

# CONTEMPORARY HISTORICAL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION, Inc

## OLD CARS AND NEW LAWS

### PLUS WHATSUUP HERE AND THERE

*by Larry Becker*



*As the nation observes the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War, a Confederate heritage group is fighting for the right to place the Confederate flag on license plates in three new states – Florida, Kentucky and Texas. Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) based in Columbia, Tenn. already offers the Confederate-inspired tags in nine southern states: Alabama, Georgia, Maryland, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia. Critics, including the NAACP, contend that the Confederate emblem is a hurtful symbol and doesn't belong on state-*

*issued license plates. SCV members have gone to court, winning each time a state has tried to deny, recall or censor imagery on their Confederate plates. Federal courts have differed on how far the First Amendment goes in protecting an individual's vanity plates and a group's specialty plates. A crucial question with specialty plates is whether the plate is a form of private speech or government speech. There is much debate among legal experts whether the plates are covered by the First Amendment.*

*Take along some extra money for tolls!! Drivers will face higher tolls this year to pay for road maintenance and improvement projects that are being hampered by state budget short falls and declining gas tax revenues. Tolls increasing this year include the Pennsylvania Turnpike, bridges and tunnels in New York City and Virginia's Chesapeake Expressway. Four Delaware River Port Authority bridges will have toll increases in July, as will seven bridges in California. The increases range from just a few cents to \$4. The toll on the Chesapeake Expressway, on the way to the Outer Banks in North Carolina went up May 1<sup>st</sup> by \$1 and from \$2 to \$6 on weekends, May 1<sup>st</sup> through Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>. Tolls and fares on various bridges and toll roads are already scheduled to increase again in 2013.*

*Did you know that some cities and foreign countries have rules about how vehicle horns sound? New York City has decreed the NV200 taxi (model selected by the city to be used as taxis) must have "a low-annoyance horn." In addition, an interior light must flash when the horn button is pushed, in part to help police catch illegal honking. In South Korea and Japan, horns are required to be at least 93 decibels. Many automakers spend thousands of dollars trying to find the perfect horn. Many manufacturers do not want their horns to sound "wimpy" or too shrill or too loud.*

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

## ARKANSAS

The chief of Hot Spring's tourism office says higher gas prices may help draw more visitors to the resort city. Hot Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau director Steve

*Arrison says the price of gas will lead many families to stay closer to home this spring and summer.*

## **CALIFORNIA**

*On April 29<sup>th</sup>, the California State Auditor issued a report saying that The State Department of Transportation wastes money. The report stated that 6 out every 10 CalTrans projects are at least 10% over budget. CalTrans has not replied to the report at this time.*

*On April 30<sup>th</sup>, DMV announced that it will mail 85,000 letters to owners of hybrid vehicles, warning them that they will no longer be able to use carpool lanes as of July. Early adopters of hybrid vehicles received yellow stickers granting them special access to those lanes. Under legislation passed last year, the DMV will create a new sticker by 2012 for 40,000 vehicles that meet stricter emissions criteria than many current hybrids.*

*The DMV will likely stop sending registration renewal notices soon, but it still plans to make use of the postal system. One rumor is that when the new state budget is passed, there may be an increase in registration fees and that would require new notices to be issued with the new fees. On May 2<sup>nd</sup>, SB 94, a bill to delay DMV registration forms so the lawmakers can buy more time closing the state's budget was signed by the Governor on May 4th. Owners of 2.4 million vehicles with July registration deadlines and 2.5 million vehicles with August deadlines could be affected, according to DMV estimates. DMV, under SB 94, would be unable to accept payments on renewals with due dates beyond June.*

### **SB 28**

*This bill would require law enforcement agencies to put signs up within 200 feet of all intersections that have cameras alerting drivers of the cameras. Current law allows cities to put those signs at city limits. Also, camera locations must be picked for safety reasons, not revenue generation reasons. Agencies also must note on the citation how a driver can contact officers to discuss the ticket. The registered owner of the vehicle would not be required to pay the ticket if the photo shows someone else behind the wheel.*

*Another proposed bill would require DUI checkpoints only to be set up on roads that have a high rate of accidents due to alcohol use. The bill was recently introduced and not all the details are available at this time,*

*Tire stores in California are not regulated by any government agency. If they do mechanical work, they come under the authority of Bureau of Automotive Repairs but only for the mechanical work.*

## **CONNECTICUT**

*The Connecticut DMV said police have seized driver's licenses from more than 1,200 teenagers over the last three years for violating laws on passenger limits, curfews and other restrictions. The state adopted tougher laws in 2008 on 16 and 17 year-old drivers. Drivers can not use cellphones until age 18.*

## **DELAWARE**

*The Delaware River and Bay Authority has proposed raising tolls on the Delaware Memorial Bridge to avert a budget crisis. Tolls would go up by \$1 for passenger vehicles and by \$1 per axel for commercial trucks.*

*The office of Highway Safety says more than 2,500 drivers have been cited since the hands free cellphone law went into effect at the start of the year. Spokeswoman Alison Kirk, said more than 350 people were issued citations on April 21<sup>st</sup> during a statewide crackdown. She said there have been 30 crashes involving cellphones as a distraction.*

## **FLORIDA**

*The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission decided to prohibit motor vehicles, motorcycles, airboats, and campfires in parts of Broward and Palm Beach counties due to increased risk of fire. Water levels are extremely low throughout the Everglades. Vehicles still will be allowed access along several canal levees to access boat ramps used for fishing.*

*A three judge panel of the 2<sup>nd</sup> District Court of Appeals has declared unconstitutional a state law making it illegal to blast loud music or other audio from a car stereo system. The ruling, citing free speech issues, stems from two Pinellas County cases in which motorists were cited for playing their car radios too loud.*

*First-time drunk drivers may qualify for a reduced charge if they complete the Back on the Track program the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office will soon begin offering. It includes alcohol awareness classes, treatment and fines. Drivers are eligible only if the DUI didn't involve a wreck or another crime.*

## GEORGIA

*Gov. Deal has signed legislation that will allow Golf Carts on local streets beginning in January. Gov. Deal has signed legislation that creates a class of motor vehicles for Golf Carts. The law allows Golf Carts with some safety features capable of traveling up to 20 mph on the roads if local jurisdictions allow it.*

## HAWAII

*In an effort to improve visitor's first impressions of Waikiki, a major highway from Honolulu airport is undergoing beautification. The Honolulu Star Advertiser reports that the project is to plant palm trees and grass along Nimitz Highway. The \$1.2 million project will begin in June.*

*The state opened a new H-1 freeway on-ramp and an off-ramp on May 16<sup>th</sup> that is expected to remove traffic bottlenecks around some large shopping centers in Kapolei. The ramps are part of the Kapolei interchange complex. More new ramps are due to open in August.*

## IDAHO

*Felony prosecutions of drunk driving in Idaho increased 25% in 2010 from 2009, and are up 100% since 2006. A 2006 change in the law means a person convicted of two DUI's in the past 10 years faces a felony charge if caught a third time.*

*Idaho drivers still using studded snow tires after May 1<sup>st</sup>. face a \$62 fine. The allowable time to use the special tires started Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> and ended on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Neighbors Oregon and Washington extended studded tire season because of continued wintery weather, but the Idaho Transportation Department said it's sticking to the schedule.*

## ILLIONIS

*Drivers can go on line to dispute Illinois Tollway violations. The website lets drivers view their licenses images, select from two dispute options and file a challenge. The Tollway snaps photos of the license plate of toll jumpers. In a test in March 2011, nearly 900 people viewed the photos, which resulted in fewer than 40 disputes submitted online.*

## IOWA

*A rest area planned for Interstate 380 will feature works by Grant Wood and other Iowa artists. The \$2.2 million rest stop, to open in about a year, will showcase landscapes and icons by regional artists, including Wood's famous American Gothic in front of the building.*

*Iowa's scenic and heritage byways are getting new signage. The first of an estimated 1,000 have gone up along the highway between Ames and Boone. Signs will be installed along the state's nine other byways by mid-November.*

## KENTUCKY

*The Department of Parks will now allow pet owners to bring pets into state resort park lodge rooms that have been designated for pets by paying a \$25 fee. Each park will have a limited number of rooms available for pets, and an extra \$100 charge will apply if pets are taken into non-pet rooms.*

## LOUISIANA

*Baton Rouge metro Councilman Mike Walker wants the ramp meters at Interstate 12 entrances taken out of his district, if not completely removed from East Baton Rouge Parish, because he says they are causing traffic delays. The ramp meters are lights that alternate between red and green lights allowing one vehicle at a time to enter the Interstate.*

## MAINE

*New signs will be going up in coming weeks on coastal roads, alerting residents to evacuation routes in the event of a hurricane or severe storm. The round blue signs feature the words Emergency Evacuation Route and a directional arrow.*

*The 879-foot Franklin D. Roosevelt Bridge from Lubec to Campobello Island, New Brunswick is (shifting) moving. The state Dept. of Transportation bridge engineer John Buxton said he will work closely with his Canadian counterparts over the next year to determine the scope of repairs or replacement. The bridge opened in 1962.*

## MARYLAND

*The Howard County Council is considering a proposal to allow speed cameras in school zones. Drivers going faster than 12 mph over the speed limit would get a \$40 ticket. The program's initial cost would be \$1 million. Revenues are projected to be \$1.2 million if ticket issuing begins by Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>.*

*Two parking meters installed in Downtown Annapolis to collect spare change for the homeless have collected \$1,905 in the first three years. The mayor said the money supports the Light House shelter. However, Bevin Buchheister, president of the Ward One Residents Association, calls the meters "visual clutter" and wants them removed.*

## MASSACHUSETTS

*A bill to ban "the use and sale of any exhaust pipe that increases the sound emissions of any vehicle, including motorcycles" has been introduced in the Massachusetts Legislature. An identical bill was introduced in 2009 by the same sponsor and was set aside for study without committee consideration. The bill is opposed by SEMA.*

## MINNESOTA

*Gov. Dayton has outlined a plan to sink nearly \$400 million into improvements for state highways that will result in 10,000 jobs. Repairs include repaving and drainage, signal and lighting to stretches of roads including Interstate 35 and Highway 55, 62, 71 and 160.*

## MISSISSIPPI

*Voters in Tupelo have approved a five-year extension of the local Major Thoroughfare Program. A vote on May 3<sup>rd</sup> showed that 83% of the voters approved the renewal of the 20-year-old road improvement program for five years. City officials have said the property tax levy will bring in about \$4 million a year.*

## MISSOURI

*Transportation Department Director Kevin Keith is proposing to cut 1,200 staff positions, close 135 facilities and sell 740 pieces of equipment to save \$512 million through 2012. The Highways and Transportation Commission is expected to act on the proposal at a June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.*

## MONTANA

*The Montana Highway Patrol has installed a drop box at its Great Falls office so people can dispose of unwanted prescription drugs. It opened on March 30<sup>th</sup>. Patrol Capt. Kenton Hicketier said it's the state's first 24-hour drop box. The box is a through-the-wall slot leading to a locked safe.*

## NEBRASKA

*Entry fees for state parks rise next year to offset maintenance and upkeep costs. Lawmakers have overridden the Governors veto on the increases.*

## NEW JERSEY

*The Turnpike Authority is considering allowing a private vendor to take over toll operations starting this summer in a cost-saving move. As many as 800 toll-takers on the Turnpike and the Golden State parkway could be out of jobs if the state goes through with the plan.*

*Police have issued 1,838 tickets to teen drivers for failing to display red decals in the first year of the law that makes it easier to spot young motorists. Also, 3,309 tickets were issued to teens who have more passengers than the Graduated Driver's License law allows, and 2,810 tickets were written for drivers out after curfew.*

## NEW MEXICO

*The city of Las Cruces is easing up on plans to seize cars from people who fail to pay tickets issued through- red-light cameras. Mayor Ken Miyagishima said the worst penalty should be putting "boots" on the cars of top speed and red-light violators. The Sun-News reported about \$1.5 million is owed in unpaid tickets.*

## NEW YORK

*In early May, public hearings were held on the future of the Interstate 81 corridor. The State dept. of transportation and the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council said a nearly 1 ½-mile elevated stretch will need to be replaced in a few years.*

*The New York City Council unanimously approved a bill that increases penalties for taxi drivers who refuse to take passengers to their requested destination. Drivers will be fined \$350 to \$500 for a first offense. If they get caught within the next two years, they face a fine of \$1,000, double the current fine. A third offense calls for \$1,000 fine, plus license revocation.*

## **NORTH CAROLINA**

*Off-road vehicles are banned from the beaches from 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. through Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> to protect rare sea turtles that nest on the beach. Loggerheads, leatherback and green turtles typically lay eggs at night from May to September.*

## **OHIO**

*Fairfield county Sheriff Dave Phalen is asking deputies to spend more time on foot and slow down to save on gas. Officers are being told to park their patrol cars for 15 minutes out of every hour and to walk around and talk to residents and business owners. Phalen said golf carts will be used for some patrolling.*

*More than 60,000 people are eligible to take advantage of an amnesty discount to pay parking violations totaling about \$12 million due the city of Cincinnati. The program continuing through June offers a 50% discount on unpaid parking violations incurred before July 1<sup>st</sup>. The city council started the program and one for income taxes to address a \$54 million budget deficit.*

## **OKLAHOMA**

*A bill that would name a bridge over the Red River border after former president George W. Bush is heading to the Governor's desk.*

*A \$70 million bond issue for the Department of Transportation road and bridge construction program failed in Senate. It fell 25 votes short of the votes required.*

## **RHODE ISLAND**

*Providence Mayor Angel Taveras said parking enforcement will be stepped up in an effort to generate revenue. He said the city has been losing at least 35% of potential parking meter revenue due to lax enforcement. The city has not been issuing tickets on Saturday and Sunday's after 3 p.m. to avoid having to pay overtime to officers. (I guess that we will not be visiting his city any time soon).*

## SOUTH DAKOTA

*The City Council of Rapid City has set June 7<sup>th</sup> as the date for a public vote on tougher billboard restrictions. It is not clear whether this applies to billboards just in the city or ones along the nearby highways.*

## TENNESSEE

*Memphis Mayor A. C. Wharton is proposing to lease future on-street parking revenues to Gates Capitol Group in return for a one time payment of \$10 million to \$15 million upfront. An independent study projects that the city could increase annual revenues by \$869,000 by hiring four new enforcement officers to work nights and weekends.*

## VERMONT

*Lawmakers have signed a \$536 million transportation bill that includes money for interstate road paving, the state's contribution to a new Lake Champlain Bridge and money for deteriorating bridges.*

*Dozens of drunken-driving prosecutions in the state are threatened because of a mistake in the software on a breath analysis machine and whistleblower's complaints about unethical laboratory work. At issue, breath-tests using a DataMaster DMT machine at a state police barracks. A handful of license suspensions are being overturned.*

## WISCONSIN

*Gov. Walker wants Highway 41 between Milwaukee and Green Bay to be upgraded to an Interstate. The State Dept. of transportation would spend the next years improving the 142-mile highway segment. It would cost \$15 million to \$20 million to make improvements.*

## WEST VIRGINIA

*The city of Fairmont has approved a \$2-a-week fee for non-residents working in the city limits, to help pay for street paving. Nearly 4,300 non-residents work in the city. The ordinance includes a separate \$2-a-week street maintenance fee that residents will have to pay. Combined, the two fees are expected to generate \$1.1 for paving.*

## WYOMING

*The National Park Service is proposing allowing from 110 to 330 snowmobiles a day in Yellowstone National park. Some days, it would allow more snowmobiles, and other days it would allow fewer so long as they do not exceed 330. Based on Yellowstone's winter season, the park could average 254 snowmobiles a day. A decision is likely this year.*

# WHAATSUUP HERE AND THERE

*Larry Ballanger of Chattanooga Tennessee, who was arrested after tooting his horn at a police officer at a traffic signal last year, filed a \$2 million federal lawsuit, claiming false arrest. Ballanger was cited for violating the noise ordinance and obstructing traffic. When he wouldn't sign the citation, he said he was arrested for disorderly conduct. The citations were dismissed.*

*According to a recent USA Today newspaper survey, the four cities with the most expensive hotel rooms are" #1 - New York, #2 - Honolulu, #3 - Boston and # 4 - Santa Barbara, California.*

*Many auto manufacturers are now adding strings of small light-emitting-diodes - LEDS - next to the headlights on lower priced new vehicles, even entry level vehicles at no extra cost.*

*The city of Clair Shores Michigan is considering a \$6 million project to encourage boaters to use the Nautical Mile area. The plan would convert a beach along Lake St. Clair into wetlands and add a swimming pool to the area.\The beach has been closed in the past due to pollution. The plan also includes boat slips for visitors, a recreation center and a new hotel.*

*Across the country, the problem of catalytic theft is on the rise again, as the price of platinum, rhodium and palladium - the metals found inside them - rises. Thieves are using portable power saws to remove the converters in*

*minutes, police say. The converters cost \$1200 to \$2,000 to replace them, says Police Lt. Paul Doroshov of the Davis California Police department.*

*Colorado State University students will re-engineer a Chevy Malibu into a hybrid electric or fuel-cell vehicle in a three year project sponsored by General Motors and the U.S. Dept. of Energy. The object of the EcoCar 2 program is to reduce the car's environmental impact without compromising performance, safety and consumer appeal.*

*A boxy minivan made by Nissan will be the icon yellow cab in New York City according to the mayor. The model, selected from among three finalists, is designed so it could eventually be updated with an electric engine. The city is exploring the possibility of replacing the city's entire fleet of more than 13,000 taxis with vehicles powered by electricity.*

*Save those cans and bottles when you are in Oregon! The Oregon house has voted 47-12 to expand the bottle deposit to cover energy drinks, tea bottles and other containers. Lawmakers have agreed to make the system apply to any glass, metal or plastic beverage container except for those that hold milk, wine or liquor.*

*Larry Becker - May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2011*



