

Quarterly Issues Report

WUSF Public Media

Florida Matters Public Affairs Show

University Beat

News Stories

July 1 – Sept. 30, 2012

Florida Matters Quarterly report July 1 – Sept. 31, 2011

Time aired: Tuesdays at 6:30 – 7 p.m. and Sundays at 7:30 – 8 a.m. on WUSF 89.7 FM; Friday at 7 – 7:30 p.m. on WSMR 89.1 FM

[Florida Matters: 2012 Property Tax Amendments](#)

September 25, 2012

Radio Description:

Florida's property tax code resembles the finest Swiss cheese - it's so full of holes - says one academic. And voters have an opportunity to add more property tax exemptions when they go to the polls November 6th.

Five of the 11 proposed Florida Constitutional Amendments lower property taxes on selected populations. Voters will decide if they want to expand exceptions and give tax breaks to senior citizens, disabled veterans, small business owners and new home buyers.

If approved by 60 percent of voters, it will mean paying less for some. But, as one county commissioner puts it, when somebody pays less there's always somebody who has to pay more.

Counties, cities and many agencies that depend on property taxes as their major source of revenue are worried about further big exemptions. The concern is that further erosion of their property tax base will force either cuts in services or increases in mileage rates which means everybody ends up paying.

This week on Florida Matters State Sen. Mike Bennett of Bradenton and New College political science professor and former Collins Center Fellow Frank Alcock discuss those amendments.

If there was ever a Florida election where voters may want to consider doing some homework - this is it. Here are the five Florida Constitutional Amendments that pertain to property taxes courtesy of information from the [Collins Center for Public Policy](#):

[Amendment 2](#) – Disabled veterans who entered the military when not a Florida resident would become eligible for a property tax discount commiserate with their disability. Disabled veterans who lived in Florida when they joined the service currently receive this property tax discount. Other requirements for the tax discount: the veteran must be a current Florida resident, 65 or older and disabled in combat.

[Amendment 4](#) – It is 663 words long and has four main components:

- - Property value decline – known as the “recapture rule” – it doesn't allow property taxes to go up on homestead properties and specified non-homestead property when property values are going down.

- - Property tax limitations – it gives new home buyers – defined as someone who has not owned a homestead property for the past three years – a discount of 50 percent on an assessed value above the \$50,000 standard homestead exemption. The discount would phase out over five years.
- - Non-homesteaded assessments – currently capped at 10 percent annual assessments on non-homestead property would be reduced to a 5 percent cap. Homestead properties have a 3 percent cap.
- - Delay of scheduled repeal – currently set for 2019, repeal of the non-homestead tax exemptions and limitations would be pushed to 2023.

[Amendment 9](#) – This would grant a full property tax exemption to the surviving spouses of military veterans who die while on active duty and to the surviving spouses of first responders who die in the line of duty. Military spouses already have this full exemption but it's only in state statute. This expands the benefit to surviving spouses of police, firefighters, and emergency responders and places it permanently in the constitution.

[Amendment 10](#) – This doubles the exemption from \$25,000 to \$50,000 for individuals and businesses that pay tangible personal property taxes. It also gives local governments the ability to further expand the personal property tax exemptions.

[Amendment 11](#) – Senior citizens already receive an additional exemption. But this amendment gives additional exemptions to low-income seniors who have lived in their home for more than 25 years.

To read more about all 11 Florida Constitutional Amendments on the ballot, including the pros and cons of each measure, go to the Collins Center [2012 Proposed Constitutional Amendments](#) website.

[The Future of the Gulf of Mexico](#)

September 14, 2012

Radio Description:

It's been just over two years since the Deepwater Horizon well was capped, ending the largest oil spill in U.S. history. But is it really over? The largest gathering of scientists since the spill met over the weekend at the Tradewinds Island Resort in St. Pete Beach to discuss the damage to the Gulf - and what may yet happen.

The Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Symposium was billed as the first summit to bring together marine scientists, recreational and commercial fishermen - as well as government agencies - to determine what's happened to the biology of the Gulf during the last two years. Part of their discussion was about the safety of eating Gulf seafood and long-term damage to the fisheries.

Florida Matters traveled to the symposium on St. Pete Beach to talk to some of the speakers.

[A Conversation with Sam Gibbons and John F. Germany](#)

September 12, 2012

Radio Description:

Sam Gibbons was re-elected to Congress 16 times, and never lost an election. That came after he parachuted behind enemy lines on D-Day in Normandy, during one of the most harrowing invasions of World War II. He was instrumental in getting the University of South Florida off the ground. He also helped the then-small town of Tampa expand to the limits of the university. And he rode in President John F. Kennedy's convertible limousine through Tampa in 1963 - the last stop before that fateful ride in Dallas.

Sam Gibbons is now 92. He rolls around in a wheelchair now, a long way from the days he strode as a political giant in Tampa. He appeared before a standing-room-only crowd recently with former circuit judge John F. Germany at the downtown library that bears his friend's name.

[Parties, Politics and Protests: The Republican National Convention](#)

September 4, 2012

Radio Description:

It was Tampa's big turn on the international stage -- hosting the Republican National Convention.

These are some of the best stories from the RNC, including:

- What do protesters do at night?
- What are Republicans doing to attract Hispanics?
- Can juvenile Palmetto bugs really carry people away? (and other media myths about Tampa)

[Parties, Politics and Protests II: The Republican National Convention](#)

August 31, 2012

Radio Description:

The eyes of the world were on Tampa for the Republican National Convention. So, how'd we do?

We look at the protests that never materialized, the economic winners and losers, and the political impact of the RNC on Tampa Bay and Florida.

[Is Tampa Ready for the Republican National Convention?](#)

August 21, 2012

Radio Description:

After months of preparations, the Republican National Convention is coming to town. Our region's reputation is riding on whether the convention is labeled a success.

So, are we ready? Joining us to answer that question is James Davis. He's communications director for the 2012 Republican National Convention; Ken Jones, the President and CEO of the 2012 Tampa Bay Host Committee for the Republican National Convention.

Tampa Police Chief Jane Castor says yes, they are as ready as they can be. As she told WUSF's Craig Kopp, they've been learning lessons from previous conventions and the NATO summit in Chicago earlier this year.

So, how about the protesters? WUSF's Steve Newborn spoke with Mick Kelly of Minnesota. He's with the Coalition to March on the RNC, and helped organize the 2008 RNC Protest in St. Paul.

Some people may protest, but others want to show their support for Mitt Romney at the Republican National Convention. WUSF's Sarah Curran found one of them.

Finally, the impact on the business community is predicted to be huge – and the Tampa Bay Business Journal is gearing up to measure the convention's economic impact. WUSF's Bobbie O'Brien spoke recently with Tampa Bay Business Journal Editor Alexis Muellner.

[What Effect Will the Republican National Convention Have on Florida Elections?](#)

August 14, 2012

Radio Description:

When the Republican National Convention comes to town, it's going to affect our traffic, our security, and our economy. But will it affect how Florida votes in November?

The conventional wisdom about political conventions is that where you hold it, matters at the ballot box. But academic experts are skeptical.

So, what will be the effect of the Republican National Convention on the election in Florida? We've got several folks here to help us answer that question.

Hoe Brown is Hillsborough County Chairman of Romney for President. April Schiff is President of Strategic Solutions, a political consulting company in Tampa.

WUSF's John O'Connor is one-half of our award-winning education reporting team, StateImpact Florida. And Aaron Sharockman is the deputy politics and government editor for the Tampa Bay Times.

[Hurricane Andrew: 20 Years Later](#)

August 7, 2012

Radio Description:

It was 20 years ago, at 5 a.m., when Hurricane Andrew hit southern Florida.

It caused \$30 billion in damage, and it left 15 dead and more than 250,000 homeless.

Those are the numbers from Hurricane Andrew. But numbers can't do justice to the human toll of the storm.

This week, with help from our friends at [WLRN/Miami Herald News](#), we look back at Andrew, and what it means for us today.

WLRN reporter Rick Stone was actually working here at WUSF on August 24, 1992 -- the day Hurricane Andrew hit.

He immediately travelled to south Florida and embedded himself in a relief mission trying to help storm victims. In our first segment, he remembers that trip.

In segment two, WLRN's Kenny Malone speaks to one south Florida veterinarian who's still counting his losses.

In our third segment, we discuss how Andrew was the costliest storm in American history, and how that led to some major changes to the state's building codes.

WUSF's Carson Cooper speaks with Dr. Tim Reinhold, senior VP for research and chief engineer for the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety in Tampa.

Finally, we wrap up this special remembrance of Hurricane Andrew with a story from WLRN's Kenny Malone about the storm, a poet and his battered old radio.

And that's Florida Matters for this week. Special thanks to WLRN/Miami Herald News for sharing some of their stories of the storm. You can find their special coverage of Andrew's 20th anniversary [here](#).

[A Closer Look at the Local Primaries](#)

July 31, 2012

Radio Description:

It's lost in all the hoopla surrounding the presidential campaign and the upcoming Republican National Convention. But there's another election coming up - the primaries. And outside money is flooding in like never before.

WUSF's Carson Cooper chats with [Peter Schorsch](#), who edits SaintPetersBlog, Tampa Tribune political writer [William March](#), and veteran journalist [Wayne Garcia](#), with the USF School of Journalism. They talk about the race for state House between Jeff Brandes and Jim Frishe in Pinellas and Hillsborough counties; the Rachel Burgin versus Tom Lee race in eastern Hillsborough; the race for Pinellas Sheriff between former Sheriff Everett Rice and interim Sheriff Bob Gualtieri; and Ronda Storms vs Rob Turner for Hillsborough Property Appraiser.

[Lucia's Letter](#)

July 18, 2012

Radio Description:

Lucia's Letter is [the award-winning documentary](#) by WGPU Public Media that describes one Guatemalan teenager's trip with a coyote from Guatemala through Mexico to southwest Florida.

The story is a composite of several local Mayan women's experiences of becoming a coyote's slave. All of the women were raped, starved and drugged during the trip and then sold when they arrived in the U.S.

Some ended up as indentured slaves in the vegetable fields and/or in brothels. Others were sold to men they were forced to marry.

This documentary tells the story of this effort through the women, trying to use Lucia's Letter to convince mothers to stop sending their daughters to the states.

This version is an excerpt of the complete show. [CLICK HERE](#) to find the full one-hour documentary and more information about Lucia's Letter.

[Florida Matters: RNC Economic Impact](#)

July 17, 2012

Radio Description:

It's being billed as second only to the Olympics when it comes to press coverage and economic impact. In just a few weeks, the Tampa Bay area will host the [Republican National Convention](#).

But some critics say there's no evidence that previous political conventions have paid off for local residents and some small businesses have yet to reap any dividends in Tampa.

And, RNC organizers have felt the sting of criticism that small businesses did not benefit when the big political party came to town in previous years.

So, the [Tampa Bay Host Committee](#) is working to change that perception and help small businesses get their piece of the pie. The Host Committee is also working with Bloomberg to set up special events during the RNC week that will partner local officials with CEOs and out-of-state business leaders to discuss future business ventures.

[St. Petersburg Mayor Bill Foster on the Rays, the Pier, and More](#)

July 12, 2012

Radio Description:

The decisions made by St. Petersburg Mayor Bill Foster and the city council over the next year will shape the city for decades to come.

Specifically, Foster is trying to keep ahold of the Tampa Bay Rays, and rebuild the city's iconic Pier.

Florida Matters' Carson Cooper interviewed Foster for our Newsmakers series.

He asks Foster about both of those issues -- as well as his plans for cutting the budget, his feelings about Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn, and his plans for the Republican National Convention.

[The Future of the Affordable Care Act in Florida](#)

July 3, 2012

Radio Description:

The Supreme Court says it's constitutional. But Gov. Rick Scott says he won't expand Medicaid or set up insurance exchanges envisioned by the Affordable Care Act.

We break down the future of the ACA in Florida with Dr. Jay Wolfson, professor of public health and medicine at the University of South Florida; Mona Mangat of St. Petersburg of Doctors for America, and Alan Sayler, owner of Sayler's Suncoast Water of Pinellas Park and plaintiff in the state's ACA lawsuit.

Find the ACA law [here](#).

Read Dr. Wolfson's blog post [here](#).

UNIVERSITY BEAT THIRD QUARTER 2012

University Beat reports run on WUSF 89.7 FM every Tuesday at approximately 6:35 am and 8:35 am and every Thursday at approximately 5:45 pm.

It also runs every Friday on WSMR 89.1 FM every Friday at about 7:30 pm. Each report is between two and a half minutes and three and a half minutes in length.

University Beat: Marianna Graves (week of July 2, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

A team of USF researchers is surveying a grave yard at the Dozier School for Boys in Marianna, Florida to find answers and give the family members of the boys buried there the closure that has escaped them for so long. (Education, Children, Crime, Violence)

University Beat: Advertising & Neuroscience (week of July 9, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

We talk to a USF marketing professor who is working with neuroscience researchers to analyze how people respond to advertising. (Business, Education, Science)

University Beat: Sensory Marketing (week of July 16, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

A USF researcher is studying “sensory marketing”—how advertisers use our senses to sometimes “trick” us into buying things we might not necessarily want. (Business, Education, Science)

University Beat: USF Pre-College Recap (week of July 23, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

Almost 200 high school students from around Florida got a taste of what college life is like during USF’s recent Pre-College Program. (Education, Children, Science, Environment, Arts)

University Beat: PR Competition (week of July 30, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

Students in a USF Public Relations class finish second in a national competition to design a marketing campaign for America's Natural Gas Alliance. (Business, Education, Environment)

University Beat: Advanced Visualization Center (week of August 6, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

Put together 16 high-resolution stereoscopic 3-D monitors and you get a display two to three times better than any I-MAX movie theater screen. With a device like that, you can look at objects smaller than a human hair or examine minute details of an ancient artifact. That's the promise of the USF Advanced Visualization Center. (Education, Science)

University Beat: Scholarship Students (week of August 13, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

Profiles of two award-winning USF students. (Education, Women, Politics, Science)

University Beat: Political Cartoon Exhibit (week of August 20, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

Exploring a collection of political cartoons amassed by a USF faculty member and now on display at the Tampa Museum of Art. (Arts, Politics, Education)

NO REPORT due to Republican National Convention (week of August 27, 2012)

University Beat: STEM Superheroes RE-BROADCAST (week of September 3, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

Three USF PhD students don superhero costumes to teach elementary school students science, technology, engineering and math, both in person and through an internet video series. (Science, Education, Children, Arts, Environment) (ORIGINALLY RAN week of June 18, 2012)

University Beat: Musical Training Research (week of September 10, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

Researchers from USF's School of Music and the Department of Communication Sciences are studying young and old piano students to find out more about the nature of how we learn. (Science, Arts, Children, Education)

University Beat: New Business Dean (week of September 17, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

Meet Moez Limayem, who was recently named dean of USF's College of Business. (Business, Education, Economy)

University Beat: USF St. Petersburg Student Center (week of September 24, 2012)

By Mark Schreiner

A look at USF St. Petersburg's new, 21 million dollar Student Center. (Education, Economy)

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(See Attached Excel File)