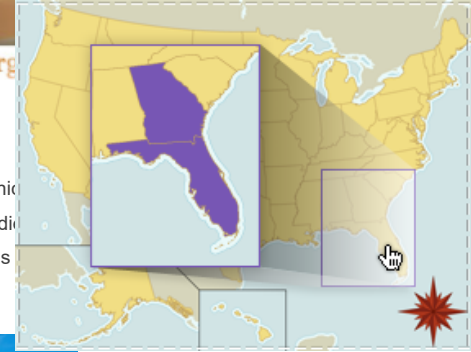




July 2008

## Get Local



### In this issue:

[Montana enacts digital billboard moratorium](#)

[Geotourism moves into the spotlight](#)

[Orton Family Foundation begins community planning initiative](#)

[Scenic Nevada announces quick draw art auction](#)

[Scenic Virginia sponsors viewshed photo competition](#)

[Illegal signs workshop held in NYC](#)

### Montana enacts digital billboard moratorium

The Montana Transportation Commission has voted unanimously to ban electronic billboards on interstate and primary roads until the outcomes of future safety studies are known. They believe the results of the studies will enable them to make decisions on the future of digital sign technology based on more solid information.

The commissioners received over 400 comments on the issue from the public. Legal counsel Tim Reardon said he had never seen such interest statewide in a proposed rule change. Commissioners didn't offer support or opposition to the comments, responding instead that they didn't have sufficient evidence to do so.



Montana road - photo by Dan Bachman

They said Montanans seem divided on something that could profoundly change the aesthetics and safety of their roadways, and that it was worth it to wait for results of the Federal Highway Administration's digital billboard safety study now underway.

[Click here](#) to read the entirety of the Montana Transportation Commission's decision.

### Scenic America makes the news:

[Nation's scenic parkways strained as traffic grows](#)

[Sinkhole is one more sign of Pasadena Freeway's age](#)

[Editorial: Billboards are unsightly, obnoxious, and pollute the view we ALL must share](#)

[Former Michigan Governor: Fight back against assault of the billboards](#)

### Geotourism moves into the spotlight

With the goal of better preserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of the nation's public lands, five U.S. government agencies have joined the [National Geographic Society](#) in unveiling a ground-breaking framework to formally adopt the principles of geotourism.

Pioneered by National Geographic since 2002, geotourism refers to tourism that helps sustain or enhance the geographical character of a place - its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and well-being of its residents.

"This agreement will enhance both the environment and the local economies, better preserving America's diverse recreational and scenic assets - a source of immense national pride," said Dirk Kempthorne, Secretary of the Interior. "Geotourism showcases what is authentic and unique and defines us."



El Mapais National Monument - photo by Brad Cownover

### Scenic Quote of the Month

**"It's the slickest, most back-door, under-the-table dealing I've ever heard of. It's worse than the billboard business."**

Scenic America is the only national organization monitoring the management of

~ **Billboard company owner Donald Tedder, after North Carolina officials voted to extend a one-year moratorium on billboards along Interstate 40 in July of 2000.**

scenic resources on public lands, applauds this agreement, and is offering our services to all the involved parties.

---

#### Scenic Trivia Question

**Q: When did Baltimore ban new billboards?**

**A: In March of 2000 the City Council overwhelmingly passed a bill to ban new billboard construction in Baltimore. The bill was the first one signed by newly elected Mayor Martin O'Malley, now Governor of Maryland.**

Biddeford and Damariscotta, Maine, Golden, Colorado, and Victor, Idaho are the first communities to be awarded \$100,000 each plus Foundation staff support to help them tap into their own citizens' wisdom about what is best for their towns.

"We should challenge the single-minded notion that if it's good for the economy, approve it," said Lyman Orton, Board Chair, Founder of the Foundation, and long-time Scenic America board member. "After all, are we just an economy, or are we a society?"

[Click here](#) for more information about the new initiative.

---

#### Scenic Nevada announces quick draw art auction

Scenic Nevada is sponsoring their 5th annual "Quick Draw" artist's auction, barbeque and benefit. The event takes place Saturday, August 2, at the M & L Ranch, a beautiful seven-acre ranch setting in southwest Reno.

#### Tell a Friend

**[Click here to tell your friends and family about Scenic Overlook and spread the word about Scenic America.](#)**

Attendees will have the opportunity to watch 28 of northern Nevada's finest artists create a masterpiece in only 1 1/2 hours. Their paintings will encompass a wide range of subjects, including landscapes and scenic settings, and each will be made available for purchase.

All proceeds will benefit Scenic Nevada, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, non-partisan organization that works to preserve, protect and enhance the scenic character of Nevada. [Click here](#) for more information on the event.

---

#### Make a donation

**Your tax-deductible donation helps us to provide information, support, and guidance to communities, planners, and policy makers that recognize...**

**Change is Inevitable, Ugliness is Not!**



#### Scenic Virginia sponsors viewshed photo competition

In conjunction with its Tenth Anniversary celebration, [Scenic Virginia](#) is sponsoring its first-ever viewshed photo competition.

"We are looking for the best of the best," said president Eugenia Anderson-Ellis. "We challenge all photographers to send us their favorite images of Virginia's most scenic landscapes."



Scenic Virginia is calling upon professionals and amateurs alike to submit their digital photographs in one of five categories: Coastal /Chesapeake Bay, Mountains, Open Space/Farmland, Rivers/Waterways, and Urban Landscapes.

A panel of expert judges will select a winner in each of the five categories. The deadline for entries is September 1. [Click here](#) for more information on the contest and the submission process.

---

#### Illegal signs workshop held in New York City

A large and enthusiastic audience turned out for the illegal billboard workshop held recently in New York City. The workshop, led by Rami Tabet of [illegalsigns.ca](#), was hosted by the [Anti-Advertising Agency](#) at the [Eyebeam](#) art and technology center.

#### Contact Us

**Scenic America**  
**1250 I Street NW**  
**Suite 750**  
**Washington, DC 20005**

**202.638.0550 ph**  
**202.638.3171 fax**  
**[www.scenic.org](http://www.scenic.org)**

Tabello briefed the audience on his experiences in Toronto, where his group has worked tirelessly to have hundreds of illegal signs removed. He said that it is imperative for concerned citizens to take the initiative in bringing illegal signs to the attention of city officials, and to stay on top of the process until the signs come down.



Rami Tabello speaks at the illegal signs workshop - photo by Max R. Ashburn

A new website, [illegalbillboards.org](http://illegalbillboards.org), was born out of the meeting. Currently the site is focused on illegal signs in New York City, but there are plans to expand it to cities across the country. In the meantime it serves as a wonderful resource center for citizens concerned about illegal signs in their own communities.

Copyright 2008 Scenic America

[Unsubscribe](#) from this newsletter.