**AAMVA Regional News**

**June 29, 2012**

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**Tidbits**

Charlotte Palmer, who has headed up the Illinois SOS CDL Section and the Help Desk ever since CDL started, is retiring. She has over 44 years of service to this Office and will be missed by all, both personally and professionally. James (Jim) Nelson, a former facility manager, has been appointed to her position.

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**Region I News**

**Register Your Car and Get Tested for HIV: Innovative Program at D.C. DMV Yields Big Results**

As a line of people snaked out the door of the Penn Branch DMV in Southeast D.C. yesterday morning, Stephanie, a slight woman with a gentle voice, took advantage of her captive audience to make what would otherwise be a strange pitch in a government office—get a free HIV test, she offered, and you can receive a $7 credit towards your DMV services. Not everyone took her up on the offer, but others were handed a red number card and told to wait for one of two testers to call them into a private room. The testing, which has gone on at the Penn Branch DMV since October 2010, is a first-of-its-kind attempt in the nation to bring HIV testing directly to D.C. residents. Since it started, some 8,000 people have taken the test—double what was originally expected. Last month alone, 600 people accepted Stephanie's pitch. As D.C. battles an HIV/AIDS epidemic that rivals some African countries, testing is only one front—but it's also one without which more substantial gains cannot be made. The test is quick and painless—an oral swab yields results within 20 minutes. If a resident comes up positive—of those 8,000 tested, less than one percent have—they are offered the chance to go directly to FMCS offices for counseling, medical services and a full diagnostic exam. [Read the full story at DCIST.com](http://www.districtcouncil.org).  

**New Hampshire Sees Spike in Motorcycle Deaths**

Motorcycles are everywhere in New Hampshire, and so are motorcycle accidents. The season for motorcycles is just beginning, but there already have been 10 motorcycle fatalities in the state this year. Last year, there were just 14 motorcycle fatalities. The state tries to keep motorcyclists safe with roadside messages to the public to watch out for motorcycles. New Hampshire has no law requiring motorcyclists to wear helmets, which may contribute to some accidents. The state also is trying to train motorcyclists how to reduce their risks. [Read the full story in the Eagle Tribune](http://www.eagletribune.com).  

**Tougher Driver Cell Phone Law Headed To Christie (New Jersey)**

The New Jersey Senate has given final approval to a measure making it easier to convict drivers of vehicular homicide or assault by auto when they kill or injure someone while using a cell phone. Lawmakers voted 37-0 for the bill. It now heads to Gov. Chris Christie's desk. The bill classifies the illegal use of a hand-held cell phone as driving recklessly, 1 of the factors in finding a person guilty of vehicular homicide or assault by auto. Lawmakers say it’s currently difficult to hold drivers criminally accountable when they kill or injure someone while using a cell phone. The Assembly voted 79-0 for the measure last week. [Read the full story at My Fox NY](http://www.mystacymd.com).
Pennsylvania Decorated Vets May Get Special Car Plates
A bill on its way to Gov. Corbett would allow certain decorated Pennsylvania veterans to tout their military medals on special license plates. The state Senate unanimously approved the legislation on Wednesday. The bill would allow special plates for each of certain military medals: the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, the Bronze Star for Valor, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Navy Cross and the Air Force Cross. If the governor signs the bill, veterans who want the plates will be required to document their medal and pay a fee of at least $10 in addition to the annual vehicle registration fee. Read the full story in Centre Daily.

Region II News

Disabled Parking Permit Requirements to Change (Florida)
Effective October 1, any person issued a blue permanent disabled parking permit must renew the permit every four years and, when doing so, provide a certificate of disability completed and signed by a certifying authority within the last 12 months. That means every blue disabled parking permit holder will, at least every four years and within 12 months of the date of their renewal, fill out Form HSMV 83039. Permit holders will not have to pay a renewal fee. In addition, effective July 1, for lost or stolen blue permanent disabled parking permit, a replacement will only be issued if you submit the same documentation required for renewals. The new law does not affect red temporary disabled parking permits, nor people who have disabled (wheelchair) license plates. Under current Florida law, blue disabled parking permit holders must renew their parking permits every four years, but they do not have to submit certificates of disability when renewing. They can renew online, by mail or by visiting a Tax Collector’s office. The legislation also directs DHSMV to collect calls reporting abuse of the permits. Illegally obtaining or using a permit can result in the loss of the parking permit and carries the potential for criminal penalties. Read the DHSMV press release.

Motorcycle Wrecks in Kentucky Increase By 52% In 2012
Motorcycle wrecks are up 52% in 2012 compared to last year. In 2012, there have been more than 800 motorcycle crashes. For the fifth year, Kentucky State Police have hosted "Motorcycle Safety Day" to remind riders about wearing their safety gear all of the time. Police and the riders in attendance believe this type of training and safety reminders will help to keep motorcyclists safe when they take on the road. At the event, police also handed out Rider Alert cards. Motorcycle riders can share their emergency contact and medical information on it. Police say this can be helpful for emergency crews when there is an accident. The riders also had the option of putting a Rider Alert sticker on their helmets. The stickers are designed to remind people not to remove a riders helmet after being involved in a collision. The state passed a new motorcycle rider test this year. Read the full story at WKYT.com.

Electronic Proof of Car Insurance Authorized (Louisiana)
As of August 1, drivers will be able to show proof of insurance electronically on cell phones or other devices if their insurers send the data that way. The new law (HB 1130) allows a driver to receive and use the electronic insurance data as well as the traditional insurance card as proof of auto liability insurance. The bill defines a “mobile electronic device” as any "small, hand-held computing or communications device that has a display screen with touch input or a miniature keyboard." The legislation, which flew through the Legislature with no votes against it, says that displaying proof of insurance on an electronic device does not allow a police officer to have access to "any other part" of the device while checking for insurance coverage. The bill also says that paper copies, including the
insurance card or a copy of it, can still be used as proof of insurance. It says a court or Office of Motor Vehicle officials may require the paper cards to be produced. Read the full story at NOLA.com.

**Sun Sets On State Specialty Tags (North Carolina)**

The days of the black bear are numbered. At least the ones that live on the Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park specialty license plates. In the ongoing struggle over the merits of a safety issue, the full-color license plates, which raise non-tax dollars for the Friends of the Smokies and some 40 other nonprofits across the state, now seem doomed. While the N.C. House unanimously passed a bill, HB 1035, in early June to allow the full-color plates to continue, the Senate will not take up the bill, therefore halting its passage to the governor’s office. “The Highway Patrol and the DMV are not signing off on that bill. It does not meet the requirement that sufficiently allow them to read the tags,” Sen. Tom Apodaca said. The N.C. General Assembly in 2011 adopted legislation, HB 289, which mandated all specialty license plates conform to a standard design featuring the white “First in Flight” background starting July 1, 2015, known as the “sunset clause,” to increase their readability for law enforcement and by toll-road cameras. A readability study was commissioned by the General Assembly last year. The study, released in April, recommended the state “continue to issue the full-color background special license plates in the new standardized format.” The increase in the number of full-color specialty plates — there are now about 40 — has made the job of law enforcement across the state more difficult. Read the full story in the Citizen-Times.

**New Technology Could Speed Driver’s License Renewal (Tennessee)**

Renewing or replacing your driver’s license could get a lot faster and will certainly be a lot cooler thanks to one of the most popular gadgets in recent memory. The Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security has put six dozen iPads into action at driver service centers across the state. Customers who visit specified driver service centers to simply renew or replace a lost driver license may use a special application installed on the iPads to quickly complete and pay for the transaction using a credit or debit card. The customer should get the new driver license within minutes of the transaction. You can also change your address and process license reinstatement fees on the iPads. And the state plans to expand the program to eventually allow prospective drivers to schedule their road tests. The state says it paid about $79,000 for the iPads, but they are replacing equipment that had reached the end of its life. These self-service iPad stations will cut down on the number of customers waiting for service from a driver license examiner and will help reduce the overall wait time for all customers. Read the full story at WMCTV.co.

**TxDMV Board Selects Whitney Brewster as New Executive Director**

The Texas DMV Board has announced the selection of Whitney Brewster as the agency’s new executive director. Brewster currently serves as the director of Alaska’s Division of Motor Vehicles and has led the agency for the past five years. Previously she directed Alaska’s Division of Elections, was deputy chief of staff for the lieutenant governor and worked for the Alaska State Legislature. Brewster attended Brigham Young University where she received a bachelor’s degree in psychology. She earned her master’s degree in public administration from the University of Alaska Anchorage. She has served on the Life Alaska Donor Services Board of Directors and was elected secretary of the AAMVA RegionIV Board of Directors. Brewster has been recognized as one of Alaska’s Top 40 Under 40 by the Anchorage Journal and Anchorage Chamber of Commerce. A Houston native, Brewster is looking forward to her return to Texas. Brewster’s first day at the TxDMV will be Monday, Aug. 6, 2012. She will oversee an agency with 763 employees, a biennial budget of approximately $300 million and more than $1 billion
in annual revenue collections. Read the DMV press release. Congrats Whitney! Alaska/Region IV’s loss is Texas/Region II’s gain!

**Texas Launches Faces of Drunk Driving**

A new Texas DOT campaign hopes to leave a lasting impression to keep the public from drinking and driving. It's called the Faces of Drunk Driving. The purpose is to show the lasting impact for family, friends and the drunken driver. Every year in Texas, 1,000 people die from alcohol-related accidents -- making this the deadliest state in the country. At 22, Sean Carter was a passenger in a pickup of a driver who had a lot to drink. "After the crash, he stated in the police report he had 12- to 15 beers in one hour," said Jenny Carter, Sean's mom. "Sean was intoxicated as well, and he made the drunken decision to get into that vehicle.” When the car spun into a tree, it fractured Sean's right side. As the truck stopped, his head moved from side to side. And his brain rubbed up against the inside of his skull, and it caused this all-over brain injury. When he woke up from a 39-day coma, he couldn't walk or talk. That was seven years ago. Today, Sean lives his life from a wheelchair. His computer communicates his sense of humor, but he still has his adorable smile. Now Sean is what TxDOT calls a face on the "Faces of Drunk Driving." The goal is to show the public how drinking and driving can affect all those involved. Together they travel across the country talking to groups about the crash, demonstrating the lasting impact. It's a reminder of life's simple pleasures that can be taken from us by drinking and driving. Read the full story at KXAN.

**New Virginia DUI Laws Take Effect July 1**

Tighter restrictions on driving under the influence (DUI) of alcohol will take effect on Sunday, July 1. New legislation will require everyone convicted of a DUI to have a ignition interlock device placed in their car. The device ensures the driver of the car is sober, by having them blow into a breathalyzer in order to get the car to turn on. In the past only those who had already been convicted of a DUI or had blown .15 or higher when arrested were required to have one installed in their car. The device costs around $500 to install and then around $100 each month to maintain. Legislators say it's necessary to keep Virginians safe. Another law extends the amount of time a person has to have their Learner’s Permit before taking the Behind-The-Wheel test, in the past it was 30 days, but beginning on July 1, it will be 60 days. Read the full story at WHSV.com.

**Troops to Trucks Program Streamlines CDL Application (Virginia)**

Through the Troops to Trucks program, the Virginia DMV is helping the men and women of the Armed Forces obtain tools for future employment in the transportation industry. Beginning July 1, implementation of a new federal regulation will allow the roads skills test to be waived for qualified military personnel applying for a CDL. Under the Troops to Trucks program, these applicants will be required to pass only one DMV-issued test – the written knowledge exam, and they will not be required to take the road skills test, also called the behind-the-wheel exam. Active duty personnel including current National Guard and Reserve members, or those discharged in the last 90 days are eligible for the Troops to Trucks’ road skills test waiver. Applicants must be a Virginia resident, and have a Virginia driver’s license or be eligible for one. In addition, an applicant’s commanding officer or designee must certify he or she has held a military operator’s permit and has driving experience, for the past two years, operating the same type of vehicle driven while in the military that he or she plans to drive with a Virginia CDL. Two laws taking effect July 1 also impact Virginia’s military personnel. One law allows active duty members of the U.S. military who are deployed outside of Virginia and plan to return to apply for an extension on their driver’s license validity for three years, or for 180 days after the driver returns to the U.S., whichever occurs first. Another
law allows members of the military to obtain 90-day extensions on the expiration of their license plate registrations or vehicle registrations while they are deployed outside the U.S. and beginning July 1, this extension is extended to the member’s spouse or dependents, when they return after accompanying the member while he or she is deployed outside the U.S. The service member, spouse or dependent has 90 days from the date of return to the U.S. to renew or register. Read the DMV press release.

West Virginia Texting-While-Driving Ban Goes Into Effect Sunday
Beginning Sunday, the bans on texting and using handheld devices while driving will go into effect. West Virginia was the 36th state to institute the bans, with the passage of Senate Bill 211 this year. The legislation makes texting while driving a primary offense for drivers of all ages, and talking on a handheld cell phone a primary offense for drivers with a learner's permit or intermediate license. For all other drivers, talking on a cellphone while driving will be a secondary offense until July 1, 2013, when it will become a primary offense. Read the full story in the News and Sentinel.

Region III News

Iowa Law Waives Truck Test for Experienced Vets
An Iowa law that soon takes effect lets people with recent experience driving large trucks in the military obtain an Iowa commercial driver’s license without taking the drive skills test normally required. The law lets DOT waive the testing requirement for Iowans who are on active duty or separated honorably in the past 90 days. They must meet certain experience and safety requirements set by FMCSA. Applicants must be Iowa residents and hold valid Iowa driver’s licenses. The new law does not waive the written test for the commercial license. Read the full story in The Gazette.

Registration Renewals for Apportioned Commercial Vehicles Now Available Online (Ohio)
Beginning Monday, June 25, 2012, the BMV will allow interstate commercial truck drivers to use a new online system for yearly registration renewals. The Web site will offer renewal services for the International Registration Plan (IRP). The agreement provides payment of apportioned fees on the basis of total distance operated in each jurisdiction. During 2011, Ohio collected nearly $120 million in registration fees from Ohio based companies, as well as out-of-state truckers who drive through on Ohio roads. The new online system will not only significantly reduce the registration processing time, but will benefit out-of-state drivers who may be unable to return to Ohio to process registration paperwork. Read the BMV press release.

Region IV News

Arizona DPS Set to Hire Officers Again After a Four Year Lapse
Beginning June 29th, DPS will be accepting applications for sworn officer positions throughout the state. Until then, applicants are encouraged to fill out a job interest. Applications will only be accepted online through the DPS website. DPS is looking to fill officer positions in rural areas of the state. Applicants hired will attend a one week pre-academy at DPS. The first training academy class will start in November graduating in April, 2013. DPS has 20 slots reserved in this class. The second training academy class will start in February, 2013 with graduation in June, 2013. Upon graduation, the new officers will attend an eight-week post academy at DPS and then 12 weeks of field
training at their duty post. Due to the difficult economy, DPS has not hired sworn officers since 2008. Read the DPS press release.

Gov. Brown Drops Four-Day Workweek Plan for State Workers (California)
Gov. Jerry Brown’s plan to move the state to a four-day workweek died Saturday with the news that California’s biggest state worker union has tentatively agreed to furlough terms that don’t include the compressed schedule. Service Employees International Union Local 1000 told members that its negotiators accepted a deal with Brown requiring that covered workers take 12 unpaid leave days over the 12 months starting July 1. Although employees' paychecks will show a 5% monthly hit on their wages, they have some flexibility to schedule the time off, unlike Brown’s proposal to put workers on a fixed 9.5-hour, four-days-per-week calendar. Read the full story in the Sacramento Bee.

Electric-Vehicle Drivers in Colorado to Get a Charge Out of New Law
For just $5,000, you too could own a filling station — selling not gas but electrons to anxious electric-vehicle drivers. A new law, effective in August, slashes state regulation so that anybody can resell electricity. Traditionally, only utilities could do that. Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper backed the law as a way to spur entrepreneurs to install e-chargers at grocery stores, hotels, malls, cafes and other urban spots. It is part of a broadening “electric vehicle readiness” campaign aimed at cleaning metro Denver’s ozone-prone air by shifting to battery-powered transport. Today, about 1,200 electric vehicles (and 35,000 hybrids) are registered to roll on Colorado roads out of 5.1 million vehicles. Colorado clean-technology industries sponsored the legislation aimed at enabling EV charging beyond homes. Auto dealers embraced it. For around $5,000, anybody with property and access to electricity can install an EV charging station, and a market for $1-an-hour battery charging probably will emerge soon. The latest "level 3" technology can fully charge a car in 45 minutes instead of 4 hours, Altman said. Drivers would pay $4 instead of $40 or more for a tank of gas. Read the full story at the Denver Post.

New Idaho Texting Ban Goes Into Effect July 1
Idaho’s new texting-while-driving law officially goes into effect on Sunday, July 1. The new law makes it an infraction to text and drive, and carries an $85 fine if a motorist is cited. Idaho became the 37th state to prohibit the practice earlier this year. AAA’s November 2011 statewide survey of registered Idaho voters showed that 87 percent of Idahoans supported a legislative ban on texting while driving. That public support is backed by Idaho crash data that shows 192 people were killed and 1,534 were seriously injured in crashes involving distracted driving from 2008 to 2010. Read the full story at KOZE950.com.

Other News of Interest

22 Charged in Multi-State Scheme to Obtain Driver’s Licenses with Fake Documents
Charges against 22 individuals were unsealed Wednesday and arrests were made in six states in connection with an alleged scheme to fraudulently obtain driver’s licenses for illegal aliens and other ineligible individuals. Federal agents have made 17 arrests in New Jersey, New York, California, Nevada, Virginia, and Georgia – including a contract employee of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) charged with stealing and providing forms used to aid in the scheme. The charged criminal operation allegedly provided a suite of unlawful services to individuals illegally residing in the U.S., including fraudulently obtaining driver’s licenses, and investor and student visas. According to the complaints: Young-Kyu Park was the leader of an alleged criminal enterprise that allegedly
acquired, created, and counterfeited a variety of documents for sale to customers. Members of alleged criminal enterprise are accused of escorting customers to various state motor vehicle agencies and coaching them through the process of obtaining the licenses. In return, customers each allegedly paid a fee of approximately $3,000 to $4,500 for the unlawful services. The enterprise also allegedly altered and counterfeited other immigration documents, including passports, and created and provided fictitious documents to customers – such as fictitious utility bills and bank statements used to establish residency requirements. Young-Kyu Park and his co-conspirators also allegedly fraudulently extended expired Korean passports of individuals without legal status in the U.S. so they could obtain driver’s licenses. These illegal services were, at times, allegedly advertised in Korean newspapers and online with headings such as, “New Jersey Driver’s License.” The enterprise allegedly maintained a network of co-conspirators in New Jersey, Nevada, Georgia, and Virginia that met with customers. Read the full story in NJ Today.

Dock-N-Lock LLC Prepares To Unveil Groundbreaking Distracted Driving Solution
Over two years in the making, Dock-N-Lock LLC is in the final stretch to bring their highly anticipated solution to prevent distracted driving to market. Here’s how the solution, trademarked Surge’ON, works: A non-removable chip gets placed on the driver’s phone that is recognized by a locker installed near the driver seat. The driver must place the phone inside a universal locker, which then recognizes the phone. Once the locker is closed, it self-locks and the vehicle is able to start. Without the driver’s phone secure in the locker, the vehicle will not start. The benefits of such a device are clear. No more texting and driving, no more hands-on calling, and no more distracted driving caused by a hand-held device. Another benefit is that the solution is also an anti-theft device. The vehicle will not start without the driver’s cell phone secure inside the locker. The device works with all phone makes and models. Dock-N-Lock intends to release two versions of the Surge’ON solution. One that will allow Bluetooth and one that will not allow any use of the cell phone while the vehicle is being operated. Read the full story at PRWeb.

Fewer Teens Drink and Drive Where Licensing Laws Are Toughest
Graduated drivers license programs may be successful in keeping young drivers who have been drinking from getting behind the wheel, according to research at Washington University in St. Louis. Car accidents are the leading cause of death among teens aged 13 to 19, and some states, including Massachusetts, have adopted graduated licensing laws that allow suspension of a teenager’s driver’s license for any alcohol-related charge. The researchers used 1999 to 2009 national survey data for 220,000 teenagers ages 16 to 17 from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System to see whether a state’s driving laws correlated with teens’ drinking and driving behavior. Teens who lived in states considered to have a strong graduated license program were nearly four times more likely than teens from states with a weak program to report not driving after drinking any alcohol and to report not being a passenger in a car with a driver who had been drinking. BOTTOM LINE: Teens from states with strong graduated drivers license programs are less likely to report drinking and driving or getting in the car with a driver who had been drinking. CAUTIONS: The survey relied on self-reports by the teens, so it is likely that some underreported their potentially stigmatizing behavior. Read the full story at Boston.com.

Motorcycle Helmet Laws Reduce Deaths
Fewer motorcyclists die in states that require helmets, and the costs to society are lower too, according to a new federal study. About five times as many no-helmet biker deaths occur in states with less restrictive laws, the CDC study found. CDC researchers looked at a government tally of fatal traffic crashes. They focused on 2008 through 2010 and counted 14,283 deaths of motorcyclists. That included 6,057 bikers with no helmet. Only about 12% of
those deaths occurred in the 20 states that required everyone on motorbikes to wear helmets. The researchers also made 2010 cost calculations based on medical expenses and lost work productivity from motorcycle deaths and injuries. In 2010, more than $3 billion in economic costs were saved due to helmet use in the U.S. Another $1.4 billion could have been saved if all motorcyclists had worn helmets. In states that mandate helmets, more is saved per registered bike than in states with fewer or no restrictions, $725 versus $200, researchers estimated. When the study was done, three states — Illinois, Iowa and New Hampshire — had no helmet law and another 27 only required helmets for teenagers or certain other riders. Twenty states had universal motorcycle helmet laws, but Michigan changed its law this year. Now riders older than 21 can ride without a helmet if they meet certain requirements, including carrying an additional $20,000 in medical insurance. Motorcycles account for about 3% of the registered vehicles on the road. But about 14% of the people who die in traffic accidents are motorcyclists. Also Thursday, NHTSA urged motorcyclists not to wear the 5X5 brand, SA-08 model motorcycle helmet. Under federal testing, the helmets failed to meet penetration protection requirements. Read the full story at WHPTV.com.

Nearly 300 Drivers, 128 Companies Face Action after FMCSA Sweep
The FMCSA on Monday, June 25, announced that 287 commercial bus and truck drivers were removed from the roads and 128 companies face enforcement actions as a result of the agency’s annual drug and alcohol strike force sweep that occurred from April 30 through May 11. During the two-week sweep, nearly 200 federal investigators examined the drug and alcohol safety records of commercial drivers employed by bus and truck companies, including school bus drivers, interstate passenger carriers, hazardous material transporters and general freight long-haul trucking companies. Their goals were to identify motor carriers in violation of federal drug and alcohol testing requirements and to remove from the road commercial truck and bus drivers who jump from carrier to carrier to evade federal drug and alcohol testing and reporting requirements. The 287 commercial drivers identified in the sweep face the prospect of a monetary fine and being barred from operating a commercial motor vehicle for failing to adhere to federal drug and alcohol regulations. Additionally, 128 truck and bus companies face pending enforcement actions for violations, such as using a driver who has tested positive for illegal drugs and for not instituting a drug and alcohol testing program. Both drivers and carriers will have an opportunity to contest the alleged violations and the amount of the civil penalties. Read the full story in CCJDigital.

Did you know that July is National Hot Dog Month . . .

• The National Hot Dog and Sausage Council estimates that over seven billion hot dogs will be eaten by Americans between Memorial Day and Labor Day. During the July 4th weekend alone (the biggest hot-dog holiday of the year), 155 million will be downed. Every year, Americans eat an average of 60 hot dogs each.

• The term “hot dog” is credited to sports cartoonist Tad Dorgan. At a 1901 baseball game at the Polo Grounds in New York, vendors began selling hot dachshund sausages in rolls. From the press box, Dorgan could hear the vendors yelling, “Get your dachshund sausages while they’re red hot!” He sketched a cartoon depicting the scene but wasn’t sure how to spell “dachshund” so he called them simply, “hot dogs.”

• Council research shows that for adults, mustard is the condiment of choice, while children prefer ketchup. That said, preferences do change from region to region. For instance, hot dogs in New York are generally served with a lighter mustard and steamed onions, while Chicago hot dogs can come with mustard, relish, onions, tomato slices, or pretty much anything at all.