

OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS PLUS WHATS UP HERE AND THERE

By Larry Becker



Thrillist's award for "worst damn freeway in America" went to the region's Interstate 66, the Washington Post reports.

A partnership of MasterCard and General Motors is developing the first payment-capable key fob which will allow you to pay for gasoline and or pit-stop munchies by using your key fob. Several banks are also working with GM to allow your key fob to work with their services.

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.

ALABAMA

Florence City treasurer Dan Barger reports that parking meter collection totaled of \$119,000 at the end of the fiscal year Sept. 30 compared with \$107,000 the previous year and \$71,500 the year before that. The increase is due to the fact that the City Council increased the parking meter rates in June 2013. (Nice extra income for the city).

ALASKA

The National Park Service is considering installing new amenities, including parking, pit toilets and picnic tables, near the southern boundary of Denali National Park & Preserve.

ARIZONA

State Route 67, the highway to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, is scheduled to close for the winter Dec. 1, but it could close earlier if there's heavy snowfall in the area.

CALIFORNIA

Beginning Veterans Day of 2015, legislation will allow a veteran to apply for a California driver's license or ID card with a designation that clearly identifies the individual as a veteran. The designation will help inform law enforcement and medical workers of an individual's veteran status so they can appropriately treat a vet who may be suffering from medical trauma, such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, as a result of their service.

The state DMV, which recently sent Tesla Motors CEO Elon Musk a warning letter contending that the auto maker's "referral program" violated California laws, subsequently sent a memo that a Sacramento-based trade association claim is aimed at Tesla's false advertising practices.

DELAWARE

A \$70 million contract has been awarded to begin construction on the planned U.S. toll road in the southern part of New Castle County.

One month of lane closures on Interstate 495 began Nov. 2nd as construction crews replaced a connector that allows the bridge near the Port of Wilmington to flex and expand.

In early November, the state Police took a systematic look at where pedestrians cross roads and will introduce education and enforcement initiatives. The announcement comes after a story pointed out that the state is the deadliest for pedestrians in the nation.

D.C. – WASHINGTON

The city is testing variable rate parking, The Washington Post reports. City officials want to reduce downtown traffic congestion.

FLORIDA

Brevard County Commissioner Vice Chairman Jim Barfield is proposing a 6-cent-a-gallon increase in local gas taxes to help pay for road improvement.

The Florida Dept. of Transportation engineers have proposed that the city of Harbour Beach consider a pair of roundabouts as a solution to remedy Eau Gallie Boulevard beachside traffic- safety woe.

GEORGIA

A new bike trail that connects Atlanta to Chattanooga Tenn. is now open according to the Marietta Daily Journal. U.S. Bike Route 21 consists of about 161 miles of existing trails and bike lanes.

HAWAII

Kauai County is asking the state to help make interisland travel cost less. No details are available at this time.

ILLINOIS

Chicago's mayor Rahm Emanuel's speed camera program improperly issued more than \$2 million in fines to drivers, ticketing them when cameras were supposed to be turned off and when the required warning signs were confusing, obscured or missing, according to a Tribune investigation. So far, there is no mention of a possible refund for some of the tickets.

A report by the American Highway Users Alliance ranked the Kennedy Expressway as the nation's No. 1 traffic bottleneck, the Chicago Tribune reports.

MASSACHUSETTS

A woman won a legal battle to wear a colander on her head in her state driver's license photo. Lindsay Miller is a Pastafarian, who are known as members of the Church of the Flying Spaghetti Monster.

MICHIGAN

Entrance and camping fees are increasing next year at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore near Traverse City to help pay for maintenance and upgrades, The Grand

Rapids Press reports. The National Park Service announced that entrance fees for vehicles will rise to \$15 and entrance fees for hikers and bikes will rise to \$7 as of Jan. 1 at the park.

On Monday, November 2nd, another large pothole opened up on an Interstate 75 bridge pronounced structurally deficient because of its deteriorating deck surface according to the Detroit Free Press. A 3 by 5-foot hole, the Rouge River bridge's fourth, was repaired Nov. 2nd on the northbound side; the bridge is used by about 115,000 vehicles each day.

The interchange of I-75 and University Drive (Auburn Hills area), has reopened with the first in the state of a new novel traffic management system. The interchange, known as a diverging diamond interchange, is designed to eliminate left turns and other "conflict points."

MISSISSIPPI

The Round Island Lighthouse near Pascagoula has opened for tours as of November 13th, The Mississippi Press reports. No other information was made available on who to contact for tour information.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The state Supreme Court denied an injunction against a band of self-styled Robin Hoods who feed parking meters while following meter readers, the Concord Monitor reports.

NEW MEXICO

State residents are rushing to get passports before drivers are no longer accepted at federal facilities starting next year. The U.S. postal Service said the earliest available appointment to apply for a passport is February.

NEW YORK

Cashless tolling will probably come to the Tappan Zee Bridge in April according to The Journal News. Drivers crossing the bridge from Rockland County will either pay via an E-ZPass account or through a monthly bill.

Six counties lost \$566,520 in vehicle registration transactions last year because motorists mailed their renewals to Albany or completed their transactions online instead of going to their local DMV, the Press & Sun-Bulletin reports. Broome, Chemung, Steuben, Schuyler, Tioga and Tompkins counties retain 12.7% of revenue when transactions are completed at local DMVs.

NORTH CAROLINA

The federal government has approved a environmental impact study of possible routes for the planned extension of the 540 Outer Loop across southern and eastern Wake County.

Routes along Cape Hatteras National Seashore that had been closed to off-road vehicles for sea turtles nests, has reopened. A permit is required for any off-road vehicle use.

OHIO

State officials are requiring railroads to install stop signs at about 1,000 crossings that have no lights or gates.

OREGON

State contractors have completed a project to rebuild a tunnel on Highway 58 southeast of Eugene. The projects \$21 million price tag was more than \$8 million above the original projection.

Crater Lake National Park reports higher-than-expected visitor numbers despite a summer fire that closed the park's north entrance for two weeks.

More than 100 silhouettes have been put up across Portland to mark deaths from car crashes. The displays mark the deaths of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.

SOUTH DAKOTA

*The city of Sturgis is developing plans to open an area south of the city to non-motorized uses, including hiking, fishing and private camping.
(Where do the campers park??)*

TENNESSEE

Starting in January, the seat-belt fine will more than double in Tennessee – a state with one of the lowest penalties compared with several whose first-time violations top out at more than \$100 a pop.

UTAH

The Utah DMV has warned drivers to make sure the annual registration decals on their license plates haven't faded away. The red dye on the printed decals for Utah drivers becomes nearly unreadable after sun and weather exposure.

WESTVIRGINIA

The Wheeling Suspension Bridge has been closed until further notice after it was damaged in a traffic accident according to a WTR-TV report. The suspension bridge, built in 1866, is a National Historic Landmark.

WYOMING

A stretch of Wyoming 130 over the Snowy Range in southeast Wyoming is now closed for the winter. The highway runs between Laramie and Saratoga. Only the portion over the highest areas of the Snowy Range is closed.

whatsuup here and there

According to an article by Charles W. Frank, author of House of cards, Milwaukee, Wisconsin issued almost 48,000 driver's license suspensions in 2014 for unpaid traffic fines. In the U.S. there are between 21 million and 31 million drivers under suspension at all times. Many of the suspensions for unpaid traffic tickets issued by towns who need the money from fines to help their budgets. One town, Baskin, La, collected 87 percent of its revenue from traffic tickets. The town had 188 people and 5 police cars. Another town, Woodworth, ending up having 7,696 tickets written in 2006 and collected \$1,017,418.58. With only 5 police officers at the time, each officer wrote on an average of 1539 tickets.

Bad Timing!! A Florida police officer, who was due to be honored at a Mothers Against Drunk Driving conference, turned up drunk to collect his award. He was so wasted,

according to an internal affairs investigation, he was found wandering in a hotel hallway stripped to just his underwear.

Tesla reports that it lost \$75 million in the third quarter of the year. They have hired a new financial officer, a former Google executive financial officer.

The “modern restrooms” in Minturn, Colorado’s Eagle Town Park were named best in the USA in 14th annual Cintas America’s Best Restroom contest, according to the Vail Daily News.

In the second week of November, a Google self-driving car was stopped by the police for driving too slow. The vehicle was driving 24 mph in a 35 mph zone. No citation was issued, but the passenger/driver (driver is required by law) was warned about the slow speed that might be impeding traffic. The Google self-driving car has a top speed of only 25 mph.

In an effort to be more “politically correct”, some sites in Washington and Oregon have had their names changed. The names were deemed offensive by the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. In Washington, the names of a lake and creek were changed to remove the word “coon”. In Oregon, there were three changes involving the removal of the name “squaw.” In September, the Interior Dept. decided to rename Mount McKinley as Denali, in honor of its sacred status for native Alaskans, ending a year long battle in the state for the name change.

COMING SOON



Larry Becker

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