner on October 18.

The criteria for the 1993 Top 20 list reflect the interests and recommendations of the National Scenic Byways Advisory Committee. One of the recommendations was the use of corridor management planning to establish a sustainable balance between conservation and use of scenic byway resources. The selection criteria for outstanding scenic byways was based on roads that:

- Exemplify sensitive or innovative design standards in construc-

tion, rehabilitation, or improvement.

- Are models for alternative information systems, such as Tourist Oriented Directional Signs (TODS), or kiosk systems.

- Have been designated through a well-developed citizen participation process.

- Have intrinsic qualities well protected by local land planning and management strategies.

- Illustrate the benefits of a well-conceived and managed state scenic byway system.

- Are part of a multi-modal travel corridor and illustrate the benefits of regional cooperation in corridor management.

Endangered scenic byways may be routes whose resources and character are threatened where:

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: Vigilance and Victories for the Scenic Environment



There is so much good news to report since our fall newsletter! A victory in Congress to preserve the billboard ban on scenic byways, a wonderful and deserving group of Stafford Award winners, and the 1993 Most Outstanding List of Scenic Byways - just for starters.

It's the time of year to count your blessings and to thank those in your community who have helped to protect and enhance its scenic character. Scenic conservation takes concerted action by you, your friends, business owners, public officials - everyone! And once an ordinance has been passed, or a state law changed, or scenic conservation policies adopted - your vigilance is needed to ensure that those laws and policies stay in place.

In mid-November, we faced an assault on one of the most progressive provisions of (ISTEA) - the requirement that new billboards are banned on state designated scenic byways that are on the Interstate

Secretary Federico Peña Speaks on Scenic Byways

"For me, a National Scenic Byways Program supports my ideals of transportation not only as an economic engine but as an investment in people... in our humanity. One of my highest priorities is to 'humanize' transportation -- to shape transportation investment to serve people in ways that enhance our environment, preserve our heritage and leave the world a better place for our children -- scenic byways renew our national spirit.

[On billboards]..."my own views are fairly straightforward. I believe that new billboards on our scenic byways are uncalled for. DOT strongly supports the law that forbids new billboards on scenic byways. Your vigilance in protecting the scenic beauty of these roads is important."

Scenic Byways Coalition Conference, December 6, 1993

and federal primary systems. Rep. Bud Shuster (R-PA) joined with Rep. Nick Joe Rahall (D-WV) to amend a bill reauthorizing the Hazardous Materials Transportation Act. When they were unsuccessful at this attempt because the amendment was not germane to that bill, Mr. Shuster and Mr. Rahall just reintroduced the Hazardous Materials bill with the repeal of the billboard ban as a part of it.

Although the House Public Works and Transportation Committee did not support attempts to strip the offensive provision out of the bill, Rep. Dingle (D-MI) deserves great credit for refusing to even consider allowing the Hazardous Materials bill to go to a full vote of the House of Representatives if it included the billboard provision.

But Mr. Shuster will be back. And we need your help. While Congress is on recess, it is a perfect time to visit with your Representative to explain to him or her the

importance of the scenic byways billboard ban. We had a mere two days notice to prepare for the Committee vote on the Hazardous Materials bill. Now we have two months to prepare for Mr. Shuster's next onslaught. ISTEA requires that the National Highway System be designated by December 18, 1995. A bill to accomplish this will be introduced early in 1994. It will almost surely include Mr. Shuster's provision to repeal the scenic byway billboard ban.

So thank you for all your work in 1993 to support a more scenic environment. And thank the many heroes in our communities like Robert Lyon and Joe Maio who not only advocate scenic quality but who act to ensure it. As a new year approaches, let's all pause to enjoy the beauty around us and renew our resolve to preserve and enhance the scenic character of our communities' highways and byways. SA

SCENIC AMERICA NAMES 1993 TOP 20 BYWAYS, cont'd.

- The visual or experiential environments are degraded.

- Inappropriate land use, unmanaged development, billboard blight or sign clutter degrade the view.

- A lack of corridor management planning endangers future resource conservation efforts.

- The roadway's scenic quality has been degraded but could be significantly improved by creative corridor management plans.

Outstanding Scenic Byways

-White Mountain Scenic Road, Eastern Arizona offers striking alpine scenery and numerous recreation sites. Arizona's scenic designation process is one of the most comprehensive in the nation.

-The San Juan Skyway, a 230 mile loop drive in southwest Colorado, was listed for its magnificent mountain scenery and for region-wide efforts to manage the byway with public/private partnerships.

-Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC, is the first urban street to be listed. The successful manage-

ment efforts of the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation to enhance the historic street are commendable.

-Massachusetts Route 6A, Cape Cod, connects the scenic and historic towns of Barnstable and Brewster. The Cape Cod Commission is leading an effort to inventory the features of the route and plan for its conservation and careful growth.

-Dickenson Road, a pastoral, unpaved road around Wiscasset, Maine, was saved from degradation by vigilant residents and adjacent landowners. The tree-covered road with views of village and farms is a favorite for walking, biking, and horseback riding.

-North Shore Drive hugs the shoreline of Lake Superior from Duluth, MN, to the Canadian border. The North Shore Management Board coordinates policy among local governments along the scenic road, one of the only entities of its kind in the country and a model for scenic corridor management.

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SCENIC AMERICA NAMES 1993 TOP 20 BYWAYS, *cont'd.*

-The Natchez Trace follows the historic trail from Natchez, MS, to Nashville, TN. The National Park Service provides careful management and uses unique design standards to reflect the tranquil, rustic character of the landscape.

-Going-to-the-Sun Road, the breath-taking drive across Glacier National Park in northern Montana, is a scenic route of world renown. The National Park Service is commended for using creative management techniques to preserve the byway character and its historic construction features.

-Peter Norbeck Scenic Byway loops through the rugged Black Hills of South Dakota, providing tourists with glimpses of Mt. Rushmore and numerous scenic vistas. The rustic standards for the road are being maintained by collaboration of state and federal agencies.

-Vermont Route 100 is the central north-south route through one of America's most scenic states. Vermont is a national leader in scenic quality, and bans billboards statewide. It is commended for effective use of TODs (Tourist Oriented Directional Signs), which direct travelers to local businesses with a system of uniform, legible signs within the right-of-way.

Endangered Scenic Byways:

-Old US 30, The Lincoln Highway in Greene County, Iowa, is one of the last sections of the route retaining the original design features. It is threatened by rebuilding to current AASHTO standards. The Lincoln Highway is a historic road, the first integrally signed and paved route from New York to California.



Nantahala Scenic Byway, NC
Photo: Swain County, NC

-The Great River Road, Louisiana, follows the Mississippi River.

Sprawling industrial development, billboard blight and haphazard land uses intrude on the visitor experience; and a lack of clear signage on the numerous routes that make up the River Road decreases the scenic experience.

-US 19/74, The Nantahala Scenic Byway, winds through the rugged Gorge of the Nantahala River near the Great Smoky Mountains. Traffic congestion and rafting operations overtax the road. Shoddy, temporary signs clutter the route. The popular route needs a management plan to balance conservation and use of the natural resources.

-US Route 30, Lancaster, PA, traverses rolling Amish farmland and joins historic towns in south-central Pennsylvania. High volume truck traffic, plans to widen the road, and sprawling development threaten the experience and exasperate local residents. A corridor planning process is badly needed.

-The Old San Antonio Road, crossing Texas from Louisiana to the Rio Grande is a 300-year old path traveled by explorers, missionaries and settlers. Its identity and educational value are being threatened due to abandoned right-of-way, and it lacks a consistent interpretation plan to explain its historic significance.

-The Lummi Shore Scenic Road, follows the Puget Sound along the Lummi Indian Reservation in Washington state. Severe roadbed erosion has destroyed portions of the roadway. Clogged drainage pipes and lack of maintenance also threaten the drive.

-The Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia is listed for the second year. Rapidly increasing development in the viewshed diminishes the character of this historic and beautiful parkway. Regional viewshed management is needed to conserve scenic quality.

-"Corridor H," the proposal for a four-lane access into central West Virginia, will widen scenic two-lane mountain roads and require acquisition of new right-of-way, some of which impacts sensitive wetlands and rugged mountain terrain. An

organized citizen group opposes the current plan. An open, public, corridor planning process could strike a better balance between improved access and community interests.



Shannock Road, Rhode Island
Photo: Michael Russo

-Shannock Road, the central route through Shannock, Rhode Island's National Register Historic District, is threatened by plans to rebuild the road, removing characteristic stone walls, trees and a rustic timber bridge. The necessity for design standards sensitive to historic contexts is clearly illustrated by the community outcry to protect Shannock Road.

-New York Route 28, Kingston to Dunraven, is the primary gateway to the Catskill Mountains. Rampant strip development and proliferation of billboards and on-premise signs spoil the mountain approach. Booming construction of vacation homes threatens the mountain towns. A corridor plan to manage growth and conserve the scenic resources is needed.

Scenic America President Oldham stated that "the list of endangered scenic byways is intended to alert communities to the potential loss of scenic quality in the hope that conservation efforts can deal with these problems."

Nominations for the Top 20 List were submitted by State Departments of Transportation, State Tourism Agencies, State Historic Preservation Officers, Federal land management agencies, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Scenic America's affiliated state organizations, citizen conservation groups, and individuals. A brochure of the 1993 Twenty Most Important Scenic Byways is available to members at no charge. SA

SCENIC AMERICA APPLAUDS AWARD WINNERS, *cont'd*



Administrator Rodney Slater of FHWA congratulates Stafford Award Winner Maurice Smith.

The Stafford Awards honor former Vermont Senator Robert Stafford, a staunch supporter of billboard control and scenic preservation in Congress. Local awards were given to Loudoun County, VA, residents Robert Lyon and Joe Maio for removing over 26,000 illegally placed real estate signs in the county. Mayor Michael White of Cleveland, OH, was honored for efforts to improve his city's visual character and Charleston, SC, Mayor Joseph Riley's leadership in eliminating billboards from Charleston's highways also was cited.

State level Stafford Awards went to Maurice Smith, Commissioner of the Arkansas Highway and Transportation Department, and Richard Davies, Director of the Arkansas Department of Tourism, for their efforts to establish an Arkansas Registry of Scenic Resources. Governor William Donald Schaefer of Maryland was also awarded for his role in passing statewide tree conservation legislation.

The efforts of Lyon and Maio to clean the Loudoun County roads of signs advertising new home developments led local builders to reduce the number of signs placed and caused Virginia to change its law to allow easier prosecution of sign law violators. Mayor White established a Streetscape Advisory Committee to coordinate streetscape efforts citywide. The committee has refurbished downtown streets, reduced streetscape clutter and created guidelines for the use of coordinated, uniform newspaper vending boxes. In Charleston, Mayor Riley, supported by the City Council, persuaded three major billboard com-

panies to remove 76% of the city's billboards, including all billboards in residential or historic districts. Master of ceremonies and former Scenic America chairman Carroll Shaddock wished for an equal reduction in billboards nationwide.

The Arkansas Registry of Scenic Resources is an innovative approach to scenic resource identification and assessment, the first of its kind in the nation to do so. As a member of the Scenic Resources Preservation Coordinating Committee, Maurice Smith provided his vision for conservation of Arkansas' magnificent scenic and recreational heritage. His agency's development of Arkansas' scenic byway program will go a long way towards implementing that vision. Richard Davies, as chair of the committee and Director of Tourism, led efforts

for registration of the first sites this year.

Scenic America presented a National Leadership Award to US Department of Transportation Secretary Federico Peña. Peña, the former mayor of Denver, CO, led efforts to enhance the city's historic Spear Boulevard and reduce billboard pollution by securing a billboard ban around Denver's new airport. Peña's award was accepted by Steve Kaplan, General Counsel to the USDOT. Peña's commitment to quality in design and environmental issues was praised, and his continued commitment as Transportation Secretary was pledged. Kaplan also stated that USDOT's goal was no net losses for ISTEA's progressive provisions during technical corrections, which was received with applause by the audience. SA

SCENIC AMERICA TURNS ASIDE, *cont'd*

The U.S. Department of Transportation "strongly opposed" the proposed change.

The Shuster change would have left scenic byways with the same protections as all federal-aid roads - the long discredited Highway Beautification Act, which in many states allows new billboards to be erected in rural and scenic areas where just one industrial or commercial activity - a country inn, an antique store, a lone gas station - is present.

The original version of the hazmat bill came from the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which passed a one-paragraph reauthorization of the existing program. Rep. John Dingell, chairman of that committee, wanted to pass the hazmat bill before the Thanksgiving recess and was disappointed that the Public Works and Transportation Committee had added in such clearly controversial provisions as the billboard language.

In negotiations with Rep. Norman Mineta (D-CA), chairman of the Public Works and Transportation Committee, Dingell, bolstered by efforts of the coalition and its members, refused to allow the bill to the floor of the House until the billboard language was removed. Ulti-

mately, Mr. Dingell prevailed and the House passed H.R. 2178 on Sunday, November 21, without the Shuster provision.

The episode revealed both the billboard industry's adeptness at backdoor politics and the inherent limitations of their strategy, which depended on secrecy for its success. Scenic America, with substantial help from its coalition partners and its state-level cooperating organizations (five groups were key to the effort: Scenic Texas, Scenic North Carolina, Surface Transportation Policy Project, Pennsylvania Resources Council, and the Garden Clubs of America), effectively orchestrated a strong and immediate response, generating public comment to members of Congress, meeting with members and educating them and their staff about the issue, and obtaining extensive media coverage and support for conserving scenic byways.

But, while this crucial battle has been won, the war is far from over. Scenic America expects that Shuster and the billboard barons will make another attempt to overturn the billboard construction ban when Congress maps the National Highway System (NHS) early in 1994. SA



Factsheet

TREES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

An Important But Disappearing Resource

*The trees in the streets are old trees
Used to living with people.*

Family trees that remember your grandfather's name

ROBERT FROST

ment value of Lincoln Park's urban forest at more than \$625,000.

Trees are disappearing faster than you think. Thousands of acres of trees per year are destroyed. Studies show that for every seven street trees lost, only one is replanted. Just imagine what our streets and neighborhoods would be like without trees!

Trees play a vital role in the infrastructure of communities, contributing to the scenic beauty, the landscape and overall quality of the environment. Trees indicate the season of the year and the geographic region, offset development impact, mark the passage of time, and form space. Trees also support numerous ecosystems, including songbirds, small forest animals, wildflowers and smaller understory trees.

Not only are trees beautiful, but they also offer solutions to many environmental, economic, and health problems:

Environmental Benefits

-Trees can improve air quality by removing pollutants and particulates from the air and releasing oxygen. For example, researchers at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory identified three ways to cut down carbon dioxide pollution in our nation's cities: reduce auto emissions, improve electrical supply, and increase the number of trees. Increasing the number of trees was by far the cheapest option.

A study currently underway in Chicago estimates that trees that cover about 23.2% of the Lincoln Park neighborhood, filter 43.9 tons of particulates yearly and absorb 14 tons of carbon dioxide, 12.4 tons of nitrogen oxides, and 220.8 tons of sulfur dioxide. The project staff calculates the annual pollution abate-

-Trees help reduce the amount of stormwater that will run off a site, with the potential savings of thousands of dollars that would otherwise have to be spent for drainage ditches and structures, flood control projects, and other "engineered" solutions to storm water management. One study by Rowan Rowntree of the U.S. Forest Service found that in Salt Lake City, in a one-inch rainstorm over a 12-hour period, the tree canopy of the urban forest reduced surface runoff by 11.3 million gallons.

One of the most significant environmental benefits of trees, particularly in urban areas, is to counteract the so-called heat island effect.

Urban areas with little vegetation can experience temperatures of up to seven degrees higher than those with heavy tree cover. This can mean an enormous increase in energy costs to cool buildings.

-A recent EPA study on the benefits of tree shading found that for every one degree increase in summer temperatures, peak cooling loads increase by 1.5 to 2 percent. Air conditioning to compensate for the urban heat island effect amounts to an estimated 3 to 8% of urban electricity use, costing \$1 billion yearly. The study says that strategically planted vegetation can cut costs by 15 to 35 percent. Based on this kind of compelling research, an

increasing number of utilities are adopting tree planting programs as part of their overall energy conservation efforts.

-An urban pollution often overlooked by the experts, noise or "invisible pollution" is repeatedly cited by city dwellers as one of the most serious pollutions we face. Excessive or unwanted sound has both physical and psychological effects. Noise can come from many sources, but roads and highways are high on the list of culprits.

Trees can play an important role in deadening unwanted noise. Sound waves are absorbed by a tree's leaves, branches, and twigs. While research on the ability of plants to control sound is limited, some studies suggest that belts of trees 100 feet wide and 45 feet high can cut highway noise in half.



On Sonoma Mountain above the Valley of the Moon.

Photo: Ed Cooper Photography

Economic Benefits

While the environmental, aesthetic, and health benefits that trees provide are substantial, tree protection advocates must be prepared to reduce those benefits to dollar-and-cents terms to persuade doubting legislators, developers, and others. Fortunately, an increasing body of research and information is available to help make the economic case.

TREES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

-Appraisers have long recognized the important contribution of trees to real estate values. Numerous studies show conclusively that people are willing to pay more for treed lots. In a study of Greece, New York, treed lots sold for an average of \$9,500 more than ones without trees. A 3 to 5 percent increase in sales prices of single family homes in Athens, Georgia, was associated with trees. According to a survey done by a mortgage company based in Westbury, New York, trees increase property values by 20 percent. National organizations that represent developers and home builders are also beginning to promote tree protection and landscaping because these pay off in the long run.



-Growing evidence shows that, not only do trees enhance real estate values on an individual lot or project basis, but they can also be an important economic asset for the community as a whole. Trees are increasingly recognized as important elements of building a positive overall community image, which more and more is recognized as a key factor in locational decisions being made by businesses.

Health Benefits

There is little doubt that the stress and noise of cities can have an impact on our physical and psychological health. But how trees and veg-

etation can help counteract these tensions has been mostly a matter of speculation, at least until recently. Now several studies are beginning to establish just how much of a difference trees can make.

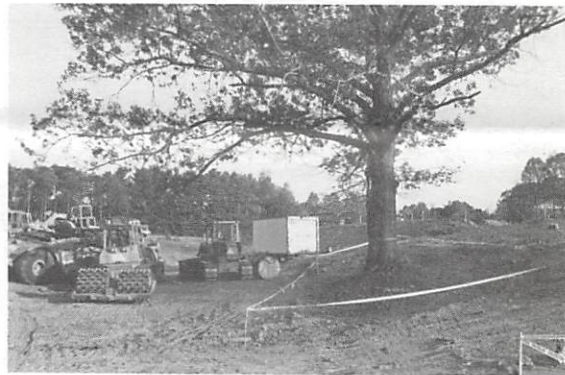
-One of the most interesting studies was done by a University of Delaware professor of geography. The results were published in *Science* in "View Through A Window May Influence Recovery from Surgery." Professor Roger Ulrich found that over a nine year period gall bladder patients who could see trees outside their windows instead of a blank wall needed almost a full day less recovery time and required fewer painkillers.

Property owners have a major responsibility for caring for and maintaining their trees. Good information from professionals, ranging from foresters and horticulturists to landscape architects and urban planners, is important for protecting trees. Citizens and communities must adopt and support sound policies and regulations that will address and protect the scenic, environmental and economic benefits of trees.

A community's tree policies and regulations should be tailored to fit the needs of that specific community. Tree conservation ordinances are a useful tool that can help communities protect all the resources and values trees provide. Some tree ordinances may require the planting of street trees, protect sensitive forested valleys, limit clearing during development, or create incentives for thoughtful, careful development that preserves trees.

Preserving a community's trees should involve all citizens for their insight and support. Those who have lived in a community for many years have a deep understanding of the area's needs. Experts, such as the tree or planning commission members, municipal attorneys, and environmental and natural resource

consultants, also can contribute to the process by ensuring that the tree policies can achieve the desired community goals and that the ordinance is enforced. Comprehensive policies, regulation and implementation to protect community tree resources will guarantee scenic, environmental, economic and health benefits for many years to come.



Tree protection during construction.

Tree conservation materials available from Scenic America:

Tree Conservation Ordinances: Land Use Regulations Go Green, by Chris Duerksen is a guidebook for planning and implementing a successful tree conservation ordinance. Targeted to citizens, local government officials and planners. \$24.00 plus \$5.00 shipping/handling.

Trees Are Treasure: Sustaining the Community Forest is a full color, 12 minute video for citizens and communities to spread awareness about the importance of public policy and regulations for tree and forest protection. Stories of communities which established their own successful tree ordinances. \$19.95+ \$3.00 shipping/handling.

ORDER BOTH FOR \$29.95 PLUS \$5.00 SHIPPING/HANDLING.

Trees Make Cents, by Elizabeth Brabec. This eight page bulletin documents numerous case studies which demonstrate the positive influence of tree and landscape protection on property values and other economic measures. Five valuation methods discussed. \$5.00 + \$3.00 shipping/handling.

For more information, please contact Scenic America at (202) 833-4300.

NEWS AROUND THE NATION...

Pittsburgh Quorum Too Much For Billboard Lobby

Scenic advocates scored a major victory when Pittsburgh Mayor Masloff decided not to veto a controversial ordinance on new billboards. The city council showed their support by assembling a quorum guaranteed to override a possible mayoral veto when Councilwoman Madoff made a special return from South Carolina to be on hand for the vote.

The new law, sponsored by Councilman Jim Ferlo, reduces the maximum size of future billboards from 1200 square feet to 750 square feet in industrial areas and 378 square feet in neighborhoods zoned commercial. In addition, maximum height was cut back from 85 feet to 45 feet. The new law also restricts billboard placement and prohibits the erection of billboards near riverfront areas and tunnel entrances.

Missoula County Tightens The Reins On Billboards

In August, the Board of Missoula County Commissioners in Montana unanimously passed a ruling to extend temporary zoning throughout the county that will restrict the construction of billboards to commercially or industrially zoned areas and limit their size to 300 square feet. The issue of billboard control was brought to the commissioners by the Concerned Citizens of the Evaro Area when 1,200 square foot boards were erected atop Evaro Hill. Meggen Ryan-Hartse of the group said, "The billboards themselves have done most of the work. They're so huge and obnoxious."

The temporary zoning can only be maintained for two years before the commissioners must make a permanent decision. "The debate

is whether you control them or whether you eliminate them," said Commissioner Dussalt. The commissioners are considering various ways to limit billboards permanently. The designations of "gateway" areas, involving regulations of such things as architecture, signs, and landscaping on roads leading into urban Missoula is likely.

Clueless in Seattle: A Phone-Call Mystery

Jordan Brower, anti-billboard activist and a driving force behind Seattle's recent vote to approve tougher restrictions on billboards, recently received three harassing phone calls, one of which included a threat on his life. U.S. West tracked the three calls to the home of Chris Ackerley, 24 year-old son of Barry Ackerley, CEO of Ackerley Communications and the area's billboard baron.

Although the calls were traced to the location, the city attorney's office says the phone company trace doesn't nail down who made the calls. Without that, there can be no prosecution. Hmmm...now who do you think may have been the caller. Perhaps the butler? Spike, the family dog? It's easy to see why prosecutors are left baffled, unable to pinpoint the perpetrator.

Philly Ads Vanish Like Smoke

Cigarette advertisements are disappearing from billboards throughout Northeast Philadelphia thanks to the efforts of Linda Lawrence and the Mayfair Civic Association. Mayfair Civic is taking advantage of the Voluntary Code of Good Practice, a good faith compact among tobacco companies not to advertise within 500 feet of a school, playground, or church. In two weeks, Lawrence helped re-

move almost a dozen billboard advertisements. She considers the removal of the Camel cigarette ad a special victory. "Too many kids are into Joe Camel," she said. "That was a nice one to get down."

Though many civic groups blame the tobacco companies for the signs, Lawrence blames the billboard operators. "Tobacco companies sign contracts with billboard operators not to place ads within the (prohibited) area," Lawrence said. "But apparently the billboard operators are not holding up their end of the bargain."

Small Town Takes a Big Stand in California

Billboards have long been a part of many California street scenes, but not every town is leaving the welcome mat out for the larger-than-life advertisements. The city of Galt, population 9,000, became the first in Sacramento County to prohibit new billboards as part of a sign ordinance adopted this year. "I just think there are too many signs in too many places - we're overwhelmed with advertising," said Orvell Fletcher, Galt city councilman. "I think it intrudes on the environment in a way that isn't necessary."

Neighboring counties, such as Roseville and Davis, have beaten Galt to the billboard banning punch, passing ordinances prohibiting construction of the roadside advertisements years ago. Planners in Sacramento, Placerville and Folsom are trying a different approach, allowing new billboards but placing so many restrictions on their placement that few, if any permits, are sought.

"Billboards don't make me buy anything, that's for sure," said Carla Shreve, 48, a Galt homemaker. "This used to be a nice country town. Now you drive along the main street and there are all kinds of visual clutter." SA

SUPPORTERS FLOCK TO SCENIC AMERICA

The Lyndhurst Foundation (Chattanooga) has awarded Scenic America second-year funding for "Scenic Byways Southeast," the Tennessee and North Carolina components of our National Scenic Byways Initiative. This commitment will enable Scenic America to further its work on scenic byways in Tennessee and to solidify gains in North Carolina, where we have identified three target areas for assistance in scenic resource conservation. In both states, Scenic America has already built coalitions of citizens, government officials, and local groups which we will strengthen with this important support. "We are proud of the Lyndhurst Foundation's vote of confidence in Scenic America's work," said Sally Oldham, president of Scenic America, "and we are eager to build upon progress in these two states. The foundation's support is critical to our efforts there."

Scenic America has also recently received unrestricted grants from

the American Conservation Association (New York City), which has long been a leading funder for Scenic America; from the Town Creek Foundation (Oxford, MD); and a

pledge for 1994 from the L.J. Skaggs and Mary C. Skaggs Foundation (Oakland). Scenic America expresses its gratitude to these and all its supporters! SA

National Coalition for Heritage Areas Spring Conference

The NCHA will sponsor a National Conference on March 13-15, 1994 at the Georgetown University Conference Center in Washington, DC, focusing on: National Heritage Partnership Legislation: Who Drives Heritage Areas?; Funding for Heritage Areas; Managing Heritage Areas; Economic Development - What's the Trick?; Interpretation of Big Places; and Marketing and Promoting Heritage Areas.

The conference will offer field trips to local heritage areas and provide a great opportunity to network.

For more information or an application form for the "Call for Presentations," please call (202) 673-

4204 or write to P.O. Box 33011, Washington, DC 20033-0011. SA

Scenic America, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, is the only national group devoted solely to preserving and enhancing the scenic character of America's communities and countryside.

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Please accept my tax-deductible contribution of \$___ in addition to my membership.

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