

CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION, Inc.

OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

PLUS WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

By Larry Becker



According to a recent news story on ABC TV, some states are using companies owned by the Chinese government to build roads and bridges in the U.S. They also use as many Chinese workers as they can. Some of the projects are: the new Oakland-San Francisco Bay Bridge, the Alexander Bridge in New York State and a huge road/bridge project in Alaska. If road and bridge projects are funded by the federal government, they are required to use U.S. companies and also supplies from U.S. companies. Some states have found a way around this requirement.

On Jan. 23rd, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that law enforcement must get a warrant before they can attach a GPS tracking device to a criminal suspect's vehicle.

A federal tax credit for ethanol producers and users expired on Dec. 31, ending an era in which the federal government provided more than \$25 billion in subsidies. The program had been in use for more than 30 years. Most experts feel that the elimination of the subsidy will lead to increased gasoline prices.

ALABAMA

The city council of Tuscaloosa has voted to begin contract negotiations with Gatso USA to install red-light cameras. The council authorized the mayor and city attorney to sign with the Beverly, Mass. based firm, who will begin installing the cameras in the spring. According to the Tuscaloosa News, Gatso will take a \$30 cut for every paid fine of \$100 or more.

ARIZONA

The state Department of Transportation would like to hear what motorists think about rubberized asphalt. For more than six years, the Arizona Dept. of Transportation has been adding a 1-inch layer of rubberized asphalt on more than 200 miles of freeway. The department says it makes a noticeable noise difference.

Arizona residents, convicted of DUI for the first time, received a gentler sentence under a new law that went in effect Jan. 1. The new law requires first-time offenders to keep an ignition-interlocking device on their vehicle for six months instead of the previous year-long requirement. The device stops a vehicle from starting if alcohol is detected on the breath of the driver when they blow into the breath analyzer part of the machine.

CALIFORNIA

As of Jan. 1, a new law requires children younger than 8 to use booster-seats. They also must be properly buckled in a car seat or booster-seat, and in the back seat. In addition, children 8 and older, who are not tall enough for the seat belt to fit properly, must ride in a booster-seat or car seat. Previously, the law required that children remain in a booster-seat until age 6 or until they weighed 60 pounds.

Entrance and use-fees in California State Parks increased on Jan. 1.

If you have an outstanding traffic ticket, the state is offering you a deal that took effect Jan. 1. If you pay your ticket in the next six months (July 1), the state will knock off 50% of the fine, however restrictions do apply, No DUI's, reckless driving or parking tickets. It is also only for tickets

issued prior to 2009. The state figures it can collect millions of dollars in delinquent fines and local governments could avoid the cost of jailing or dragging these people to court. Courts instead could focus on collecting more recent fines.

A new law has given judges more discretion to take away a driver's license for 10 years if the person is charged with DUI and has had 3 previous convictions for DUI in the previous 10 years. This bill (AB 1601) was written by Assemblyman Jerry Hill.

On Jan. 9, Gov. Brown proposed a \$5 discount to vehicle owners who renew their registration via the internet or by mail. He stated that this would save money by reducing the number of people who go to DMV offices to do their registration renewals in person.

On Jan. 2, California began offering green decals of near-zero emission vehicles, which allows them to drive in the state's carpool lanes. The vehicles that qualify for the decals may not be in dealers showrooms for a few more months. To qualify for the decal, a vehicle must meet state standards as an Enhanced Advanced Technology Partial Zero-Emission Vehicle (EAT PZEV). The standards require manufacturers to offer 150,000 mile warranties on the emissions and energy systems. Two of the vehicles likely to qualify are the Chevy Volt and the Toyota Prius. The state will limit the green decals to 40,000 vehicles.

On Jan. 15th, DMV announced that it will pay \$5.6 million to settle a class-action lawsuit over its practice of suspending driving privileges of people convicted of boating under the influence. The case stems from a 2005 conviction. The settlement was approved on Jan. 9, and went to 735 boaters who had their driving privileges suspended after BUI convictions.

On Jan 26, Air Quality Control Officials meeting in Southern Ca were expected to adopt sweeping new changes to rules controlling how many low or zero emissions vehicles are on the state's roads. The rules would increase the number of hybrid plug-in vehicles and even fuel cell and electric vehicles being driving in California, beginning in 2015. Among other

things, the rules would require that one in seven new cars sold in California by 2025 be a zero-emission or plug-in vehicles. The proposals were approved by approved by the Clean Air Resources Board on Jan. 27th. (Information courtesy of NBC KCRA channel 3 in Sacramento, Ca.)

COLORADO

The state department of transportation wants to install a \$20 million sprinkler system in the Eisenhower Tunnel, so firefighters could get inside if a blaze broke out. The four-lane tunnel on Interstate 70 is one of the busiest corridors across the Continental Divide. CDOT is looking to the federal Department of Homeland Security to help pay for the system.

D.C. – WASHINGTON

Metro proposes to raise bus and rail fares by 5%, raise parking rates and eliminate a rush-hour surcharge this summer to overcome a \$116 million shortfall in its next operating budget, the Washington Post reported on Jan. 10th.

DELAWARE

The Police department of Dover has announced that it will start immobilizing cars with parking-boots if the driver has accumulated more than 5 unpaid parking tickets or has fines exceeding \$200.

The state Department of Transportation is developing a phone system that will allow drivers in 2013 to monitor traffic, emergencies and weather conditions. Callers will be able to dial 511 to get the latest reports on road conditions affecting travel and transit. The information will also be available on overhead roadway signs, a website and an application for smart phones and table devices.

The state Department of transportation has begun surveying for an environmental impact study for a project to increase the capacity of state Highway 1 by 2020 to help relieve miles-long backups at peak hours.

INDIANA

The state is offering a license plate benefiting gay causes. Bureau of Motor Vehicle spokesman Graig Lubsen said the Indiana Youth Group plate bears a logo with reaching hands in rainbow colors. Some \$25 from sales of each \$40 plate goes to the group serving lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youths.

IOWA

During the second week of Jan., a lawmaker introduced a proposed state constitutional amendment to outlaw traffic cameras. Rep. David Tjepkes introduced the measure a year after the House approved legislation that limited fines based on the cameras. The amendment is a multi-year process that requires approval by two general assemblies and statewide vote.

People who zip around downtown Iowa City on mopeds had to comply with new regulations that took effect in Jan. An ordinance requires moped owners to pay to park in newly designated spots that require a \$45 annual permit. They also have to move spots every day to avoid long-term storage. Those who park in bicycle racks or on sidewalks will be fined \$15.

Two Interstate 80 rest stops will be removed to make room for a new interchange. The rest stops set west of a proposed interchange at Exit 119 in Dallas County. The Dept. of transportation say that 500,000 people visit the area on the eastbound side annually, the westbound side gets 400,000 visitors a year.

LOUISIANA

Teenagers in driver's education programs will now have to learn the rules of littering. Under a new law that took effect on Jan.1, a litter education

course is required before 15 and 16 olds can get their license. State Sen. Fred Mills said the idea is to create an anti-litter culture among youth.

The state received low scores in the first report card issued by civil engineers who grade roads, bridges and other infrastructures. The state chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers gave Louisiana roads a “D” and its bridges a “D+”. The highest grade went to dams, which received a “B-“.

MAINE

The city of Portland has paid \$150,000 for 18 parking kiosks that take debit and credit cards in addition to coin, and install them in the spring according to city spokeswoman Nicole Clegg. The kiosks meters are part of a pilot program.

Campers can make reservations starting Jan. 17th for the 2012 season at Baxter State Park. People who show up at headquarters can make up to two reservations for any time from May 1 to Oct 15th. The park also will begin its rolling reservation system on the same date allowing campers to use the park's website to reserve lean-tos, tent sites and cabins up to 120 days in advance.

MARYLAND

A proposed Ocean City ordinance would allow horseback riding on the beach from Nov. 1 to March 30th with a \$50 per horse permit. City Councilman Brent Ashely’s proposal is a way to boost tourism outside the summer season, gets a second reading before the council in Feb.

The Montgomery County Council has changed its mind on what kind of transit line to build in the Interstate 270 corridor, voting to recommend a busway over the light-rail system it endorsed in 2009. The recommend goes to Gov. O’Malley as he considers which mode and route to submit in a bid for federal construction money.

MASSACHUSETTS

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority has proposed fare hikes as high as 43% and service reductions as well to close a projected \$16 million budget gap for the 2012 fiscal year. The fare hikes would be the first in five years and would take effect on July 1.

MISSISSIPPI

Signs will be going up on part of the old highway 61 known as the Mound Trail project. The project is aimed at raising awareness of the numerous Native mounds and earthworks. The driving trail will include up to 30 mound areas visible from the road and clearly marked by signs with information about each location.

NEW JERSEY

A 50% toll increase has motorists seeking alternatives. Turnpike Authority spokesman Tom Feeney said 70,000 fewer vehicles used the Turnpike in the first five weekends of the month, a 3% drop from a year ago. More than 100,000 fewer vehicles traveled on the Golden State Parkway, a similar decrease.

NEW YORK

Sheriff Kevin Walsh of Syracuse is fighting budget cuts to keep the helicopter unit flying. The unit is used for crime fighting, air lifting accident victims to hospitals and search and rescue missions. He has proposed slapping corporate logos on the helicopters to raise money to keep them flying. Other states such as Massachusetts, North Carolina and Missouri allow corporate logos on some of their equipment.

There is a proposal in New York City to ban smoking in vehicles even if the only occupant is the driver. Currently, smoking in a vehicle is banned if children are in the vehicle.

NORTH CAROLINA

The state Turnpike Authority opened a 3.5 mile stretch of the Triangle Expressway to traffic in December, but it did not begin charging motorists tolls until Jan. 3. Tolls are collected electronically through wireless transponders in vehicles.

The state Transportation Dept. has started holding 5 public hearings about proposed toll rate increases on the Southport/Fort Fisher, Swan Quarter Ocracoke and Cider Island/Ocracoke ferry routes and proposals to start tolls on the Bayview/Aurora and Cherry Branch/Minnesott Beach routes in order to raise \$5 million annually.

OHIO

Department of Transportation Director Jerry Wray said a draft project list shows money for building a second Interstate 90 replacement bridge won't be available until 2023. Work on the first bridge should be completed in 2013.

The Cleveland Port Authority is in talks with its Canadian counterpart about a passenger ferry service across Lake Erie, possibly next year. The service between Cleveland and Port Stanley, Ontario, would start as a two-year trial and carry people, cars and some trucks.

OREGON

The state Bureau of Transportation has proposed to stop repaving major roads in the state for the next 5 years. That would save the state more than \$4 million a year in the state budget.

RHODE ISLAND

The state Turnpike and Bridge Authority has postponed until February a decision on a plan to increase tolls on the Pell Bridge that connects Newport and Jamestown. Tolls for the Mount Hope Bridge are also on the agenda. The board is considering the changes as it looks to put together a financing plan for the \$250 million needed to maintain the bridges over the next 10 years.

In an effort to reduce crime and vandalism, the city of Central Falls has banned street parking overnight Jan. 1 through April 1. One day later, the city suspended the ban when outraged citizens packed a City Council meeting.

Dept. of Transportation spokesman Charles St. Martin said a portion of the Pawtucket River Bridge that's still under construction must be dismantled because some beams are misaligned. Construction began in Nov. 2010.

SOUTH CAROLINA

The city of Beaufort resumed using boots in January after 450 drivers ran up almost \$42,000 in overdue parking fines. The city's use of wheel boots to immobilize vehicles stopped about two years ago when the city hired Lanier Parking Solutions to enforce parking rules.

The city of Myrtle Beach will expand its boardwalk and create a new park after reaching Costal Dining and Entertainment who plans to open a new restaurant in the area.

TENNESSEE

Despite a lawsuit and a temporary shutdown, the city of Bluff City speed cameras netted the city nearly \$1.6 million in the 2010-2011 fiscal year, according to an audit obtained by Bristol Herald Courier. From 1 Jan. 1 2010, to May 31, 2011, the cameras resulted in nearly 40,000 citations.

Linden Ave in Memphis is now Dr. Martin Luther King Ave. The Ave is a nine-block downtown street that runs in front of the Fed-Ex Forum and parallel to Beale Street.

VIRGINIA

A report released by Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety gives Virginia a red rating, meaning the state has fewer than seven of the 15 laws the group considers optimal for highway safety. The report said motor vehicle accidents cost the state economy \$5.2 billion annually.

WASHINGTON

An electrical glitch caused the new toll system on the Highway 520 bridge to malfunction. Drivers crossed the span from 6:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. without paying. There were no reports of drivers complaining because they could not pay.

WEST VIRGINIA

More than a dozen companies and the state Transportation Department have agreed to pay penalties totaling more than a half a million dollars to settle state department of Environmental Protection allegations of environmental violations.

WYOMING

Authorities were busy trying to stop drunken drivers on and around New Years. According to preliminary figures from the Police dept., one driver of every eight cars stopped in Laramie County from Wed. 12/23 to early Sunday 1/2/2012 was impaired and arrested.

Drivers can now choose to have authorities notify next of kin in the event of an emergency. They can make their choice when getting or renewing their driver's license. The option was approved by by lawmakers last year. When drivers choose the option, the back of their license will indicate next of kin information is on file. Emergency responders can use the information to contact relatives.

On Jan 12th, the state Transportation Finance and Policy Commission held a session to gather ideas about long-range transportation needs and financing.

WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

Just as several new plug-in electric vehicles are heading to showrooms, the government let a tax credit for installing home and commercial charging equipment expire on Dec.31. Proponents of the program are pressuring Congress to restore the program, hopefully in January.

According to information from a Los Angeles area business reporter, GM had planned to sell 60,000 new Chevy Volts last year, but they only sold about 7,000. The \$40,000 base sticker price is one of the reasons for the slow sales. GM is receiving federal and state subsidies in order to keep the price down to \$40,000 base.

Clark County Nevada supervisors are considering an ordinance to make it illegal to feed pigeons in the unincorporated area of the county. The ordinance would apply to public and private property. The head of the of the park maintenance said it would be a great way to keep the pigeons and their waste away from the parks. Don't worry!! It will still be legal to feed the slot machines. A little known fact about Las Vegas is that gambling makes up less than 40% of tourist revenue.

Bare ground or weeds?? The Parks Department of Rapid City, S.D. has announced that it will stop mowing grass along the roadsides of about 30 miles of rural roads. Instead, property owners will be responsible for making sure that the grass is cut and could be fined it is not. The grass is suppose to be less than 8 inches tall.

The first roof top farm in Honolulu will be on top of a car dealership. Farmroof says the company, along with the Kumehameha Schools and others, will begin installing a 38,000 sq. foot USDA certified organic farm on the rood of Auto Mart USA in Kakaako. The farm will supply the community, retailers, and chefs with vegetable crops.

The 5 most popular stolen cars are: #1 – Honda Accord, #2 – Honda Civic, #3 – Toyota Camry, #4 – Acura Integra and #5 – Cadillac Escalade.

The top 5 states with the most vehicular deaths in 2009 are: #1-California - 3081, #2-Texas -3071, #3-Florida-2558, #4-North Carolina-1314 and #5-Penn.-1256. The states with the lowest rate are: D.C.-29, Wisconsin-56, Vermont-74, Rhode island-83, and Hawaai-109.

According to a recent survey by Fred Meier and Chris Woodyard of USA Today newspaper, the average age of cars and light trucks on U.S. roads increased again last year, to a record 10.8 years auto data service Polk reported on Jan. 9.

In 1906, Baltimore Maryland became the first city to use automobiles for mail collection

