

# OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS PLUS WHAT'S UP HERE AND THERE



*By Larry Becker*

*In an AT&T sponsored survey of frequent drivers who text daily regardless of where they are – 98 % say they were aware of the dangers of texting behind the wheel. Nevertheless, three quarters of them admitted to texting while driving despite broad public campaigns and laws against it some states.*

*Nineteen automakers accounting for most of the passenger cars and trucks sold in the U.S. have signed onto a set of principals they say will protect motorist's privacy as computerized cars pass along more information about their drivers than many motorists realize. Industry officials say they want to assure their customers that the information that their cars stream back to automakers or that is downloaded from the vehicles computers won't be handed over to authorities without a court order, sold to insurance companies or used to bombard them with ads from businesses without their permission.*

Not all of the following state bills are laws at this time. They have recently been introduced and are currently under consideration by the respective legislatures. Due to the elections, there is very little legislation at the federal level at this time.

## **ARKANSAS**

**The 91-year-old Broadway Bridge in Little Rock will be closed for six months starting in May of 2016 for a \$98.4 million bridge replacement project. The new bridge is set to open in November 2016**

## **ARIZONA**

**On November 22<sup>nd</sup>, deputies in Coconino County were able to cite drivers for talking on their cellphones without a hands-free device. Violators could be fined \$100. Not all counties in Arizona have a ban on cellphones that are not hands-free.**

**The city of Phoenix is set to roll out its Grid Bike Share program with 100 bikes and 27 locations in and around the central corridor. Monthly, yearly and \$5 hour rental rates are available.**

## **CALIFORNIA**

**Officials are looking for a cheaper way to extend the Bay Bridge pedestrian path and give walkers, joggers and bikers a way to get all the way from Oakland to San Francisco. The Contra Costa Times reports that extending a 2-mile trail along the western span would cost \$400 to \$500 million. Officials are considering several options, but no decision date has been set.**

**SMARTS!! The city of San Francisco has issued approx. 60,000 handicapped parking placards, but has less than half that amount of spaces available. The city estimates that it loses over 2 million dollars a year of parking revenue due to the large amount of handicapped placards being used.**

**A California appeals court has rejected a San Diego agency's plan for more highways and public transportation saying it wasn't properly evaluated for its impact on climate change. The 4<sup>th</sup> District Court of Appeals 2-1 decision upheld a ruling against the 40-year plan, adopted in 2011, which calls for 130 miles of new highway lanes, 156 miles of trolley service as well as bicycle and pedestrian projects.**

**Environmental groups contend the plan far exceeds state targets for greenhouse gas emissions, but favors more roads too much.**

## **DELAWARE**

**The University of Delaware is offering people who have received parking tickets on campus to get out of paying their fines while helping those in need. As of Nov.24<sup>th</sup>, the university will allow parking citations to be paid with non-perishable food items.**

## **HAWAII**

**The state will be requiring permits for vehicles to access the Mokuleia section of Kaena Point State Park Reserve. As of Dec.1, a permit will be required to drive beyond the paved parking lot. This will not apply to those who hike or bike on the dirt road.**

## **IDAHO**

**Work on a bridge over Interstate 90 in Post falls is scheduled to start in early December.**

## **INDIANA**

**The 104 year-old Newbern Bridge closed the first week of November, removed piece by piece to become the first pedestrian bridge spanning Haw Creek as part of an extension of the Columbus People Trails.**

## **IOWA**

**Des Moines interim police chief is considering expanding the use of automated traffic enforcement cameras to include capturing images of drivers who speed through green lights, The Register reports.**

## **MINNESOTA**

**The city is planning to build a parking ramp across Fifth Avenue and is considering whether to add an expansion to the convention center at the same time.**

## **MISSISSIPPI**

**State transportation officials are investigating where faulty guardrails have been installed along Mississippi roadways. Trinity Industries Inc. stopped shipments of its ET-Plus guardrails after a Texas jury ordered it to pay at least \$175 million for misleading regulators. Nevada is also investigating guardrails installed in the state. It is not known if the Nevada guardrails came from Trinity Industries or not.**

## **MONTANA**

**Glacier National Park is proposing to raise its seven-day vehicle entrance fee from \$25 to \$30 in the summer and from \$15 to \$20 in the winter.**

## **NEBRASKA**

**Residents of Decatur are hoping a former toll booth will help attract visitors. The Burt County Bridge Commission used the booth to collect \$1 tolls from motorists traveling on Hwy 51 to and from Decatur. The state will help pay to move the toll booth somewhere else in Decatur.**

**The state Dept. of Transportation has begun installing cable barriers along the local corridor (Salem) of Interstate 5 after two recent fatal crashes, the Statesman Journal reports.**

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

**The North Carolina Dept. of Transportation has begun work to raise and level N.C. Highway 12 north of and south of the temporary bridge on Pea Island in Dare County.**

## **OHIO**

**Voters have approved a measure to stop using automated cameras in Cleveland that ticket motorists. Last year, Cleveland collected \$5.8 million from camera violations and \$5.1 million as of Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> of this year.**

## **OKLAHOMA**

**The State Dept. of Transportation plans to widen a 3-mile stretch of Oklahoma Hwy. 9 east of Norman. The project is scheduled to begin in 2020 and will be completed in less than two years. Until then, motorists will have to use the present road.**

## **OREGON**

**The State Dept. of transportation has begun installing cable barriers along the local (Salem) of Interstate 5 after two recent fatal crashes, the Statesman Journal reports.**

**Crater Lake National Park is proposing a hike in its vehicle entrance fee from \$10 to \$25. Park officials say the 150% increase is needed to account for inflation and raise money for maintenance projects.**

## **RHODE ISLAND**

**The Rhode Island Dept. of Transportation says 24 locations will be equipped with radar technology to detect wrong-way drivers and warn motorists of the danger.**

**Officials have launched a new website with winter driving tips. More information can be found at [www.dot.rigov/about/winter](http://www.dot.rigov/about/winter).**

**The Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority says the project to install a permanent median barrier on the Newport Bridge is**

**scheduled to start in December. The agency's board of directors has approved a \$5.9 million contract for the barrier.**

**Did you receive a parking citation in Cranston lately? If so, you may want to contact officials as the city police dept. is being investigated in a parking ticket scandal.**

## **TENNESSEE**

**A Middle Tennessee State University instructor is driving from Key West to Seattle in a vehicle fueled by waste chicken fat and waste vegetable oil from school dining facilities. Alternatives fuel researcher Cliff Ricketts began his journey on November 6<sup>th</sup>.**

## **TEXAS**

**Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlins announced that six urban planners and transportation experts convened in late November to discuss the 9-mile Trinity River toll road.**

**Austin's planned bridge for cyclists spanning Barton Creek has been delayed a few months for a redesign.**

## **VIRGINIA**

**A DMV draft report has predicted that taxis will be outnumbered by ride-sharing drivers after the state begins regulating the industry, The Virginia-Pilot reports.**

## **VERMONT**

**Gov. Shumlin with the DMV and Fish & Wildlife Depts. announced the creation of 3 new conservation license plate designs. Motorists will also be able to choose license plates that include images of a loon, brook trout and white-tailed deer.**

## **WASHINGTON**

**The Seattle Police Dept. has decided to stop writing traffic tickets. They are switching to an electronic system that will print out electronic tickets instead. The new system will also scan driver's licenses.**

**IS NOTHING SAFE ANYMORE?? Nine wildlife cameras used to track elk near North Bend have been stolen. The Transportation Dept. was using the cameras in a project to prevent elk collisions on I-90.**

## **WEST VIRGINIA**

**The DMV reports that new license plates digitally produced in the Mount Olive Corrections complex will no longer have raised lettering.**

**Residents of Wheeling have launched an online petition to save the Aentnaville Bridge that was built in 1891.**

# **WHAT'SUUP HERE AND THERE**

**In a recent survey by Pew research Center/Smithsonian magazine of 1001 adults, 50% say they are not ready to ride in self-driving cars, 48% say they would and 2% do not know if they would.**

**There are more registered pickup owners in Texas than any other state. I guess that is due to the "wide open spaces".**

**A survey by Hankook Tire Company asked drivers how good they were at parallel parking. The results are: 31% say they do it on first try, 36% say two times at the most, 18% say three or tries, and 15% say they don't even bother to try.**

**Some car trivia for you! The first gas station opened in Pittsburg in 1913 and the wording on the marquee was "Good Gulf Gasoline". The first parking meters were installed in Oklahoma City in 1935. The first three color traffic lights were installed in Detroit in 1919. Two years**

later, they experimented with synchronized lights. The first drive-in movie theater opened in 1933 in Camden, N.J. The first drive-in restaurant (Royce Hailey's Pig Stand) opened in Dallas in 1921. The 1915 Scripps-Booth Model C was the first car to have the horn button in the center of the steering wheel and also the first car with electric door locks The first car to be referred to as a convertible was the 1904 Thomas Flyer, which had a removable top. The lowest mass produced cheapest American car was the 1925 Ford Model T Runabout. The cost was \$260, \$5 less than the 1924 model.

Motor vehicle-bicycle fatalities are typically in urban areas (69%) and involve adult male bikers 20 and older (74%). In 2010 there were 621 fatalities and in 2012 there were 722. Information from Governors Highway Safety Association released Oct. 27<sup>th</sup>.

In the second week of November, a Phoenix company said that it plans to produce what is called the world's first 3-D printed car. Local Motors says it plans to make them available for sale in a year at prices ranging from \$18,000 to \$30,000. The basic idea is simple, buyers would be able to select their ideal car on a computer screen and hit the print button. A giant machine would start making the car out of carbon fiber reinforced plastic, weaving it out of thin lines of paste that hardens to form the chassis, body and even the dashboard. Why not be the first in your area to have one? Order now!

Six speed transmissions are rolling off a new production line at a Toyota plant near Buffalo. The additional line increases the plants annual production capacity from 500,000 transmissions to 700,000.

A local man in Farmington Maine has been charged after allegedly throwing a table at a passing car and then punching the teenage driver because he was upset by the sound of the vehicle's exhaust.

*Larry Becker*

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