



New Scenic America banner

*July 2012**~ Follow Us ~**~ Scenic News ~*

Missouri lawmaker [receives more than \\$100,000](#) in free outdoor advertising...

DC Verizon Center billboard bill [fast-tracked](#) to passage...

Scenic Byway kiosk [dedicated in](#) downtown Canton...

Rapid City's new sign codes [take effect](#)...

Dover, N.H. [considers creating](#) scenic byway...

Route 66 event to [honor founder](#) of Pig Hip restaurant...

~ Tell a Friend ~

Know someone who might be interested in scenic issues? Why not [encourage them](#) to sign up?

~ Donate ~

You can support our unique and vital mission by making a [tax-deductible donation](#) today.

Names & Faces:

Former Polish Ambassador hosts Scenic Knoxville for fundraiser

President signs transportation bill

On July 6 President Obama signed a new transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21), which will sustain the Highway Trust Fund and provide states and communities with two years of steady funding to build needed roads, bridges and transit systems.


Although the [National Scenic Byway Program](#) was not eliminated, and the designation program still exists within the Federal Highway Administration, there is no direct funding or grant program in the new bill for scenic byways. It appears there is some funding eligibility for byways under the new Transportation Alternatives (TA) program, however, the extent of that eligibility is not yet clear.

It is expected that decisions for use of TA funds will be made at the state level. A bit of good news: it appears that projects eligible for TA funds under "community improvement activities" includes the "inventory, control, or removal of outdoor advertising."

As we learn more, Scenic America will keep you informed of how the new transportation bill will affect the issues we care about, including scenic byways and billboard control. For now, the Department of Transportation has [set up a website](#) for the new bill that includes a link to its full text.

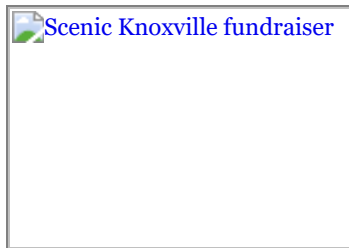
Byways101 website created as hub for scenic byways resources

When news of the imminent closure of the America's Byways Resource Center came down last year it elicited concern in the scenic byways community that many of the valuable tools created by the Center would be gone for good. Fortunately, a coalition of byways proponents has stepped forward to ensure that these important tools and resources will remain available to the public.

A new website, [Byways101](#), hosted by  America's byways resource center the [National Scenic Byways Foundation](#), will continue to offer these tools, publications and resources to byways leaders and the public at large. Among the available publications is *Conserving Our Treasured Places: Managing Visual Quality on Scenic Byways*, a guide on the scenic conservation planning process created jointly with Scenic America.


Former ambassador to Poland **Victor Ashe** and wife **Joan** hosted a fund-raising event for [Scenic Knoxville](#) at their home recently. **Joyce Feld**, president of Scenic Knoxville, and former Mayor Ashe spoke to the guests about the goals of Scenic Knoxville and its importance in protecting the scenic resources in the Knoxville community.

Board Member **Gene Burr** was awarded a Leadership Award from Scenic Knoxville because of his dedicated work on scenic issues in Knoxville and in the state of Tennessee. He was the founding President of Scenic Tennessee and recently won an American Institute of Architects (AIA) Gold Medal award for his work creating a design manual to be used with middle-school students in Knoxville.



The America's Byways Resource Center closed to the public on June 30 after more than a dozen years of providing support to the scenic byways community. Scenic America would like to thank the staff of the Resource Center for their hard work and dedication to these special roads.

New paper highlights benefits of designing with nature in mind

You know how driving down a lush green byway  makes you feel much better than navigating a busy highway lined with billboards and other blight? Well, it turns out there's plenty of science that explains just why you feel that way.

Thanks to Reyn Bowman of [Scenic NC](#) and his [Bull City Mutterings](#) blog, we've been made aware of [a new paper](#) that cites the economic and public health benefits of designing with nature in mind. The paper's authors suggest that by understanding the concept of biophilia -- the innate human attraction to nature -- designers can create healthier, happier and more prosperous communities.

The paper references studies that have shown that chaotic and unsettling environments create "stress, frustration, irritability, and distraction." In contrast, people are "more wakefully relaxed when exposed to natural landscapes." Neuroscientists have found that viewing nature is literally a pleasurable experience!

The study's authors contend there is also an economic benefit to designing with these principles in mind. For example, a study in Cleveland, Ohio, found that good landscaping aesthetics coupled with large shade trees added an average of 7% to rental rates! [Click here](#) to download the full 43-page paper.

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