

February 7, 2014 - Regional News

AAMVA News

Make Your Hotel and Travel Arrangements for the 2014 Region IV Conference

AAMVA's 2014 Region IV Conference will take place June 2-5, at the Sheraton Vancouver Wall Center in Vancouver, BC. Visit the Region IV Conference Web site at www.aamva.org/2014-Region-IV-Landing-Page/ and make your hotel and travel arrangements today. (Registration for this event is not yet open.)

Archived Webinar on the Government's Role in Identity Establishment Now Available for Download

The February 5th webinar on the Government's Role in Identity Establishment has been archived and is now available for download on AAMVA's Webinar Archives page. Hosted by Geoff Slagle, AAMVA Director of Identity Management, the webinar features speakers Anil John, U.S. Federal Government Service at the General Service Administration's Office of Government-Wide Policy and Mike Farnsworth, Program Manager, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. Visit www.aamva.org/Webinar-Archives/

Beware: Increase in Credit Card Security Breaches

A recent credit card breach targeting Marriott, Sheraton and other hotels (<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/04/us-whitelodging-databreach-idUSBREA1300120140204>), has prompted AAMVA to issue a warning to its members as event travel season nears. We encourage you to be extra vigilant about making your reservations and transactions using your credit cards while on travel. What precautions can you take? Check out the "Did You Know" section at the bottom of this newsletter for tips on how to keep your credit card information safe.

Region I

Maryland Considering Expanded Interlock Requirement for DUI Convictions

Driving under the influence of alcohol is a serious crime in Maryland. Drivers who are convicted of a DUI offense can face significant penalties including loss of their driver's license, fines and even jail time. If advocates from Mothers Against Drunk Driving get their way, the penalties for Maryland drunk driving offenses may grow even more severe. MADD wants Maryland lawmakers to require every person convicted of DUI -- even first-time offenders -- to install ignition interlock devices in their vehicles. Read the full story in the Digital Journal.

<http://www.digitaljournal.com/pr/1723336>

Quebec Gives Green Light to Drivers to Put Vanity Plates on Vehicles

Quebec could be facing a bumper crop of vanity plates now that the provincial government has given the green light to the personalized licence tags. Starting in September 2015, Newfoundland and

Labrador will be the only holdout to the plates as Quebec joins everywhere else in Canada in allowing them. Read the full story at CTV News.

<http://montreal.ctvnews.ca/quebec-gives-green-light-to-drivers-to-put-plate-on-vehicles-1.1663926>

Québec Announces Changes to Driver's Licence Security Features

Québec has announced that due to a production issue, the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ) will modify UV features on its driver's licence, beginning February 10, 2014. For additional information please contact Harold Blaney at Harold.Blaney@saag.gouv.qc.ca.

Bill Would Grant Driver's Licenses, Permits to Undocumented Immigrants in Rhode Island

Immigrants living in Rhode Island illegally would be able to apply for driver's licenses and permits, under legislation recently introduced into the General Assembly on behalf of Governor Chafee. The proposed "driving privilege licenses" and "driving privilege permits" would be a separate category from regular driver's licenses and driver's permits, according to the proposal, which has been introduced by state Rep. Anastasia Williams, D-Providence, and state Sen. Frank Ciccone, D-Providence. Read the full story in the Providence Journal.

<http://www.providencejournal.com/breaking-news/content/20140203-bill-would-grant-drivers-licenses-permits-to-undocumented-immigrants-in-r.i..ece>

Region II

Motor Vehicle Registration, Renewal, Transfer and Vehicle Property Tax Payment January Deadlines Extended (Alabama)

State Revenue Commissioner Julie P. Magee announced today that the January 2014 motor vehicle registration, renewal, transfer and vehicle property tax payment deadlines have been extended through Feb. 10, 2014, for all Alabama residents affected by county office closings due to severe winter weather conditions, occurring Jan. 28, 2014. Read the press release.

http://revenue.alabama.gov/news/01302014_1.pdf

Florida Revives Push to Give Driver's License to Undocumented Immigrants

Florida could join the ranks with other states allowing undocumented immigrants to get a drivers' license. The push is being driven by several groups petitioning lawmakers to approve a bill that would permit undocumented residents to navigate the highways legally. Read the full story in the Florida Watchdog.

<http://watchdog.org/127241/florida-drivers-license-undocumented-immigrants/>

House Passes Bill to Boost Speed Limit on Urban Interstates (Georgia)

The Georgia House of Representatives voted 157-7 Monday to allow the speed limit to be raised to 70 mph on interstate highways in metropolitan areas with a population of 50,000 or more. Read the full story in OnLine Athens.

<http://onlineathens.com/local-news/2014-02-03/georgia-house-passes-bill-boost-speed-limit-urban-interstates>

South Carolina DMV Announces “No Pay, No Play” for Bad Checks

The South Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) announced today that DMV will no longer provide services to customers who write bad checks. Many services will remain unavailable until the customers pay all dishonored checks and fees. Read the DMV press release.

http://www.scdmvonline.com/DMVNew/default.aspx?n=news_release

Ex-West Virginia DMV Worker Pleads Guilty in ID Scheme

A former West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles worker has pleaded guilty to a conspiracy charge stemming from a driver's license scheme. Kermit Miller of Martinsburg faces up to 15 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Read the full story at DaytonDailyNews.com.

<http://www.daytondailynews.com/ap/ap/crime/ex-wva-dmv-worker-pleads-guilty-in-id-scheme/ndCMc/>

Bill Would Extend Driver's License Renewals (West Virginia)

Legislation to extend driver's license renewal cycles from five to eight years would save the state money and would be more convenient for the state's 1.4 million drivers, Division of Motor Vehicles Commissioner Steve Dale said Tuesday. Read the full story at WV Gazette.com

<http://www.wvgazette.com/News/201402040108>

Region III

Thousands of Illegal Immigrants Applying for Driver's Licenses (Illinois)

Nearly 47,000 immigrants living in the U.S. illegally have started the process to receive Illinois driver's licenses. According to the Illinois Secretary of State's office, 5,235 immigrants have already applied for the licenses since the new program began in December. Another 41,712 have scheduled appointments at the 36 driver's license stations handling the applications. Read the full story at JG-TC.com.

http://jg-tc.com/news/state-and-regional/thousands-of-illegal-immigrants-applying-for-driver-s-licenses/article_269abcf2-317f-5bd3-a1c5-78e5fccef380.html

Ohio State Highway Patrol See Increase in Illegal Weapons Arrests

Troopers with the Ohio State Highway Patrol have been paying extra attention during traffic stops, resulting in an increase in arrests for illegal weapons possession. In a news release issued Tuesday afternoon, officials with the Ohio State Highway Patrol said they have seen a 39 percent increase in illegal weapons possession arrests compared to 2012. Read the full story at WOWKTV.com.

<http://www.wowktv.com/story/24633428/ohio-state-highway-patrol-see-increase-in-illegal-weapons-arrests>

Bill Would Force Elderly to Renew Drivers Licenses Every 4 Years (Wisconsin)

Elderly drivers in Wisconsin would have to renew their licenses more often under a new bill proposed on Tuesday. Under current law, all drivers must take an eye exam and renew their licenses with the D.O.T every eight years. This bill would require drivers 75 and older to renew their licenses and take the eye exam every four years. Read the full story at WXOW.com.

<http://www.wxow.com/story/24637288/2014/02/05/bill-would-force-elderly-to-renew-drivers-licenses-every-4-years>

DUI Laws Under Increasing Scrutiny in Wisconsin

Wisconsin legislators have been under significant pressure from many different sources to make changes to existing drunk-driving laws. Many first-time offenders receive only municipal citations for their DUIs, as opposed to criminal charges that are handed down in other jurisdictions, making it the only state to handle DUIs in this way. Read the full story at EINNews.com.

<http://world.einnews.com/247pr/376604>

Region IV

Wilson Proposes License Plate Options (Alaska)

Traditional license plates in Alaska could get a new look under a bill proposed by a Wrangell lawmaker. HB293, from Rep. Peggy Wilson, would allow for license plates to have a standing grizzly bear, modeled after the 1976 bicentennial plate. Read the full story in the Washington Times.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2014/feb/4/wilson-proposes-license-plate-options/>

New Law Could Streamline Arizona's Specialty License Plates

Arizona lawmakers are trying to pass a law that will streamline specialty or vanity plates in the state. Right now there are more than 50 different types of specialty plates Arizona drivers can get; a majority of them look a lot different from the standard Arizona license plate. Read the full story at TucsonNewsNow.com.

<http://www.tucsonnewsnow.com/story/24639964/new-law-could-standardize-arizonas-license-plates>

Final Guilty Plea in DMV Bribery Scam (California)

The last of 30 people charged in a DMV bribery scam pleaded guilty in San Diego federal court this week, the U.S. Attorney's Office said. Jeffrey Bednarek, 54, a former licensing examiner for the state Department of Motor Vehicles, entered his plea late Tuesday, admitting to producing more than 100 fraudulent regular and commercial driver's permits and licenses between 2009 and 2012. Read the full story at UTSanDiego.com.

<http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2014/jan/30/guilty-dmv-bribe-bednarek-el-cajon-license-driver/>

California: Lawsuit Filed Over License Plate Reader Secrecy

Police in Los Angeles, California do not want the public to know how the department uses automated license plate readers (ALPR or ANPR in Europe). On Friday, privacy advocates filed a lawsuit to force the city government to reveal how this technology is being used to track motorists. Read the full story at TheNewspaper.com.

<http://www.thenewspaper.com/news/43/4326.asp>

Bill Waiving Veterans License Plate Fees Passes Panel (Colorado)

State Sen. George Rivera's bill to exempt veterans from paying a one-time \$50 fee for special license plates honoring their service was passed out of the Senate Finance Committee on Tuesday. Read the full story at Chieftain.com.

<http://www.chieftain.com/home/2258598-120/bill-license-photos-committee#sthash.h9mzlroi.m6a7n3o2.dpuf>

New Mexico Motor Vehicle Division to Modernize Information Systems to Better Serve Customers

State Taxation and Revenue Secretary Demesia Padilla today announced that the Motor Vehicle Division has entered into an agreement with Fast, a Colorado-based company, to modernize its information systems and to improve customer satisfaction. Read the MVD press release.

http://www.mvd.newmexico.gov/uploads/PressRelease/a5924171a2c3411bbae902f347fd646f/MVD_System_Upgrades_.pdf

Motorcycle Report Calls for Tougher Rules for New Riders in Saskatchewan

A new report says Saskatchewan should increase requirements for getting a motorcycle learner's licence and make additional gear mandatory for new riders. The recommendations are from a motorcycle review committee formed by Saskatchewan Government Insurance, which is trying to find ways to reduce claims and save money. Read the full story in the Times Colonist.

<http://www.timescolonist.com/motorcycle-report-calls-for-tougher-rules-for-new-riders-in-saskatchewan-1.813409>

Other News

U.S. Seeks Vehicle-to-Vehicle Safety Technology

U.S. regulators plan to require auto makers to equip cars and trucks with technology that allows vehicles to communicate with each other to avoid crashes. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx on Monday sent a signal to the auto industry that the Obama administration is intent on pushing ahead with so-called vehicle-to-vehicle, crash-avoidance systems. He didn't outline a timetable for when such systems would be required aboard new cars and trucks, however. Read the full article on NASDAQ.com.

<http://www.nasdaq.com/article/us-seeks-vehicletovehicle-safety-technology-20140203-00866#ixzz2sYJry7YB>

Fatal Car Crashes Involving Pot Use Have Tripled in U.S.

The legalization of marijuana is an idea that is gaining momentum in the United States, but there may be a dark side to pot becoming more commonplace, a new study suggests. Fatal crashes involving marijuana use tripled during the previous decade, fueling some of the overall increase in drugged-driving traffic deaths, researchers from Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health report. Read the full story at News10.com.

<http://www.news10.com/story/24629049/fatal-car-crashes-involving-pot-use-have-tripled-in-us-study-finds>

Did You Know

CREDIT CARD FRAUD

You can't miss the news stories about recent security breaches involving credit card fraud-- Target, Nieman Marcus, Marriott, Sheraton--the list goes on. According to an article on star-telegram.com (<http://www.star-telegram.com/2014/01/24/5511881/savvy-consumer-how-to-protect.html#storylink=cpy>): "While no Social Security numbers have been hacked so far, the retailers said, data including card numbers, expiration dates, three-digit security codes, names, mailing addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of about one-third of the U.S. population have been exposed."

That being said, there are some precautions you can take to keep your credit card and other personal information safe. Following are only a handful of online articles and resources that we encourage you to take a look at:

- Ways to keep your credit card and debit card information safe from hackers: CardHub.com <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/ways-credit-card-debit-card-information-safe-hackers-cardhub-article-1.1562779>
- How to Keep Your Personal Information Secure (FTC) <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0272-how-keep-your-personal-information-secure>

- 8 Tips to Keep Your Credit Card Information Safe When Shopping Online
<http://genxfinance.com/8-tips-to-keep-your-credit-card-information-safe-when-shopping-online/>
- Using Your Debit Card Safely
<http://www.debitsavvy.org/debitsavvy-lifestyle/protect-yourself/using-your-debit-card-safely/>