

CONTEMPORARY HISTORIAL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION, Inc.

# OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

## PLUS WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE



by *Larry Becker*

*According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, drunken driving among teens has fallen 54% in the past two decades, a trend helped by laws to curb underage alcohol consumption and higher gas prices keeping high school students off the road.*

*An article in the Oct. 11<sup>th</sup> issue of the Sacramento Bee newspaper asked the question, When and Why should seniors finally give up their car keys? There was no definite answer. California DMV says that isn't age strictly speaking; it's unsafe driving, a problem that came into renewed focus at the end of August, when a 100-year-old Southern California driver backed onto a sidewalk filled with schoolchildren, hitting 11 people. Almost 14% of California's 24 million licensed drivers are age 65 or older, according to DMV statistics. Within two decades, one quarter of the nation's drivers will*

*be in that group. We all know that the more we age, the slower our reflex's are. There are resources that are available to assist older drivers and their families: DMV has a senior driver page on their website, AAA Foundation for Driving Safety's senior driving site, AARP offers driver safety refresher classes and other driving information for seniors, the Alzheimer's Association has an on-line resource center for seniors. Experts say that there is no certain age for people to stop driving, it is a decision that they and their families must make after discussing it with their family doctor. The American Medical Association recommends that doctors administer a few simple tests in advising older drivers.*

*Electric-car battery maker A123 systems has filed for bankruptcy protection and reached a deal to sell it's automotive assets on Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>. A123 had received a \$249 million government grant from stimulus funds. The grant money was never meant to be repaid. The company had to match the money as it used it. So far it has received \$132 million, Energy Department spokeswoman Jen Stutsman said. (information courtesy of Sacramento Bee newspaper on Oct. 17. (I wish I could get a big loan and not have to repay it! Now, we know where our tax money goes.)*

*Not all of the following state bills are laws at this time. They have recently been introduced and are under consideration by the respective legislatures.*

## **ARIZONA**

*The state has awarded a \$119 million contract for a project to ease congestion on a portion of Interstate 17, the main route between Phoenix and northern Arizona. The Dept. of Transportation said the construction of a 2-mile climbing lane on the southbound I-17 leading to the top of Copper Canyon south of Camp Verde will begin in early 2013.*

## **ARKANSAS**

*The state Highway and Transportation Dept. will begin installing cable median barriers on nearly 400 miles of freeways early next year. The three-*

*year effort will be paid for with \$74 million in federal funds in hopes of preventing head-on collisions.*

## **CALIFORNIA**

*AB 1658 which authorizes the DMV to issue license replica license plates of the 50s, 60s, 70s, and 80s has been signed into law by Gov. Brown. The bill takes effect in 2013, but requires a preorder of 7,500 plates to become effective.*

*SB 1310 which would have increased the fine for texting or using a hand held cell phone while driving has been vetoed by Gov. Brown, who said the present fines were sufficient.*

*S.B. 750 which would have exempted BMW from sharing their key codes with locksmiths has been vetoed by Gov. Brown. The Gov. said the 24/7 standard for car key replacement should apply uniformly to all manufacturers.*

*Proposition 33 is Los Angeles insurance executive George Joseph's plan for liberalizing the rules on auto insurance premiums. The proposition loosens laws on auto insurance premiums. For the first time, it would let insurers offer "good driver" or persistency discounts to new customers who maintained continuous coverage with another insurer. Existing law lets insurers offer these discounts only to current customers. It would let insurers increase premiums for drivers who haven't had maintained continuous coverage. Supporters say that it gives longtime motorists more freedom to shop around. They can take "persistency" discounts with them when they transfer to other companies., and that it rewards those who are "being responsible" by maintaining continuous coverage. Opponents say that it discourages drivers from even buying insurance (even tho you have to show proof of insurance when you register a vehicle), and that it penalizes law abiding motorists who let their coverage lapse for legitimate reasons. They also say that because insurance is a "zero sum" game, the discounts given to some will result in higher premiums for others.*

*The new 12 mile Highway 65 bypass near Lincoln has opened. Drivers will no longer have to travel through the city on it's narrow streets.*

*All California automobile service providers are required to check tire pressure for every vehicle being repaired at their facility as of Sept. 2010.. Gov Brown has signed a bill into law that removes tire age as a reason to deny checking a vehicle's tire pressure. The service provider has the right to deny the service if the tire is unsafe (example – crack, bulge or ply separation), but must note it on the invoice of the service order.*

## **COLORADO**

*Larimer County is expanding a credit card-only program to Carter Lake, Hermit Park and Horsetooth Reservoir. Management say automated kiosks worked so well at Horsetooth Mountain Park that the county will no longer accept bills or coins for entrance passes.*

## **D. C. WASHINGTON**

*On Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>, police began resuming breath testing of suspected drunken drivers after a 20 month overhaul of the program, which stalled when incorrectly calibrated machines were found to be giving faulty readings, the Washington Post has reported.*

*A report by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments said the region isn't doing enough to encourage the use of electric vehicles. The Washington Post has reported that there are about 500 electric vehicles in the area along with 133 charging stations, including 36 stations in the city.*

## **ILLINOIS**

*University of Illinois police would like bicyclists who ignore the Illinois vehicle code to be warned: You will be ticketed and the ticket will cost you money. "We're talking about people running stop signs, stop lights and not signaling when they turn, and here's a huge one, going the wrong way on a one-way street. It is a violation of the Illinois Vehicle Code and that is a*

*standard traffic citation which will cost you \$120,” UI Deputy Chief of Police Skip Frost said.*

## **KENTUCKY**

*Gov. Beshear has ordered that window decals be placed on 11,000 state vehicles and 400 state patrol cars with the message “No Text on Board.” The state passed a law against texting while driving two years ago.*

## **MINNESOTA**

*Police and other public employees in the state routinely abuse their access to the state’s drivers’ license database looking up personal information on citizens thousands of times for their own purposes, the Star tribune has reported. In the past two years, audits revealed that about 160 individuals, mostly in government agencies, improperly used Minnesota’s Driver and Vehicle Services (DVS) database.*

## **MISSOURI**

*The City Council of Cape Girardeau is considering a law requiring helmets for scooter riders. In August, a student died after being struck by a pickup while riding a scooter. Some cities in the state already require helmets for scooter riders.*

## **NEW HAMPSHIRE**

*The city of Portsmouth wants to get rid of 600 parking meters. The coin-operated meters are no longer needed because the city now uses a “pay and display” parking system.*

## **NEW JERSEY**

*A railroad crossing sign unveiled at the Plauderville station gives a visual and audio warning to pedestrians that a second train is approaching. Similar devices could be installed at 33 other crossings in the state.*

*The Motor Vehicle Commission is making it easier for parents to check the safety record of buses that transport their children to school. The agency, which inspects 32,000 school vehicles twice a year, says it is making more information available in the “school bus report cards” posts on line [njmvc.gov](http://njmvc.gov).*

*The New Jersey Transit Board is considering spending up to \$1.2 million to outfit 820 buses with plastic safety shields to protect drivers from violence. N.J. Transit spokeswoman Nancy Snyder said assaults against drivers have dropped from 60 incidents in 2010 to roughly 25 so far this year.*

## **NEVADA**

*An 18-month-long \$72 million construction project nearing completion in the I-80 corridor thru Reno and Sparks includes a series of electronic message boards that give motorists real-time estimates on travel times to various exits.*

*State officials are reminding off-road vehicle owners, that ORV vehicles must be registered and licensed to be used in Nevada.*

## **NEW YORK**

*Lincoln Center celebrated the completion of a 6-year, \$1.2 billion redevelopment project by dedicating the 83-foot long President’s Bridge, a pedestrian walk spanning West 65<sup>th</sup> street.*

*Under a law that goes into effect in a year, military veterans will be able to get a distinguishing mark on their driver’s licenses and non-driver ID cards from DMV.*

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

*The state Highway Patrol is cracking down on dangerous driving around school buses and in school zones. They will be watching school zones using marked and unmarked cars.*

*Visitors to the Blue Ridge Parkway can cruise a new smartphone application to help them navigate through the state's most visited national park site and its surrounding environs. The Blue Ride Parkway – Travel Planner includes GPS maps, hiking, trail descriptions and a link-up for up-to-date details on fall leaf color.*

## **NORTH DAKOTA**

*Area law enforcement officers are prepared to beef up drunken driving patrols in northeast North Dakota. The Grand Forks Herald reports that more officers have been assigned to patrol city and rural roads, as well as state highways in the area, as of October 12<sup>th</sup>.*

## **OHIO**

*The state is conducting a \$2.85 million study to consider ways to make more money from the Turnpike. The Columbus Dispatch has reported that the Department of Transportation deputy director Jim Riley's briefing to the Turnpike Commission did not include a specific recommendation for increasing tolls.*

*The state handed out 300,000 disabled parking permits in 2011, an increase of 21% from 2006, according to the Dayton Daily News. Chairwoman Linda Oda said the Governor's Council on People with Disabilities believe the application process is too lax.*

*National Insurance Crime Bureau numbers show that motorcycle thefts have been cut in half since 2007, with 1,096 motorcycles reported stolen in 2011.*

## **OREGON**

*A new section of HWY 20 that was designed to replace a deadly 10-mile section between Pioneer Mountain and Eddyville has been dogged by cost*

*overruns and is not scheduled to open until 2015, according to the Oregon Department of Transportation . The Register Guard reports construction cost is \$170 million over budget.*

## **PENNSYLVANIA**

*Allegheny County's DUI Alternative Jail Program, known as DUI Hotel, allows drunken drivers to serve mandatory jail terms in a three-day, three-night program held at two participating hotels, the Tribune-Review reports. The program is available to first time offenders with 72-hour jail sentences*

*Work on the final mile of the Great Allegheny Passage, a 141-mile bike trail from Pittsburg to Cumberland Gap, MD., has started at the Sandcastle Waterpark.*

## **RHODE ISLAND**

*Rhode Island's new Red Sox license plates have arrived. Gov. Chaffe, Providence Mayor Angel Taveras and officials from the team presented the first 900 plates to motorists on Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>.*

## **SOUTH CAROLINA**

*The state Department of Transportation refused to take over the extension of Interstate 526, sending the \$558 million project back to Charleston County. The extension is the final link of the highway between James Island and Johns Island.*

## **TENNESSEE**

*As of Oct. 22<sup>nd</sup>, motorists in Chattanooga with three or more unpaid parking tickets will be booted. Chattanooga Area Region Transit Authority Director Tom Dugan said parking officers, will be more aggressive in handing out citations in the downtown area.*

*A report by the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations say the state needs \$38 billion by 2015 to improve public*



*infrastructure, from repairing roads and bridges to adding water lines and sewers.*

## **TEXAS**

*A new Texas license plate is now available. The design called Natural Texas, features the most popular wildflowers in Texas. The plates went on sale the last week of September. 10% of the base plate price goes to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, official non-profit partner for the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.*

*The last leg of a toll road with the nation's fastest speed limit opened on Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>. The stretch of Texas 130 from Austin to Interstate 10 at Seguin will allow motorists to bypass San Antonio and Austin. Personal vehicles with an electronic toll pass will pay about 15 cents per mile starting Nov. 11, but CBS news says the toll is about \$6 per car each way.*

## **WISCONSIN**

*So far this year 102 people have been killed in state motorcycle crashes, up from 85 in 2011. It's among the deadliest years for bikers in the last two decades.*

## **WYOMING**

*The state Department of Transportation has installed eight webcams on highways throughout the central and northern parts of the state. Russ Dowdy, WYDOT maintenance foreman in Thermopolis, said the webcams "will help drivers make good choices about winter travel before heading out there this winter."*

# **WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE**

*Electric car maker Tesla Motors Inc., said it is bringing in less money because of supplier problems and other delays in ramping up production of*

*its Model S sporty hatchback. Tesla also said that it is about to open the first location in it's "Tesla Supercharger network," company operated solar-powered electric charging stations for Tesla drivers. The first six stations will be located in California. It will take about 30 minutes to give vehicles a charge that lasts about 150 miles. One of the stations is in Barstow, which is about 150 miles from Las Vegas. The coupe sells for over \$50,000. Industry surveys show that electric vehicles are not selling as fast as expected.*

*Officials in Bismarck, N.D. plan to crack down on panhandlers. City Attorney Charlie Whitman said a proposed ordinance would keep panhandlers away from ATMs, traffic, downtown areas and schools.*

*Rangers at the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park are using video surveillance to catch people defacing the Civil War cannons. WYMT – TV in Hazard reports that officials say vandals have inadvertently identified themselves, posting photos of them and the cannon on the internet. Chief ranger Dirk Wiley said that five people caught so far face federal charges.*

*A large swath of the National Forest and Grasslands in Nebraska is reopening. The U.S. Forest Service is rescinding its closure order for most of the 25,000 acres shuttered because of massive, late-summer wildfires.*

*Larry Becker*

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