



OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS



PLUS WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

China has opened a new bridge, the world's longest at 34 miles. It has six lanes for traffic, 4 tunnels, with 1 under water, and is supported by 4 artificial islands. It cost \$15 billion to build, requiring 420,000 tons of steel and took 7 years to complete. It is expected that 40,000 vehicles will use the bridge daily. The bridge connects mainland China to Hong Kong and Macau. China also has the world's second longest bridge that is 26.3 miles long and links the eastern coastal cities of Qingdal and Huangdao.

The federal government is investigating Mercedes, alleging it had been slow to mail safety recall notices and file required reports involving recalls of more than 1.4 million vehicles.

According to Consumer Reports, seniors with limited mobility should consider these factors when buying a new vehicle: Front-seat access with wide-opening doors, low-step in heights and low door sills, all around visibility with low blind spots, easy-to-read gauges and intuitive controls for shifting, radio and heating and cooling, high performance headlights, forward collision warning, automatic braking systems and blind spot warning devices. Note also, that many insurance companies do not offer discounts for high-tech features because most features have not been on the market long enough to generate meaningful statistics.

On November 6th in Milan, Harley-Davidson unveiled its new electric motorcycle that is expected to be available for sale next year.

Police in Dubai may patrol the street by Hoverbikes in 2020. Dubai police are now being trained to fly the first Hoversurfs production unit, Hoverbike, after taking delivery from the Watsonville, California based company.

According to car-buying site, Edmonds, the average price for used car is \$20,084. The average used car buyer is paying \$400 per month with loans averaging 66.9 months. A shift in preferences to larger vehicles, SUV's and pickups is one reason why prices are up. Monthly payments on a used Ford F-150 pick-up, are \$492 and \$295 on a used Toyota Corolla sedan.

Falling asleep at the wheel is every driver's nightmare and it happens more than you think. One third of drivers surveyed by AAA say they have fallen asleep while driving in the past year. A drowsy driver is implicated in one out of six deadly crashes involving hospitalization, according to the National Sleep Foundation. The AAA study also found that drivers aged 16 to 24, were twice as likely to be in a drowsy driving crash as older drivers.

Less than 3 weeks after introducing the mid-range model 3, Tesla increased the purchase price by \$1,000. It also lowered the price of the long-range dual motor model 3 by \$1,000. Buyers who had purchased the cars earlier were not happy. Tesla is starting a ride-share company to be called, Tesla Network and plans to have it in use sometime in 2019.

Tom Voelk of the New York Times reports that a typical driver will spend nearly 38,000 hours behind the wheel in a lifetime, covering some 800,000 miles according to a study by Harvard Health Watch. Simple front car seats can have around 200 parts but can climb to 700 parts. Mechanisms allow them to slide, fold, raise, pivot, tilt for entry or drop into the floor to create cargo room. Seat tracks are engineered to keep French Fries from gumming them up. Seat designs must integrate with the look of the console, the instrument panel and the door panels. Adding to the cost and complexity, each has 1,700 to 3,000 requirements that include style, durability, recyclability, comfort, government safety specifications and features like heat and venting. A good seat can help improve safety, makes us better drivers and can even increase a car's fuel efficiency. Many auto companies offer custom designed seats for your car. Automakers were happy to kill off bench seats because it saved them the work of designing front seat air bags for all three passengers. Also available in some vehicles are discreet sensors in the seat which provide medical grade data to the vehicle which can react with tones, vibrations or visual responses when it thinks the

driver is stressed, drowsy or distracted. The seat can also automatically adjust itself “into an optimal position based on the occupant’s size, shape, and location in the seat”.

Tesla has signed an agreement to build an auto manufacturing plant in China. No date has been announced when construction will start.

According to the National Highway Safety Administration, 37,133 were killed in motor vehicle crashes on U.S. roads in 2017,down 1.8% from 2016.

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

Double-nickel, the 55 mph speed limit, is still common on highways across the South. Now, Alabama is adding a new limit: a quarter and a penny. Alabama Route 135 now has a 26 mph speed limit through Gulf State Park, AL.com reports.

CALIFORNIA

Eleven Sacramento area apartment complexes will soon have ride sharable VWs electric vehicles- the first benefit the state has received after the company was ordered to spend \$800 million promoting EVs as part of a settlement for its 2015 emission scandal.

In the rural town of Cantua Creek, near Fresno, several women, with the help of Central Valley social justice and environmental advocates, won a grant last year from the 11th Hour Project, which grants eco-friendly programs around the world. They used the grant to purchase a seven- passenger van, and a grant this year helped to buy an electric Chevy Bolt to replace the van. There is very limited public transportation available in the area and this helps to ease the problem.

The Forest Hill Bridge in Auburn, Ca (near Sacramento) is the tallest bridge in California. It is 730 feet above ground and has an 862-foot span. It was completed in 1973. The bridge is well known in the community as a place for illegal parachuting and for suicide jumpers.

The entrance fee to enter Pinnacles National Park will increase from \$3 to \$5 as of January 1, 2019.

CONNECTICUT

Police are holding a “Click it or Ticket” campaign aimed at enforcing the state’s belt law.

D. C. – WASHINGTON

Between Maryland, D.C. and Virginia, 67 bridges in the Metro area have been labeled structurally deficient by the Federal Highway Administration.

HAWAII

More than 100,000 rides were taken in October through Honolulu’s self-service bicycle rental platform, making a record.

IDAHO

Exploratory drilling has begun to find anchor points for a bridge over the Salmon River.

INDIANA

A new report says Indiana’s tourism and recreation industry will have to adjust as climate change makes the state warmer and wetter in the coming decades.

KANSAS

State officials say several changes should decrease the time people spend renewing their driver’s licenses.

KENTUCKY

Lexington city officials are offering to reduce parking fines in exchange for canned food items during the holiday period.

LOUISIANA

A national transportation research group says 14% of the state’s bridges are structurally deficient, the nation’s seventh-highest rate.

Drivers will have to wait until January to cross the Sunshine Bridge, closed since a barge hit it October 12th

MAINE

Maine's breast cancer support license plates have brought in \$3.1 million in a decade.

MASSACHUSETTS

The state announced \$40 million in funding to cities and small towns for road construction and transportation improvement projects.

MINNESOTA

More than 300 people have died in traffic accidents in the state so far this year.

MISSISSIPPI

The final four-lane segment of U.S. 92 has opened, giving the route 4-lanes from Tennessee to Alabama.

Interstate 209, a beltway around Memphis, Tennessee opened October 26th, the final stretch in De Soto County.

Three new historical markers have been approved. The markers are for the Raymond Presbyterian Church in County and the city of Verona in Lee County.

MONTANA

Yellowstone National Park officials are closing most of the park's entrances as of Nov. 5th to prepare for the winter season, but the road from the north entrance to Mammoth Hot Springs will remain open.

The new supervisor of Yellowstone National Park says he won't consider capping the number of visitors to the park.

Glacier National Park had more than 92,000 in October, up nearly 9% after a wildfire led to closures in August and September according to a report.

NEBRASKA

The Mayor of Lincoln said that the city did not get a \$1 million grant it wanted for a autonomous shuttle project, but will continue looking for ways to pay for it.

Road workers in the state have become careful about where deer crossing signs are placed, hoping to boost their effectiveness.

NEVADA

Construction has started on a new pedestrian bridge on the Las Vegas Strip.

Nevada has won a \$40,000 federal grant to make streets safer for pedestrians.

There is a proposal to build an elevated roadway in Las Vegas to help to ease traffic congestion between McCarran International airport and the Strip.

NEW YORK

New York City is waving nearly \$20 million in fees owed by taxicab owners in an effort to ease their financial burden, after a string of driver suicides.

OHIO

Greater Cincinnati drivers are some of the worst in the nation, in all types of weather. A new study from Allstate, puts Greater Cincinnati near the bottom of the 2018 America's Best Driver Report.

TEXAS

Solid median barriers along Highway 48 may be modified to better protect nesting pelicans.

A final judgement upholds a jury award of more than \$200 million to a Dallas-area family against Toyota over what they alleged were defective front seats in their Lexus.

Electric scooters have arrived in El Paso and city officials are not happy about it. El Paso's planning and inspections director has instructed code enforcement officers to confiscate any Bird (scooter Company name) scooters they see.

San Angelo Parks and Recreation Dept. is considering installing poles in city parks so members of the public can hang their own hammocks and can relax.

VERMONT

The state Dept. of Tourism says Smugglers Notch closed for the season.

VIRGINIA

A new police program teaches high schoolers what to do during traffic stops.

Cars and commercial trucks could face tolls along Interstate 81 under a new state plan, to pay for improvements to the roadway.

WEST VIRGINIA

State officials say updates at Cacapon Resort State Park will provide additional attractions for visitors to the Eastern Panhandle.

WHATSUUP HERE AND THERE

Uber has unveiled a new subscription plan , called Ride Pass for \$14.99 per month for all UberX, UberPool and Uber Express Pool users. At present it is only available in 5 cities, Austin, Texas, Denver, Orlando, Miami and Los Angeles, the cost in Los Angeles is \$24.99, but may be adjusted at a later date.

Spin, a start-up electric scooter company, has been purchased by Ford for \$40 million. They plan to market the scooters for college campus and urban areas.

AAA estimates that 48.5 million drivers will be on the road for the Thanksgiving Holiday period.

Dodge hopes that in a few years it will pass GM as the number two seller of pick-ups. They hope someday to beat Ford out of the number 1 spot. All three companies are producing “luxury” pick-ups that sell for \$100,000 or more. Just about any luxury item can be ordered on pick-ups now days.

Three of four drivers choose to purchase or lease a new vehicle at the dealership.

On average, parents spend 7 hours per week in their cars driving kids to and from activities.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is looking into some recent complaints about a “death web” in Jeeps and other vehicles. There are reports of “steering system vibrations” . The issues arise after vehicles hit a bump at highway speeds and then the steering wheel begins to shake, sometimes violently.

Larry Becker

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COMING TO YOUR AREA SOON

