



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Well, here I am on my soapbox again with the auto accident subject. A recent Associated Press story by Holly Hickman points out that traffic deaths in the United States are at their highest level in 12 years with aggressive driving, drunken driving, and racing all significant contributors to the increase according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. California is one of only six states which has enacted legislation targeting aggressive driving and giving the CHP more enforcement criteria. The other two factors, along with seatbelt and motorcycle helmet use, are education and enforcement problems. Seatbelt use is only 79% at present. Maybe we all can help with the education part of addressing the problem.

Along with our family genealogy research, my wife and I have submitted our DNA to the Oxford Ancestors project. This project will (1) trace my mtDNA back 150,000 years through my mother's maternal line to identify which of the *Seven Daughters of Eve* as identified in the book of that title by Professor Sykes of Oxford University is my ancestor; (2) trace my Y-chromosome line (father to son), which has the potential of identifying which of the several Gray families of Ireland and/or Scotland is my line; and (3) identify if I have Norse Viking ancestors in my background. My wife will only get results of the maternal (mother to daughter) mtDNA. The results will be interesting to us, but we are also happy to add to this research project. If any of you are interested, visit their Web site at www.oxfordancestors.com or write to Oxford Ancestors Ltd. P.O. Box 288, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 1WG, United Kingdom.

Well, transportation fuel costs in the Western U.S. are rising to about half that in Europe, which, wearing my public transportation and environmental concerns hat, is not unwelcome. However, I would prefer that more of the gallonage costs were earmarked for addressing transportation needs. I am hopeful that public pressure will influence the auto manufacturers to strive further to improve the mileage per gallon of their products, which would be an environmental plus. Based on SUV sales, it is fairly obvious, especially in California, that the cost of fuel is not a major detriment to auto use. It is rather surprising to me that the old 2% in lieu auto tax in California, which recently was reduced to 0.65%, has become such a political issue.

One of the rewards of retirement is the ability to have time for such pleasures as travel and this publication documents that many of us take advantage of this circumstance. I am sure that for each major vacation trip that many of us take, there are a large number of volunteer community service hours donated to various causes. I am proud that this situation exists. There are so many opportunities for each of us to be of service to our fellows and benefit our society and, incidentally simultaneously improve our individual well being.

Unhappily, this will be the last issue of this publication under the excellent direction of Joanne Ells. She and our capable Secretary/Treasurer, George Ells, have resigned from their duties due to medical necessity. They both have served well and will be greatly missed.

GEORGE GRAY, President
QUARTER CENTURY CLUB

