

# OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

## PLUS WHATSUUP HERE AND THERE



*By Larry Becker*

*According to the AAA travel organization, the number of holiday travelers this year will top 100 million. The 100 million travelers will travel at least 50 miles from home from Dec. 23<sup>rd</sup> through Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>.*

*According to a report by CarInsurance.com and broadcasted on ABC TV, the state with the worst drivers was Montana and the state with the best drivers, was Minnesota. Most people thought California would have the worst drivers, but the state came in 22<sup>nd</sup> in the survey.*

*Buried in more than 1,300 pages of a new federal transportation bill are dozens of policy changes that could affect drivers, riders and anyone else who uses, builds or renovates the nation's roads, bridges, rails and transit system. Some interstates now free to travelers could soon become toll roads. Amtrak long distance routes could face changes also. Among the items in the bill, it would bar car rental companies from keeping cars in operation that are subject to recalls, until the necessary fixes are made. The tolling provision in the bill is an improvised expansion of existing law. Congress created a pilot program in 1998 that allowed Missouri, North Carolina and Virginia, to add new tolls to interstate highways, but toll expansions in those states have run into political opposition. Under the new transportation bill, these states will have one year to move ahead with plans to add tolls or lose their slots to other states ready to add tolls to their highways. The new states would have three years to complete projects or else be removed from the pilot program. Congress banned tolls on interstates in 1956 when it was created under President Eisenhower. Some northeast states were allowed to keep tolls on existing highways that became a part of the national highway system. Other*

*states were allowed to create tolls on a new highway and on lanes added to existing interstates, but those revenues can be used only for repair and maintenance of those roads. Other items in the 1,300 page bill deals with Amtrak and other transit means. These are just a few of the items in the bill.*

*In a blow to Google and other self-driving car makers, on December 16<sup>th</sup>, the California DMV issued a draft of proposed regulations for self-driving vehicles, with key provisions that a licensed driver must be at the wheel in case of emergency while traveling on public roads in the state. The proposal would require all driverless cars to have a steering wheel and pedals and a human driver to take control of the car if necessary.*

*Leave it at home! Nearly all National Parks are no-fly zones for drone's. Citations for using a drone in a National Park range from less than \$100 to \$1,000 and you may be banned from National Parks for 2 years or more.*

*According to a report on Fox news, Uber (ride-sharing company) is now more valuable than GM or Ford.*

*We can expect new laws in several states to become effective January 1<sup>st</sup>. We can also expect many new proposed state and federal bills to be introduced after January. Many states will have new legislators starting their terms and will introduce hundreds of new bills.*

*According to a report by the Insurance Information Institute, half of all Americans are reluctant to ride in a self-driving car, 70% of older drivers are more adamant.*

*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.*

## **ALASKA**

*A Biggie! A new liquefied natural trailer specially designed for Alaska has hit the road for the first time. The 75-foot, five-axle, 13,000-gallon capacity trailer has begun a months-long trial in the Fairbanks Natural Gas utility's fleet of trucks.*

## **CALIFORNIA**

*New pink license plates featuring a pink ribbon for breast cancer are now available for California vehicles. But before they can be produced by DMV, 7,500 pre-orders are required during the next 10 months.*

*More than 7,500 state residents have submitted prepaid applications for the license plate featuring Snoopy, the super-cool beagle. That allows DMV to make the plate available for \$50. The Schultz family is giving royalty-free rights for the use of Snoopy.*

*State highway officials will study 18 Sacramento area freeway ramps and a series of ramps in San Diego to determine if small changes can help reduce wrong-way freeway driving crashes. The test was prompted by a spate of nine wrong-way fatal crashes in these two areas earlier in the year.*

*A new purple pedestrian bridge links Tijuana International Airport and San Diego over the U.S. – Mexican border. The Cross Border Xpress is the first project to join a site in the U.S. with a foreign airport terminal.*

*The law that offered drivers licenses to undocumented immigrants has continued to prove popular, with 574,000 licenses issued through November. The DMV reported that it gave 38,000 written and 24,000 driving tests in November alone, issuing a total of 26,000 licenses.*

## **CONNECTICUT**

*A new federal transportation funding bill will provide Connecticut with an extra \$310 million in financial aid over the next few years.*

## **DELAWARE**

*One of the most congested sections of Delaware highway is getting a 33.7 million surgery that will result in faster and safer commutes by the end of 2018. The project will begin mid-February. The project involves Interstate 295, Interstate 95 and U.S. 13. There will be many lane closures, detours and lots of road work during the 34 month project. New off-ramps will also be added. The highway is a key artery between New York and Washington D.C. that connects the New Jersey Turnpike with I-95 via the Delaware Memorial Bridge.*

## **INDIANA**

*Hamilton County officials have plans to convert the bustling Indiana highway 37, into a roundabout –style corridor to slow traffic.*

## **IOWA**

*Bicycles are gaining in Iowa, including parking spaces and lanes, in central Iowa communities through a new round of local grant dollars. Six complete street projects were awarded in a combined \$750,000 in grants through the Wellmark Foundation.*

## **KANSAS**

*The Kansas Turnpike Authority said it might not meet a federal deadline for allowing people to use the states electronic transponders, known as K-Tag, on other state's toll roads*

## **KENTUCKY**

*The new Louisville downtown bridge will be named in honor of the nation's 16<sup>th</sup> president, Kentucky-born Abraham Lincoln.*

*Tens of thousands people walked across the new Abraham Lincoln Bridge joining Louisville and Jeffersonville, two days before the bridge was scheduled to open for vehicle traffic.*

## **MAINE**

*The construction of an interchange on Interstate 95 near Waterville, will be the first in a new state initiative the Portland Press Herald reports. Maine is considering the use of both public and private money for transportation projects because of limited federal grant money made available.*

## **MISSISSIPPI**

*The city of Hattiesburg has voted to rename Helveston Road, between U.S. 49 and Tuscan Ave, as William Carey Parkway. The change will appear on GPS's soon, but will require time to print new maps.*

## **MISSOURI**

*In Kansas City, a new lime green "bike box" has been painted at a major downtown intersection in order to give cycles a head start in front of other cars. Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator Deb Ridgeway says the box's separation of bikes and cars turning at the intersection provides a safer environment for cyclists.*

## **NEBRASKA**

*Glen Davis, highway safety manager for the Colorado Dept. of Transportation, says Nebraska should not wait for marijuana to become legal before acting to keep drugged drivers off the roads.*

*A new place to visit when in Nebraska – a historic streetcar barn is to be added to the National Register of Historic Places. The streetcar barn, near Omaha, was built in 1909 for the Omaha and Council Bluffs Street Railway.*

*The Nebraska Board of Public Roads Classification and Standards has proposed new road construction rule changes that would ease the standards that cities, counties and the state must follow when rehabilitating roads. (Never knew that there was a Board of Public Roads Classification and Standards).*

## **NEVADA**

*Recently approved legislation requires motorists to renew their driver's license every eight years, but for motorists who reached age 65, it's every four years.*

*Nevada residents may soon be able to proclaim their support for the right to life for unborn children by requesting a special license plate from the DMV. A requirement for 3,000 plates was needed, but the initial request was for 3,194 plates. This is expected to cost \$61 for the first year and \$30 for renewal of which \$25 in the first year and \$20 thereafter would be donated to the Right to Life Origination. But Planned Parenthood has expressed concern that the plate could violate state law because of a provision that says the plates can not promote a specific religious, faith or a antireligious belief.*

## **NORTH DAKOTA**

*Effective Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>, campers and trailers may not be parked on residential streets in Bismarck. Also, boats pull-type campers and motor homes cannot be parked on residential streets. Anyone breaking the city ordinance will be subject to a \$150 fine per day of the violation.*

## **OHIO**

*In Bucyrus, stop signs on East Southern Ave. at Rogers Street may be coming down after a traffic count found the volume of traffic on Rogers wasn't high enough to merit the signs on Southern under state regulations. The city is considering changing the intersection from a four-way stop to a two-way stop*

## **OREGON**

*On December 16<sup>th</sup>, it was announced that the Crater Lake rim is closed to vehicle traffic after winter storms dropped heavy snow and knocked down trees in the parking lot.*

*Effective Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>, state residents who get their first driver's license or renew an existing one, will automatically be registered to vote.*

## **SOUTH DAKOTA**

*Edmunds County Sheriff Todd Hotz has seen enough wrecks on U.S. Highway 12 and wants changes made. Highway 12 from the state Highway 45 intersection at Craven Corners into Brown County, where the highway divides west of Aberdeen, has historically been a bad stretch according to Sheriff Hotz.*

## **TEXAS**

*A new highway, Interstate 14, is coming to Texas by way of using mostly U.S. 190 and other existing roads from West Texas to the Louisiana border. The project will take years to build because the existing roads must be brought up to freeway standards.*

## **UTAH**

*This is why the wait in line was long. Zion and Bryce National Parks attracted a record number of visitors in 2015. National Park Service records show that Zion had 3,370,953 through October. There are no figures available for Bryce Canyon.*

*Uber has launched a first-in-the-nation service, called UberSKI, in Utah. It offers rides in cars that have all-wheel drive and the ability to carry skies and snowboards.*

# **WHAATSUPP HERE AND THERE**

*Self-driving cars still require a licensed driver in the vehicle at present time. Vehicles tested with 25 drivers not doing anything became bored and 16 fell asleep. However, another 25 were tested and allowed to read books or other activities, and only 3 fell asleep according to a report by KFBK radio in Sacramento, Ca.*

*Most states add extra fees to traffic tickets that double or even triple the fine. In California, an \$80 ticket can cost as much as \$499. In North Carolina, a \$30 ticket can cost \$218. In California, many drivers who receive these expensive tickets simply do not pay them. California estimates that it is owed \$10 billion in unpaid tickets. Some cities and counties do not notify DMV about the unpaid tickets, so it does not show up when they apply for a new license.*

*Over 25.4 billion miles were traveled by 25.3 million motorcycle riders in 2014 according to the Motorcycle Industry Council.*

*Looking for a place to work at a cheap price? Smartphone parking apps promise to do both. The top picks by Wise Bread (wisebread.com) are: BestParking, which displays lot rates by price; Parker, with built-in navigation to guide you to the nearest open asphalt; and SpotHero, which reserves a spot at a discounted price. Other apps, include ParkMe, Parking Panda and Park Whiz. (Now if I knew how to use my smart phone, I would be all set).*

*GM has begun importing and selling Buicks made in China.*

*Thanks to a new SEMA sponsored law, people who want to own a replica car may soon be able to purchase a completed turn-key vehicle from the manufacturer starting in early 2017. People who want to install an engine in a kit car or build their own specialty constructed vehicle are still permitted to do so. There are several requirements to purchasing a replica car. Low volume auto manufacturers (up to 5,000) motor vehicles a year global production) will have the option of selling 325 completed replica vehicles in the U.S. each year. The new law treats replica cars the same as kit cars, subject to certain equipment standards (lighting, tires, windshields, brake hoses, etc) recalls and remedies but not vehicle standards (roof crush, side impact, etc). Replica vehicles produced by the companies will have a current model year engine package certified by the EPA or California Air Resources Board and are exempt from emissions testing. Replica buyers will still have the option of installing the engine of their choice. More information is available at SAN's "Tag and Tire Toolbox." NHSTA and the EPA have one year to issue regulations to implement the new program.*

*A new federal law requires independent tire dealers to maintain records, including the name, address and information identifying the tire purchased, and electronically transmits this information to the tire manufacturer.*

*The first G. P. vehicle (Jeep) manufactured for use in World War 2 is now on display at the veterans Memorial Museum in Huntsville, Ala. It has been restored to its original*

*condition. The Willys Company, built 362,894 wartime Jeeps, at its headquarters in Toledo, Ohio. Ford built 285,000, initially at the Rouge plant in Detroit that today produces F-150 pickups.*

# HAPPY NEW YEAR



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