

CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION Inc.

# OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

## PLUS WHATS UP UP HERE AND THERE

by Larry Becker



*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.*

*In its 8<sup>th</sup> annual report on traffic accidents, the 10 U.S. cities with the worst drivers are as follows starting with number one: Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Providence R. I., Hialeah Fl., Glendale Ca, Philadelphia, Alexandria Va., Newark N.J., Miami, and at number 10, San Francisco Ca.*

*In a report by Diane Sawyer of ABC News, Highway I-635 in Texas is being rebuilt with underground tunnels from I-35 to I-45 and is being contracted to a Chinese firm for over \$5 billion.*

*There is still controversy over the San Francisco Bay Bridge new span and doctored data on test results. The Federal Highway Administration, in a draft assessment, criticized CalTrans for waiting for years to rigorously review testing problems. CalTrans insists that its tests on roadway and bridges, including the new span of the San Francisco Bay Bridge span were valid and the roadways, bridges and the new span are safe.*

*How about \$8 a gallon for gas? On Sept. 12<sup>th</sup>, 50 Lukoil gas stations in New Jersey and Pennsylvania raised prices to more than \$8 a gallon for the day to protest what they say are unfair pricing practices by Lukoil, North America. The owners and the New Jersey Gasoline, Convenience, Automotive Association said Lukoil charges more for gas than other companies charge their franchisee, forcing them to charge customers more. Association leader, Sal Risalvato said Lukoil charges 7 cents or more per gallon than other companies. The company issued a statement defending its pricing and accusing the gas station association of encouraging "public misstatements and ill-conceived actions".*

*A recent report in USA Today Newspaper states that there is a serious shortage of qualified auto technicians looming. Auto dealers and repair shops are looking to recruit the repair technicians of tomorrow.*

## **ALABAMA**

*The City Council of Tuscaloosa is considering a plan to close a free parking lot used for the University of Alabama football games. The council may ban parking along Hack Warner Parkway from the U.S. 82 exit into Martin Luther King Blvd. Fans walking along the Parkway create a safety issue the council says.*

*A new state law requires motorists convicted of drunken driving with a blood alcohol level of 1.5% or higher to install ignition interlocks on their vehicles. First and second time offenders must keep the device on their vehicles for two years.*

## **CALIFORNIA**

*AB 2189 has passed in the Legislature and been sent to the Governor. The bill would apply to an estimated 400,000 undocumented immigrants expected to meet the requirements of President Obama's new Deferred Action for Children Arrivals program, which would qualify them to be eligible for California driver's licenses.*

*Legislation that was sponsored by the auto clubs, but did not take effect until 2013 required auto manufacturers to provide “smart key” codes to locksmith so they could replace lost keys. In August 2012, a bill by Sen. Ed Hernandez, SB 750 was introduced that would exempt BMW from the legislation. Under SB 750, BMW owners who lose their fancy keys would have to bear the cost of a tow, wait a day for a key and pay \$300 to \$500. Under the legislation that was passed in 2006, locksmiths could duplicate the key with one or two hours at a cost of \$100 to \$400, according to the Legislature’s staff analysis.*

*Anti-tax advocates are mobilizing their forces to defeat a last minute bill moving thru the Legislature that would extend some fees on car registration and tire purchases for several additional years. S.B. 1455 would extend a \$20 smog abatement fee and various car and boat registration fees set to expire in 2016 would be extended to 2023. A \$6 air quality district fee set to drop to \$4 in 2015 would be extended at \$6 until March 2023 and a \$1.75 tire fee set to drop to 75 cents in 2015 would be set at \$.50 until 2023.*

*Starting in February, the Golden Gate Bridge will use an all-electronic system to collect tolls. Under the planned new system, Fastrak will remain open and bridge officials hope more people will sign up for it. Fastrak drivers will pay a reduced toll of \$5, while others will pay \$6. Video cameras have been installed on the bridge to capture the license plates of violators. There is also another account, “pay by plate” that deducts payments from a driver’s account after the vehicle passes thru the toll plaza. The bridge will also offer a one time payment option that can be made up to 30 days before passing thru the toll gates. There will also be retail outlets where bridge users can pay their toll in cash by providing their license plate numbers. Payments will also be accepted on the phone and online. The Bridge Authority says the new system will save roughly \$19 million in salary and benefits over 8 years.*

*In some states, it is illegal for motorists to flash their headlights to oncoming motorists to warn them of traffic enforcement activities ahead, but it is not illegal to do so in California.*

*On September 24<sup>th</sup>, the Sunset Boulevard over Interstate 405 reopened more than two years after demolition and reconstruction work began. The seismically*

*upgraded span is 30 feet wider, five feet higher and now has eight lanes to carry up to 22,000 vehicles that travel over the bridge on a typical day.*

## **D. C. WASHINGTON**

*The city can continue installing it's new "smart meter" system in taxicabs for now, a Superior Court judge has ruled. However the Washington Posts reports that an administrative law judge whether the installation by California based Verifone Systems can continue in face of a contract challenge by another company.*

*The City Council has passed emergency legislation that order the DMV to apply discretion in out-of-state cases of reckless driving, the Washington Post has reported. The city has revoked drivers licenses because of tickets issued in Virginia, which treats driving over 80 mph as reckless driving.*

## **DELWARE**

*The Marine Education, Research and Rehabilitation Institute license plate is being offered to state residents for \$50. The non profit group, dedicated to the conservation of marine mammals and sea turtles, will receive \$35 of the fee. The plate was designed by local artist Karin Snoots.*

## **FLORIDA**

*The City Commission of Cocoa Beach is considering an ordinance to curb harassment and abuse of bicyclists, pedestrians and joggers. It targets motorists who threaten to injure bikers or runners, force them off the street or pass them within 3 feet or less. The measure, if adopted, would start Oct.4, the measure will levy \$100 fines for first offenses, \$200 for subsequent violations.*

## **INDIANA**

*The city of Indianapolis is spending \$2 million on a project where vans equipped with cameras roam the city streets and create a comprehensive inventory to help leaders better direct money to repair roads and sidewalks.*

## **LOUISIANA**

*State motorists, except for those in New Orleans, Kenner and Westwego, now have the option of getting their vehicles inspected every two years instead of annually. The annual safety sticker costs \$10; the two year one costs \$20.*

## **MARYLAND**

*The State Highway Administration is working to fix cracks in 10 newly built overpasses on the \$2.56 billion Intercounty Connector, the Washington Post has reported.*

## **NEBRASKA**

*Nebraska is on track for a 20% increase in the number of ignition interlock devices issued in DUI cases. A new state law requires the sensors for most people convicted of first and second offenses of drunken driving. Drivers inhale into the devices before their vehicles can be started.*

## **NEVADA**

*Digital parking technology has come to the downtown Reno business district with 200 underground sensors to help enforce a two hour parking limit. A smart phone app allows users to see open parking spaces and monitor their time limits.*

## **NEW HAMPSHIRE**

*The DMV is launching their Troops to Trucks Program to help veterans skilled in the operation of heavy vehicles to obtain commercial drivers licenses. Skilled veterans could skip the road test, but must pass the written exam.*

## ***NEW JERSEY***

*The state has banned drivers from making big smiles on their driver's license photos because such expressions do work with facial-recognition software.*

## ***NEW MEXICO***

*A new poll has found that nearly three-fourths of New Mexico voters oppose a state law allowing immigrants to obtain driver's licenses. The poll found that 71% of the state's likely voters are against the 2003 state law.*

## ***NEW YORK***

*Tompkins County has painted the shoulder along a stretch of Ellis Hollow Road green in a research project to see if the calming color slow drivers. It's suppose to give a feeling of a narrower road and also clearly mark the area for walkers and cyclists.*

*New York City has painted "Look" in large letters on crosswalks on 110 dangerous intersections in the city's five boroughs as a reminder for pedestrians to be alert*

## ***OHIO***

*Ohio State University President Gordon Gee is calling for a task force to look into making it safer to walk and bike on the campus. In the first week of September, a freshman was critically injured when a truck struck him, and a woman was seriously injured when she was hit by a bicyclist.*

## ***OREGON***

*Portland was named as America's most friendly bike city this year. Many Portlanders go about their daily lives in ways that would be unfamiliar to most Americans. Downtown and near-city neighborhoods are awash in*

*bikes and bike lanes, delivering bikes dot the urban landscape and bars are not encased in massive parking lots - they have bike corrals out front. Portland boasts that 6% of all trips to work are by bike, the highest percentage of bike commuters in any large U.S. city, says Dan Anderson of the Portland Bureau of Transportation.*

## **SOUTH CAROLINA**

*The state Department of Transportation reported a majority of those surveyed in the western suburbs favor completing Interstate 526 through the area at a lower-speed, divided parkway.*

*The DMV has created a mobile phone app to help people study for the state's driver's license test.*

## **SOUTH DAKOTA**

*The state's largest city, Sioux Falls, has banned texting while driving. The City Council voted to make sending and receiving electronic messages while operating a vehicle, a crime within the city limits. The ordinance will take effect Sept. 28<sup>th</sup> and will be punishable by a fine of up to \$200 or 30 days in jail.*

## **VERMONT**

*A study by the Vermont Agency of Transportation said the Winooski traffic circle is one of the more crash-prone in the state. The circle has seen 219 crashes that caused 42 injuries in 2006-11.*

*A proposed \$32 rail spur in Middlebury designed to ease truck traffic between marble processor Omya's Inc. quarry and its plant in Pittsford has been delayed indefinitely. The delay is related to the sluggish economy.*

## **TEXAS**

*Texas will soon open a section of highway with the highest speed limit in the country, giving drivers a chance to rip through a trip between two of the state's largest metropolitan areas. The Texas Transportation Commission approved a speed limit of 85 mph for a 41-mile toll road between Austin and San Antonio.*

## **WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE**

*A new study suggests “distracted walking” is taking a toll on teenagers as the number of pedestrian injuries soars among 16 to 19 year-olds even as it drops among nearly every other group. Safe-Kids Worldwide suggests the rise in teen injuries is related to distraction, caused by the use of electronics and handheld devices while walking.*

*The Obama Administration has finalized regulations that would force automakers to nearly double the average gas mileage of all new cars they sell by 2025. The rule means that all new vehicles would have to get an average of 54.5 mpg in 13 years, up from 28.6 mpg at the end of last year. The requirements will be phased in gradually, and automakers could be fined if they don't comply. The Administration says the new rules will save families up to \$7,400 on fuel over the life of the vehicle. They did not release any information as to how much it may increase the cost of the vehicle in order to reach the new mpg requirement.*

*The Alaska ferry system has a new logo for its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. CostAlaska says the new Alaska Marine Highway logo is a blue-and-white retro image that includes a ferry surrounded by a circle with the system's name and an orange banner.*

*A new Civil War Trails marker in Brownsville, Maryland tells the story of the clash on Maryland Heights, the first battle action in the state. The Sept. 13, 1852, action was part of the Battle of Harpers Ferry.*

*A report shows that more and more “older” baby boomers are switching from two-wheel motorcycles to three wheeled “trikes”. Industry experts say the sale of tens of thousands of trikes, whose sticker price can rival an upscale sedan’s – a new three-wheel Harley starts at \$30,999. Aging bikers are finding that adding a third wheel makes it easier on their ailing knees, backs and other assorted aches and pains.*

*In West Virginia, a proposed rule by the National park Service would allow bicycles on trails in the New River Gorge. The rule would authorize bicycle use on five new trails. and 19 existing trails and administrative roads.*

*Larry Becker*

