

## OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS PLUS WHAATS UP HERE AND THERE

By Larry Becker



*Travel + Leisure magazine has rated the following cities as the snobbiest in the U.S. Number one is San Francisco followed by New York City, Boston, Minneapolis/St Paul, Santa Fe and Seattle Wa., tied for 5<sup>th</sup> place, followed by Chicago, Providence R.I., Washington D.C., and Charleston S.C.*

*Let them know! A new app for mobile devices will let you tell the lawmakers in the House and Senate whenever you see evidence that the roads, bridges and transit systems you use are falling apart. The app, "I'm Stuck" is from infrastructure advocacy group, Building America's Future.*

*The Federal Dept. of Transportation is proposing to reduce trucker's paperwork to save the industry \$1.7 million a year. The paperwork deals with inspection reports required before and after every trip a commercial truck makes called Drivers Inspection Reports. The inspections on 4 million vehicles nationwide, covers 20 items to be checked, in case anything needs repair. Under the proposal, truckers would be required to file only reports that deal with defects, which are found in only 5% of inspections.*

*General Motors is reducing the sticker price of the Chevy Volt electric car by 13% as it tries to keep pace with rivals in the market for plug-in vehicles. On August 6<sup>th</sup>, G.M. said the 2014 Volt will start at \$34,995, including shipping, about \$5,000 less than the current model. Sales of electric vehicles are rising, but they are still only 0.2% of the U.S. auto market.*

*Another blow to us seniors! The compact disc players are being phased out by auto manufacturers, Cadillac, Telsa Model S, Kia Soul and the Chevy Spark have*

*discontinued them on the 2014 models. We can expect to see them disappear from more cars in the near future.*

*The follow state bills are not laws at this time. They have recently been introduced and are currently under consideration by the respective legislatures.*

*This information is only as of August 17<sup>th</sup> as I will be leaving the following week to attend the CHVA National Tour.*

## **ALABAMA**

*In early August, thirteen new eco-friendly buses began service. The busses will run on natural gas and are equipped with security cameras and wheelchair ramps. The Birmingham-Jefferson County Transit Authority estimates that the buses will save 10% on fuel.*

## **ARIZONA**

*Work began in the first part of August to repave a 16-mile stretch of Interstate 40 in both directions between Williams and Ash Fork. Some bridge work, guardrail replacement and pavement markings will also be done. The project will be completed by next spring.*

## **ARKANSAS**

*In addition to changing lanes when approaching police cars, firetrucks and ambulances, motorists will have to slow down or try to go around tow trucks and utility company vehicles. Legislators this year said motorists must exercise caution around vehicles with blue, red, yellow, white or green lights. The law became effective on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2013.*

## **CALIFORNIA**

*Red Light cameras may be on their way out in California. AB 62 by Assemblyman Nazarian has passed in the Assembly by a 72-1 vote and is now pending in the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee. The bill would require local governments using the red- light cameras to add an additional second to all yellow lights over the current legal minimum. It is based on recent violations and accidents. There are several court rulings against citations issued based on red-light cameras.*

*Red-light cameras in Sacramento and several other California cities are programmed to trigger only if sensors determine a vehicle is approaching the intersection above a certain speed, usually 15 mph. Law enforcement officers say almost all cars going less than 15 mph as they approach the red-light are going to stop. They set the cutoff speed at 15 mph so the camera isn't clicking away at every approaching car.*

*The U.S. Dept. of Transportation and the California Transportation Dept. have approved a plan that will allow the new span of the Oakland-San Francisco Bay Bridge for Labor Day. They have approved a temporary fix for the broken bolts and a permanent fix is expected to be completed by December 2013. The new span of the bridge has had several major problems during its 10 year construction.*

### **DELAWARE**

*State officials are taking public comment through August 31 st, on a proposed revision to the red-light camera program. Among other things, the revision clarifies the rules for challenging a violation notice, which carries a fine of \$112.50.*

### **D.C. WASHINGTON**

*Some D. C. neighborhood residents are required to obtain a permit to park on the street but will be able to apply for a free visitor parking pass that will be valid Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, through Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014.*

### **GEORGIA**

*Some 121 Georgia State Patrol troopers, Capital Police, and Motor Division Compliance officers are off the job as of August 15<sup>th</sup> until administrative glitches involving their certification can be worked out, authorities announced in the third week of August.*

*Some Good News! Companies in Savannah that provide horse-drawn carriage tours have expanded cleanup hours so that "equine waste technicians" are available whenever the carriages are operating.*

### **KENTUCKY**

*The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet has announced plans that it will assess "penalty points" against offenders convicted of texting while driving.*

## **MARYLAND**

*During the first week of August, city crews in Annapolis replaced nearly 300 coin operated parking meters with new credit card-swiping machines in the historic district. The new machines will also accept coins. The price to park is doubling to \$2 per hour.*

## **MISSISSIPPI**

*The Aldermen of Oxford are discussing a proposal to stiffen parking fines in the downtown area. The Northeast Daily Journal reports that officials are concerned that the current minimal fines will have little impact on thousands of extra drivers expected in town for the University of Mississippi athletic events. The proposal would raise first time fines from \$10 to \$50 on game days only.*

## **NEVADA**

*A new telephone area code will be added to the Las Vegas area in May 2014. All local calls within the 702 area (Las Vegas and Clark County) will need to be made dialing the area code. That's to accommodate the new 725 area code that will co-exist as an overlay throughout the region beginning next June. (Remember this when you are in Las Vegas next year trying to win your fortune).*

## **NEW JERSEY**

*Nearly 500,000 motorists in 18 towns are receiving notices about a \$4.2 million settlement over parking tickets generated by American Traffic Solution's red-light cameras. The minimum payment is \$8.50.*

*Gov. Christie has signed into law a bill that would crack down on motorists who stay in the left lane. The law raises the penalties for violating the keep-right law from \$50 and \$200 to between \$100 and \$300.*

## **NEW YORK**

*The state is sending 16,000 notices to tax payers who owe more than \$10,000, threatening to suspend their driver's licenses if they don't pay up. Officials expect to collect \$26 million this year.*

## **PENNSYLVANIA**

*State transportation officials are warning that 1,000 bridges in the state are getting additional weight restrictions in coming months as a consequence of declining funding for repairs. The new restrictions began in August.*

## **RHODE ISLAND**

*Residents unhappy with a new 10-cent toll on Rhode Island's Sakonnet River Bridge are vowing to protest. Portsmouth resident John Vitkevich said a protest event announced that a protest event was held on Sunday, August 18<sup>th</sup> at the bridge, which connects Portsmouth and Tiverton. The new toll began on Monday, August 19<sup>th</sup>.*

## **SOUTH CAROLINA**

*Effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, the Congaree National Park's visitor center will be closed on Sundays and Mondays due to budget cuts.*

*Plans are under way in Myrtle Beach to create a new regional transportation hub on the Grand Stand for buses, taxis and bicycles that can be used by residents and tourists. It would also help to ease traffic congestion in the area.*

## **TEXAS**

*In August, Gov. Perry called the Legislature back for a third special session to approve more money for roads, but the main sticking point centers on what is the most conservative way to fund them without raising taxes. The Texas Dept. of Transportation says it needs an extra \$4 billion a year just to maintain its road network.*

## **WASHINGTON**

*The Meridian School District may install cameras on buses that would operate like red-light cameras – read license plates and issue tickets to drivers who pass illegally.*

## **WYOMING**

*Wheres that at?? Phan Dinh Nguyen, who bought the unincorporated area 30 miles west of Cheyenne last year for \$900,000, plans to give Buford another identity, renaming it Buford PhinDeli Town. PhinDeli roughly translates to: "delicious filter coffee," and the new name reflects Nguyen's plans to sell Vietnamese coffee to travelers*

*along interstate 80, according to Amy Bates, of BuckinghamBates Global Marketing, who is representing Nguyen.*

## **WHAATS UP HERE AND THERE**

*A survey by Consumer Reports Magazine finds that carrying a bicycle on top of your vehicle lowers your mileage more than most drivers think. In the test, using a 2014 Honda Accord, cruising at 65 mph, the vehicle averaged 42 mpg, but with two bicycles attached to the roof, the mileage dropped to 27 mpg. An empty rack dropped the mileage to 37 mpg and an empty rack with a wind deflector reduced the mileage to 27 mpg.*

*Drinking and walking can be as deadly as drinking and driving according to a recent survey. New data on pedestrian fatalities show that a third of pedestrians killed in 2011 had blood-alcohol levels above the legal limit for driving. (Information from an article by the Associated Press.)*

*Warning!! The city of Hutchinson Kansas is considering an ordinance that would ban public nudity in the city. The law would not apply to anyone under 10 years old, a nude model or a breast-feeding mother. So, make sure that you have all your clothes on while in Hutchinson.*

*Larry Becker  
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