


Scenic Overlook

September 2013

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Scenic News:

Houston [declared a certified](#) Scenic City...

Campaign seeks to plant [1,000,000 daffodils](#) in Newport...

Marketing expert says [death knell for billboards](#) grows louder...

Bighorn National Forest [seeks input](#) on scenic byway planning...

Nicholasville, KY officials want [digital billboards turned off](#)...

Trees [being chopped](#) for billboard visibility in SC...

PA township allows digital billboards, with one catch: they [can't change ads](#)...

Rhode Island Gov. Chafee receives Stafford Award for beautification

Drivers in Rhode Island are being treated to a host of improvements to the state's gateway roads as of late, including murals on bridge abutments and significant landscaping projects, thanks to a highway beautification program spearheaded by Governor Lincoln Chafee.

Scenic America recently presented Governor Chafee with the Stafford Award for his visionary leadership of the project. The award [was presented](#) during a recent reception in Newport hosted by our Board chair, Ronald Lee Fleming.



An award for excellence in transportation leadership was given to Rhode Island Department of Transportation Director Michael P. Lewis for his skill in implementing the program.

Also during the reception, an award for Courage in Leadership was given to town officials in Middletown, Rhode Island for their efforts to remove billboards from a key gateway road into town. For more on the award and to see [before/after photos](#) of the location [click here](#).

Opposition grows to Georgia law that protects billboards from trees

Outrage is growing over a Georgia law that gives billboard owners the power to dictate what happens on the publicly-owned state right of way within 500 feet of their signs.

The law was passed in 2011 after many years and hundreds of thousands of dollars in lobbying by the



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Ever wonder how far billboards in the U.S. would span if lined up in a row?



billboard industry. It was challenged by the city of Columbus but was [upheld by the courts](#), who cited legislative language that said billboards provide a "substantial service and benefit" to the traveling public.



But now that the law is becoming a reality there is a growing outrage about its real life effects. Community leaders in one Atlanta neighborhood [are worried about the law's effects](#) on their development plans. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution says the law [is a sad reflection](#) on the state's values. Even cartoonist Mike Luckovich calls the state "[Paradise Lost](#)."

The law takes effect just as [another study finds](#) that trees offer numerous health benefits to urban areas. That's just one more thing Georgia should consider as it pursues what Mother Jones calls its [war on trees](#).

Barbara Sandford, a founder of Scenic America, dies at 94

Barbara Sandford, one of the founders of Scenic America, died on September 2 at the age of 94 at her summer home in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire.

Mrs. Sandford was a [longtime resident](#) of Plainfield, New Jersey, where she was actively involved in civic life. She served as president of the Plainfield Garden Club, sat on the Plainfield Beautification Committee and was chair of the Plainfield Shade Tree Commission.



She wanted to protect roadsides from billboard blight, or "litter on a stick," as she called it. She formed Scenic America with others who wanted to create a voice for the average citizen in Washington, where the billboard lobby exerts tremendous pressure on lawmakers.

"We owe a debt of gratitude to Barbara Sandford for her passion and commitment to scenic beauty," said Mary Tracy, president of Scenic America. "We will continue to honor her legacy by working to make America a more beautiful place for the generations to come."

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