Regional News

May 29, 2012

Virginia Lockman, formerly of the Minnesota DMV and member of AAMVA’s FR Committee is very ill. Her struggle with thyroid cancer is intensifying and she moved to Hospice Care this week. Virginia would appreciate hearing from her old friends. Messages can be sent through her Caring Bridge webpage http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/jinnylockman. Our thoughts and prayers are with you Virginia.

Congratulations to Montana’s Driver Control Supervisor Vickie Zincke who was recently honored as a nominee for the Interagency Committee for Change by Women Excellence in Leadership Awards. Vickie was one of three nominees in state government. Each year the ELA recognize people in those three categories who have outstanding leadership qualities, who recognize the value of women in the workplace, and who actively encourage women to move forward. Vickie has worked for the MVD since 2004. Way to go Vickie!!

In the category of what was he thinking . . . A trooper clocked a 28-year-old man in upstate New York driving 193 mph. This happened on the same stretch of road where another motorcyclist was spotted doing 166 mph earlier this month. The trooper alerted nearby patrols and the man was eventually stopped. He was apparently headed to a hospital to visit a patient. He was issued 14 traffic tickets, including one for speeding.

Region I News

Delaware DMV Honored for Security Efforts
Delaware became the ninth state to be recognized for its efforts to implement more secure driver’s licenses and photo IDs in the fight against identity theft. The Coalition for a Secure Driver’s License presented the DMV with its “Identity Security Award.” The award is presented to states that have taken measures to make their driver’s licenses more secure to promote identity and homeland security. The DMV staff was praised for the hard work they put into implementing not only more secure licenses, but more secure procedures for issuing those licenses and IDs, starting at 2008. DMV Director Jennifer Cohan described how Chief of Driver Services Scott Vien stayed at the office for days at a time, even setting up a cot to sleep in his office. Cohan says that Delaware is the only state that is not only compliant with the Federal Real ID Act (passed following 9/11), but also still issues licenses over the counter. Read the full story in WGMD.com. http://www.wgmd.com/?p=58524

Senate Passes Ritchie Motorcycle Safety Bill
Posted By Contributor On June 1, 2012 @ 7:57 am In Community | No Comments
State Senator Patty Ritchie has announced her bill that would improve motorcycle safety by including awareness training in the DMV's mandatory, pre-licensing courses has passed unanimously in the Senate.

“This is just one more step towards making our highways safer for both motorcyclists and those traveling on four wheels,” said Senator Ritchie. “By teaching people how to properly share the road, we can cut down on accidents and help save lives.”

The measure, S.7138, was prompted by a recent uptick in motorcycle related accidents in our region, including accidents that claimed the lives of four motorcyclists already in Oswego this year—more than any full year since 2008.

According to the most recent data from the New York State DMV, there were 152 fatalities from 5,150 motorcycle accidents in 2009.

The bipartisan bill, cosponsored by Senator Kevin Parker of Brooklyn, amends Vehicle and Traffic Law to create a motorcycle safety and awareness component to the required five-hour driving course. Specific requirements would be set by the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles.

In recent years, more New Yorkers are choosing to get around on motorcycles. In Oswego, Jefferson and St. Lawrence Counties, the number of registered motorcycles increased 16 percent from 2007 to 2010, to 13,500 on the road.

Jefferson County saw the largest percentage increase during that time period (27 percent), while Oswego had the highest number of registered bikes (5,017).

The bill has strong support from motorcycle groups and enthusiasts in New York State, including New York Rider Magazine.

"Charlotte's Law" Would Take Away New York State Driver's Licenses After 3 Strikes

Drivers in New York can, and do, get away with murder. But if something called Charlotte's Law makes it through Albany, it could soon become harder to be a serial car killer. If the bill goes through, New York would be home to one of the toughest road safety laws in the union.

Basically Charlotte's Law is a "three strikes" rule that would permanently terminate licenses of New York drivers who habitually break the law in life threatening ways. Charlotte's Law gets its name from Charlotte Gallo, a Schenectady woman who was killed in January 2010 by a driver who, according to the Times Union, had 23 prior traffic citations and had been involved in 10 crashes. He walked away from the Gallo's death with a $100 fine for failure to yield and a one-year license revocation. Things would have been different if Charlotte's Law were on the books. It "would permanently take away the licenses of those convicted of any of these offenses three or more times in 25 years: DUI or DWI; a violation of VTL 1146, which includes the state’s vulnerable user laws; or vehicular manslaughter." Read the full story in the Gothamist.

http://gothamist.com/2012/05/30/charlottes_law_would_take_away_nys.php

Lawmakers Seek Tougher Laws for Wrong-Way Driving (New York)

Legislation to help combat wrong-way driving incidents recently moved forward in the Senate’s Transportation Committee. But the bill has previously failed to pass in the Assembly. The bill would DOT to create a program to address wrong-way driving, which was highlighted by a string of deadly accidents that have occurred in recent years. The Senate passed a bill in January that would create felony charges for people who drive the wrong way.
either knowingly or while intoxicated. An Assembly bill to do the same has several sponsors, but is stuck in committee. The proposal would investigate causes for wrong-way driving crashes, examine what other states have done to combat the issue and suggest and implement possible solutions. The committee also approved legislation that would allow drivers in the state to list two emergency contacts on a "next of kin registry" for emergency responders to contact in case of an accident. Read the full story in the Democrat and Chronicle. Read the full story in the Democrat and Chronicle.

Former DMV Worker Pleads Guilty to Felony Embezzlement and Forgery Charges (Vermont)

A former DMV worker was given a suspended and deferred sentence for his role in a scheme that involved what a prosecutor described as "international gangsters."

Marvin C. Bourn, 53, pleaded guilty to a felony count of embezzlement, four felony counts of authoring a forged vehicle title, and one misdemeanor count of making false statements on a vehicle title. According to an affidavit by DMV Investigator Mary McIntyre, in October 2011 she began investigation the DMV office in Bennington because a number of registration and title applications from there had incomplete, inaccurate, or missing information. One involved information from a Bennington inspection station that does not exist.

McIntyre said the paperwork involved four vehicles, all from New York: A 2004 Acura, 2001 Volkswagen Beetle, 2007 Acura, and a 2004 Audi. She said she sent civil tickets to each owner to see if one could tell her who authored each one’s paperwork. She said she was eventually contacted by Vladimir Kravchenya, 29, owner of the 2004 Audi.

He said he tried to register his car in New York, but had difficulty, and so went through a man he knew as "Venny," who could do it in Vermont where the process is easier. He said he gave Venny $842 for the registration and $642 for the "Vermont tax," plus $200 for Venny’s fee. They never met in person, money and paper changing hands by being left in a car.

McIntyre said Bourn was interviewed about the four questionable titles he processed and was able to identify Venny as Veniamin Skorobogach, 19, of Frankfort, N.Y.

McIntyre wrote that she confronted Bourn with her suspicion that Skorobogach was scamming people by inflating the cost of what it took to get a Vermont registration and that she believed Bourn was getting a cut. Bourn said he was given $10 once, and then one time Skorobogach left $5. He said he tried to slip him more, but he always refused.

Bourn’s attorney, Stephen Saltonstall, said some of that money went to an office pool used for coffee and doughnuts. He said Bourn felt threatened by Skorobogach and was being used as a "patsy."

Deputy State’s Attorney Robert Plunkett agreed that Bourn’s role in the scheme was the least of it. He said Skorobogach, after being contacted by police, went to Ukraine, but has since returned.
An arrest warrant has been issued for him.


### Region II News

**New Kentucky Law Toughens Penalties for Driving Without Insurance**

Starting June 1st, Kentucky motorists who don't carry insurance risk losing their car registration. Registered owners of personal vehicles shown to have been without insurance more than 60 days will receive notices in the mail. The owners will then have 30 days to obtain coverage or show proof of existing insurance before their registration is canceled. The new enforcement effort is aimed at those who skirt Kentucky’s mandatory insurance law. This law is aimed at people who are driving uninsured and they know they are driving uninsured. They typically will obtain a policy just long enough to get a vehicle registered and then they would go and cancel it. Each month, insurance companies will submit to the state the vehicle identification numbers of the vehicles their policies insure. A database compares the VINS with those of vehicles registered to Kentucky owners. The initiative has been test-piloted in eight counties within the past few years, and based on those results, the state estimates around 30-thousand un-insured notices will be issued each month. Read the full story in WKYU Public Radio.


### Unpaid Fines Could Cost Thousands Their Licenses (Tennessee)

The impact of a law that gives Tennessee court clerks a powerful tool for collecting unpaid court costs will soon be felt when thousands of people begin losing their driver's licenses. The law says defendants have a year to pay all court costs in misdemeanor and felony cases or the Department of Safety will automatically revoke their licenses. It took effect last July, and the one-year grace period to pay is beginning to come to an end for some defendants. Court clerks will provide information to the state about who hasn't paid their fines. There's almost $1 billion statewide in unpaid fines and court costs. Read the full story in the Tennessean.


**Ignition Interlock Required After First DUI Conviction; New Law Takes Effect July 1**

*Read the DMV press release.*

https://secure2.sglc.com/DMSImage/16820120531063236949/0.htm

### Region III News

**U.S. Department of Transportation Shuts Down 26 Bus Operations, Including Three in Indiana, in Unprecedented Sweep**

The U.S. DOT’s FMCSA has shut down 26 bus operations, declaring them imminent hazards to public safety. This action is the largest single safety crackdown in the agency’s history. Additionally, FMCSA ordered 10 individual bus company owners, managers and employees to cease all passenger transportation operations, which includes selling bus tickets to passengers. The bus companies transported over 1,800 passengers a day along Interstate-95, from
New York to Florida. Following a year-long investigation, FMCSA shut down three primary companies - Apex Bus, Inc., I-95 Coach, Inc. and New Century Travel, Inc. – that oversaw a broad network of other bus companies. The 26 shutdown orders apply to one ticket seller, nine active bus companies, 13 companies already ordered out of service that were continuing to operate and three companies attempting to apply for operating authority. In addition to Indiana, the various companies are based out of Georgia, Maryland, New York, North Carolina and Pennsylvania. Federal safety investigators found all of the carriers had multiple safety violations, including a continuous pattern of using drivers without valid CDLs and failure to have alcohol and drug testing programs. In addition, the companies operated vehicles that had not been regularly inspected and repaired. The companies’ drivers also had serious hours-of-service and driver qualification violations.

In addition to the Imminent Hazard Orders, FMCSA is taking further steps to ensure the bus companies they shut down cannot continue to operate under other names. Under a new FMCSA rule, FMCSA has revoked the carriers’ operating authority and linked the active companies to other companies previously placed out of service. This new rule, expands FMCSA’s authority to take action against unsafe motor carriers that attempt to evade enforcement by “reincarnating” into other forms or by illegally continuing their operations through affiliate companies. FMCSA will continue to work closely with local, state and federal law enforcement officials to ensure these companies remain out of service.

FMCSA began investigating the network of carriers operating along I-95 following a series of deadly bus crashes last spring. FMCSA ordered several bus companies to shut down last summer after a comprehensive compliance review of their operations. The investigation of those operators uncovered additional problems and serious safety violations with other I-95 carriers, and FMCSA investigators have been working diligently ever since to establish the links between the bus networks.

Over the last several years, the DOT has taken aggressive efforts to strengthen motorcoach safety and enforcement. The DOT has doubled the number of bus inspections of the nation’s estimated 4,000 passenger bus companies -- from 12,991 in 2005 to 28,982 in 2011. Staying committed to the Motorcoach Safety Action Plan, in January 2010 FMCSA banned texting by commercial drivers, and in November 2011 the agency prohibited commercial drivers from reaching for, holding or dialing a cell phone while operating a commercial motor vehicle (CMV). Earlier this year, FMCSA also released the SaferBus mobile app to give travelers a quick way to view a bus company’s safety record before buying an interstate ticket or booking group travel.

Earlier this month, FMCSA and its state and local law enforcement partners conducted safety inspections of motorcoaches, tour buses, school buses and other commercial passenger buses in 13 states and the District of Columbia. This effort resulted in over 2,200 safety inspections and the successful removal of 116 CMV drivers and 169 buses from the roadway for substantial safety violations.

Congress is also currently considering surface transportation legislation which, if passed, would adopt several new safety policy proposals to further protect bus customers, including:

- Granting FMCSA greater authority to pursue enforcement action against unsafe “reincarnated” companies by establishing a single national standard for successor liability that eliminates the loophole allowing bus and truck companies that have been shut down for unsafe operations to recreate themselves;
- Eliminating the jurisdictional gap that prevents FMCSA from directly regulating passenger carrier brokers, including ticket sellers that are not also motor carriers;
• Enhancing FMCSA and its state partners' authority to inspect buses at locations with adequate food, shelter and sanitation facilities for passengers; 
• Requiring new passenger carriers to undergo a full safety audit before receiving operating authority; and 
• Raising the penalty from $2,200 to $25,000 a day against passenger carriers that attempt to operate without valid USDOT operating authority.

Consumers are also encouraged to report any unsafe bus company, vehicle or driver to the FMCSA through a toll-free hotline 1-888-DOT-SAFT (1-888-368-7238) or FMCSA's online National Consumer Complaint Database.

**Despite New Statewide Texting Ban, Ohio Cities Creating Stricter Bans of Their Own**

As a bill banning texting behind the wheel awaits Gov. John Kasich's signature, some Northeast Ohio cities are proposing even more stringent restrictions on electronic devices of their own. In Beachwood, the City Council introduced an ordinance that would ban not just texting, but all cell phone use while driving. House Bill 99, which will become state law in the next few months, will make texting while driving a secondary offense for adults and all electronic device usage for minors a primary offense, with the exception of GPS. This means that adults can only be ticketed for texting if they are pulled over for different traffic violation. Minors can be pulled over for any use of an electronic device. The new law will give local ordinances precedence if their penalties are more severe. Brooklyn, which has had a cell phone ban since 1999, has seen a decrease in cell phone violations in the last three years. Read the full story at Cleveland.com.
http://www.cleveland.com/open/index.ssf/2012/05/despite_new_statewide_texting.html

**Ohio State Highway Patrol Launches Program To Keep Pedestrians Safe**

The Ohio State Highway Patrol is launching a new program to keep pedestrians safe. OSHP is partnering with the Englefield Oil Company and Duchess Shoppes to give out neon green bags when people shop at convenience stores. The bags are easier for drivers to see if people are holding them while crossing the street, OSHP officials said. The yellow bags just don't show up as well. The neon green -- not just green but neon green -- are going to stand out from quite a distance. Partners are hoping that in return, people will be seeing them sooner than too late. The bags are being distributed at stores statewide between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Read the full story at 10TV.com.
http://www.10tv.com/content/stories/2012/05/25/reynoldsburg-ohio-state-highway-patrol-launches-new-program-to-keep-pedestrians-safe.html

**Region IV News**

**Speeders Could Lose Vehicles (Alberta)**

The president of the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police says allowing officers to seize the vehicles of people who drive at extreme speeds would save lives and reduce injuries. British Columbia and Ontario both have such laws that have cut down on excessive speeding. Alberta Transportation Minister Ric McIver has said the government will review giving police the authority to make immediate vehicle seizures, but hasn't made a decision yet. McIver is expected to make recommendations to Premier Alison Redford by the end of next month to improve safety on Highway 63. The association, which represents all police services in Alberta including the RCMP, may also draft a new resolution on the issue this fall for presentation to the government.

Their 2009 motion called on Alberta's solicitor general to allow on-the-spot seizure of vehicles belonging to drivers caught speeding more than 50 km/h over the limit, and impounding them for seven days. The government turned it down.
At the time the chiefs wrote that police were continually ticketing people for excessive speeding and the change was needed in the interest of public safety.

A similar policy brought in by British Columbia in 2010 for people caught driving more than 40 km/h over the speed limit has resulted in 10,387 vehicles being seized and temporarily impounded. Within one year, the number of fatal and injury-related crashes related to speeding was cut in half to 105 compared to the previous five-year average, according to the B.C. Ministry of Justice.

Knecht said such results can't be ignored.

"I certainly support it and I know a lot of my colleagues would as well."

Read the full story in the Leader Post.

Governor orders audit of specialty plate program

By Hannah Dreier (AP) – The San Francisco Chronicle

Gov. Jerry Brown on Tuesday ordered an audit of California's specialty license plate program after a review by The Associated Press found there was little oversight of the $250 million raised in the 20 years since the Legislature authorized it. The administration asked its Department of Finance to undertake the review, said Elizabeth Ashford, a spokeswoman for the governor. She said the governor had no immediate plans to return $3 million taken by Brown and former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger from a fund involving a memorial plate created in honor of the victims of the 2001 terror attacks. The money helped close the budget deficit.

http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/n/a/2012/05/29/state/n110711D34.DTL&type=printable

Lawmakers to amend specialty license plate bills

By Hannah Dreier (AP) - The Monterey County Herald

California lawmakers trying to establish new specialty license plates this year said Wednesday they are moving quickly to amend their bills and enact safeguards to ensure the money is spent as promised after an Associated Press investigation raised questions about oversight of the program. Several lawmakers said they are changing their bills to include regular audits as a way to assure the public that the extra fees drivers pay for the specialty plates are going to the right place. Some also are calling for ongoing oversight of all the specialty license plate funds and say the state should return the millions it has borrowed from one of them. A key lawmaker leading a transportation committee said he plans to hold legislative hearings to examine the program.


Assembly passes “vintage” license plate bill (Calif.)

http://blog.sfgate.com/stew/2012/05/31/assembly-passes-vintage-license-plate-bill/

The California State Senate unanimously passed a bill Thursday that its backers say would protect the rights of drivers by regulating red-light cameras.

The bill by state Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, would establish statewide standards for the installation and operation of traffic enforcement cameras and make it easier to challenge tickets.

"This bill is designed to establish some ground rules around the use of red-light cameras, and make sure that drivers' rights are protected," Simitian said in a statement. "We want to be sure that if drivers get a ticket that they shouldn't have, they have a way to contest the ticket that's relatively quick and convenient."
Senate Bill 1303 proposes to protect drivers' rights by:

* Requiring that camera locations be chosen because of safety considerations, not on their potential to generate revenue.

* Requiring cities and counties to follow state standards in the placement and operation of cameras.
  • Requiring adequate signs to notify drivers when red-light cameras are in use.

* Prohibiting so-called "snitch tickets."

* Making it easier for a wrongfully ticketed driver to get a ticket cleared.

"I don't oppose red-light cameras per se. But I believe that traffic tickets should only be issued to improve public safety, not to raise revenue," said Simitian, adding that his constituents frequently express concerns about the devices.

Simitian tried to pass a similar bill last year, but it was vetoed by Gov. Jerry Brown. In his veto message, Brown said establishing standardized rules for red-light cameras "can and should be overseen by local elected officials."

The bill was a product of Simitian's "There Oughta Be a Law" contest. San Jose resident Vera Gill proposed the law after receiving multiple tickets from red-light cameras for a car in Southern California that she does not own and has never driven, according to the senator's office.

Read the full story in Mercury News.

Other Items of Interest

Based on a review of applications for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 Commercial Driver's License Program Improvement grant, FMCSA anticipates that an additional $6M will be available if all recommended projects are awarded. As a result, FMCSA has posted a supplemental grant notice of funding availability (NOFA) for FY 2012.

These applications are due July 2, 2012.

The priorities for this supplemental NOFA are:

1. **Compliance with the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986 (CMVSA) and its amending legislation, including the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999 (MCSIA) and SAFETEA-LU.** Priority funding will go to those projects which are aligned to this national priority and which will bring a State into substantial compliance with 49 CFR Parts 383 and 384. State with Overdue Findings from previous compliance reviews will receive priority consideration.

Secondary to priority 1 above, FMCSA will also consider applications from States and non-State entities for:

2. **Changes and programming necessary to comply with the Commercial Driver's License Testing and Commercial Lerner’s Permit Standards rule (CLP Rule) published by FMCSA on May 9, 2011.**
3. Projects that will assist the States in performing functionality in the CDLIS State Procedures Manual (version 5.2) known as "CD-31"; and assist the SDLA in making the necessary changes and upgrades to correct the deficiencies discovered while performing CD-31, including fixing broken and missing pointers.

4. Projects that will assist the State implement the military CDL testing exemption and practices that assist the ease of issuance of a CDL to military personnel.

5. Projects that will assist the State prevent and/or detect fraudulent activities in CDL licensing procedures.

Attached is the notice document. The announcement can be found at the link below or by searching for CFDA #20.232 at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov):

http://www.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=cx9SP1df3i2yCsLVyySISKHlvy0G6LdHh0jpzWpZ0y1QQ7Y1zQkgI-1021879135?oppId=118873&mode=VIEW

If you have any questions, please contact cdlgrants@dot.gov.

DMV introduces new electronic insurance system

DMV center gets test drive
[http://www.rep-am.com/articles/2012/05/30/news/local/645289.txt](http://www.rep-am.com/articles/2012/05/30/news/local/645289.txt)

Feds order shutdown of Texas trucking firm

Do you have three names? Not in New Jersey

(U.S.) Cameras catch more than 2.3 million drivers running red lights in 2011
More than 2.3 million drivers in 18 states ran a red light in 2011, according to the first-ever "Safer Roads Report 2012: Trends in Red-Light Running" from the National Coalition for Safer Roads.

And the most dangerous holiday for red light running is Memorial Day with 26,787 red-light running violations in 2011 — a more than 27 percent increase in violations than the average weekend.

"It's the most dangerous weekend," David Kelly, the coalition's president and a former acting administrator for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, told USA Today.

Kelly said it may have to do with the heavy congestion that comes from trying to get to a holiday destination. "So you see people sitting at a light and they may have to wait for a cycle and they don't want to wait for a second cycle," Kelly told USA Today. "So they go."
The National Coalition for Safer Roads, an organization that promotes the use of cameras to photograph and fine red light violations, released a press release on Friday that included highlights from the report:

Christmas Day had the lowest number of red-light running violations in 2011, with 3,859 total — nearly 40 percent less than the average daily violation total.

Friday proved to be the worst day for intersection safety in 2011 — red light cameras caught 378,122 total red-light running violations — while Sunday saw the fewest violations, with 289,603 total.

Drivers most frequently ran red lights in the afternoon, with 30.7 percent (719,702) of all red-light running violations in 2011 occurring from 1 p.m. - 5 p.m.

The report said the data was gathered from red-light "safety" cameras in 142 areas in 18 states. The cameras recorded 2,341,761 red light violations, but this is not even the total amount of run lights in those states. This is just a sampling that can show, like a survey, when red lights are run the most.

And the data shows, as the report warned, "there is no time on the road when you are not at risk of encountering a red-light violator."

A 2005 ABC News story looked at red light cameras and found intersections that used the cameras saw a "40 percent decrease in violations on average."

On the other hand, the story also said a study by the Texas Transportation Institute concluded "that extending a yellow light by 1.5 seconds would decrease red-light-running by at least 50 percent."

Kelly told USA Today the best way to end the accidents caused by red light running is to change intersections to roundabouts, because nobody can run a roundabout.

Read the full story in Deseret News.