

# April 18, 2014 - Regional News

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## AAMVA News

### Standing Committee Vacancies

Serving on the Driver, Vehicle, or Law Enforcement Committees or on a working group is an ideal way to influence policy, develop best practices, and network with your peers. Subject matter experts from driver, vehicle, and motor carrier services disciplines can include financial responsibility, licensing, testing, registration, titling, or inspection, among other experience and positions. Vacancies on the three standing committees – Driver, Vehicle, and Law Enforcement -- occur because of resignations and end of service terms. We have several vacancies on each of the three standing committees. See the positions which will be vacant on our web site at <http://www.aamva.org/Committees-and-Working-Groups/>. If you are interested in applying for membership, please download the Committee Member Application. Applications MUST be received by May 15, 2014 to be considered for October start date.

### Upcoming AAMVA Events

Get all the details on these upcoming events:

- Region IV Conference (June 2-5) <http://www.aamva.org/2014-Region-IV-Landing-Page/>
- Region II Conference (June 22-26) <http://www.aamva.org/2014-Region-II-Landing-Page/>
- Region I Conference (July 27-30) <http://www.aamva.org/2014-Region-I-Landing-Page/>

Make your hotel and travel arrangements and register online today!

## Region I

### D.C. to Issue New Federally Compliant Driver Licenses

It's about to get REAL in the District. Starting May 1, the District of Columbia will begin issuing new driver licenses -- called the REAL ID credential -- that comply with exacting federal security standards. These new cards will be required for official federal purposes, such as entry into federal buildings this fall and, by 2016, boarding flights (a valid passport will also be sufficient). Read the full story at WTOP.com.

<http://www.wtop.com/109/3603648/Thousands-need-new-drivers-license>

### Maine Warns of Driver's License Web Site Scam

Secretary of State Matt Dunlap is alerting Mainers about a scam involving a fake driver's license Web site. Numerous Maine residents have contacted the Secretary of State's office regarding the site [www.drivers-licenses.org/maine](http://www.drivers-licenses.org/maine). Residents have used this site to attempt to renew their driver's license online. After providing the site with personal information and being charged a fee, users receive

information on how to renew their licenses but fail to receive a new license. Read the full story at SeaCoastOnLine.com.

<http://www.seacoastonline.com/articles/20140417-NEWS-404170376>

### **Legislative Session Brings Changes to Driving Laws (Maryland)**

The Maryland General Assembly session ended last week, bringing with it new driving laws. The highlights include reforms to speed-monitoring cameras, move-over laws and drunken-driving penalties. Read the full story at FredrickNewsPost.com.

[http://m.fredericknewspost.com/news/politics\\_and\\_government/governmental\\_and\\_political\\_topics/transportation/legislative-session-brings-changes-to-driving-laws/article\\_ad291e16-dc16-574b-bf60-2f6ff12c0934.html?mode=iqm](http://m.fredericknewspost.com/news/politics_and_government/governmental_and_political_topics/transportation/legislative-session-brings-changes-to-driving-laws/article_ad291e16-dc16-574b-bf60-2f6ff12c0934.html?mode=iqm)

### **Md.'s Gov. Signs "Jake's Law" for Distracted Driving**

A Maryland mother's fight for stricter penalties for distracted drivers will finally become law. Governor Martin O'Malley will sign Jake's Law Monday. The law was named after 5-year-old Jake Owens, who was killed in a crash in 2011. Read the full article on nbcwashington.com.

<http://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/Jakes-Law-to-Be-Signed-By-Marylands-Governor-255131371.html>

### **Drivers Charged with Cellphone Usage Triples (Maryland)**

It's been six months since the Maryland law banning cellphone usage while driving became more strict, and the number of drivers ticketed has more than tripled. The change in state law makes driving while talking on a hand-held phone a primary offense, allowing police officers to stop a driver on Maryland roadways for just holding their phone. Read the full story at CNSMaryland.org

<http://cnsmaryland.org/2014/04/15/maryland-drivers-charged-with-cellphone-usage-triples/>

### **Beacon Hill Approves 'Boston Strong' License Plate (Massachusetts)**

A bill creating a "Boston Strong" license plate has been given final approval by lawmakers. The measure was sent to Gov. Deval Patrick's desk on Monday, one day before the anniversary of the Boston Marathon bombing. The phrase "Boston Strong" became popular after the April 15, 2013 attack that killed three people and injured more than 260 others. Read the full story at CBSLocal.com.

<http://boston.cbslocal.com/2014/04/14/beacon-hill-approves-boston-strong-license-plate/>

## **Region II**

### **Alabama is 21st State to Pass Ignition Interlock Law**

Alabama Governor Robert Bentley has signed into a law that a measure that seeks to make Alabama roads safer. The law takes another stance against drunk driving. Alabama is the 21st state to adopt this specific law, which makes getting behind the wheel after you'd had a DUI a little more difficult. Read the full story at WSFA.com.

<http://www.wsfa.com/story/25272674/alabama-is-21st-state-to-pass-ignition-interlock-law>

### **Veteran's Driver's License/ID Available for All Georgia Vets**

A new enhancement at the Georgia Department of Driver Services (DDS) that allows all military veterans to request a special license or identification card denoting their service was announced by Governor Nathan Deal today. DDS Commissioner Rob Mikell is pleased that the details were included at a special ceremony at the National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center in Columbus. Read the press release.

<http://www.dds.ga.gov/news/newsdetail.aspx?id=341>

### **Georgia to Roll Back Cost of Fish & Wildlife License Plates**

Georgia's wildlife license plates will soon cost less and provide more support for conserving Georgia wildlife, from bald eagles to bobwhite quail. Gov. Nathan Deal signed House Bill 881 into law today at Jekyll Island. Read the full story at TheFishingWire.com.

[www.thefishingwire.com/story/316428#sthash.7u70kiBE.dpuf](http://www.thefishingwire.com/story/316428#sthash.7u70kiBE.dpuf)

### **Haley Signs Bill Requiring More DUI Locks on Cars (South Carolina)**

South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley signed into law Monday a bill requiring more people convicted of driving under the influence to install a device that won't let their vehicles start if the drivers have been drinking. The governor enacted what was called "Emma's Law" quietly but plans a ceremony later to honor the family who fought for the bill for their late daughter, Haley spokesman Doug Mayer said. Read the full story at TheState.com.

[www.thestate.com/2014/04/15/3388569/haley-signs-bill-requiring-more.html#storylink=cpy](http://www.thestate.com/2014/04/15/3388569/haley-signs-bill-requiring-more.html#storylink=cpy)

### **Patrick Wayne Davis Booked in Knox County on Odometer Fraud and Identity Theft Charges (Tennessee)**

Following an investigation by the Tennessee Highway Patrol's Criminal Investigation Division (CID) Patrick Wayne Davis was arrested for odometer fraud, identity theft, and felony theft on Tuesday, March 11 in Knoxville. Davis allegedly altered the odometer of a 2004 Honda Accord over 120,000 miles. Read the full story at KnoxvilleDailySun.com.

<http://www.knoxvilledailysun.com/news/2014/march/patrick-wayne-davis-arrested.html>

### **TxDOT Introduces Lotería Game Truck to Announce Drink. Drive. Go to Jail. De Veras. Campaign**

Easter, Fiesta and Cinco de Mayo are deeply cherished celebrations within the Hispanic community, but the festivities emphasizing food, family and fun can also lead to tragedy when drinking and driving is involved. In an effort to save lives during this busy time of year, the Texas Department of Transportation is introducing Drink. Drive. Go to Jail. De Veras., a bilingual, culturally relevant campaign aimed at encouraging Hispanic drivers, as well as others, to never drink and drive. Running through May 5, the campaign features a touring interactive truck – themed with imagery inspired by Lotería, a Mexican game of chance similar to bingo — that will visit select cities to invite people to play a game that reminds them not to drink and drive. Read the DOT press release.

<http://www.txdot.gov/inside-txdot/media-center/statewide-news/019-2014.html>

### **West Virginia DMV Expanding Online Services**

The West Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles is widening its online service offerings. West Virginians now have the option to renew their vehicle registration and request a duplicate registration card online. Besides those two online options, motorists can view their official driving record, access their driver's license status and get a snapshot of their driving record, among others. Read the full story at NewsDaily.com.

<http://www.newsdaily.com/united-states/8c540b80a5f98949c276439afdcc80a0/wva-dmv-expanding-online-services>

## **Region III**

### **Unlicensed Motorcyclists Account for 36% of State Fatalities Over 10 Years (Wisconsin)**

Wisconsin motorcyclists who lack a valid cycle license are dying on the highways in large numbers every year. Over 10 years, about 36% of motorcycle fatalities in the state involved operators who had not completed the safety training or skills test necessary to receive a valid motorcycle license, yet they were riding anyway, according to Wisconsin Department of Transportation records. Read the full story in the Journal Sentinel.

<http://www.jsonline.com/business/unlicensed-cyclists-account-for-36-of-state-fatalities-over-10-years-b99244340z1-255113381.html>

## **Region IV**

### **Rhonda Craft Leaving California DMV**

Congratulations to Rhonda Craft who has been appointed as the Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety by Governor Jerry Brown. Most recently, Rhonda served as Driver Safety Branch Chief for the Department of Motor Vehicles. Rhonda takes on her new role starting Monday, April 21. She was an active participant in AAMVA and we wish her the best of luck in her new position!

### **DMV Targets Unlicensed Car Dealers Posing as Private Sellers (California)**

California Department of Motor Vehicles investigators fanned out across the state on Saturday, April 12, citing unlicensed car dealers who prey on disadvantaged buyers by disguising themselves as private sellers with the intent of flipping unsafe, used vehicles. Undercover officers issued 93 citations gave 68 warnings, impounded 109 vehicles and arrested four individuals on outstanding warrants during Saturday's operation. Read the DMV press release.

[https://www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/newsrel/newsrel14/2014\\_29.htm](https://www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/newsrel/newsrel14/2014_29.htm)

### **State to Change ID Card, Driver's License Process (Hawaii)**

The cost of obtaining a state identification card and the documents required to get a driver's license in Hawaii will change beginning May 1, state Department of Transportation officials said Tuesday. State IDs will cost \$32 in Kauai County and \$40 in Honolulu, Maui and Hawaii counties. The cost currently for a state ID is \$20 for people 64 and younger and \$15 for people 65 and older in all counties. Read the full story at StarAdvertiser.com.

[http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/20140415\\_City\\_announces\\_changes\\_to\\_state\\_ID\\_card\\_and\\_drivers\\_license\\_process.html](http://www.staradvertiser.com/news/breaking/20140415_City_announces_changes_to_state_ID_card_and_drivers_license_process.html)

### **Judge Says Flashing Headlights is Free Speech (Oregon)**

A local judge in Southern Oregon has ruled that flashing your headlights to warn other drivers that a sheriff's deputy is approaching is protected as free speech under the Oregon Constitution. Read the full story at KBOI2.com.

<http://www.kboi2.com/news/local/254772981.html>

### **Province Set to Expand Photo Radar in Saskatchewan**

The Government of Saskatchewan is reminding drivers that photo radar is being expanded in the coming months. Beginning June 27, the pilot program will be expanded to the province is calling three high-risk locations: Ring Road in Regina, Circle Drive in Saskatoon and the intersection of Highway 1 and 9th Avenue in Moose Jaw. School zones in those cities could have the radar as well. Read the full story at CKOM.com.

<http://ckom.com/story/province-set-expand-photo-radar-saskatchewan/314366>

### **HazMat Driver Licensing Becoming More Convenient in May (Washington)**

Commercial drivers who haul hazardous materials (HazMat) will soon be able to more closely align their driver license renewal cycle to their federally required HazMat threat assessment. Beginning May 18, 2014, expiring commercial driver licenses (CDLs) that are HazMat endorsed will be renewed for a length of time more closely matching the time remaining on their Department of Homeland Security HazMat threat assessment, depending on when their birthday falls in the calendar year. This new procedure will allow HazMat drivers to take advantage of more of the time remaining on their current threat assessment. More information is available at [www.dol.wa.gov](http://www.dol.wa.gov).

## Other News

### IRS Tracking License Plates

The Internal Revenue Service and other federal agencies reportedly awarded contracts to a license plate-tracking company to provide access to license-plate recognition databases or technology used to collect plate information. Bloomberg News reported that the IRS and other government agencies awarded about \$415,000 in contracts to Livermore, Calif.-based Vigilant Solutions before the Department of Homeland Security dropped a plan for similar work after privacy concerns were raised. Read the full article on [myfoxaustin.com](http://www.myfoxaustin.com).

<http://www.myfoxaustin.com/story/25281797/irs-tracking-license-plates>

## Did You Know

### BLOOD MOON

Last week, North Americans who were “in the know” (and had a clear sky at night), were witness to a celestial phenomenon called the “blood moon”. Unfortunately, I was not “in the know” and did not get to witness it. Lucky for me, though; apparently I’ll get another chance witness this event whose very name conjures up frightful images, and elicits a collective “Ewww!” out of the mouths of my children.

Here's what online searches have taught me:

- Scientifically-speaking, a Blood Moon is an eclipse tetrad: four back-to-back total lunar eclipses.
- So, as I mentioned earlier, we’ll get another chance (three more chances, in fact) to witness a Blood Moon in the next 18 months.
- Blood Moons are not all that unusual. What IS unusual is having four Blood Moons within a year and a half—as one article put it, “like drawing a rare lunar poker hand of four of a kind”. According to NASA, the four Blood Moons will occur in roughly six-month intervals on the following dates: April 15, 2014; October 8, 2014; April 4, 2015, and September 28, 2015.
- Interestingly, before the dawn of the 20th century (from 1600-1990), there was a 300-year period without a single tetrad.
- The last time a tetrad took place was in 2003-2004, with the next predicted for 2032-2033. In total, the 21st century will see eight tetrads.
- During an eclipse, the moon may turn a red or coppery color as it reflects sunrises and sunsets happening around the world. While the moon is in shadow, some light from the sun shines through Earth's atmosphere. Red light (unlike other colors that are blocked and scattered) is better able to penetrate the atmosphere, which creates this "bloody" effect.

Will I be looking towards the evening sky on October 8<sup>th</sup> this year? You bet! With a name like Blood Moon, I would be upset if I missed it. There is a lot more to learn about this celestial phenomenon, and there are lots of prophecies and mystical stories that surround it.

Take a look at some of these online resources before the next Blood Moon:

- 'Blood moon' full lunar eclipse: 10 facts (NDTV) <http://www.ndtv.com/article/cheat-sheet/blood-moon-full-lunar-eclipse-10-facts-508826>
- Lunar Eclipse Facts: 5 Neat Things About Tonight's 'Blood Moon' (Space.com) <http://www.space.com/25496-lunar-eclipse-blood-moon.html>
- Five fascinating facts about the upcoming Blood Moon lunar eclipse (Examiner.com) <http://www.examiner.com/list/five-fascinating-facts-about-the-upcoming-blood-moon-lunar-eclipse>
- 'Blood moon' will be a sight to behold, weather permitting (CNNTech) <http://www.cnn.com/2014/04/11/tech/innovation/blood-moon/>