

CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION, Inc.

# OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

## PLUS WHATSUUP HERE AND THERE

*Larry Becker*



*Bosch engineers have developed a new safety feature that alerts drivers when they are speeding. It is a gas pedal that gives a “gentle vibration” to the driver’s foot when the car is speeding along too quickly. It can also help to save fuel.*

*President Obama has proposed a new \$10 tax per-barrel of oil. The tax would be phased in over five years and apply to both domestic and imported oil. According to an article by Natham Bomey of the USA Today newspaper, a 15-gallon gas fill up would cost at least \$2.76 more.*

*The New York Times reports that, Takata has sold 54 million metal “inflators” (airbags) in the U.S. containing ammonium nitrate, an explosive compound that regulators believe to be at the center of exploding airbags. About 28 million inflators in 24 million vehicles have been recalled. Of the 28 million inflators, only 30% have been repaired. The rest of the inflators, about 26 million, have not been recalled. The National Highway Safety Traffic Administration has stepped up its scrutiny of the problem, but has stopped short of an immediate recall of all Takata airbags containing the compound.*

*Ford is also developing a self driving vehicle – no details available.*

*Computers that control cars of the future can be considered drivers just like humans, the federal government's highway safety agency has decided. While the safety agency agreed with Google "driver" reinterpretation in a recent letter, it didn't allow other concessions and said federal rules would have to be changed to permit the cars. California and most other state DMV's say that self-driving cars must have a steering wheel and a licensed driver in the front seat.*

*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.*

## **ARKANSAS**

*Work on the first stop light in the county (Huntsville area) will begin sometime in March and will likely to be completed later in the year. Madison County is one the 5 counties in the state that does not have traffic signals.*

*State highway officials have initiated \$2.8 million in road improvements with a focus on reducing wrong way crashes on the state highway system.*

## **ARIZONA**

*The Arizona Dept. of Transportation is introducing a new type of snowplow to its fleet of snow plows. Tow plows, are plows towed behind a conventional snowplow truck. The combination is able to plow a 24-ft path, the width of two typical traffic lanes.*

## **CALIFORNIA**

*What else is new??? Corrosion in the S.F./Oakland Bay Bridge's Yerba Buena Island Tunnel that caused a concrete chunk to break loose last month is more widespread than the state suspected, according to the S.F. Chronicle. Caltrans found 12 spots in the tunnel where concrete was in danger of breaking away from the wall.*

*Transportation officials closed a 6-mile stretch of the notoriously gridlocked 91 freeway on Feb. 19 through Feb. 22 as part of a \$14 billion construction project to widen the freeway.*

*State Senator Bob Wieckowski has introduced a bill that would eliminate sales taxes on new automobiles manufactured in Ca. for out of state buyers. A small group of electric vehicles would fall under the provisions of the S.B. 680.*

*The sales tax on gasoline was replaced on 2010 with a gasoline tax tabbed at 17.3 cents per gallon and the Board of Equalization was tasked with adjusting it each year to continue its equivalence to the sales tax. It later grew to 18 cents a gallon, but last year, the board cut it by six cents as gas prices started to decline, thus slashing transportation revenue nearly \$90 million. The California Transportation Committee projects a \$754 million drop in revenue over the next five years and says it must cut back projects accordingly. Some say this is a move widely aimed at pressuring state Republicans on a tax increase which they oppose.*

*The Ca. Air Resources Board is proposing revisions to its portable fuel container rules. The primary change is to require the PFCs to be certified to fuel containing 10% ethanol, as is the case with current rules issued by the U.S. EPA.*

#### ***D.C. – DISTRICT OF COLOMBIA***

*The National Park Service has announced that the Lincoln Memorial will undergo a major renovation over the next four years.*

#### ***DELAWARE***

*A couple paid \$325,000 for a low digit state license plate, the News and Journal reports. Ray & Donna White bought the black and white license plate No. 14 at an estate sale. Two other low digit tags – 457 & 1785 – sold at the auction for \$32,000 and \$ 8,000 respectively.*

#### ***IDAHO***

*Legislation has been introduced in the State Senate to require the issuance of only a single license plate for motor vehicles.*

#### ***IOWA***

*Legislation has been introduced to require the issuance of only a single license plate for motor vehicles and will be attached on the rear of the vehicle.*

*State legislators are pushing bills to improve highway safety-including two that would make texting and driving a “primary offence” and create 24/7 sobriety programs that would require convicted drunken drivers who are out of jail to take daily breath tests.*

#### ***HAWAII***

*State lawmakers are considering a proposal that would add regulations to the state's law regarding slow drivers using the far left lane of the highway.*

## **LOUISIANA**

*It would cost at least \$100 million to install enough barriers to prevent cars from veering into any of the uncovered drainage canals on the east bank of Jefferson Parish, The Advocate newspaper reports.*

## **MAINE**

*Acadia National Park is one of five national parks to pilot electronic entrance passes. The pilot program will expand to include Colorado National Monument, Theodore Roosevelt National park, Everglades National Park and San Francisco Maritime National Park over the next few months.*

## **MASSACHUSETTS**

**Boston mayor, Marty Walsh, announced an interactive website where people can mark off problem roadways and intersections. The “Vision Zero Boston Safety Concerns” map is part of the mayor’s effort to significantly cut down on bike and pedestrian related accidents by 2030.**

## **NEW JERSEY**

**Legislation has been introduced that would create a vehicle registration classification for street rods and replica custom vehicles and provide for special license plates for these vehicles. The proposal is a version of SEMA-model legislation.**

## **NORTH DAKOTA**

**The state will receive more than \$1 million in federal money to upgrade railroad crossings around the state. The funding will be used to upgrade grade crossings with active warning signals at Ross, Grand Forks, Larimore, Ramsey County and Devils Lake.**

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

**The new “Nothing Compares” state logo designed by Gov. McCrorty’s administration is available as a specialty license plate.**

## **RHODE ISLAND**

**Gov. Raimondo has proposed pushing back the date for issuing new license plates to between September and April 2017. Officials say the delay is linked to the overhaul of the state DMV.**

## **SOUTH DAKOTA**

**Bicycle riders would be required to yield to vehicles in certain circumstances under a bill being debated in the state Legislature. The proposal would require a bicyclist to pull to the side of the road and stop if a faster vehicle came up behind on a roadway with a limited shoulder or no shoulder.**

**The Hughes County Commission is raising the county’s wheel tax on large vehicles. The tax on vehicles weighing more than 6,000 pounds will go from \$2 per wheel to \$5 per wheel, and from a maximum of four wheels to as many as a dozen.**

## **TEXAS**

**The Texas Dept. of Transportation will distribute \$1.3 billion to 14 roadway projects to reduce traffic congestion in Texas’ major cities. Texans lose about 52 hours and \$1,200 annually due to gridlock.**

## **WASHINGTON**

**Red-light cameras led to nearly 40,000 tickets in Seattle in 2015. Now the city is considering adding more, KING-TV reports. Seattle’s existing red-light cameras brought in more than \$5 million last year. The Seattle Dept. of Transportation is looking for more intersections to install red-light cameras. The program has been in Seattle since 2006. There are 31 cameras at 23 intersections throughout the city.**

**Avista is asking state regulators to approve a pilot program that would see 265 charging stations for electric cars in eastern Washington state. The company has filed a request with Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission cities environmental benefits, fuel cost savings and vehicle performance as benefits of the plan, The Spokesman-Review reports.**

## **WEST VIRGINIA**

Legislation has been introduced that would allow West Virginia's vehicle hobbyists to install and use aftermarket exhaust systems that meet a 95-decibel limit. The bill is sponsored by SEMA.

The second Friday in July has been designated as West Virginia Collector Car Appreciation Day. The U.S. Senate has passed a similar resolution dedicating the day as Collector Car Appreciation Day also.

## WHAATSOUP HERE AND THERE

*Nearly 10% of the country's bridges – 58,495 out of 609,539 – were considered structurally deficient last year and needed repairs. The total represents 2,574 fewer bridges than the more than 61,000 in 2014. The length of these bridges combined is 1,340 miles and are used by more than 204 million vehicles that cross these bridges every day. The five states with the most deficient bridges are Iowa with 5,025, Pennsylvania - 4783, Oklahoma – 3,776, Missouri – 3,222 and Nebraska – 2,474. The states with the biggest share of deficient bridges are – Rhode Island at 23.2%, Pennsylvania at 21%, Iowa at 20.7%, South Dakota at 19.7% and Oklahoma at 16.4%. Repair work is underway at many of these bridges. Deficient bridges are not necessarily falling down, but are in need of repairs. Of the 230 most heavily traveled bridges, that need repair, 85% were built before 1970 with creation of the interstate highway system. (Information from article by Bart Jansen of USA Today newspaper).*

*No mercy for the fat man!! Spokane TV station KREM reports that a man legally named Santa Claus pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of reckless driving. (Maybe he did not have full control of his reindeer).*

*It's unfair!! Kentucky men would have to have signed permission forms from their wives before obtaining a prescription for Viagra or other such drugs for erectile dysfunction in a bill filed by a state legislator.*

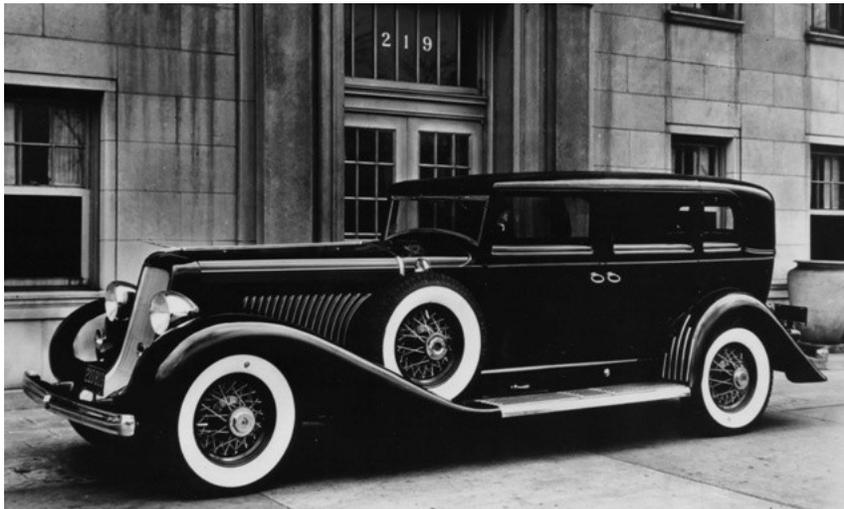
*Last year, a Long Island village installed a system of 27 cameras that would scan the license plate of every single vehicle that rolled into town. The cost was \$750,000. If a wanted criminal drove through, the system would sound an alert. Since the system went live on Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>, they have triggered an average of 700 alarms a day. Mainly about cars on the road with expired or suspended registration stickers. Officers have impounded 500 vehicles. They have written more than 2,000 court summonses, mainly for minor violations. The dept. has adjusted their responses by responding only to high priority*

*alarms. Overall, the system works well, but requires a large police force to respond to all the calls. Civil liberties advocates have raised some privacy concerns.*

*New car sales are up, but more drivers are tardy on their auto loans. Sixty day delinquencies are on the rise and the total debit for auto loans is the highest in history according to a report by Chris Woodyard of the USA Today newspaper.*

*In 1890, Thomas Ahearn invented the first heater for cars, Margret A. Wilcox invented an improved model in 1893, but both had no temperature controls. In the 1930's, Harry J. McCullum developed the Southwind heater which provided immediate heat to the interior and had temperature controls. Paul Galvin is credited with inventing the first radios to be used in cars in 1929.*

*Volvo plans to eliminate car keys and replace them with smartphones beginning in 2017. The smartphone would be used like today's key fob, or a mental key. It would not only start the car, but lock and unlock the doors and trunk. The same device would be able to handle multiple digital keys – one for every Volvo car in the family. Testing will begin the technology starting this spring using the car-sharing firm that operates out of the Gothenburg, Sweden airport.*



*Information as of February 24, 2016.*