

# OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

## PLUS WHAATSUP HERE AND THERE

by Larry Becker



*On October 1<sup>st</sup>, Interstate Highway 76 celebrated its 75th birthday. It was the nation's first super highway, 552 miles long, and was named the Pennsylvania Turnpike. It now has 68 toll plazas collecting over \$92.3 million from 198.5 million vehicles traveling the highway yearly.*

*According to Bankrate.com, the average commute each way is 24.4 miles. The survey did not say if this is to work or just daily commutes.*

*It will take months and maybe years to repair the damages to roads and bridges in South Carolina due to the recent flooding.*

*The EPA is lowering the ozone pollution standard limit to 70 parts per billion (ppb) from the current 75 ppb standard. Ozone is created by emissions such as nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds. The EPA contends that the stricter standards are needed to address asthma and other respiratory problems it associates with exposure to ground-level ozone, also known as smog.*

*In the first week of October, China had a major traffic jam involving over 1,000 cars. Fifty lanes of traffic were reduced to just 20 lanes. This was on a Chinese holiday weekend, and we think we have traffic problem.*

*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**

*State Troopers, already a rare sight on many highways, are about to become rare at major events, including Talladega and Foot Wash where they have provided security for years, AL.com reports. The reduction is part of budget cuts.*

## **ARIZONA**

*The Grand Canyon National Park has announced that the North Rim Visitors Center closed as Oct 16<sup>th</sup>. The North Rim will remain open to visitors until closing Dec. 1<sup>st</sup> or an earlier closing of State Route 67 if there is snow.*

## **CALIFORNIA**

*Motorists with outstanding traffic tickets originally due on or before Jan. 1, 2013 will be allowed to pay them off at a reduced amount, either 50 or 80 percent of the citation amount, depending on the driver's income. All assessed penalties will be waived, and payments can be made in installments. The new amnesty program, A.B. 85, became effective October 1<sup>st</sup>. The bill contains provisions that will license reinstatement for drivers who lost their license because they failed to pay the fine or appear in court. Courts are allowed to charge motorists a \$50 amnesty fee. DMV will charge a \$55 fee for drivers seeking to have their licenses reinstated. Parking tickets local ordinance violations, and some major vehicle code violations, such as DUI and reckless driving are not covered by the amnesty program. Gov. Brown has signed S.B. 405, which guarantee motorists can fight their tickets in court before being required to pay their fines.*

*The Golden Gate Bridge Authority wants to impose a toll (in the next few years) on pedestrians and bicyclists who cross the bridge, but A.B. 40 would ban, until 2021, sidewalk tolls for any state owned bridge.*

*A squabble between staff and management at a DMV call center in Sacramento has broken out over a policy that deducts employee's leave time or docks pay when a toilet trip takes more than seven minutes, according to grievances filed by the SEIU union. The DMV and the union are trying to resolve the problem.*

*On October 9<sup>th</sup>, Gov. Brown signed legislation to automatically register anyone who has a driver's license or state ID card. AB 1461 will require the state to register adults to vote when they get or renew a driver's license unless they opt out. Non-citizens seeking licenses are not automatically registered to vote as the law requires voters to be U.S. citizens. Supports of the bill acknowledge that the law will accomplish little unless those newly registered multitudes actually cast votes.*

*Gov. Brown has signed legislation granting the Senate Rules Committee and speaker of the Assembly one appointment each to the controversial California Air Resources Board, but the Governor still controls all mother appointments to the Board. CARD is not friendly towards vehicles and views them as an enemy.*

*Local police departments are now allowed to "read" your license plate, collect data from it – follow you to your destination and keep computer records of all of this, but as of Jan. 1, 2016 the users of ALPR devices will have to maintain "reasonable" security standards.*

*According to a survey by the Los Angeles Times and USC, traffic is the main concern of residents, topping physical safety, personal finances and making ends meet.*

*The Sixth Street Bridge in Los Angeles, which connects the downtown Arts District to Boyle Heights will be torn down next year, replaced with a new bridge. The \$2.8 million project is expected to open in 2019.*

## **COLORADO**

*The U.S. Forest Service is considering a reservation system for overnight visitors to the heavy traveled Four-Pass Loop and Conundrum Creek areas to better manage a surge of hikers.*

## **HAWAII**

*Wailuku planning officials are considering an unused cane haul road into a route to relieve congestion on a West Mau highway.*

## **IDAHO**

*The state has started installing variable speed limit signs on a stretch of Interstate 15. The signs will allow transportation officials to wireless lower the 80 mph speed limit during dust storms.*

## **IOWA**

*Sioux City officials are looking to develop a recreational vehicle campsite along the Missouri River in Chris Larsen Park or in Bacon Creek Park the city's east side according to the Sioux City Journal.*

## **MASSACHUETTS**

*Legislation has been introduced to require new-car dealers to provide purchasers a written statement declaring it is illegal for manufacturers or dealers to void a warranty or deny coverage because of aftermarket or recycled parts were installed or because someone other than the dealer performed the service. The Magnuson-Moss warranty Act regulates warranties for the protection of consumers and provides that vehicle manufacturers may not deny warranty coverage based on the use of aftermarket parts alone. Consumers are generally unaware of the rights afforded them under the law and many are forced to absorb the costs for repairs that were properly covered under the warranty. The bill, sponsored by SEMA, would simply provide that consumers be made aware 10-pointboldface type of these basic rights.*

## **MICHIGAN**

*On October 21<sup>st</sup>, a ribbon cutting ceremony marked the completion of a 16-month, \$89 million toll plaza project on the Sault Ste. Marie International Bridge that connects Sault St. Marie Michigan with a community of the same name in Ontario.*

*Legislation has been introduced that would allow vehicles that display a Michigan historic vehicle plate or an authentic Michigan registration plate free access to state parks hosting a car show, classic car cruise or other similar events. Generally, a Recreation Passport is available to Michigan registered vehicles for \$11 and is valid for the duration of the calendar year.*

## **MINNESOTA**

*The Minnesota Dept. of Transportation has found drones to be reliably helpful in bridge inspections. MNDOT will soon begin the second phase of a two-part study to determine the cost effectiveness of using the drone technology.*

*The signs around Lake Calhoun now include the lake's Dakota name. The new signs include the name Bde Maka Ska.*

## **MISSISSIPPI**

*New signs went up in the third week of October giving U.S. Highway 78 a second name – Interstate 22. The Commercial Appeal reports that the four-lane highway covers roughly 200 miles between Memphis, Tennessee, and Birmingham, Alabama.*

*The city of Pontotoc announced that it has received a \$111,000 state grant to build a bridge on which bicyclists can ride to the Terry Chewe Memorial Sportsplex. This will also improve safety between bicyclists and vehicles in the area.*

## **MONTANA**

*On October 1<sup>st</sup>, the State Dept. of Transportation started either replacing or installing hundreds of new 80-mph traffic signs along Interstates 15, 90 and 94.*

## **NEVADA**

*A section of State Route 342 south of Gold Hill is temporarily closed while a construction project by Comstock Mining, is realigning the road. Traffic will be detoured to State Route 341. The project is slated to be completed by mid-November.*

## **NEW JERSEY**

*State residents are not happy about the idea of a gas tax increase. Roughly three-fifths of New Jersey adults say they oppose raising the gas tax.*

## **NEW YORK**

*The state has received a one-year extension to comply with federal security requirements for driver's licenses, according to the DMV.*

## **PENNSYLVANIA**

*Legislation has been introduced in Pennsylvania to extend the emissions inspection exemption to vehicles never before registered in the state or any other jurisdiction for 10 years from the date of original registration. Current law only exempts new vehicles that have less than 5,000 miles on their odometer for one year after their first registration.*

## **RHODE ISLAND**

*Infrastructure repairs have started on the Jamestown-Verrazano Bridge.*

*Revenue at the seven state owned, pay-to-park beaches rose \$55,000, or 14%, compared with last summer, the Providence Journal reported.*

## **SOUTH DAKOTA**

*State officials have unveiled the design for 2016 license plates, which is similar to the current Mount Rushmore plate design, with different coloring.*

## **TEXAS**

*Six years after the state legislature approved \$10 million to equip school buses with seat belts, the money is gone, but less than \$1 million was awarded to school districts to equip their buses with seat belts, the Houston Chronicle reports.*

## **UTAH**

*The Brice Canyon National Park broke its record number of visitors in a calendar year by hitting 1.5 million in September. Nearby Zion National Park is expected to reach more than 3.2 million visitors by the end of October. (Now you know why it was so crowded.)*

## **WASHINGTON.**

*Wanted to work on their car? The Seattle Tool Library, a non-profit organization that lends tools for free to the community, reported more than \$10,000 in tools were stolen items. The other stolen items included laptops, routers, air compressors and a salmon cooke.*

## **WYOMING**

*The Powell Tribune reports that no contractors have placed a bid on the project to stabilize about 800 feet of road ING, about 15 miles north of Powell.*

# WHAT'S UP HERE AND THERE

*Toyota is joining the ranks of self driving cars and hopes to have one ready for highway driving by 2020. GM has also announced that it is working on developing a self-driving car.*

*Of all of the states, California has set the most ambitious targets for cutting emissions in coming decades by encouraging the spread of electric vehicles, but the big problem is that there are not enough charging stations. A report by the New York Times says that there is 1 charging station for every 10 electric vehicles.*

*Big Blow to Tesla! On October 20<sup>th</sup>, Consumers Reports withdrew its recommendation for the Tesla Model S – a car the magazine previously raved about – because of poor reliability for the sporty electric sedan.*

*There are many safety features on new cars such as turning a car back into it's lane if it starts to drift, hit the brakes if the sensors detect that it is about to rear-end the vehicle in front of them are just a few. The big problem is that not all drivers know to use the safety features, and turn them off. The Dept. of Transportation and the University of Iowa are kicking off an education campaign to inform drivers on how the safety features work. The effort includes a website, MyCarDoes-What.org with video demos.*

*The National Park Service reports that over 3.8 million tourists visited Yellowstone National Park in 2015 as of Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>. The annual record is about 3.6 million visitors.*

*On demand transportation, Uber, announced on October 15<sup>th</sup>, that in addition to transporting people via the Uber X and town car services, and delivering lunches via Uber-Eats and Uber-Fresh, it will now offer courier services to businesses. They will begin operations in San Francisco, Chicago and New York.*

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